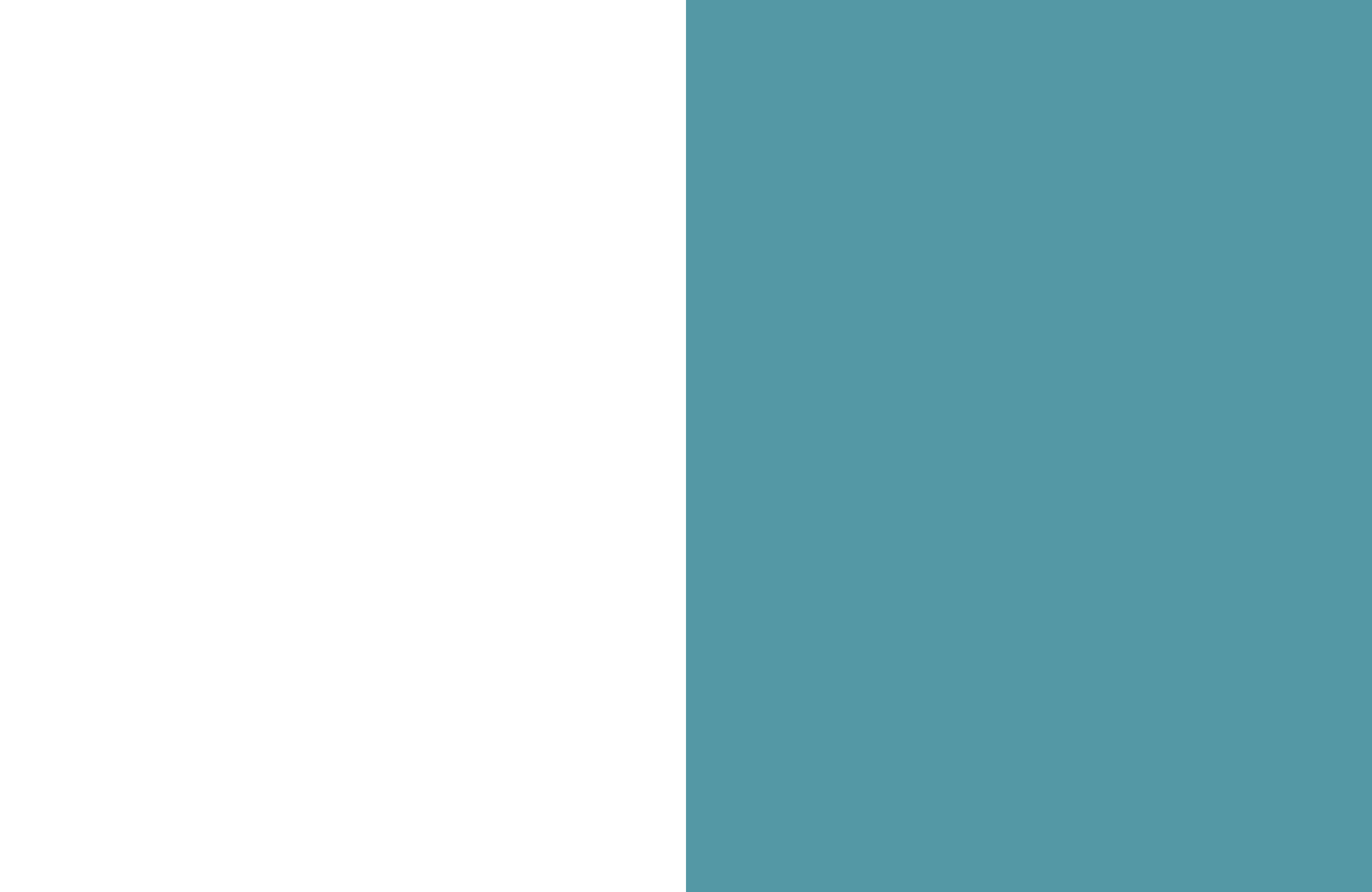


DIY Urbanism Toward the Design of Fairest Cities

AN INITIATIVE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF HOMELESS EPHEMERAL SETTLEMENTS IN LISBON



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Politecnico di Milano | School of Architecture, Urban Planning & Construction Engineering
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This thesis is a testimony of one amazing year that I have spent in Politecnico di Milano, during which I had the fortune to attend many inspiring courses but also to meet and collaborate with many wonderful people, colleagues and professors from the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies in Piacenza. First and foremost I would like to thank my Supervisor Bruna Vendemmia, whose support guided my work since the beginning and was essential for the completion of my project. I am very grateful for her firm interest in my work and my ideas and her constant advising and guidance through it. I am also very thankful for the sharing of her great knowledge and enthusiasm on the studies of Urbanism and Architecture as well as her motivation and assistance on the enrichment of my project with very interesting points and inspirations. But mostly I am appreciative of her patience, her understanding and encouragement even during the greatest difficulties through the execution of my thesis as well as her immense availability which facilitated considerably my work. Moreover, I would like to thank the Professors and the Didactic crew of the Department of Politecnico di Milano in Piacenza for their contribution into the great knowledge and experiences that I attained through my studies in Italy as well as the administration team for their availability to my questions. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to all the wonderful people I met in Portugal and with whom I have collaborated during my exchange studies, my internship and my thesis research for their support, guidance and sharing of information, experience and wisdom. I owe a special thanks also to the interviewees for the purpose of my thesis who were very helpful in my understanding of the real homeless situation in Lisbon. Likewise, I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity that was given to me to participate in the study courses in Italy and Portugal which introduced me to me a beautiful exploration of a lifechanging experience through my travel on two wonderful cultures and my encounter of numerous lovely people and communities. Last but not least, my deepest love and gratitude is devoted to my family. None of my achievements would have been realised without their support, love and trust.

INTRODUCTION**I THEORETICAL CONTEXT****01 Politics on public space****005 Different meanings of public space**

005 The importance and the production of public space

006 Exclusion and struggle over neoliberal public space

007 Expression of power in public space

008 Vanishing of public space and public life

008 Privatisation of public space

009 The end of public life

009 Exclusive spatial strategies

011 Informal urbanism in neoliberal cities

011 Defining formal and informal

011 Reasons for urban informalities

012 Informal populations

013 Informal spaces

013 Informal practices as political struggle

015 Criminalisation of informal practices

015 The insurgency of informal spaces

02 The informal practice of DIY urbanism**019 DIY urbanism as citizen participation practice**

019 About citizen participation

021 From informal urbanism to DIY urbanism

023 Review on DIY urbanism meanings

023 Historical inputs of DIY urbanism practices

023 Definitions and meanings of DIY urbanism

025 Academic perceptions on DIY practices

025 Modern roots of DIY urbanism

029 Critical analysis on DIY urbanism

029 Critical points on modern practices

030 Opportunities and dangers in neoliberal cities

033 Social practices versus contemporary DIY tactics

II METHODOLOGY

039 Homelessness: A different approach of DIY urbanism

040 Research Question

041 Research Design

III CASE STUDY**03 The homeless' tent cities in USA****051 The DIY practice of Tent Cities**

051 Typologies of homeless shelter resources

051 Reasons for studying the practice in the US

057 Emergence of the practice - brief history

057 Description of the encampments

065 Reasons for initiating the practice

069 Benefits for Tent cities residents

071 Tent cities compared to slums

075 Responses on Tent cities

075 Prohibition of Tent cities

077 Support on Tent cities development

081 Tent city urbanism

083 Examples of authorized homeless' settlements

085 Tent city 3 & 4, Seattle, WA

091 Dignity Village, Portland, OR

097 Community First! Village, Austin, TX

103 Pinellas Hope Village, St. Petersburg, FL

111 Authorization framework

115 Tent Cities as a revolutionary DIY urban practice

115 Meanings for neoliberal urban space

IV PROPOSAL**04 Design of ephemeral settlements****123 The example of Lisbon**

125 Reasons for selection

129 Homeless situation in the city center of Lisbon

129 Profile of homeless population

131 Homeless housing strategies

133 Types & characteristics of occupations in public space

143 Design of homeless ephemeral settlements

146 Vision - Objectives - Strategy

151 Guidelines: Spatial configuration & Organisation

157 Location

165 Masterplan

167 Diagrams

177 Sections

181 Structures typologies

183 Infrastructure solutions

V CONCLUSIONS**VI ANNEX****BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Despite the acknowledged values of the openness and inclusiveness of public space for the city and social life, many social urbanists suggest that public space in neoliberal cities had never been place of free, unmediated interaction, but on the contrary place of conflicting relationships of power and traditionally place of exclusion. In fact, urban space is not just a physical entity but rather a product of social relations. In contemporary cities public space has increasingly become subject of ownership, commodification and control by dominant social forces who tend to generate social inequalities by spatial exclusion. The exclusions concern mainly marginal, neglected and disadvantaged social groups who respond with the employment of informal practices as a struggle for spatial justice and the 'right to the city'.

Means of urban informality, although criticised and restricted in the past have gradually attained approval by post-recession governments as cheap solutions of urban development, boosting a tremendous wave of informal urban interventions and practices to gain popularity in recent years. Official authorities seem to respond with tolerance and permission and even attempt to authorise informal circumstances leading to what has evolved today into DIY Urbanism, Tactical Urbanism or other similar tactics. Namely, the promotion of and the encouragement for experimentation with citizen-led, temporary urban actions that contextualised by citizen participation in city-planning aim to provide more appropriate and inclusive spaces and uses in the urban environment.

However, it is suggested that up to now most of the sanctioned and authorised cases of DIY Urbanism seem to associate with economic and cultural vitality, while DIY practices of social value and commentary tend to remain neglected, stigmatised and criminalised. A perfect example that justifies this situation is illustrated by the occupation of public space by the homeless populations. While, DIY urbanists respond to the scarcity of urban space by opening it up to culture, community and the grassroots economy, the primary homeless demonstrate the scarcity of housing, adequate social services and community resources in urban space by appearing in that space and using it for shelter and other necessities. Even though both scenes are informal responses to the absence of space for everyone's needs and ambitions, DIY urbanist are faced as entrepreneurial while the homeless tend to be ignored and unwelcome in contemporary urban space.

The present thesis attempts to examine whether it is possible that DIY urbanism initiatives can represent practices for the social inclusion of sensitive groups in contemporary cities by focusing on the study of 'Tent Cities', an informal DIY practice of the homeless in USA which has managed to secure authorised space for the development of homeless communities in many different cities. Intending to explore whether such practices can generate experimental initiatives that will contribute as temporary, or as a basis for more permanent solutions to the issue of homelessness, the research aims to extract useful conclusions by the American case study that can be used as guidelines and determine which are the most critical characteristics for the ideal development of similar communities in European cities. Following the same process the thesis incorporates the design of a DIY strategy for the establishment of ephemeral homeless settlements within a context of associations and circular exchange of resources among different urban groups which encourages social inclusion of marginal groups, acceptance of diversity and the cultivation of a social capital in modern cities. At last, the thesis includes the proposal to apply the designed initiative in a specific intervention site in the city of Lisbon, objecting to demonstrate also the spatial and structural organisation of an ideal ephemeral homeless settlement.

#DIY urbanism
 #informal practices
 #tent cities
 #ephemeral settlements
 #homelessness
 #public space

Nonostante i riconosciuti valori di apertura e inclusione degli spazi pubblici per la città e la vita sociale, molti urbanisti suggeriscono che lo spazio pubblico nelle città neoliberali non è mai stato un luogo di interazione libera o non mediata, ma, al contrario, è stato un luogo di relazioni conflittuali di potere e tradizionalmente un luogo di esclusione. Infatti, lo spazio urbano non è solo un'entità fisica ma piuttosto un prodotto di interazioni sociali. Nelle città contemporanee lo spazio pubblico è diventato sempre più oggetto di proprietà, mercificazione e controllo da parte delle forze sociali dominanti che tendono a generare disuguaglianze sociali per esclusione spaziale. Queste esclusioni riguardano principalmente gruppi sociali svantaggiati, trascurati e ai margini, che, manifestando una lotta per la giustizia spaziale e per il "diritto alla città", rispondono con la messa in atto di pratiche informali.

Le pratiche informali di rigenerazione urbana, sebbene criticate e limitate in passato, hanno gradualmente ottenuto l'approvazione da parte dei governi per essere soluzioni economiche di sviluppo urbano, dando origine ad un'enorme ondata di interventi e pratiche urbane informali che hanno guadagnato popolarità negli ultimi anni. Le autorità sembrano rispondere con tolleranza e indulgenza e persino con l'autorizzazione di manifestazioni urbane informali portando a ciò che oggi è diventata l'urbanistica fai-da-te, l'urbanistica tattica o altre pratiche simili. Più precisamente, portando alla promozione e all'incoraggiamento della sperimentazione di azioni urbane temporanee guidate dai cittadini che, realizzate con la partecipazione dei cittadini alla pianificazione della città, mirano a costruire spazi e usi più appropriati e inclusivi nell'ambiente urbano.

Tuttavia, sembra che finora la maggior parte dei casi sanciti e autorizzati dell'urbanistica fai-da-te siano associati alla vitalità economica e culturale, mentre le pratiche fai-da-te di valore sociale tendano a rimanere trascurate, stigmatizzate e criminalizzate. Un esempio perfetto che illustra questa situazione è fornito dall'occupazione dello spazio pubblico da parte dei senzatetto. Mentre gli urbanisti fai-da-te rispondono alla scarsità dello spazio urbano aprendolo alla cultura, alla comunità e all'economia popolare, la situazione dei senzatetto dimostra la scarsità di alloggi, di servizi sociali adeguati e di risorse comunitarie sufficienti nello spazio urbano, manifestandosi in quello spazio e utilizzandolo per riparo e altre fondamentali necessità. Anche se entrambi i fenomeni sono risposte informali all'assenza di spazio per le esigenze e le ambizioni di tutti, l'urbanista fai-da-te è comunemente accettata mentre i senzatetto tendono ad essere ignorati e respinti dallo spazio urbano contemporaneo.

La presente tesi esamina la possibilità che le iniziative di urbanistica fai-da-te possano essere pratiche per l'inclusione sociale di comunità fragili nelle città contemporanee, concentrandosi sullo studio di "Tent Cities", una pratica informale fai-da-te dei senzatetto negli USA che è riuscita a garantire ufficialmente lo spazio per lo sviluppo di comunità senzatetto in molte città. Volendo esplorare se tali pratiche possano generare iniziative sperimentali che potrebbero diventare soluzioni temporanee o basi per soluzioni più permanenti al problema dei senzatetto, la ricerca mira a trarre dal caso di studio americano linee guida per determinare le caratteristiche più importanti per lo sviluppo ideale di comunità simili nelle città europee. Seguendo questo percorso, la tesi incorpora la progettazione di una strategia fai-da-te per la creazione di insediamenti temporanei di senzatetto in un contesto di socialità e scambio circolare di risorse tra diversi gruppi urbani che incoraggia l'inclusione sociale delle comunità più fragili, l'accettazione della diversità e la coltivazione di un capitale sociale nelle città moderne. Infine, la tesi include una proposta di realizzazione dell'iniziativa identificata in uno specifico luogo di riqualificazione nella città di Lisbona, mostrando inoltre l'organizzazione spaziale e strutturale di un insediamento temporaneo ideale per senzatetto.

#Urbanismo fai-da-te
#pratiche informali
#tendopoli
#insediamenti effimeri
#senzatetto
#spazio pubblico

Public space has been an important aspect for cities and urban culture since the first cities emerged. The arrangement and the organisation of public space compose essential indications over the social life of a city as well as the degree of freedom and justice that pervades it. Space has always been socially produced through a contested process among diverse social forces. Thus, often the production of public space is prevailed by the dominant socio-urban forces as well as the rules and regulations imposed by them in each instance, which in the case of contemporary cities are represented by the system of neoliberal economy market.

The consequent challenge that arises, is that the immediate concerns in this system is the facilitation and economic development of the private capital with a view to profit acquisition through land ownership, as opposed to the development of a social capital and the attainment of the foreseen qualities in the urban context including spatial justice. In the latter case, public space could correspond to the ideal and by definition inclusive, free space where individuals are given the opportunity to co-exist, interact and accept diversities resulting in a tolerant, egalitarian society. On the contrary, contemporary public space has established a discriminative and exclusive character against the less privileged social groups by being only in favour of those who serve the private interest.

For this reason, contemporary cities increasingly face the challenge of totally losing social life by eliminating opportunities for social interaction in public space - especially among diverse social groups - through design strategies, while the privatisation of public space within the neoliberal rhetoric signifies private life as the supreme concern of modern lifestyle.

Nevertheless, the excluded social groups from the market-regulated public spaces have been always tackling the scarcity of free space in the cities through informal tactics and practices. By inventing new counter-spaces or by transforming those already exist, groups and individuals who have been in a constant struggle for social and economic survival in the urban surroundings resist the spatial inequality through means of self-help strategies. The new self-made spaces and the activities that take place therein usually contravene the norms and regulations of the official urban planning and mostly are treated with surveillance and criminalisation by authorities, leading to further marginalisation of the needs that they express.

In many cities of the global South, where complexity permeate the conditions of living, informal spaces and

practices have been often disregarded, and yet in some cases have been authorised under special regulations. Surprisingly, today the authorisation of numerous and different kinds of informal urban practices takes place almost everywhere, and particularly in the most advanced cities of the global North. It's seems like the notions of several neglected urban groups that for years are being conveyed through urban informalities, have been finally considered by authorities and in the general framework of the citizen participation are incorporated as local initiatives and experiments in the official urban policy. The result is not only the endorsement of certain unofficial urban interventions but also the encouragement for more citizen-led temporary activities that will constitute the base for bigger changes through the following involvement of official planning.

Hence, informal self-help strategies that used to reflect the needs and urges of those being ignored by the principles of official urban planning, suddenly turn into tactics fully embodied into the same process. And so nowadays we report a significant degree of tolerance and approval towards the phenomenon of informal or DIY Urbanism as well as the abrupt emergence of practices such as the 'DIY Urban Design' and 'Tactical Urbanism'.

Arguably, what today has evolved into 'Tactical Urbanism' might seem hopeful and optimistic at first glance but taking into account the neoliberal context within these events occur, might mask some crucial threats. Since such initiatives do not appear spontaneously but are introduced by top-down policies, the comprised goals and the engaged social groups can be entirely opposite to those the original practice of DIY Urbanism involves. More specifically, urban policy can authorise and exploit selected ephemeral moments of creativity inducing further neoliberal development and generating more social exclusions and gentrification rather than claiming for socio-spatial justice by means of equal and unbiased participation in the process of planning and hence in "the right to the city".

The present thesis aims to stress the question whether initiatives such as the so-called 'Tactical Urbanism' can represent practices that aim to social inclusion and equal socio-spatial distribution. By exploring the informal practice of 'tent cities' in the USA proposes a strategy and a spatial configuration prototype for the establishment of ephemeral homeless settlements inside the urban limits of contemporary cities as an experimental urban initiative, using as a starting point the city of Lisbon in Portugal.

Theoretical Context

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Politics on public space

01

The present chapter is based on an extensive literature review on the politics on public space. Firstly, it attempts to explain the fundamental significance that public space comprises for the democratic organisation of the city and its citizens, as well as the complex social context which establish the meanings of public space. It is evidently stated that despite the socially diverse potential for spatial production, urban space is mostly produced by dominant and uncontrolled forces often resulting in the development of spatial policies that generate excluded populations and activities from the use of public spaces.

In particular, it is discussed that the emphasis on profit and capital growth by the contemporary cities has developed powerful alliances between local governments and neoliberal corporations, creating dominant forces that prioritise urban politics of the privatisation and commodification of public space. As a result, urban planning enforces perpetual social segregation by spatial exclusion, and in this manner the 'openness' and 'inclusiveness' of public spaces is eliminated while consumerism is promoted as the prevalent activity of public life.

In an effort to analyse the responses of the socio-spatially excluded populations, the chapter introduces the informal practices that these populations implement through place-based tactful, or more overt activities and tactics. It is highly claimed that informal practices primarily function as a means for survival for the specific groups and serve as political claims for spatial justice against long standing exclusionary urban strategies. Finally, these actions despite their frequent criminalisation and usually after intense struggles establish novel and insurgent urban spaces, create collective meanings and embrace social diversity, offering a great potential for the transformation of the prevalent structure and culture of our cities and societies.

Different meanings of public space

THE IMPORTANCE & THE PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SPACE

Cities have long attracted those in search of greater freedom of opportunity, of expression, of association. These core possibilities are tightly bound up with the demands of citizenship, the idea that to live in a city is to be part of a community, indeed, a community of communities. The willingness and the capacity to equitably transact our relationships with the city's innumerable others is foundational for urban citizenship (Ho 2012).

Public space has been an important facet of cities and urban culture. In cities around the world, urban spaces such as plazas, markets, streets, temples, and urban parks have long been the centres of civic life for urban dwellers. They provide opportunities for gathering, socialising, recreation, festivals, as well as protests and demonstrations. Urban open spaces provide relief from dense urban districts and structured everyday life. As civic architecture, they become collective expressions of a city as well as depositories of personal memories. As places where important historical events tend to unfold, public spaces are imbued with important, collective meanings – both official and unofficial (Hou 2010).

Brill (1989: 8) writes that public space comes to represent the public sphere and public life, “a forum, a group action, school for social learning, and common ground”. In the Western tradition, public space has had a positive connotation that evokes the practice of democracy, openness, and publicity of debate since the time of the Greek agora (Hou 2010). This imagery of the Agora, Harvey (2006: 17) writes, has “a powerful hold on the political imagination.” The Agora is the image of public space as a place that bolsters democracy because it is the location where urban citizens are likely to “encounter and hear from those who are different, whose social perspectives, experience and affiliations are different” (Young 1991:119; Spataro 2015).

Henaff and Strong (2001) further argue that the very idea of democracy is inseparable from that of public space. “Public space means simultaneously: open to all, well known by all, and acknowledged by all [...]. It stands in opposition to private space of special interests” (Henaff & Strong 2001: 35). Henaff and Strong (2001: 35) also note that public space “designates an ensemble of social connections, political institutions, and judicial practices.” Mark Francis (1989: 149) writes, “Public space is the common ground where civility and our collective sense of what may be called ‘publicness’ are developed and expressed.” Fraser (1990) argues that, as a public sphere, public space is an arena of citizen discourse and association. Young (2002) sees public space in a city as accessible to everyone and thus reflecting and embodying the diversity in the city.

Serving as a vehicle of social relationships, public discourses, and political expressions, public space is not only a physical boundary and material setting (Hou 2010). According to Lynch (1971) space is not just ‘out there’ as a mathematical entity or a-priori category but always socially produced, and so, the city itself is a powerful symbol of the complexity of the society. Similarly, Lefebvre (1991) argues that space is the product of social relations, rather than an inert stage upon which people and objects move. “Space is not a thing but rather a set of relations between things” (Lefebvre 1991: 83). Space is socially diverse: “We are confronted not by one social space but by many—indeed by an unlimited multiplicity or an uncountable set of social spaces” (Lefebvre 1991: 86). Finally, space is not divided in distinct terrains with limited boundaries but overlapping and conflicting movements and arrangements (Speer 2014).

The production of space is a contested process. The shaping and reshaping of urban spaces is a product of complex power-geometries, as different actors seek to determine who and what the city is for (Lefebvre 1991). Among the resources mobilised in these power struggles are capital, property rights, planning codes, spatial design, law, various policing techniques and technologies, education, socialisation, and labour (Iveson 2013).

EXCLUSION & STRUGGLE OVER NEOLIBERAL PUBLIC SPACE

Public spaces and significantly public life, that by definition takes place in these spaces, consist fundamental elements for the presence of democratic societies. Nevertheless, the evidence of these elements appears to be distorted in the history of urbanisation.

Among the social multiplicity over space, each society tends to produce its own dominant space. (Speer 2014) Lefebvre (1991) has argued that space is often socially produced by forces that are beyond the control and even access of large portions of populations and hence, modern urban space is unjust and exclusionary. “Space commands bodies” (Lefebvre 1991: 143) and is produced by dominant groups for precisely that end. For Soja (2010) production of urban space can be unjust and oppressive, and so is very politically charged.

For scholars such as Fraser (1990), Marston (1990), and Mitchell (2003) the difference between the ideal and the reality is a product of deliberate exclusions that prevent access for certain publics. Public spaces have never simply been places of free, unmediated interaction since they have always been spaces of exclusion too (Mitchell 2003: 132; Spataro 2015). “The idea of public space has never been guaranteed. It has only been won through concerted struggle.” (Mitchell 2003: 5).

Similarly, Watson (2006: 7) argues, “public space is always in some sense, in a state of emergence, never complete and always contested.” Mitchell (2003: 5) further argues that struggle “is the only way that the right to public space can be maintained and only way that social justice can be advanced.” To him, it is through the actions and purposeful occupation of a space that it becomes public (Hou 2010). Agacinski (2001: 133) notes that, before the French Revolution, the ‘public’ in the Western tradition referred to the “literate and educated” and “was never thought to be the same as the people.” Even in recent Western history, some have argued that, “despite the rhetoric of publicity and accessibility,” the official public sphere

rests on a number of significant exclusions, based on gender, class, and race (Fraser 1990: 59). By delineating what constitutes public and private and by designating membership to specific social groups, the official public space has long been exclusionary (Hou 2010). Critical theory of public space consistently asserts that “contrary to the rhetoric of openness and inclusiveness, the actual making and practice of public space often reflects a different political reality and social biases”¹ (Hou 2010: 3).

Today, although multiculturalism is more widely acknowledged, the historic bias continues, as Low, Taplin, and Scheld (2005: 4) found that “restrictive management of large parks has created an increasingly inhospitable environment for immigrants, local ethnic groups, and culturally diverse behaviours.” Observing how different cultural groups use the neighbourhood parks in Los Angeles, Loukaitou-Sideris (1995: 90) claims that, contrary to the notion of inclusiveness, the “contemporary American neighbourhood park does not always meet the needs of all segments of the public.”

Though, ‘space’ is continuously reinvented as ‘place’ over time through the formation of place-based resistance, and project identities (Castells 1997; Peña 2003; Mares & Pena 2010). Soja (2010) claims that in seeking for spatial justice its necessary to develop a new spatial consciousness which is closely related with the social reproduction of space rather than the morphological.

¹The development and design of public parks in America provides an illustration on how public space has long been an ideologically biased and regulated enterprise contrary to the rhetoric of openness (Hou 2010) and socio-cultural embodiment. In the United States, early parks were built with the purpose to serve as a relief “from the evils of the city” (Cranz 1982: 3, 5). The emergence of reform parks in the United States further demonstrated this bias (Hou 2010). Located in mostly dense, immigrant and working class neighbourhoods, they were designed to move children and adults from the streets. With the goal of social and cultural integration, and provisions for organized play, the parks and playgrounds were also designed to assimilate immigrants into the mainstream American culture (Cranz 1982).

EXPRESSION OF POWER IN PUBLIC SPACE

Aside from the practice of exclusion, public space has also been both an expression of power and a subject of political control. Across different political systems and cultural traditions, the functions and meanings of public space have varied significantly, illustrating the diverse means and degrees of social and political control (Hou 2010).

Under medieval monarchy in the West, public space was where political power was staged, displayed, and legitimised (Henaff & Strong 2001). In the totalitarian societies of recent times, large public spaces serve as military parade grounds – a raw display of power to impress citizens as well as enemies. In modern democracies, as the power has shifted to the people, public spaces have provided a legitimate space for protests and demonstrations – an expression of the freedom of speech. Yet, such freedom has never come without considerable struggles and vigilance (Low & Smith 2005; Hou 2010).

In recent Western democracies, public space and the formation of public opinion have been important components of the democratic process. Through opportunities of assembly and public discourses, political expressions in the public space are important in holding the state accountable to its citizens. This distinction between the public and the state has been an important ingredient in democratic politics. (Hou 2010). However, in the post-9/11 world of hyper-security and surveillance, new forms of control in public space have curtailed freedom of movement and expression and greatly limited the democratic activities and meanings of contemporary public space (Low & Smith 2005; Hou 2010).

By contrast, in countries influenced by Confucianism in the East, social and individual life is dictated predominantly by obligations to state and family, with little in between. The official public space is traditionally either non-existent or tightly controlled by the state. Where public space is represented and controlled by the state, the everyday and more vibrant urban life tends to occur in hidden places of the city -

the backstreets and alleyways - away from the official public domain² (Hou 2010).

On that account, arguably public space acts as a catalyst in the process of reversing the dominant powers of govern and control over cities regardless how power have been manifested in different instances through history.

² Seoul's Pimagol, narrow alleys that parallel the city's historic main road Jong-ro, serve as an example. To avoid repeatedly bowing to the noble-class people riding on horses on Jong-ro, a requirement back in the days of feudal power, the commoners turned to the back alleys, away from the main road. Over time, restaurants and shops began to occupy the back alleys, which became a parallel universe and an important part of the vibrant everyday life in the city. Pimagol was once an important passage and gathering space for commoners and the city's unofficial public space (Hou 2010: 4).

Vanishing of public space and public life

PRIVATISATION OF PUBLIC SPACE

In the last few decades, transformations in the political economy of public space have created a very specific form of exclusion. Cities have created entrepreneurial alliances that are “expected to serve as market facilitators, rather than salves for market failures” (Hackworth 2007: 61; Spataro 2015: 190). This trend is the result of the way urban regimes attempted to solve political and economic crises stemming from a breakdown of Keynesian liberalism. In response to these crises, the intense privatisation of public space led to what has been called the ‘end of public space’ (Sorkin 1992), or the ‘suburbanisation’ of public space (Hammett & Hammett 2007).

In modern societies, the private and personal have taken precedence over the public and impersonal, as people became less interested in public matters and more driven by private interests and personal desires (Hou 2010). The “unbalanced personal life and empty public life are manifested in the dead public space of modern architecture, with few opportunities for social interactions” (Sennet 1992: 16). A number of practices have further challenged what is left of public space in both its physical and political dimensions. Most notably, the growing privatisation of public space has become a common pattern and experience in many parts of the world where “downtown districts as well as suburban lands are transformed into themed malls and so-called festival marketplaces” (Hou 2010).

As space becomes a vessel for profit, the sensual experience of it is attached to a price. In the capitalist city, the quest for profit comes to dominate urban planning, and people are increasingly forced to pay money simply to enjoy space³ (Speer 2014). Modern planning is largely focused on developing a symbiotic relationship between private market forces (e.g. developers or entrepreneurs) and the public sector, with planners performing mostly creative,

diplomatic and exhortative roles as shepherds of the public interest (Myers & Banerjee 2005). But even this facilitative model of planning stakes out a clear role for local government focused largely on managing and shaping private resources. (Finn 2014). Public funds are used to subsidise development of private sites, while developers are generously rewarded for providing spaces with limited public use (Hou 2010).

As streets, neighbourhoods, and parks become malls, gated communities, and corporate venues, public space becomes subjected to new forms of ownership, commodification, and control (Hou 2010). City governments have relinquished control and management of public spaces to the private sector (Katz 2006; Kohn 2004). According to Kohn (2004: 11) “this has created a situation in which much of New York City’s public space is privately owned”. The control of public space is now a worldwide phenomenon that shows how form follows capital (Hou 2010).

Davis (1992: 155) observes, “the ‘public’ space of the new megastructures and super-malls have supplanted traditional streets and disciplined their spontaneity.” Loukaitou- Sideris and Banerjee (1998: 278) further write, “American downtown is a product of purposeful design actions that have effectively sought to mould space according to the needs of a corporatist economy and to subordinate urban form to the logic of profit.” Capitalist space prefers expressions of difference that are mediated by planned consumption and exchangeability, rather than spontaneous and subjective impulse. To fit the mould, modern citizens consume homogenous commodities and occupy homogenous places. In short, capitalism is linked to conformity (Speer 2014).

However, the political economy of the city is not just an invention of top-down neoliberal governmentality and its managerial spatial imperatives. The struggles toward alternative use of space through

³ For example, in 1993 Seattle banned people from sitting on public sidewalks, but created an exception for those who were patrons at nearby cafés (Mitchell 1997).

place-making practices that promote self-reliance, community, and autonomy constitute spatial practices that are both counter-hegemonic and revealing of unplanned outcomes and uses (Mares & Pena 2010; Finn 2014).

THE END OF PUBLIC LIFE

In an effort to emulate successful urban spaces of the past, contemporary streetscapes and town squares are reproduced but segregated from the rest of the city, to create a supposed safe haven for businesses and consumers. Whereas the physical form and appearance of the spaces may look familiar to the traditional public space in the past, their public functions and meanings have become highly limited (Hou 2010) undermining the qualities that permeate our societies and our public lives.

The contemporary urban planning's prioritisation of private interests guided by strategies of gentrification and revitalisation increase exclusions and create public spaces that are effectively dead as sites of democratic participation. Sorkin (1992) argues that this is a process that makes cities more like theme parks and other highly regulated zones of mass consumption. "The theme park presents its happy regulated vision of pleasure [...] as a substitute for the democratic public realm, and it does so appealingly by stripping troubled urbanity of its sting, of the presence of the poor, of crime, of dirt, of work. In the 'public' spaces of the theme park or the shopping mall, speech itself is restricted: there are no demonstrations in Disneyland." (Sorkin 1992)

Kohn (2004: 2) writes, "When private spaces replace public gathering space, the opportunities for political conversation are diminished." Mitchell (2003: 34) also argues that, "in a world defined by private property, the formation of public sphere that is at all robust and inclusive of a variety of different publics is exceedingly difficult." Barber (2001: 203) notes that the privatisation and commercialisation of space have turned our "complex, multi-use public space

into a one-dimensional venue for consumption." He further writes, the "mall of America has sometimes entailed the mauling of American civil society and its public"⁴ (Barber 2001: 201).

Today, the ordinary representation of pleasing and acceptable public space is the one of a clean, beautified and homogenous space that facilitates consumerism by all means, rather than socially inclusive, interactive and diverse. As Speer (2014) states "In many U.S. cities, the use of public space is clearly tied to consumption practices". Incompetent for the generation of meaningful connections and ideas exchanges, contemporary public space minimises the social awareness and political participation of its citizens and maximises individualistic and self-interest behaviours and lifestyles, indicating the elimination of public activities and their significances.

EXCLUSIVE SPATIAL STRATEGIES

Urban commodification frequently requires the municipal state to use collective resources to exclude unwanted publics, a process that gives weight to the notion of the 'end of public space' (Spataro 2015). Kohn (2004) argues that the excluded are individuals who are unsettling or unattractive to the spectating and consuming public. "Downtown districts, residential communities, and shopping malls routinely exclude sources of discomfort for their patrons, including panhandlers and homeless people, religious zealots, strikers, and petitioners". (Kohn 2004:14; Spataro 2015: 190).

Urban scholars have documented a variety of spatial tactics that serve these exclusions: the

⁴ Putnam (1995) uses the metaphor of "bowling alone" to characterise the decline of civic engagement in American society. Using evidences in decreased voter turnout, attendance in public meetings, and memberships in traditional civic organisations, including labor unions and church groups, he argues that such decline undermines the working of democracy.

militarisation of urban space combined with defensive architecture (Davis 1992; Mitchell & Staeheli 2006), the creation of gated communities (Low 2004; 2006), and the redesign of parks and plazas to increase through flow traffic and facilitate surveillance (Low 2000).

However, the single most important strategy cities use to exclude unwanted people is the enforcement of zero-tolerance policies for minor infractions known as quality-of-life violations⁵. The use of zero tolerance policies has been implemented against graffiti, public drinking, sleeping, and urinating, among other minor infractions (Smith 2001; Spataro 2015). In a relatively short amount of time this tactic became the norm in cities across the globe. "The globalisation of zero tolerance has occurred with lightning speed, suggesting that it is responding to very deep-seated and broadly parallel insecurities across several continents" (Smith 2001: 70; Smith & Low 2006).

This clampdown on the openness of public space highlights the nature of public space as a form of property that functions within the context of capitalist private property regimes. In their analysis of San Diego's redevelopment, Mitchell and Staeheli (2006) identify contemporary practices that seek to align public spaces with the interests of private property owners. These are development practices that create a 'symbolic unity' (Harvey 2006) between newly cleansed public spaces and nearby private spaces. "Public spaces – like sidewalks, parks, city streets, and plazas – are frequently cornerstones of redevelopment efforts. Publicly funded beautification of public spaces is used to jumpstart private property development, in part because improvements in public space have relational benefit to the value of surrounding private property. In this sense, private property development relies on public property redevelopment." (Mitchell and Staeheli 2006: 150).

⁵ In the 1980s and 1990s cities such as San Francisco and New York came to see homeless people and their advocates as obstacles to neoliberal development if these individuals remained visible in public (Smith 1992a, 1992b).

Because these transformations of urban space frequently displace working people, the 'beautification' strategy remains threatened by the notion of public space as "as the only place in which socially excluded people can be, without being at the sufferance of another" (Mitchell and Staeheli 2006: 151). As a result, so-called legitimate force must be used to maintain public spaces so that these spaces continue to function in the manner conducive to private property and not as locations where unwanted publics gather. (Spataro 2015).

The 'end of public space' in contemporary cities, then, is not so much an end to an era in which public spaces met a particular ideal as open spaces of democratisation. But, is a process where the 'publicness' of a space is a property relation that serves private development first and foremost (Spataro 2015). It is not an accident that certain public spaces are austere, overly sanitised, or have the feel of theme park, nor is it an accident that certain public spaces do not have benches or other forms of urban furniture (Davis 1992). These qualities are beneficial to the entrepreneurial alliances that manage the spaces in their image of 'publicness'. (Spataro 2015).

In this sense, contemporary urban design and planning strategies clearly emphasise on the economical growth of private industries within the city instead of the production of a more equal and spatially fair city.

Informal urbanism as an everyday struggle in neoliberal cities

DEFINING FORMAL AND INFORMAL

The dichotomy of the 'formal' and 'informal' is a regular topic of inquiry in many disciplines, while conceptions vary widely and contentiously. In some instances, the term 'informal' is used simply to describe casual or spontaneous social situations (Morand 1995) when elsewhere it refers to extra-legal economic and labor activity (Portes et al. 1989). Social scientists, since Weber have confronted formality and informality in the study of organised social and economic action, argue that the contrast is between the routinised, official, or bureaucratic and the ad hoc, creative, or unauthorised (Douglas 2015).

In formalistic or tight behaviours that occur in social situations, each person present may be obliged to show constant devotion to the spirit of the occasion (Goffman 1963: 198-199). Formality and informality in this sense are understood as two distinct types of 'interaction orders' (Goffman 1983). Formalistic behavioural mechanisms are sometimes used in the production and accomplishment of role behaviours that, in turn, serve to enact official duties and prescribed routines (Morand 1995). By contrast, Dubin (1958: 65-73, 1974) suggests that one sense of informal refers to ways of performing work that are not outlined in official formal descriptions. Alternatively, the term informal is used to denote human relations characterised by interpersonal familiarity and social cohesion.

Bureaucratic and mechanistic organisations are most typically defined relative to a set of structural arrangements, for instance, in terms of high degrees of specialisation and division of labor, an hierarchical command structure based on legitimate authority, or routinisation of job duties (Burns & Stalker 1961; Weber 1947). Informality, in contrast, may play a role in organisations in which degrees of innovation, interpersonal cohesion, and role flexibility are expected

or in any subunit or temporal phase is generally more organic. Organic organisations are prototypically defined relative to a set of structural arrangements such as low degree of formalisation, significant lateral communication and decentralisation of decision making (Burns & Stalker 1968; Morand 1995).

According to Charles Horton Cooley (1909: 343) formalism essentially turns the creative and beautiful into cheap repetition, and leaves individuals at "the prey of apathy, self-complacency, sensuality and the lower nature in general". While for systems and institutions too much formalism stymies innovation, Scott (1998) has likewise argued that formal, centralised state planning may fail when it disregards the local knowledge and creativity that are needed to build functional systems.

Douglas (2015: 119) and McFarlane (2012: 103) claim that "the relationship between informality and formality can shift over time, in a way that is complex, multiple and contingent" or may even be considered loosely as a 'spectrum' (Cobb, et al. 2009; Loftus-Farren 2011). The boundary between what is and is not considered legitimate activity is a shifting one and constitutes a contested process that involves social struggles and a variety of actors (Lindell 2010).

McFarlane (2012: 89) also writes, "the distinction between formal and informal is one of the most enduring in urban and planning theory" and "a multifaceted resource for naming, managing, governing, producing, and even critiquing contemporary cities". At the same time, it sets up a potentially problematic dichotomy when in fact definitions are varied and real-world instantiations are hardly so clear-cut in terms of actors, organisation, and porous legality (Douglas 2015).

REASONS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF INFORMALITIES IN URBAN SPACE

As it is mentioned above urban space has always been exclusionary for certain groups that do not serve the dominant forces of the city, and the survival of

whom is based on struggles on the demand of socio-spatial justice. Therefore, informality emerges as a response to these exclusions by the formal forms of urbanity and involves endeavours for socio-political change. In the neoliberal era, private capital constitutes the dominant force and therefore the excluded are portrayed by those who don't satisfy its interest due to their social, economical or cultural identity and in many cases by those who don't want to comply with its prevalent culture.

Several academics have argued that urban informality occurs as the result of exclusion from formal markets and the systematic marginalisation of populations by the state (Bayat 2004; Roy 2005, 2009; Silver 2014; Berglund 2018). The state inherently defines formality by establishing legal economic structures and creates informality by exclusion from the same structures. These processes can be seen in the provisioning of housing, commerce, and utilities in communities excluded from formalised markets for such commodities. (Laguerre 1994; Berglund 2018; Speer 2014; Loftus-Farren 2011; Vocativ 2013). Thus is quite obvious that "when a city doesn't adapt to the people, the people will find alternatives to adapt to the city" (Vocativ 2013).

In this sense, excluded social groups activating their 'right to the city' and participate in the reproduction of urban space by introducing informal activities and applying informal tactics in public or privately owned urban spaces. "The 'right to the city' emerges from the chaos and unpredictability of the street, in defiance against the commodification of urban space. It is the urban dweller's 'cry and demand' to reclaim city space from the powerful economic forces that control it" (Speer 2014)

While scholars long considered the informal economy to be entirely separate from formalised economic institutions, the prevailing thought is that formal and informal networks are intricately connected, relying on one another to persist (Berglund 2018). Through these interactions, informality plays an important role in the creation of space, prompting Roy (2005) to describe it as an "organising logic that functions as a system of norms that governs the process

of urban transformation itself". In this way, informality is not an anomaly, but a set of practices that urban space is organised around, along with its integral social and economic relations (Berglund 2018).

Pointing to the contradiction between the pervasiveness of informality and its illegality Laguerre (1994) argues that "[...] legal norms do not necessarily coincide with social ones. Many social practices are covered under social and illegal norms."

INFORMAL POPULATIONS

While Roy (2005) cautioned against a one-dimensional understanding of informality as only belonging to communities with high poverty rates, the literature on informality in the public realm overwhelmingly focuses on communities typically excluded from formal economic opportunities, such as immigrants and people of colour (Laguerre 1994; Hou 2010; Rios 2010; Rojas 2010; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Berglund 2018).

As stated by Gaffikin and Perry (2012), the interpenetration of informalities is fashioned via the growing significance of three population sets: first, of migrants to cities, most evident in the developing world; second, of immigrants to cities in both developing and developed worlds, and related diaspora communities; and third, of the excluded populations which tend to be consigned to segregated geographies marked by deprivation and social isolation. These urban populations are described as 'informal' in the sense that they often are outside the dominant culture (the formal social and belief mores), outside the material order (via day labor, contingent labor, barter economies, often illegal, even criminal networks of production and exchange), outside the social protection of full citizenship (as squatter, transient and communities locked in ghettos, slums, shantytowns, favelas), and transnational (involved often in unregulated remittance economies with their countries or regions of origin) (Gaffikin & Perry 2012).

Moreover, the 'right to the city' emerge from the demands of all who are dispossessed. This broader category includes those who are thrust out of the workforce and deprived of the city—those who do not have access to capital, housing, infrastructure, or urban space (Speer, 2014). Marcuse (2009) argued for a similarly interpretation of who claims the 'right to the city'. He urged that the right belongs to the culturally alienated, as well as the materially deprived—"those directly in want, directly oppressed, those for whom even their most immediate needs are not fulfilled: the homeless, the hungry, the imprisoned, the persecuted" (Marcuse 2009: 190).

INFORMAL SPACES

The existence of exclusions implies the existence of conflicting relationships of power in the urban space. Which in turn suggests that both social and financial survival of the excluded groups depends essentially on the informal re-formation of public spaces and urban functionalities, the emergence of which can potentially reverse these power relationships.

Excluded from formalised markets and ostracised from public spaces, these populations invent informal practices and often occupy interstitial spaces in cities. (Chase et al. 2008; Hou 2010; Rios 2010; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Berglund 2018). Fraser (1990: 67) argues that historically, excluded groups created their own versions of public space, thereby creating 'subaltern counter-publics'. These counter-publics act as "bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed towards wider publics" (Spataro 2015). Drawing on the spatial histories of enslaved Africans in the US south and the women's liberation movement, Evans and Boyte (1986) argue that communities seeking social justice create 'free spaces'. Free spaces are "particular sorts of public places in the community where people can learn a new self-respect, a deeper and more assertive group identity, public skills, and values of cooperation and civic virtue" (Spataro 2015). Similarly, Scott (1990) finds that

oppressed groups seek out or actively create spaces where the 'hidden transcript' – a counter discourse based in overcoming domination – can become instantiated in ritualised, symbolic, and communicative forms. For Scott (1990) the hidden transcript may thrive in a variety of spaces, but it requires a level of autonomy or freedom from those spaces where the dominant transcript prevails.

Whether conceptualised as 'bases', 'free spaces', 'hidden transcripts' or 'geographies of autonomy' these concepts point to a need for groups that are excluded to produce both counter-spaces and counter-discourses (Spataro 2015). In many historical and contemporary examples these spaces are not part of what we commonly think of as public space because the balance of forces in society require that the counter-public remains clandestine in order to avoid repression (Scott, 1990). However, in other examples, excluded or oppressed groups build counter-space within already existing public spaces, often with significant risks of reprisal. When this occurs, groups "represent themselves to a larger population, and through this representation give their cries and demands some force. By claiming space in public and by creating public spaces, social groups themselves become public." (Mitchell 2003: 129)

Both strategies – building public spaces that are free from domination and claiming more visible public spaces – are integral for excluded groups. As Fraser's metaphor of a 'base' denotes, counter-publics create alternative public spaces in order to build the power that makes riskier action possible (Spataro 2015).

INFORMAL PRACTICES AS POLITICAL STRUGGLE

Excluded individuals, or simply those with political goals that are anathema to neoliberal urbanisation, use particular spatial tactics in order to transform public property into politicised public space (Spataro 2015). Scott (1990) argued that, in the absence of open protest and direct confrontation, political struggle takes the form of a myriad daily

practices of resistance, characterised by small-scale individual actions. Such practices constitute disguised and deliberately concealed resistance, rather than public claims and overt resistance. Informal actors seek invisibility and autonomy from state discipline and regulations. (Lindell, 2010)

Asef Bayat similarly, approaching 'the politics of informal people' in the South stresses how through individual everyday actions, they not only resist but also gradually conquer new space from dominant groups and undermine the capacity of the state to exercise surveillance. He calls it "a quiet encroachment of the ordinary", to refer to "the silent, protracted, but pervasive advancement of ordinary people in relation to the propertied and the powerful" (Bayat 2004: 90). This is "not a politics of protest", he claims, "but of redress", which avoids overt collective demands and large-scale mobilisation (Bayat 2004: 90; Lindell 2010).

According to Rojas (2010) such practices are significant as a means of economic survival for immigrant groups who occupy the margins of public places to solicit work and sell goods. The lack of formalised public spaces for such activities and the need for informality to be "hidden in plain sight" has led to the appropriation of under-utilised remnants of public spaces (Berglund 2018). But they are also fundamental for other socially excluded groups, such as the homeless populations, which occupy public space as a shelter for sleeping and living, or more radically claim their rights for equal housing and employment opportunities or other services, into locations that force other publics to confront some of the contradictions of wealth and poverty (Casanova and Blackburn 2007; Wright 1999). These tactics provide a means for excluded groups to "become public" (Mitchell 2003) and represent themselves, against the powerful interests of entrepreneurial partnerships in the city.

Thereby, people handle the deepening uncertainty of urban living through ephemeral urban interventions and in this way diffuse forms of social collaboration that take place in informal associations, resisting government decisions by collaborating in 'silent' but powerful ways. (Simone 2004; Lindell 2010). Yet, at the heart of such interventions lies a subversive

streak. These unsolicited and unauthorised acts are de facto forms of rebellion, critiques of cities as they exist. Like mass protest, urban interventions are forms of local advocacy and demand of a better city, society, and world (Ho 2012; Finn 2014).

Given the nature of fiercely contested spatial conflicts, Spataro (2015) argues that self-helped informal urbanism is at its core the urbanism of the excluded and their allies, or simply the spatial tactics that groups use to assert that they belong to a political community, and to broadcast their values in a way that, by virtue of being in public, can overcome the uneven power dynamics at the root of exclusion (Spataro 2015).

Today, as more and more public spaces have become heavily regulated and privatised, attempts for greater freedom have been illegally practiced by a number of various social groups - apart from the most socially excluded ones. These acts, despite their momentary nature, defy what Sorkin (1992) characterises as the 'end of public space' (Hou 2010). For instance, vacant lots are occupied by mobile markets and incomplete development is encroached upon with building additions, garage sales, guerrilla gardening, and recreational uses. Exaggerated freeway rights of way are used for sidewalk vending, merchandise displays, playgrounds and signage. Under-utilised local access roads, cul-de-sacs, and sidewalks are activated as playgrounds, temporary markets, and regular garage sales (Kamel 2014: 125, Berglund 2018).

According to Douglas (2013) urban interventions are contingent upon their social and historical contexts and it is not coincidental that the phenomenon has increased during the so-called neoliberal era of economic restructuring and deregulatory policy. During this period informal practices can be seen as both a reaction to and a product of the structures and processes that define the contemporary city-trends, such as state disinvestment, commodification, gentrification, and a general intensification of uneven development (Brenner et al. 2010, Fairbanks & Lloyd 2011; Harvey 2006; Smith 2008).

CRIMINALISATION OF INFORMAL PRACTICES

While informality plays a defining role in shaping public spaces and public life in many communities, in other realms, both legal and illicit forms of informality are stigmatised and criminalised (Valenzuela 2003; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Berglund 2018). Informal activities in public space are often contested by planners and policy makers who may demonise citizens carrying out such activities as criminal and defiant (Laguerre 1994; Roy 2005; Hou 2010; Rios 2010; Kamel 2014; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Berglund 2018). Laguerre argued that informality is considered ‘parasitic’ by state actors because of the tax revenue lost to the underground economy (Laguerre 1994: 5; Berglund 2018).

Planners and policymakers usually see informal activities at best as “unorganised, marginal enterprises that should be ignored and at worst as unlawful activities that should be stopped and prosecuted” (Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014: 1; Berglund 2018). Often, the result is the development of policies that criminalise and aim to eradicate activities such as day labouring, street vending, and street art from public space, treating them as undesirable forms of ‘disorder’ (Valenzuela 2003; Mitchell & Beckett 2008; Rios 2010; Varsanyi 2010; Berglund 2018).

THE INSURGENCY OF INFORMAL SPACES

Contradicting to the rhetoric of criminalising such practices and restricting the existence of those ‘informal’ spaces it is suggested that by enabling exactly these practices, the social reproduction of space (Lefebvre 1995 ; Soja 2000) is facilitated. The places where these practices take place are critical for the city itself as they consist the foundation of the urban transformation process. The same transformation process seeks for a change through the manifestation of insurgent, revolutionary spaces where actual socio-spatial issues are reflected and frequently can find

temporary solutions rather than remain completely ignored.

According to Gaffikin & Perry (2012) in the cities of the global South informalities are encountered as normal circumstances and the socio-spatial discriminations of restrictive citizenship are often accounted for generating the resilience, and sometimes the insurgency, of modern urban politics. While the migratory, transnational, and segregated settlements of such urban politics may be marginal in terms of their income and power, and while their ‘informal’ nature may be dismissed as random, chaotic, even anarchic, they are not marginal to the functioning and understanding of the city. They are the city. “Against the surveillance grids, jacked-up ecological footprints, and fragmented echoes of failed suburbia that define the post-Fordist cities of neoliberal dreams, inner-city urban forms are being reinvented and reshaped from the bottom-up by spreading multitude of heterotopias, the diverse shifting mosaic of cultural forms that everywhere transform space into place.” (Mares & Peña 2010).

The instances of self-made urban spaces reclaimed and appropriated sites, temporary practices and informal gathering places, created by predominantly marginalised communities, have provided new expressions of the collective realms in the contemporary city. No longer confined to the archetypal categories of neighbourhood parks, public plaza, and civic architecture, these insurgent public spaces challenge the conventional, codified notion of public and the making of space (Hou 2010). Following this point, the ‘end of public space’ argument is “overly simplistic in that it does not necessarily appreciate how new kinds of spaces have developed” (Mitchell 2003: 8). Citizen initiatives and informal activities have created new uses and forms of public space ⁶. They

⁶ A case in point is the community garden movement in North America and elsewhere in which hundreds and thousands of vacant or abandoned sites (including both public and private properties) have been transformed into productive plots and as places for cultivation, recreation, gathering, and education by communities (Lawson 2005; Francis et al. 1984; Hou 2010). These

include spontaneous events, unintended uses, and a variety of activities that defy or escape existing rules and regulations. These everyday practices transform urban spaces into what Watson (2006: 19) calls, “a site of potentiality, difference, and delightful encounters”. Rather than isolated instances, these are acts of insurgency transcend geographic boundaries and reflect the respective social settings and issues (Hou 2010).

Although these everyday expressions of public space activism might not have the appearance of radical insurgency, it should be noted that many of the outcomes would not have been possible without extensive grassroots struggle ⁷ (Hou 2010). Mares & Peña (2010) have claimed that the emergence of these movements is a continuation of decades-long struggles by communities to control their own ecological and socio-economic futures.

Despite of the different character of the aforementioned urban practices, it appears that the core idea behind each action is always the same, the survival of the excluded groups through the publicity of their struggles against to the prevalent politics of the urban space.

and other forms of community open spaces have emerged as an alternative park system (Francis et al. 1984). Through personal and collective uses that provide both private and public benefits, these community gardens function as ‘hybrid public spaces’, distinct from their conventional and official counterparts (Hou et al. 2009).

⁷ In the Shilin Night Market in Taipei, one of the largest and most popular evening markets in the city, the vendors develop their own monitoring protocols, make-shift apparatus, and temporary storage sites so that, when the policemen approach the market from a distance, they can easily detect them, signal each other, disappear in a matter of seconds, and then converge again once the cops go away. (Hou 2010)

In Caracas, people not being able to pay for housing occupied a 45-story unfinished construction and turned it into an improvised home for a community of more than 750 families. Known as the informal vertical community of Torre David, this example reveals valuable information from a physical and a social perspective on what the residents created in eight years of squatting. The community was neither a den of criminality, nor a romantic utopia. Rather, Torre David was a building that possessed the complexity of a city (U-TT 2018). “Capitalism utilises housing as a commodity while we see it as a fundamental human right.” (Vocativ 2013). Torre de David stands as a symbol of the neoliberal failure and of the poor’s self-empowerment. With its magnificent deficiencies, it represents an opportunity to reconsider how we create and foster urban communities (U-TT 2018).

In the Mount Baker neighbourhood of Seattle, gardeners and community activists joined to defend a well-used community garden from being sold by the city for private real estate development (Hou 2010). Often, community gardens are located in contested space, involving the counter-claims of developers, speculators, planners, and philanthropists. The struggle for urban agriculture epitomises an element of the environmental justice movement that seeks to link demands for open space, ecological protection, and food sovereignty with demands for fair and adequate housing, meaningful jobs with living wages, and the protection of the essential common spaces that neighbourhoods and families require to sustain a sense of place and community (Mares & Peña 2010).

The informal practice of DIY Urbanism

02

Taking into account the acknowledgement that urban informalities make up useful paradigms of bottom-up strategies and solutions for several urban issues, as well as the urge to explore appropriate methods of citizen participation in the place-making process, the following chapter presents a review on the perceptions around the topic of participation and the role of citizen interventions in urban design and examines the possibility of integrating DIY practices as instruments for wider engagement in the design of contemporary cities.

After the presentation on a brief historical review on DIY efforts and the conclusion that DIY activities can vary significantly in terms of their meanings and their intentions, the most relevant meanings for the present research are presented, along with a distinction between the different academic interpretations based on the various contexts and impacts of DIY practices. This paragraph explores as well the transition from traditional forms of DIY urbanism into what constitutes today Tactical Urbanism and similar goal oriented practices analysing their characteristics and meanings and emphasising the concurrent promptitude of governments to permit and authorise these occurrences.

The central objective of the last part of the chapter is to discuss the increasing endorsement and authorisation of DIY tactics by authorities nowadays, and introduce a critical interpretation of the phenomenon, reporting that governments tend to authorise DIY practices of economic value while practices of social value remain ignored and marginalised. At that point, the opportunities but also the dangers that the authorisation of modern forms of DIY tactics can bring in neoliberal cities are explored, discussing their potential implications and most importantly questioning the intentions of contemporary urban policy to promote social equality and spatial justice as opposed to economic growth. This fact is clearly depicted on the meanings of the DIY practices that are selected for authorisation, compared the ones that remain neglected by the authorities.

DIY urbanism as citizen participation practice

ABOUT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Over the last decades, there is a question of ongoing pertinence for cities and urbanists globally, regarding the rights, expectations, and responsibilities of the public as they relate to urban space (Finn 2014b).

National and local laws, as well as societal norms, form the appropriate activities in public and privately-owned space, which might even differ from one neighbourhood to another (Finn 2014b). In most of the cities of the occidental world, there are normative assumptions about how shared urban spaces are designed, built, and altered. Urban planners and policymakers, private developers, architects and engineers, and a variety of civil or contracted workers are all familiar actors of shaping urban space. Their actions are governed by established codes and ordinances, land-use agreements, and the ostensibly democratic planning process. (Douglas 2015). Nonetheless, questions on how the public can get involved in the design process are raised to a great extent, often bedevilling for planners and city governments.

Yet, there have always been tacit, and often popular, exceptions to existing laws and regulations that govern the uses of urban space⁸. Instances include street artists, mobile vendors, tent-city dwellers, radical occupiers, and a handful of other unauthorised actors who nonetheless physically shape the built environment (Douglas 2015). Each of them illustrates the complex and constantly evolving negotiations among individuals, groups, businesses, and government over how much freedom an individual or

⁸ Some acclaimed instances are the Speaker's Corner in London's Hyde Park, the bouquinistes in Paris, the urban homesteading and community garden movements of the 1970s and 1980s in New York City, the recent Occupy movement worldwide.

a group should have in shaping the city (Finn 2014b).

These two opposing forces personify the distinction between the sanctioned and the unsanctioned in urban placemaking and feed the narrative of a binary distinction between formality and informality in urbanism (Douglas 2015).

Different attempts of balancing individual urges to shape urban space against an amorphous greater good have always been considered, at least partially because we still lack widely agreed-upon theories or norms into this direction (Finn 2014b). At the beginning of the 1960s the still emergent field of city planning began to depart decisively from highly technological and managerial approaches that had largely been the state of the art in the United States and the UK to that point (Finn 2014). Inspired by several texts and seminal essays⁹, some planners began to question the field's reliance on top-down approaches and social and environmental equity started to gain recognition within the practice of planning (Krumholz 1982; Hartman 2002).

Meanwhile, closely linked with advocacy planning, a community design movement arise evincing significant DIY spirit¹⁰. Supported by academic and professional planners, under-resourced communities developed citizen-based development plans, designed and built projects like parks and other community spaces¹¹ (Finn 2014).

By the late 1960s the appropriate role for citizens in urban planning and design decision-making was being debated even within the formal government

⁹ For instance Kevin Lynch's "The Image of the City" (1960) about the urban user experience, Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" (1962) and Herbert Gans' "The Urban Villagers" (1962) about Boston's urban renewal programs, Paul Davidoff's "Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning" (1965).

¹⁰ Do-it-yourself (DIY) is another term for bottom-up or citizen-initiated interventions in public space.

¹¹ Amid the well-known projects of that era can be mentioned Karl Linn's "neighborhood commons" built on vacant lots in Philadelphia and elsewhere, "People's Park" on Berkeley's University of California parking lot and "Tent City" on a parking lot in Boston.

planning structure. This conversation, especially vigorous in the UK, epitomised by the 'Skeffington Report' in 1969 and endorsed participation as a valuable input for the forthcoming development processes. In the intervening decades, planning and urban design professions have come to see community participation as critically important continuously seeking ways to create stronger partnerships between planners and citizens (Finn 2014).

Jacobs and Appleyard (1987: 120) in an attempt to create an "urban design manifesto," argued that "as important as many buildings and spaces are many participants in the building process. It is through this involvement in the creation and management of their city that citizens are most likely to identify with it and, conversely, to enhance their own sense of identity and control." The urbanist Sir Peter Hall (1996) argues likewise, "there are just a few key ideas in twentieth-century planning, which re-echo and recycle and reconnect" (Hall 1996: 7) and of this small handful, one is the idea which "argues that the built forms of cities should, as generally they do not now, come from the hands of their own citizens. We should reject the tradition whereby large organisations, private or public, build for people, and instead embrace the notion that people should build for themselves." (Hall 1996: 9). Visconti et al. (2010) argue that the quest for the construction of what can be defined as 'authentic public place' is implied through the collective involvement of artists and dwellers in shaping the city (Visconti et al. 2010). In this light, it is clear that authenticity is socially constructed (Grayson & Martinec 2004) by means of the collective action on public place.

Yet, from another point of view, the process of shaping the urban environment has never been the exclusive domain of professional planners and designers. Participation can take other forms rather than merely getting involved in workshops and public meetings. As Jon Lang (1994: 35) notes "All kinds of people are involved in designing cities: lawyers, developers, individual house-holds, and professional designers of various types. Much is designed by people who do not regard themselves as designers, but whose

actions nonetheless change the built world. While professional designers are involved in making many decisions about the future of the city, many design decisions are made by the citizens on their own behalf." Following David Harvey's view, "we are all participants in the creation of urban spaces and one of our responsibilities as public citizens is to go out and try to create the environment in which we want to exist." (Harvey 2009).

In accordance with Lang (1994) and Hall (1996) the turn of a 'citizen' to 'designer' or 'planner' can be clearly seen on the longstanding shelf-helped dynamics of the slums of the global south, and on privately-owned parcels where a degree of autonomy is exercised. Likewise, in the case of public space, bottom-up or DIY unsanctioned interventions that can be interpreted as acts of citizen participation in the design and decision making process, "both novel and in direct opposition to top-down, capital intensive, and bureaucratically sanctioned implementations of professional planners" (Talen 2012).

Despite the history of self-help promulgated by the community design movement and the widespread acknowledgement of the fallacies of top-down technocratic approaches, the importance of contextual solutions (Sirianni 2007) and public participation and consensus-building (Innes 1996; Margerum 2002), the formal structure of modern municipal planning and design still leaves very little room for true DIY efforts (Finn, 2014). As it has mentioned earlier, this is a result of the symbiotic partnership that modern planning endeavours to develop with the private market in an attempt to overcome the crises that arose after longtime of poor governance. Consequently, local governments focus largely on managing and shaping private resources (Myers & Banerjee 2005) rather than actually exploring ways to apply the theoretical context based over advocacy and participation in urban planning.

Nevertheless, we observe today an increasing promptness by local authorities to support the development of DIY practices and authorise their occurrences. This can be detected in the growing tolerance by which unofficial urban interventions

have been handled in most developed European and American cities that considered as cultural and artistic centres (Douglas 2013; Ho 2012). Apart from endorsing a number of DIY practices, local urban policies have also included in their agendas DIY experiments in an effort to activate citizen participation in the design process and extract diverse opinions on crucial issues. While these responses seem to shape a more fair and equal approach of urban design among the different stakeholders of a city, we should closely examine the types of practices that usually receive the attention of local agencies as well as their intentions, acknowledging that DIY activities can range significantly in forms and meanings.

In any case, whether private resources come in the form of multi-billion-dollar developments or DIY built projects, it should be stressed that the role of planning is to maximise the public benefit of private actions and minimise their attendant harms. The recent turn towards a citizen-based model has been influential in shaping DIY practitioners' view of what is possible when citizens wish to engage in the shaping of urban space. A big challenge arises though, due to the scale of bottom-up efforts, their spirit that ranges from altruistic to whimsical and occasionally rebellious, and finally the potential harms that may cause aside from the potential benefits. Accordingly, it is more likely that bottom-up efforts will be generally overlooked in need of better top-up policies. That's why there are not yet clear models of how citizen-led interventions can be better examined and harnessed as a useful input to formal planning and design processes (Finn 2014).

FROM INFORMAL URBANISM TO DIY URBANISM

Even though municipal planning has not come up yet with a clear consent on how to deal with bottom-up urban interventions and include them in the decision-making process, the unauthorised alteration and appropriation of the built environment has been a feature of urban life for as long as there have been cities (Douglas, 2015).

The term 'informal urbanism' is perhaps most commonly used in reference to the growth of slum settlements and all manner of accompanying social and city-making functions, especially in the rapidly growing cities of the global South, where informality is becoming the new normal in economic activity and urban development alike (Gaffikin & Perry 2012; Lindell 2010; Douglas 2015). The meaning and context of 'informal' in the literature is part of a confusion, with official planning efforts sometimes described in this way (Hou & Kinoshita 2007; Douglas 2015).

It is important therefore, at this point to give a clear definition to the informal (a.k.a unauthorised or unsanctioned) urban practices which will help us to understand better their roots and their original goals and consequently the attention that they should receive when this topic comes to academic discussions.

As stated by Douglas (2013; 2015), informal practices and products are those counterposed to that which is officially sanctioned or produced and thus 'formal' or legally and normatively bestowed with the right and duty to shape urban space. As informal urban space interventions in general can be described "all the unauthorised, place-based direct actions that challenge the usual or regulated uses of particular urban spaces".

As reviewed in the previous chapter (see pp. 11-12) the informalities in the urban space have been introduced by neglected and often vulnerable groups of the city - whose existences usually don't match the conventional, normal lifestyles - with fundamental intention their survival and the quest of solutions to their exclusions from different aspects of urban life. These practices are expressed in many different ways, they take different forms and in many cases, usually after extensive struggles, they can lead in the establishment of revolutionary spaces.

However, today along with the proliferation of the phenomenon we observe the involvement of border publics in such activities, apart from the socially excluded (Douglas 2013). Therefore, there are crucial characteristics that differentiate one practice from another including the interests of the practitioners and the beneficiaries of each practice, posing a challenge in

shaping an integrating definition.

It is clear that all manner of unauthorised spatial interventions can be seen in the city nowadays ¹² - "from juvenile bathroom graffiti to organised political demonstrations" - and the meaning of each one should be examined with attention as for its intentions and goals. Some urban interventions are claimed to constitute radical strategies of political expression, even theoretically potent 'resistance' while others are merely described as acts of artistic and personal self-expression or understood as vandalism and 'pointless' juvenile acting out (Douglas 2013).

While debates about the rights and responsibilities of urban citizens towards their governments and the existing social, political, and economic orthodoxy are as old as cities themselves, we find ourselves today in a moment of drastic demographic change, economic restructuring, resource competition, technology diffusion, and political upheaval, or what Alex Evans, Bruce Jones, and David Steven (2010) call the 'long crisis' ¹³ (Finn, 2014b). The present situation affects evidently a greater amount of individuals and groups in cities, since their priorities are disregarded on an pursuit by the governments to combat the crisis satisfying firstly their private allies (Hackworth 2007, Spataro 2015), generating thereby more 'exclusions' in the urban space. This fact has contributed to circumstances in which many urban dwellers increasingly feel as never before that they can, and must, take certain matters relating to health, happiness, and economic well-being into their own hands (Finn, 2014b), applying what is generally known as DIY urbanism.

¹² Today, many phenomena of interest can be encountered, known by many names: graffiti, street art, happenings, situations, big games, pervasive games, art interventions, culture jamming, space hijacking, place hacking, Park(ing) Day, Critical Mass, Reclaim the Streets, protestivals, activism, craftivism, anarchitecture, yarn bombing, guerrilla knitting, guerrilla gardening, guerrilla

theatre . . . the list goes on (Douglas 2013).

¹³ As long crisis is described the current global situation which is delineated by a number of complex global risks - population growth, climate change, resource scarcity, major shifts in economic power, increasing state fragility, security threats, rapid technology diffusion and corroding information.

Review on DIY urbanism meanings

HISTORICAL INPUTS OF DIY URBANISM PRACTICES

Despite the recent surge in publicity about DIY activities, they are actually part of a much longer history and neither the tactics of DIY urbanism, nor the forces driving these interventions are really new. Although it would not coalesce as a true movement until sometime in the early 2000s, the roots of DIY urbanism were firmly elements of art, urban activism, and urban life by that point, as simultaneous shifts in the thinking about citizens' roles in urban planning, design and policymaking were also taking place (Finn, 2014).

To the extent that DIY urbanism can be depicted as an artistic or social statement, some precedents can be traced to the mid-twentieth century when artists like Guy Debord employed experimental modes of art including proto-DIY approaches to comment on the era's social conservatism and controversial social shifts toward modern architectural design and rational planning practice (Schrijver 2011).

Also, the well-known practice of graffiti around the globe has always been "an aesthetic practice applied for the beautification of public architecture and urban style", where the ideologies behind the actions are about the right to reclaim the public space, resisting to the normative form of modern cities and "formulating values of desirable states of reality" (Visconti et al. 2010).

A critical import that is often linked to the DIY approach is the concept of 'the right to the city' as initially conceived by the philosopher Henri Lefebvre in 1968, and subsequently revived and re-articulated by the geographer and social theorist David Harvey. The 'right to the city' claims that "far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city." (Harvey 2009: 315), and has become a social movement for modern advocates working on a range of urban issues, including DIY proponents.

In accordance with Talen (2012) the cities of United States carry as well a long tradition in self-help and urban beautification efforts ever since the mid-to-late 1800s, through the City Beautiful era's art and civic improvement movements and during the mid-20th century, when urbanists such as Jane Jacobs and William "Holly" Whyte promoted fine-grained, contextual design solutions.

In addition, in the 1970s, informal activities of urban "pioneering" and "homesteading" such as squatting in vacant urban properties and guerrilla gardening can be placed on the list of DIY urbanism (Finn 2014).

Another popular DIY input from the 1970s, initiated by skateboarders, BMX bicyclists, BASE jumpers, and other participants of 'extreme urban sports' who started to increasingly adapt urban landscapes for their own needs by re-modelling infrastructure and public spaces (Ferrell 2001).

Despite many historical cases, contemporary DIY urbanism actions seem to find new beginnings in the 1960s and 1970s, around the dawn of the so-called neoliberal era and certainly rising in visibility just the last few decades, manifested through civic functional and aesthetic improvements (Douglas 2013). While academic observers draw quickly connections between Lefebvre's and Harvey's theory and today's DIY movement, Douglas (2011a) appears to be cautious, noting that many DIY practitioners today "are resistant to the idea of themselves as radicals" and express no interest in "upending local authorities, let alone the system" suggesting that modern DIY urbanism may have different motives than the social commentary that marked proto-DIY activities.

DEFINITIONS AND MEANINGS OF DIY URBANISM

It is clear that the movement of DIY urbanism goes by dozens of names, so the lack of a unifying theory or definition is no surprise (Finn 2014). This fact also indicates the numerous motives behind different instances of the practice. For the

purpose of this research though, with the term 'DIY Urbanism' I will inclusively refer to all sorts of practices that respond to the following characteristics:

1. take place in the urban public space or unused, abandoned public and private property
2. are initiated by individuals, dweller groups or any kind of non-governmental and non-profit organisation
3. aim to express the choices and necessities of the general public on an attempt to improve the way of living, the uses and the form of the urban space and deal with socio-spatial issues of the city or essentially seek for spatial justice.

In addition, below are introduced some of the definitions of DIY urbanism underlying the most relevant meanings to the extent of this research.

According to Finn (2014b) 'Do-it-yourself urbanism' can be defined broadly as "any action taken by citizens that impacts urban space without government involvement or in opposition to government policies and regulations". This definition aims to stress the failure of official policies and regulations to respond and satisfy the needs and desires of all individuals or social groups of the city, who inevitably at some point will address their own problems by implementing informal or unauthorised self-helped solutions.

Also, as "DIY urbanism can be portrayed those practices instigated, designed, created, paid for and implemented by single users or small voluntary groups and not municipalities or corporations, bearing functional, merely aesthetic or political interests that aim to benefit the general public" (Finn 2014). Despite of the various meanings of citizens-led urban interventions, here is underlined that the common goal of all DIY urbanism practice is always some kind of contribution or improvement in the city that will potentially benefit - or at least not disturb - collectively all the citizens instead of one exclusive group.

For Douglas (2015), 'DIY urban design' is one of the manifestations of DIY urbanism and consists a bottom-up, informal activity "which is creative and generative. But also, it is outside of the official policy

and planning controls and is often of questionable legality and efficiency. However, it shows that even official-seeming streetscape design elements may be far from official." This opinion emphasise the degree of creativeness, innovation as well as the potentiality that is often revealed by citizen-led design efforts, compared to traditional professional urban solutions. It is significant that even if these efforts might lack some legitimate elements, officials should definitely not ignore them but they should find ways to balance their disadvantages.

Despite the acknowledgement of these general meanings, it is suggested that the motives and reasons behind all shorts of unauthorised urban interventions vary significantly. Douglas (2013) notes that 'DIY urbanism' actions have their own inspirations, contexts, and intentions. The motivations behind these practices are diverse, as are the scales of their intended, and actual impacts. Some of them are associated with activism movements and include strong political contexts and beliefs (Spataro 2015; Speer 2014) while others as simply conscientious interventions by citizens focus on physical improvements (Douglas 2013; Ho 2012). Many practices aim to foster the inherent value of bottom-up intervention itself and view citizens involvement as important to a more dynamic, democratic, and locally sensitive approach to urban design, and by claiming urban space activate the 'right to the city'. Yet, other interventions are just replacements of absent and failing governmental development.

Even though might be difficult to detect all the different meanings and intentions of a single practice, all DIY interventions unify as counteracts in profit-based, regressive and bureaucratic processes of official urban planning. Thereby, in spite of the various definitions that can represent DIY urbanism, what should be underlined is their objective to dispute official inadequate policies and mechanism by introducing unofficial innovative and more fair solutions. For this reason, officials should deal with DIY urbanism legitimacy by implementing measures and methods for its potential authorisation and integration in the design process, equally and regardless of which is the primary purpose of each DIY urban activity.

ACADEMIC PERCEPTIONS ON DIY PRACTICES

As it has already mentioned, the character of the numerous actions that are included in the broad definition of DIY Urbanism can substantially vary. There are diverse means through which individuals and groups can engage actively in the contestation and remaking of public space, and the city by extension (Hou 2010). And so there are different academic perceptions and interpretations of all manners of bottom-up urban interventions (Douglas 2013).

Firstly, there is the perspective that considers a variety of practices as essentially just vandalism or trespassing, and frequently seems to imply that the acts have little deeper significance beyond serving as an indicator of crime and disorder. In this category it can be obviously detected the view of illegal alteration as delinquency and often as a criminalised action (Keizer et al. 2008; Sampson & Raudenbush 1999; Wilson & Kelling 1982).

A second interpretation, a bit more sympathetic, perceives unauthorised interventions as instances of concept art, personal expression and communication, or popular subculture (Kidder 2012; Kwon 2002; Snyder 2009). In these approaches, the activities bear an artistic or symbolic value and are considered to have a small intended impact, mostly physical or functional, assuming personal motivations that rarely include wider political, economic, and geographical factors¹⁴.

The last perception, addresses to unauthorised urbanism in terms of radical activism and protest, sometimes with explicitly stated wider political goals and often inherent critical transformative potential. This perspective is the most commonly advanced in the literature and mainly advocates that urban interventions like graffiti, busking, bicycle activism, and many other - collected as 'urban anarchy' by Jeff

Ferrell (1995; 2001) - are conscious reactions to the increasingly regulated, policed, and commodified urban space of the neoliberal era. Many observe these informal practices as instances of outright 'resistance' to authority, capitalism, or the mainstream culture (Lambert-Beatty 2010; Pickerill & Chatterton 2006; St. John 2004; Spataro 2015). In this category can be included site-specific actions, such as the 'Reclaim the Streets'¹⁵ demonstrations of the 1990s the recent 'Occupy movement'¹⁶ which seem to be empirical actualisations of the popular resistance implied by Henri Lefebvre (1991; 1996) and other theorists arguing for the transformative potential of 'critical consciousness' in everyday urban space.

MODERN ROOTS OF DIY URBANISM

Though old in origin, in contrast to the widespread formal and professionalized urban planning and design practice in Europe and North America over the last two centuries (Levy 2011), the trend of DIY urbanism may currently indicate something of a shift, or indeed a revival. Unauthorised DIY contributions have seen growing interest in recent years raising questions about rights, responsibilities, contexts and consequences by authorities and communities alike (Douglas 2015).

¹⁵ Reclaim the Streets (RTS) is a collective with a shared ideal of community ownership of public spaces. Participants characterise the collective as a resistance movement opposed to the dominance of corporate forces in globalisation, and to the car as the dominant mode of transport. They organise site-specific interventions where streets are illegally closed to traffic by raucous impromptu carnivals while jackhammers replace asphalt with saplings.

¹⁶ The Occupy movement is an international progressive, socio-political movement, expressing opposition to social and economic inequality and to the lack of "real democracy" around the world. It is communicated through social media and alternative media and takes place in several cities through temporary occupations of public spaces where non-violence demonstrations and discussions occur.

the examples of 'DIY urban design' and 'Tactical Urbanism'

Besides the long tradition of DIY practices that frequently seek to reclaim public spaces or resist to conventional culture of modern cities, as it has already mentioned several academics observe a novel form of urban interventions. Contemporary DIY practices take more ostensibly civic-minded forms than self-expressive activities, urban art, or protest, but at the same time much more personal, limited, and place-based than the tactics of broader protest or 'resistance' (Douglas 2015).

These interventions can be presented as small-scale and creative, unauthorised yet intentionally functional and civic-minded "contributions" or "improvements" to urban spaces usually inspired by official infrastructure. In particular, a number of citizens who, when confronted with something in their communities in need of fixing, improving, or enlivening, choose to do it themselves without asking permission through skilful, playful, and localised actions. These increasingly visible, yet often unattributed practices complicate common assumptions and have received little but growing attention in social science and urban design discourse (Corsín Jimenez 2014; Douglas 2013, 2015; Finn 2012; Ho 2012; Hou 2010; Iveson 2013; Overmeyer 2007; Schindler 2014).

Examples include guerrilla greening - planting or functionally converting unused land, infrastructure, or facades - such as converting parking spaces into parks or turning overlooked road medians into flourishing gardens; spontaneous streetscaping— painting traffic markings, bike lanes and crosswalks, or installing design elements such as signage, ramps, and public furniture¹⁷ in areas that lack it; and aspirational urbanism— promotional signs, public notices, or other informational installations by which community members express their own policy and development ideas or alternatives (Douglas 2013).

DIY urbanism of this sort can be detected especially in the majority of the cities of Europe, United States and Canada or other cities that can be depicted as major hubs of cultural innovation, "known

in particular to be visible centres of street art, guerrilla gardening, and other types of urban intervention" (Douglas 2013) or "big urban centres with high concentrations of creatives" (Ho 2012).

Surprisingly, in recent years, this modern wave of bottom-up, DIY urban activities have managed to gain the support of authorities and have been repeatedly encouraged and approved by municipalities and local governments. Local authorities tend either to dismiss the state of legality and the potential risks of such practices or to authorise their activities in certain, under-used urban places as short-term experiments.

According to Berglund (2018) and Lerner (2012), these formally sanctioned bottom-up activities, that stemmed from the recession and post-recession era when economic strain in both the private and public sector, led mainstream urban designers and planners to embrace grassroots practices as a novel alternative to state-led neighbourhood and public infrastructure enhancements. These grassroots strategies offered an alternative to mainstream practices that carried out small-scale development when cities could not (Berglund 2018).

Some architects, planners, and community activists have implemented urban design experiments that are deliberately cheap, temporary, and unofficial. "And sometimes these modest but audacious interventions have led to altered municipal policies and lasting changes in the cityscape" (Lerner 2012). Those who undertake such initiatives call themselves by various names such as "Tactical Urbanism, Pop-up Urbanism, Urban Acupuncture" - or "Provisional,

¹⁷ As in many urban areas, seating and shelter at bus stops are largely provided by the advertising companies that use these structures as displays, so where there is no advertising, there may be no place to sit (Douglas 2013). "Chair bombing" is a popular spontaneous streetscaping practice that consists the building of crafting chairs from shipping pallets and depositing them unbidden outside laundromats and other places where people have to spend stretches of time (Lerner 2012).

¹⁴ This perception often fail to appreciate community-regarding and socio-economic reasons behind anonymous improvements in the urban space like intersection warning signs, bike lanes or urban furniture (Douglas 2013).

Opportunistic, Ubiquitous, and Odd Tactics in Guerrilla and DIY Practice and Urbanism.” (Lerner 2012). The fact that there are so many concurrent, competing names for these myriad citizen-led urban improvements suggests that they remain a phenomenon-in-the-making, ripe for analysis (Ho 2012).

Urban designers Lydon et al. (2012) coined the term ‘tactical urbanism’ to refer to the use of such practices in post-recession cities that at the time, did not have the means to carry out formalised planning projects (Berglund 2018). In line with Lydon’s handbook “Tactical Urbanism Volume 2: Short Term Action/Long Term Change” (2012), “Tactical Urbanism,” is a deliberate experimental approach to city-making that features the following characteristics: aims to instigate change, is local, low-risk with short-term and low expectations and intends on “the development of social capital between citizens, building an organisational capacity between public/private institutions, non-profit/NGOs, and their constituents” (Lydon et al. 2012). The events can be short-lived and mobile (Lerner 2012).

Although traditionally, many middle-class communities have had influence on the creation of space by voting on planning and urban design proposals and measures, tactical urbanists propose placemaking through smaller, incremental changes at a local level, allowing communities to be closer to decision-making and have more control over their environment (Berglund 2018). They also suggest that if communities physically participate in the improvement of the city, they can create a reputation with municipal leaders as a committed group of citizens that is willing to invest time and effort into their surroundings, granting to their projects “an increased likelihood of gaining public support for more permanent change later” (Berglund 2018; Lydon et al. 2012).

While not typically carried out by municipalities, these tactics that are orchestrated by individuals, non-profits, and local businesses are often implicitly endorsed by cities through their lack of regulation or by granting permission to use certain spaces, like under-utilised parking or sidewalks (Berglund 2018).

Thus, they constitute in a sense, some kind of “officially sanctioned DIY urbanism”, which following

a long discourse over community participation in the urban design process, nowadays, during an era of evident financial impediments eventually has the chance to publicly exist and broadly embraced by cities and communities. To put this in a global context of another sort though, we must acknowledge that what we call ‘tactical urbanism’ is simply ‘a way of life’ in parts of the developing world where people’s tenuous existences rely on self-help solutions (Ho 2012), as well as in neglected or segregated areas of developed cities.

To further underline the endorsement of such practices in the developed cities, it worths to mention that in recent years apart from an emerging wave of creative small-scale place-making efforts, a variety of articulations in regard to DIY urbanism started to appear in different zones of planning and urban design. As documented by Finn (2014) some of these can be illustrated by a wide range of recent exhibitions¹⁸, multiple publications¹⁹, numerous workshops, symposia and other events designed to explore and promote DIY and associated practices²⁰, and even some university courses in the higher education²¹.

It should be stressed here, that contemporary ‘DIY urbanism’ activities illustrate one essential difference compared with the traditional informal practices of the past decades, which is basically the emphasis in urban design efforts that feature official elements or methods and the involvement of official stakeholders, as for instance municipal authorities, during the actual process or afterwards. The well-known provocations of ‘insurgent public space’ (Hou 2010), ‘tactical urbanism’ (Lydon 2011), and ‘spontaneous interventions’ (Ho 2012) are examples of formally sanctioned or government-driven projects that otherwise have much in common with the sort of civic-minded but unauthorised improvements as these are described by Douglas (2015).

¹⁸ US pavilion at the 13th International Venice Architecture Biennale; just space(s) (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) 2007); Actions: What You Can Do With the City (Canadian Centre for Architecture 2008); DIY Urbanism (San Francisco Planning + Urban Research Association (SPUR) 2010); Unplanned: Research and Experiments at the Urban Scale (Superfront Gallery, Los Angeles, California 2010); Small Scale, Big Change: New Architectures of Social Engagement (Museum of Modern Art, New York City, 2010) as well as numerous European exhibitions of similar provenance.

¹⁹ Among them the hand- books Tactical Urbanism Volume 1 and Tactical Urbanism Volume 2: Short Term Action/Long Term Change (Lydon et al. 2012), which has been widely circulated on the internet and highlights many DIY tactics but also includes city-sanctioned prototype efforts such as ‘Build a Better Block’ and ‘gutter cafes’.

²⁰ Tactical Urbanism Salons in New York City, Philadelphia, Memphis, Louisville, and Santiago, Chile; Bat-Yam Biennale of Landscape Urbanism in 2010 near Tel-Aviv in Israel (subsequent versions have been held in Terni, Italy; Stuttgart, Germany, and Derry-Londonderry, UK); “Do It Yourself Urbanism in Cincinnati” competition; the US pavilion at the 13th International Venice Architecture Biennale in 2012 highlighted DIY and related efforts under the theme “Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good”.

²¹ Queens College of The City University of New York is offering a Guerilla Architecture track within its Master’s of Fine Arts (MFA) program, while Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP) offered a course during the Spring 2012 term entitled “Hacking the Urban Experience” in which architecture students designed and installed unsanctioned DIY interventions in public spaces.

Critical analysis on DIY urbanism

CRITICAL POINTS ON MODERN PRACTICES

At this stage two critical points should be underlined regarding the growing tendency for authorisation of informal DIY practices. Firstly, contemporary forms of DIY urbanism activities - or tactical activities - whose illegality is often disregarded, differ significantly from the original informal grassroots efforts, as these has been extensively described in previous chapter, in terms of the publics that they involve (see pp. 12).

Based on Douglas (2013)²² the practitioners of contemporary forms of DIY urbanism exhibit some common characteristics in terms of basic demographics. More specifically, they claimed to be mostly white men with middle-class backgrounds, mainly around the age of 30s with at least some post-secondary education. Their studies and careers are often related with design, urban planning and relevant fields, sometimes with direct relevance to the DIY projects that they create. Generally speaking, although there are exceptions, the vast majority of the individuals qualify as members of the so-called 'creative class' (Florida 2002).

The familiarity with urban policy and planning processes demonstrated by the practitioners seems to increase their confidence of their actions and obviously, their relative position of privilege seems to play a role in involving in illegal urban activities. Regardless the fact that some choose to show their identities while others are much more concerned with anonymity and discreteness, the truth is that an individual from a less privileged background or with a less privileging appearance could not expect the same broadly supportive response if decided to publicly intervene without permission. On the contrary, those who fear

the potential consequences of involvement due to their less privileged backgrounds most likely will choose not to participate (Douglas 2015).

The attempt to incorporate DIY practices in urban design hence, does not necessarily mean the involvement to a more social equally and inclusive urban policy. Conversely, it could be rather argued that the profiles of the participants of the authorised DIY practices justify the exact opposite - that official planning is eager to select and take advantage of those DIY practices that can be used development resources, in post-recession cities, while the longstanding grassroots practices of the socially excluded remain ignored and marginalised.

Secondly, the motivations behind authorised patterns of DIY urbanism also seem to differ as related to traditionally self-helped practices of the socially excluded.

While traditionally bottom-up informalities compose expressions of "pure resistance and contestation" (Visconti et al. 2010), or instances of citizen-initiated efforts for more dynamic, democratic, socially equal and spatially just environment, the motives of currently endorsed practices appear disconnected from political beliefs, activism or claims for the 'reproduction of space' (Berglund 2018; Spataro 2015; Douglas 2015; Ho 2012; Visconti et al. 2010). In contrast, the newly introduced occurrences of DIY or tactical urbanism focus more on 'public space beautification' (Visconti et al. 2010) improvement or installation of civic infrastructure and local spatial issues (Douglas 2013; 2015). Unfortunately, practices of loftier political beliefs that are for instance related with environmentalism, uneven investment and socio-spatial inequalities or opinions on urban policy issues like the prevalence of outdoor advertising, the commodification of public space the car-centric urban (Douglas 2013; Ho 2012) if not criminalised, tend to be neglected, discouraged and even segregated.

As a result it is highly indicated that even these seemingly public integrating processes of DIY or tactical urbanism, do represent only the ideas of certain social groups on how the urban environment should be shaped or which activities shall therein

occur. And despite the core goal of original DIY actions - which is to provoke change - they can be easily manipulated in favour of economical growth. Considering that, two questions arise; on what extend, contemporary forms of DIY urbanism act as socially diverse representations and whether they are competent to contribute in the reduction of inequalities in modern cities.

OPPORTUNITIES AND DANGERS IN NEOLIBERAL CITIES

The recent proliferation of DIY urbanism presents both opportunities as well as a set of challenges to the planning and urban design zeitgeist (Finn 2014). Admittedly DIY practices introduce a number of opportunities for both urban landscapes and urban communities. Primary described as struggles by individuals and citizen groups to find their place and expressions in the contemporary city these processes redefine the boundaries, the meanings and the instrumentality of public sphere (Hou 2010).

The spontaneous character of the interventions accompanied by low investment in time, money and infrastructure effect changes in the hegemonic urban landscapes of the last decades' strict urban planning and de-stabilise the official structures and relationships in the public space, releasing possibilities for new interactions, functions, and meanings (Hou 2010).

These changes consequently enable more tolerant environments attributed with increased cultural diversity and social integration. DIY urbanism gives the chance to the cultural, economic, and spatial changes of modern cities to be expressed and revealed to all levels of society by creating spaces where alternative identities, meanings, and relationships can be nurtured, articulated, and enacted (Hou 2010).

It is also definite that the broader range of publics involved in DIY practices gives the opportunity for the generation of more open and inclusive public spaces. The subjectivity of the multiple actors and the broader instrumentality of public space allows

the incurrence of a wider variety of individual and collective actions, suggesting a mode of city making remote from the institutionalised notion of urbanism, which facilitates more democratic processes and richer, more responsive and more identical spaces to emerge (Hou 2010).

In addition, DIY urbanism raise awareness and gets involved residents who otherwise might not have the patience to attend public meetings (Lerner 2012), but also individuals that lack the chance to participate in public procedures or they don't comply with such processes as mechanisms of representing democracy. These social groups still reside the city and through these practices they are granted a "voice". The variety of individuals and groups in the participation of the urban design through DIY urban interventions provides an arena of civic exchanges and debates and reflects the democratic well-being and inclusiveness of our present society (Hou 2010).

Furthermore, in current fiscally straitened times, DIY efforts can stand as a useful resource. Many cities that financially struggled during the recession years undergo considerable revival due to pop-up projects (Lerner 2012). These micro urban moments—vast in numbers, ephemeral, situational, intelligent, idiosyncratic—might not be sufficiently competent to replace the effectiveness of top-down planning. But somewhere in between, the two seem to be finding common ground (Ho 2012).

Finally, although not all participants in DIY activities resist against the hegemonic regulations of the contemporary public space and the notion of an 'undifferentiated public', they become active participants in 'a widening of discursive contestation' (Hou 2010) in the public space and public life of the contemporary society. The several instances of self-help and defiance - characterised also as a practice of 'guerrilla urbanism' (Hou 2010) - offer a territory for radical and everyday changes against the dominant forces of the neoliberal society.

While DIY urbanism can undoubtedly bring a number of potential opportunities at the same time masks an increasingly complex set of dynamics and challenges that might complicate and counterbalance

²² The research of Douglas (2013) involves interviews and other fieldwork in 14 cities including New York, L.A. and London as major hubs of cultural innovation, and other cities in the United States and Canada such as Chicago, New Orleans, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Toronto, and Vancouver.

those benefits, and in a long-term span can induce dangerous implications for cities (Douglas 2013, 2015; Finn 2014; Spataro 2015). This is more likely today, in a framework of increased confidence for self-helped unauthorised activity and the simultaneous enthusiasm by the impoverished neoliberal authorities to endorse all sorts of 'cheerful' urban interventions.

questioning the public benefit

First and foremost it is significant to examine, regardless the legitimacy of an action in the urban space, whether it aims to achieve equitable community benefits which are, at least ideally, fundamental considerations in official planning and professional design of civic and public spaces. These are elements that unauthorised interventions can either embody and expand, or conflict with and undermine (Douglas 2015).

Inevitably, many of the DIY, spontaneous or tactical interferences, often those that lack a wider political context (Spataro 2015), feature self-driven interests compromising their contribution to the 'social capital' and community's prosperity. Therefore, such an unregulated process, makes it extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, for cities to assure equity, safety and other concerns (Finn 2014).

Going further, it is worth considering that even the generally laudable spirit of the actions – that it is up to everyone to step up and improve their community – may only further enable the retreat of the state and foster the individualistic order that supposedly pervades the neoliberal city. One may need to be familiar with a good deal of critical theory and economic reality, for instance, to conclude that even if DIY improvement is often a reaction to neoliberal conditions and seemingly a symbol of positive local self-determination, the forces of growth in many cities now embrace any 'spark' indicating hip potential, including illegal but trendy acts of creative transgression (Edwards 2009; ; Douglas 2015; Lerner 2012; Shankaran 2013).

questioning the equal participation

Moreover, although it is up to everyone to participate in such practices, mostly those in positions of relative privilege actually feel comfortable doing so, while those who fear the potential consequences of involvement due to their less privileged backgrounds choose not to participate (Douglas 2015). Inescapable discrimination of modern cities threatens therewith the fair and equal participation in the activities due to their illicit nature.

In particular, the practitioners of functional improvements of modern DIY urban design or of tactical urbanism interventions are neither average community members nor average bureaucrats, but well-informed interlopers and often professionals who inform and justify the unauthorised improvements they make (Douglas 2015; Lydon 2012). Considering that, it is raised the point of how much difference can be found comparing their impact to a self-interested developer's. In both cases, a truly democratic and genuinely inclusive planning process is absent.

questioning the common good

Besides, the notion of the 'common good' is mutable and subjective to ensure what is beneficial to the most people with respect to everyday needs. What is good for some might not be for others (Ho 2012) and what for one person is improvement may be another's nuisance²³ (Douglas 2013).

Differences in opinion over aesthetics, perceptions about public safety, and even cultural values mean that DIY efforts may also create a potential class and ethnic tensions in many neighbourhoods, among other disagreements (Finn 2014; Speer 2014).

²³ For instance, new bike lanes in New York City might irk drivers; guerrilla gardeners might be annoying squatters to property owners; culture-jamming billboard pranks might be classifiable as vandalism; and all of these acts might be gentrification by another name (Ho 2012).

gentrification

Another challenge is that any attempt to integrate or otherwise harness enthusiasm for DIY approaches runs the risk of creating or perpetuating inequity in many urban neighbourhoods (Finn 2014). These tactics have been critiqued for their lack of acknowledgement of historic trends in urban inequality, and for encouraging gentrification (Berglund 2018; Mould 2014; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Spataro 2016). While the act of unauthorised improvement may be a reaction to perceived neglect and disinvestment in an area and a symbol of organic creativity and social organisation, it should be emphasised that in many cities today, development capital is quite happy to take advantage of any 'sign of life' and run with it. In other words, if neoliberal conditions – such as uneven development – make space for DIY urban design, it may also be the case that some DIY urban design enables or encourages the continuation of these very conditions (Douglas 2013).

More to the point, though, if a reading in urbanism, critical theory, and urban policy includes awareness of the state disinvestment and uneven urban development that DIY urban design responds to (Douglas 2014), it should also imply awareness of other concerns of the neoliberal city, such as insensitive development or gentrification. Because of the form and content of most DIY improvements as well as the backgrounds of their creators, many risk to contribute to the same uneven development trends they might aim locally to resist (Douglas 2015; Spataro 2015).

In addition, DIY urban design actions appear to be more common in newly hip and 'gentrifying' neighbourhoods, than in the impoverished inner-city 'ghettos' or derelict industrial districts one might think of as the more visible 'victims' of neoliberal policy and state disinvestment and where DIY actions are ostensibly most 'needed' (Douglas 2013). As we have seen, many do-it-yourselfers frame their efforts as responses to a lumbering city bureaucracy they are quick to critique; it is a smaller number who turn their creativity to explicitly confronting market-driven ills (Douglas 2015).

While many DIY efforts have certainly demonstrated sensitivity around poverty and inequality in neighbourhood conditions, gentrification is inevitable. Allowing unchecked DIY interventions in currently low-income neighbourhoods could provide needed amenities or improvements but may simultaneously hasten gentrification and displacement in much the same way that publicly-funded infrastructure upgrades and other investments have been shown to do (Hackworth 2007; Douglas 2012; Finn 2014; Ho 2012).

Even if one cannot clearly connect individual DIY improvements to changes in property values and median monthly rents or the displacement of particular groups, it is likely that they do more good than harm to a neighbourhood's 'appeal' (Douglas 2013). Signs of social organisation and trendy activity increase the attractiveness of some urban neighbourhoods and it is entirely possible that these ostensibly counter-cultural acts of organic, positive, informal contribution may, just like official urban design improvements, ultimately help increase property values, and thus precipitate and even encourage the gentrification process.

Whether DIY urbanism ultimately represents a further erosion of democratic planning in favour of private interests, an organic and locally determined placemaking, or perhaps the possibility of a more dynamic, collaborative middle ground has yet to be seen. However, the shift from formal to informal urban design implies changes on how we conceive of the boundaries between personal, public, and private property, of who is entitled to alter urban space, of the authority and responsibility of local government, of urban use value, and of creative, critical, personal agency. To the degree that DIY actions are an indication of what some people disapprove on their urban surroundings, we could learn a great deal about how to design our urban spaces more responsively in the first place (Douglas 2013; 2015).

SOCIAL PRACTICES VERSUS CONTEMPORARY DIY TACTICS

The fact that the various projects of urbanism intervention presented in this essay skirt authority and don't involve architects, urbanists and planners do not suggest that the role of top-down design is not important for cities, but that official stakeholders should take more seriously the restless public's opinion for better living and more inclusive urban design. Through these projects, thus, there is an opportunity for architects to regain lost relevance with the public consciousness of urban well-being. And beyond all, by providing equal and un-biased responses to DIY practices of different contexts, to receive crucial knowledge from a wide variety of citizens' perceptions and novel solutions on common issues.

Thus, in order to integrate a diverse and inclusive public opinion in the urban decision-making, it is important to examine and re-evaluate the ways in which municipal officials react to the various, unbidden, unexpected, spontaneous and unsanctioned interventions of DIY urbanism.

DIY approach is glorified as both a form of social protest against anachronistic planning processes as well as a form of philanthropic provision of social goods by activists (Finn 2014). As it has briefly presented already, contemporary forms of unauthorised urbanism, most responsible for its proliferation and in most cases permission and authorisation, perceive DIY practices as a tool to promote individual or certain group interests. On the contrary, traditional forms of urban informalities used to convey collective activism to aid the survivals of marginalised social groups and their activities by resisting uneven development and spatial distribution, as well as by urging more heterogeneous patterns of urban space.

Nevertheless, even in cases that DIY proponents see the same needs, opportunities and solutions, municipal officials have other concerns that are absent or secondary to DIY actors (Finn, 2014). An explicit failure to deal equally with this duality is suggested when it comes to the state's role in defining the limits

of informality. Authorities often show exceptional favouritism in disregarding and permitting the informalities of creative urbanism with potential advantages for urban development, when other cases of less advantageous and more social interest remain ignored and are still treated as illegitimate activities (Berglund 2018; Deslandes 2012; Finn 2014; Mould 2014; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Spataro 2015).

The paradox appears by the acknowledgment that in this way the modern state exploits contemporary forms of DIY urbanism to feed the exact same neoliberal forces that DIY urbanism originally attempts to conflict.

The disconnect between the officials' perception of contemporary ('Tactical urbanism', 'DIY urban design') and traditional DIY practices (political activism) is represented by several examples in which authorities tend to criminalise, relocate and segregate shelf-helped practices that serve marginal and sensitive urban populations (Spataro 2015; Speer 2014; Loftus-Farren 2011; Berglund 2018; Deslandes 2012). An assertive and long-standing example of this discriminatory treatment can be interpreted by the perpetual struggles of the homeless populations to claim shelter on public spaces along with their continuous displacements through the implementation of strict spatial strategies (Speer 2014; Loftus-Farren 2011). A case study of the homeless' shelf-helped practices will be extensively analysed in following chapter.

As a result, contemporary DIY practices endorsed by 'Tactical Urbanism', such as similar goal-oriented tactics, as well as their growing role, have faced wide skepticism and criticism in the academic literature review of urban politics and can interject with many current debates within urban studies (Hou 2010).

Berglund (2018) points out a crucial point when claiming that "by shifting costs of municipal services away from the state to individuals, such practices become complicit in the process of neoliberalisation...". She also implies that several cooperations found a cheap opportunity to invest in such projects with the intention to revitalise and regenerate degraded neighbourhoods; "What Lydon et al. (2015) failed to foresee was the attractiveness of tactical urbanism as

a cheap means of placemaking for corporate actors". These tactics have been largely co-opted by corporate or large institutional entities that have used their political leverage to change regulatory frameworks in their favour. In contrast, when marginalised residents develop traditions of informal urbanism, they tend to remain ignored and even criminalised (Berglund 2018).

As Kinder wrote, "By the late 2000s, city planners had described urban informality and provisional spatial development as a way to stimulate reinvestment by making neighbourhoods feel trendy and public spaces feel lively" (2016: 27). The potential for revitalisation through tactical interventions sets them apart of traditions of urban informality.

While informality has long gone ignored by the urban design profession, authors observe that its repackaging in the form of tactical urbanism is often associated with economic vitality (Berglund 2018; Mukhija & Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Kinder 2016). Berglund (2018) clearly suggest that in the case of Detroit the incremental actions of the largely white middle and upper-class newcomers, aligning with the goals of tactical urbanism, was celebrated for its innovation, while long-standing practices of long-term residents are ignored or actively discouraged.

Hence, it is obvious that urban officials prioritise and discriminate informal DIY practices and the populations behind them based on their perceived economic and cultural value. The state plays a key role in defining what constitutes favourable types of development, and what does not. Otherwise stated, the dominant development paradigm of state-sanctioned gentrification clearly creates the potential for disparities among the treatment of traditionally informal urbanism and tactical urbanism (Berglund 2018).

Another important difference appears between traditionally informal practices and the contemporary practices - often of tactical urbanism - is that the latter are further promoted by the media and portrayed as clever, entrepreneurial and so, they contribute to branding that attracts what are considered by investors to be desirable groups of individuals to the city. On the other hand, informal practices of the social

commentary and spatial justice quests, that are not glorified as entrepreneurial acts that cleverly harnesses the potential of the market, are largely absent in the media and most likely not able to harness the regulatory framework to its own ends (Berglund 2018).

In accordance with Mould (2014) the urban neoliberal development discourse co-opts the reactionary and tactical moments of creativity, creating a Lefebvrian urbanism that can be replicated across space. "But rather than going on to claim a 'new land' of rhizomatic existence, they are being recaptured by the city and moulded back into the system of the urban neoliberal development in the guise of TU." (Mould 2014: 537). Deleuze & Guattari (2003) describe the role of the state as that which reconfigures tactical events by subsuming them into their own agenda. In other words, the linguistic prevalence of TU in contemporary creativity-inspired urban policy discourse represents the subordination of tactical events into neoliberal urban development structures (Boltanski & Chiapello 2005). As such, the city re-establishes economic and political hegemony through the power of political language. TU therefore is becoming a vernacular empty of tactics that is being used more as a political tool to engender neoliberal urban development than a means of empowering the socially, politically and economically excluded (Mould 2014).

In conclusion, what is generally articulated, is that TU is an apparatus that has captured urban interventionist moments and subsumed and subordinated them into the "Creative City" mantra (Laundry 2008) and the urban neoliberal development system more broadly. It represents the latest cycle of the urban strategy to absorb moments of creativity and alternative urban practices to the urban hegemony (Mould 2014). Mould (2014) also argues that contemporary DIY tactics are superficial and apolitical while Spataro (2015) defends that the tactical urbanists' suggestion - that the state might find utility in incremental, tactical strategies for change - seems to be the antithesis of DIY and grassroots interventions.

To sum up, what is highly stated in this chapter is that municipal officials and private corporations during the recent economic recession found a cheap opportunity to invest on the creativity of numerous informal practices which for years have been ignored. This opportunity has largely been translated into an ostensibly evolution of the urban policy model aiming to enhance citizen participation in planning and design processes. Yet, states and their private allies attempted to elect creative DIY efforts with potential economic value and by adapting their regulations utilise them as urban experiments, which even if superficially seemed to be efforts of participation, in the core where merely strategic tactics to revitalise post-recession cities. The intentions of the governments are evident due to the discrimination by which they continue to respond to the long-standing informal grassroots interventions of the socially excluded and the destitute, as well as the scale of promotion and acknowledgement of such practices compared to modern tactics.

The purpose of the present chapter is through this critical analysis to openly question the objectives of contemporary urban policies and to suggest a greater integration of unofficial urbanism practices into the place-making. Similar strategies of experimentation should be urgently applied in issues of socio-spatial context too, if urban planning is to advocate for a transition to more culturally and socially balanced urban environment. The accomplishment of citizens to - often unintentionally - revive entire neighbourhoods implies the advantages that DIY practices of social urbanism could provide for crucial communities and populations when given proper attention.

As a conclusion, the unbiased authorisation of informal citizen-led urban practices, along with the support from governments, can become a useful and powerful instrument for the production of equal and fair space for all urban populations.

This possibility will be extensively examined in a following chapter, through the presentation of the 'Tent Cities' a DIY urbanism case study of the homeless in the USA.

Methodology

II

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HOMELESSNESS: A DIFFERENT APPROACH OF DIY URBANISM

Public space in neoliberal cities had never been place of free, unmediated interaction, but on the contrary place of conflicting relationships of power (Mitchell, 2003) and traditionally place of exclusion. Based on Spataro (2016) not all groups have equal access to the use of public space. This point emphasizes that similarly, the laws governing public and urban space, can be manipulated by those who are seen by the authorities as entrepreneurial, and not others.

According to Deslandes (2012) even “the ability to occupy urban space informally is an expression of class power”. Following this statement, we argue that the affirmatively labeled informal or DIY urbanism - for instance the artistic or functional interventions in public spaces - can be designated as ‘formal’ by the state while other forms of informality, such as the occupation of public space by the homeless, remain criminalized. “The man who sleeps in the empty building, the women under the bridge and the families out in the park will not have their space-making celebrated for its informality and innovation. The DIY urbanists will do.” (Deslandes 2012)

What do the DIY urbanism movement and homelessness have in common? According to Deslandes (2012) statement, “whether it’s a temporary studio, a pop-up shop, a sleeping bag in a doorway or a tarpaulin under a bridge, all are informal responses to the scarcity of space for everyone’s needs and ambitions.” But while DIY urbanism is hailed as a creative, revitalizing force, homelessness is still marginalized in many cities.

In reality, the occupation of public or unused private space in order to cover the basic needs by the homeless population responds accurately to the definition of DIY Urbanism that has been formed for the purpose of the present thesis, and it can be described as a practice that express the right for shelter as a basic human right rather than another commodity of the capitalistic economic system.

In placing DIY urbanism and primary homelessness together, the intention is to mark their shared relationship to the broader urban economy that determines the availability of space and the capitalization of activity. In particular the two scenes are linked by the scarcity of accessible space in the cities where they show up. DIY urbanists respond to the scarcity of urban space by opening it up to culture, community and the grassroots economy. The primary homeless demonstrate the scarcity of housing, social services and community resources in urban space by appearing in that space and using it for shelter and other necessities. So, whilst DIY urbanists and the primary homeless are responding to unequal spatial distribution in very different orders, they share their reliance on marginal urban space (Deslandes 2012).

Nevertheless, the homeless’ claim to space in the city is more likely to be the subject of cultural unease and punitive policing. Furthermore, the authorization of informal structures and activities of DIY urbanism described in the first scene, due to the re-tiling processes that causes, amplifies the need for shelter and social life of those who populate the second scene and tend to be ignored, and consequently the unlikelihood to secure space in the city (Deslandes 2012). But is it the case that the potential authorization of the second scene can hinder the occupation of space of the first? The question should be focused more to the issue of the co-existence of these two practices in the same urban spaces.

It should be stressed that from an equity point of view, city planners cannot simply look the other way and tacitly approve DIY interventions as inherently rational reactions to municipal funding limitations if they are simultaneously vilifying and criminalizing other arguably rational activities in the very same public spaces (Finn 2014). “A homeless person poses no threat to society. The homeless have arguably only committed the offence of being needy.” The message people without shelter that reside the contemporary urban space send to society can be disturbing. If some portion of society is offended, the answer is not in criminalizing these people but addressing the root cause of their existence.

RESEARCH QUESTION

As it is suggested from the previous analysis, most of the sanctioned and authorised cases of DIY Urbanism exhibit similar characteristics in terms of the participant publics, their motivations and objectives while most of the times seem to associate with economic vitality (Berglund 2018; Mukhija and Loukaitou-Sideris 2014; Kinder 2016).

This implies that although DIY urbanism can function as a participation strategy of place-making, it still excludes of the process certain social groups that reside the city, usually those with the less privileged backgrounds. This happens either because these groups demonstrate lower probability to get involved in such actions because of their fear for the potential consequences (Douglas, 2015), or because even when minorities and sensitive groups exercise DIY practices their efforts remain neglected and of restricted publicity (Berglund 2018; Spataro, 2015) and in some cases even stigmatised and criminalised (Deslandes 2012; Finn 2014) as for instance in the case of seeking shelter in public space by homeless individuals and communities. The paradox here is that DIY urbanism is at its core the urbanism of the marginalised populations, who by virtue of being in public, can overcome the uneven power dynamics of their exclusions (Spataro, 2015).

Despite the potential for useful temporary solutions through the study of the self-help tactics of these marginal social groups, until today it is suggested that little chance is given on the authorization and experimentation with such practices. This is the aspect in which lies the significance of this research and therefore, the main question that emerges as the subject of the present thesis is to examine:

Is it possible that DIY urbanism initiatives can represent practices for the social inclusion of sensitive groups in contemporary cities?

More specifically the focus will be given to the homeless population as it is a common example of chronically neglected groups in cities worldwide. In particular, the next part of this thesis will focus on the informal strategies that groups of homeless people have applied in US cities in order to survive in the contemporary urban context by forming tent encampments on public spaces. By emphasizing on the specific practice, I will try to explore whether the potential authorisation of such practices can generate experimental initiatives that will contribute as temporary solutions to the issue of homelessness or even frame the base for a permanent solution in the future.

Since the concentration of the research will be on homelessness and as we mainly seek methods for the social inclusion and the acceptance of these groups as well as the advancement of their informal practices and spaces, a secondary question arises immediately:

Which are the main characteristics for the design and implementation of more inclusive tent camps?

RESEARCH DESIGN & OBJECTIVES

In order to satisfy the objectives of the dissertation, the methods that have been used are outlined by a theoretical discussion through a literature review, the extensive analysis of a case study of informal urbanism in the USA and the design of an experimental initiative by providing an holistic strategy and guidance on how to design and implement ideal homeless settlements as ephemeral features in urban spaces of European cities.

literature review

The aim of the literature review is to form a theoretical context for the study that follows and it mainly emphasizes on specific topics that are most relevant to the purpose of this thesis.

The core topics that are discussed refer to the importance of openness and inclusiveness of public space as well as the contested social production of urban space by conflicting social forces. It is stressed how the politics and strategies applied on public spaces in neoliberal cities by dominant social forces affect modern public space and public life and finally generate social exclusions which in turn use means of informality as a struggle for the 'right to the city' and spatial justice.

In second stage, it is addressed that urban informality has taken a different connotation in contemporary times as urban planners aimed to facilitate citizen participation in the process of urban design have explored informal instances as a way to design more appropriate spaces and functions in modern cities. This has resulted in a high degree of tolerance and authorisation towards informal interventions and tactics inducing a tremendous trend among such practices and the yield of initiatives such as the DIY urbanism and Tactical Urbanism. The theoretical discussion in this point concentrates on a critical analysis of these new phenomena, the opportunities and dangers that cause in neoliberal cities as well as the hidden motivations behind their extensive use by

post-recession governments.

The main outcome of the literature review which constitutes the base of the research question as well is the discrimination of the authorisation and experimentation processes that urban policy has until now introduced between DIY urban practices of cultural or economic value and social value.

selection of case study

From the theoretical discussion we came to the conclusion that the availability of public space in the neoliberal context is not a free and equally shared good for the public's needs and desires, but it is determined by the cultural and economic utility of every activity that aspires to take place in it, regardless if the activity is a bottom-up or top-down initiative.

Intending to support the idea that praises the 'publicity' and the 'openness' of the public space as the most essential attribute of the social welfare the selection of the case study aims to respond to the unequal provision of public space for citizen-led activities through the presentation and analysis of a successful and innovative social example of informal or DIY urban practice. This is the case study of "tent cities", a DIY urbanism practice of the homeless people that has applied in numerous cities in the United States.

"Tent cities" constitute a case study of an informal bottom-up practice that aspires to utilize unused or abandoned territory in the urban surroundings as places where the people without shelter can organise collectives and defend their right for housing by forming and building their autonomous communities which demand for official authorization. In many cases tent encampments have evolved into self-sufficient and sustainable villages with more permanent structures and other facilities, a fact that allow them to defy urban policy restrictions.

By further analysing the practice of 'Tent cities' I intend to point out the main reasons for its existence and persistence in many US cities, and following the struggles of the homeless people, also the context that surrounds its authorisation or toleration in certain cases. Besides, I will examine the constraints that

impede the practice from being fully legalized and I will investigate the benefits that could be provided if local authorities permitted its existence as an ephemeral housing strategy and a short term solution to the increased presence of people without shelter in cities.

An important objective is also to illuminate an insurgent paradigm of self-organisation and self-sufficiency that some homeless communities have attained through their attempt to escape the official administrative social provisions. Such experiences are usually disregarded, whilst they can enlighten the process of designing tools for the social inclusion of sensitive populations.

Meanwhile the practice not only addresses the cost and over-sized nature of our limited existing housing options, but also rethinks the social isolation that it has come to embody.

A last reason that drove to the selection of this particular practice as the case study for this research is the fact that even if it could be easily subsumed as DIY urbanism practice of the 'socio-spatial justice' commentary, in several instances has managed to gain official authorization.

The information on 'tent cities' has been collected through academic literature and online references, such as newspaper reports, statistical data and webpages.

design of the initiative

The last purpose of this thesis is the design of an initiative that promotes the establishment of ephemeral homeless settlements and it can be implemented in European cities and worldwide.

The methods that followed to develop this initiative were based mainly on the investigation of key concepts and key policies through the case study of 'tent cities' but also on some important features that were extracted from a brief analysis of the homeless situation in the city of Lisbon. Lisbon has been selected as the starting point for the initiative in European cities and was also analysed in an effort to find similarities and make comparisons with the American paradigm. It is selected as a European capital marked for its

exceptional social governance that maintain a remarkable tolerant policy among sensitive groups and urban minorities, and historically had formed a unique ground for the co-existence of multiple social groups and their practices in the public space.

Moreover this analysis stress the relationships that are shaped between the marginal groups of homeless and the authorities when such DIY tactics occur in the urban context and how these relationships affect the types of urban interventions and the degree of organisation and visibility of the practices themselves, often as instances of political resistance against consolidated methods of destitute management.

The data for this stage of the project were collected through interviews, online references such as newspaper reports, statistical data and webpages as well as my personal observation. The collected information assisted to later shape a strategy and specific guidelines for local governments as much as for the homeless community and other supporting organisations that will guarantee the development of ideal homeless settlements inside urban limits and the required acceptance from the surrounding community.

More specifically, the proposed strategy constitutes a circular economy system that is based on the values of sharing and recycling of resources, knowledge and experience and on the DIY tactics in order to promote self-support and self-sufficiency to the wider homeless community.

Finally, I focus in a selected site of intervention in the city of Lisbon where the proposed strategy can be implemented. At this point a concrete proposal of a settlement is designed including the spatial configuration of all the necessary facilities for its operation along with some structure and infrastructure typologies that can be built in the settlement.

To conclude with, the designed initiative corresponds to an ephemeral instrument that provides useful information on how the basic necessities of the homeless population can be secured while simultaneously casual social interaction and economic integration opportunities can be generated.

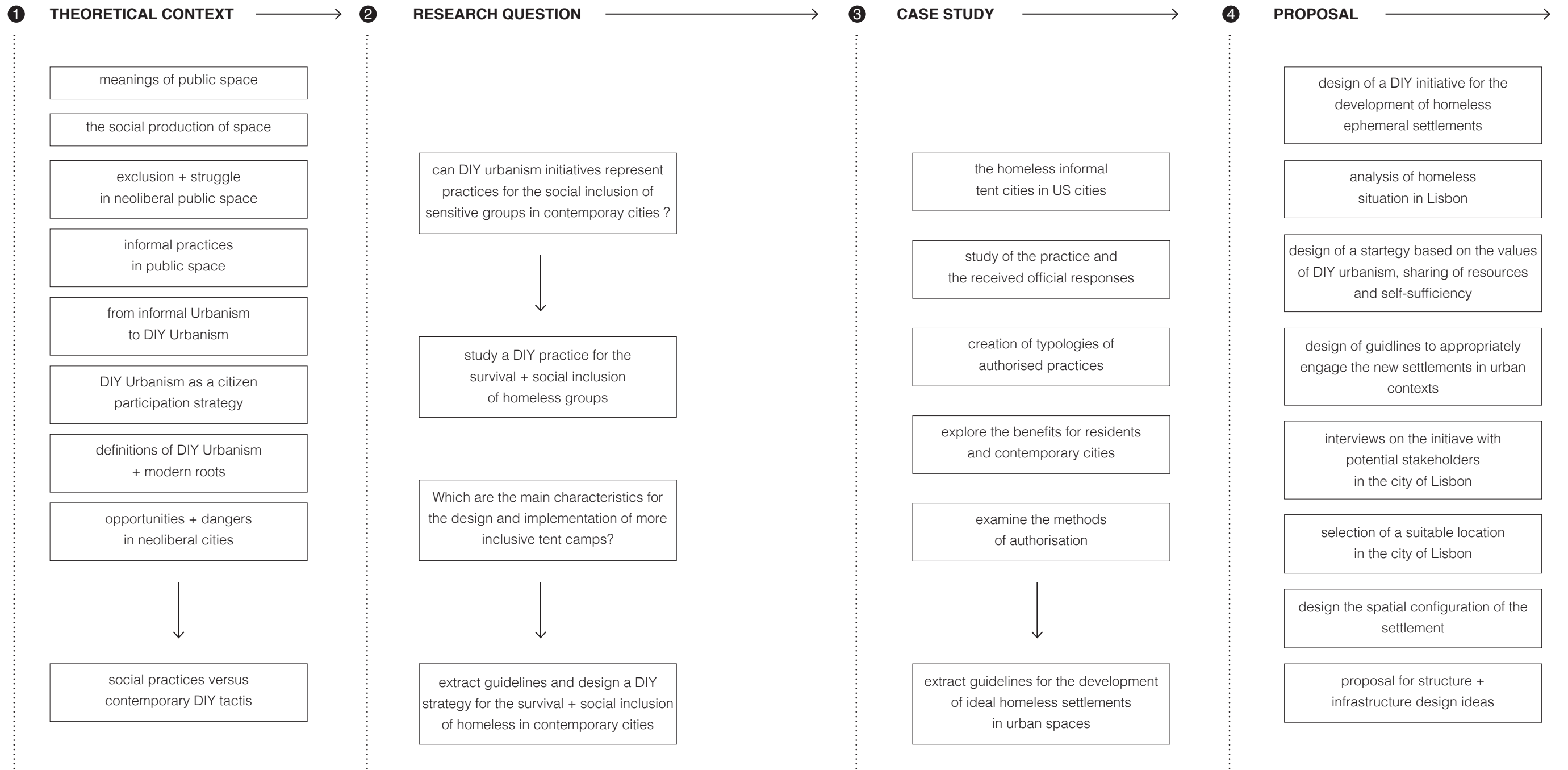


Diagram 01: Methodology

Case Study

III

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The homeless' tent cities in USA

Homeless population represents one of the most socially and spatially segregated urban groups of contemporary cities and the allowance of their DIY efforts to find shelter in urban space is often questioned. The paradigm of US 'tent cities' depicts the struggles of the destitute to formalise their strategies for housing in a broadly commodified environment, as well as the consequent official responses on these efforts of utterly social character.

This chapter examines the reasons that populations who lack shelter in the US often prefer to form autonomous communities instead of making use of the official social provisions and describes the physical and organisational arrangements of such communities. Also, it illustrates the benefits frequently unfolded for their residents.

Furthermore, it presents the most common official responses the practice has received in late years, including in several cases its toleration and even authorisation. This tendency has driven in many cases the development of sustainable, self-sufficient and affordable housing communities.

A following paragraph lists a number of examples of established settlements initially originated from 'tent cities' and makes a categorization due to the characteristics of each settlement typology. At the same time it is attempted a critical examination on the contexts that surround the official authorisation of the practice and on the final outputs of this process.

The last part of the chapter lists the revolutionary meanings that the homeless' DIY practice of 'tent cities' represents against the dominant neoliberal and commodified urban space.

Homelessness is an issue that cities face since their very first existence. Although this chapter will not analyse the reasons that cause homelessness, it seems useful to stress two important points.

Firstly, the reasons for someone to lack housing are various and cannot be interpreted through a categorization of separate causes but more through a complex correlation of different incidents that usually are related with economic deficiencies and inability for labour but even more often with loss of personal network, family and relatives. Secondly, homelessness can be divided in temporary and chronic situations. The important difference between these two cases is that the opportunity of a temporal accommodation support will most of the times be beneficial and functional for a temporarily homeless person or family. But this is not the case usually for chronic homeless situations where people even after provisional assistance will find difficulties to integrate in the rules of normative housing and the normative society and will possibly return back to homelessness.

Thus, we have to acknowledge that neither we can detect all the reasons causing homelessness and eliminate the phenomenon in the first place nor we can design of one inclusive social policy and mechanism towards all different cases of people without shelter. But most importantly we should admit that the notion of the "the right for housing" should be redefined under the notion of the "right for home" exploring the different meanings that home can take according to different needs and desires of different inhabitants. At this point, the DIY housing paradigm of the homeless' tent cities gives an insight on the ways those who lack the basic necessities re-confirm which are the necessities and how they perceive a better home and a better quality of life.

The DIY practice of Tent Cities

THE PRACTICE OF TENT CITIES IN THE USA

Occupation of public space and private unused property by the homeless, in order to cover the basic need of shelter is a long standing phenomenon both in European and American cities. The occupations might last short or longer periods of time and they take numerous forms depending on the available materials and equipment, including tents.

Even though is common to detect smaller or larger tent homeless encampments in many European cities, especially in the southern countries, the practice of the 'tent cities' is a phenomenon that expanded in such a large scale mostly in the US cities, due to the tradition of the country in such encampments through historical events, the recent proliferation of homeless population because of the economic recession and the scarcity of affordable housing. Today the practice is well-known and serves both as a shelter alternative and as a protest activism to demand more fair spatial distribution among the different socio-economic groups of citizens.

The extended scale of the manifestation of the informal practice of the homeless, accompanied with a substantial governmental response eager to authorise and support such practice as a transitional solution in the long-lasting issue of homelessness, are the leading reasons for studying the certain practice in the US. Therefore, the framework of US 'tent cities' make up an essential paradigm for the main purpose of the present research which is to examine the possibility of promoting and authorising informal practices with social context.

TYPOLOGIES OF HOMELESS SHELTER PRACTICES

Before to start analysing the practice of homeless' 'Tent Cities' it is useful to create a categorisation of the official sources that are nowadays available for providing shelter to destitute populations and social groups which are being temporarily or permanently without shelter, as well as the unofficial self-help housing practices that have been historically developed by the same groups. Accordingly, below are presented some of the most common typologies of formal and informal shelter provision alternatives observed among homeless people.

The alternatives for finding shelter are distinguished in official social provisions, designed or approved by governments through social policies, and in informal housing solutions that have been claimed and often established through long standing struggles by the destitute and activist groups. Regardless the state of formality or informality, the shelter solutions presented have been common paradigms in the majority of the Occidental and Oriental developed and developing countries and they constitute the most widespread patterns of offering shelter to the homeless both in US and European cities.

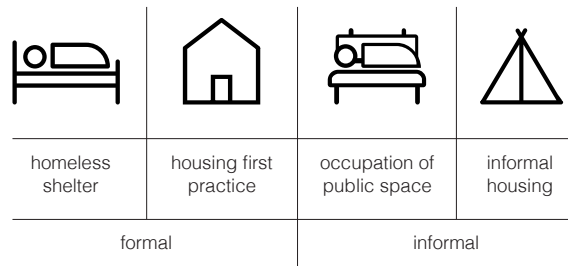


Diagram 02: Typology of homeless shelter practices

homeless shelters

Homeless shelters are transitional social service agencies directed and funded by governmental or religious institutions irrespectively, set up to provide for the needs of homeless people including shelter, food, sanitation and other forms of support. Shelters usually offer several programs based on certain eligibility requirements. In order to get accepted, usually there is a process to go through, which not always guarantee immediate and permanent housing due to the indefinitely long waiting lists. Some of the most common issues in shelters that have been generally recorded by residents is overcrowding and the consequent safety issues and potential conflicts between residents; strict rules and time schedules; minimum stay duration even if permanent housing is not available afterwards; religious conversion in case of a religious shelter; discrimination against LGBT youth and adults; separation between women and men (Fuller 2011; Herring 2015; Loftus-Farren 2011; Speer 2014).

housing first practice

"Housing First" provides an alternative to the current network of homeless shelters and it consists of a practice applied in numerous American and European countries. The program targets the large problem for homelessness which is the lack of affordable housing. This methodology attempts to place homeless individuals or families back into independent living situations as quick as possible. The practice has achieved success due the fact that homeless are more responsive to social services support once when they are in their own house. It provides crisis intervention, affordable rental housing, and allows a grace period of social service to allow the homeless to get back on their feet. The effectiveness of this concept is that it assists homeless to identify their needs and recognise the choices they must take giving them the opportunity to be self-sufficient. Nevertheless, the practice gives priority usually to circumstances of chronic homelessness which range for more than 10-

15 years living on the street, and it is generally a slower process in terms of providing housing to large numbers of people (Housing First 2011; Marques 2019).

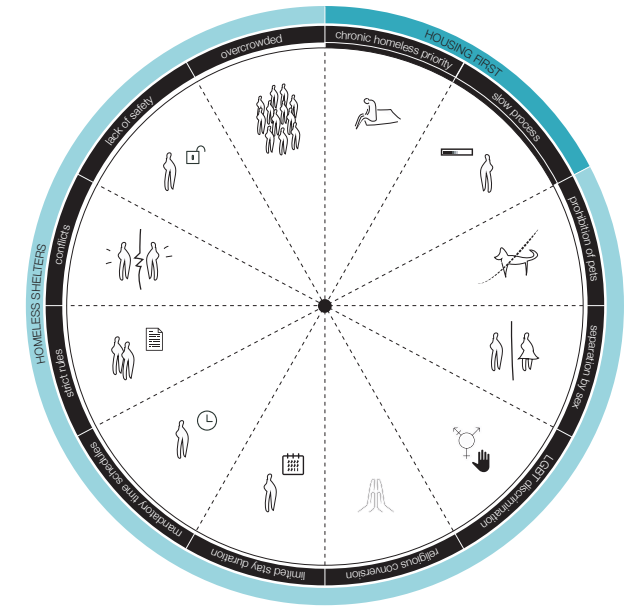


Diagram 03: Disadvantages of formal shelter sources



Photo 01: Homeless shelter in USA

occupation of public space

Occupation of public space to cover the basic needs of sleeping and storing ones belongings is the most common and traditionally applied informal practice by the homeless population when the official services fail to respond to their needs. Sleeping and living on the streets and other public spaces is a global phenomenon since the first cities existed and has frequently been treated as delinquent behaviour by the authorities. The selected locations vary between hidden places where a more permanent settling can take place and visible sites that offer protection to adverse weather conditions. When more than one individuals gather in the same locations, longer-lasting occupations and even tent encampments might emerge.



Photo 02: Homeless overnight occupation of public space in Lisbon, Portugal

*informal housing
(occupations, slums, tent encampments)*

Self-help or informal housing is a long-standing phenomenon globally and can be distinguished in numerous categories of settlements, for example, occupations of decaying or abandoned inner-city tenements, squatter settlements, slums, shantytowns and recently tent cities. The coverage of settlement types is even more complex when we consider the variety of equivalent words in other languages and geographical regions, such as 'Favelas', 'Colonias', 'Kampungs' and 'Bidonvilles' (Khalifa 2010). The practice can be simply described as the collective occupation of public or private property with the intention to settle and develop self-made dwellings and communities and is usually initiated by the most economically vulnerable who cannot afford normal housing forms. Among the variety of examples exists a spectrum of informality, ranging from the most informal housing solutions to the most well-established. Homeless encampments can be placed toward the middle of this spectrum. Their residents can experience a level of stability and permanence greater than that of the squatters or individual homeless, but their living structures are generally make-shift, and their communities are frequently forced to either relocate or disband (Herring 2015; Loftus-Farren 2011).

All informal housing solutions have emerged as a strategy for economic survival and have evolved and grown largely as a result of insufficient social services, declining wages, and decreasing provision of affordable housing in the neoliberal world era (Loftus-Farren 2011).

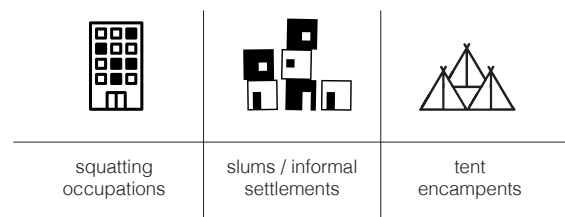


Diagram 04: Typology of informal housing practices



Photo 03: Torre David, informal occupation of abandoned office Tower in Caracas, Venezuela

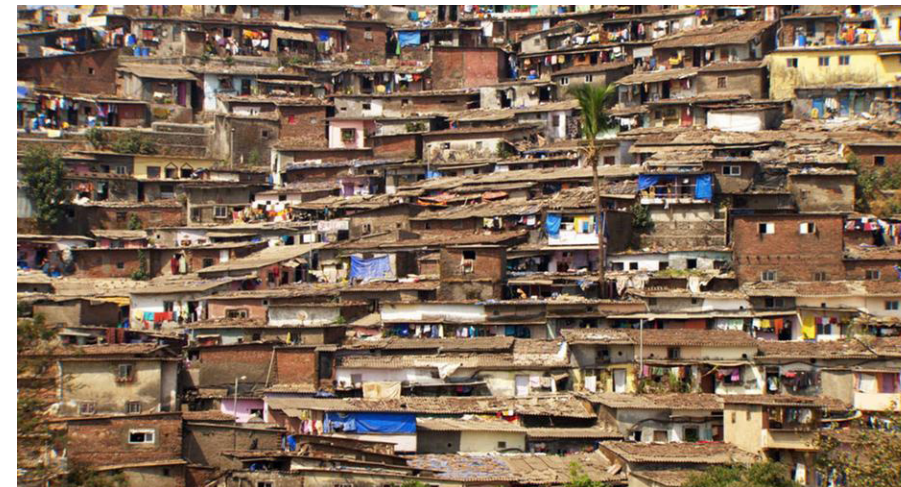


Photo 04: Slum in Caracas, Venezuela



Photo 05: Right to Dream Too, informal tent city in Portland, Oregon

Below, are presented some diagrams illustrating the evaluation of the different typologies of both formal and informal housing alternatives for the homeless, including tent encampments, in relation with certain parameters that are interesting for the purpose of the present research and the analysis of the case study of 'Tent Cities'.

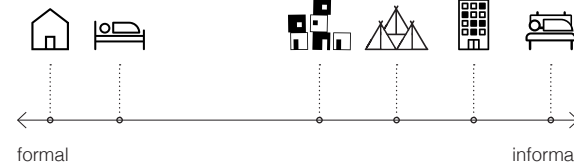


Diagram 05: Range of approval

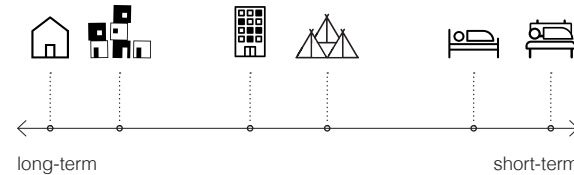


Diagram 06: Time range of habitation

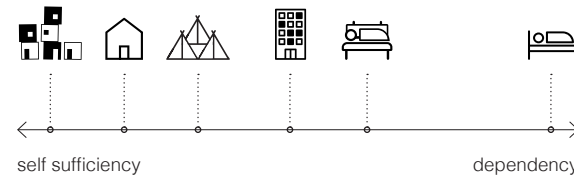


Diagram 07: Range of self sufficiency

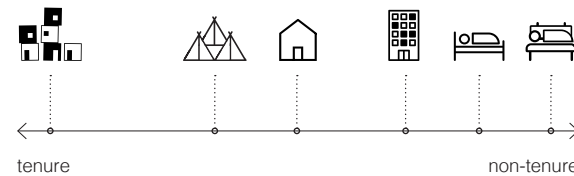


Diagram 08: Range of tenure over property

Although each of these informal housing solutions should be analysed and examined separately in respect of the impact they have both on their residents and on the cities they occupy, the focus of the present thesis is on 'tent cities' due to several reasons.

Tent cities compose temporary, more flexible and even portable spatial arrangements, compared to other informal housing practices. They claim mainly public and not private unused spaces as settlements, making it easier for municipalities to provide those spaces. Also, the process of developing tent cities to adequate living villages is relatively low-cost and, they can easily incorporate sustainable solutions in respect of structures, energy and food supply and thus form self-sufficient communities. Due to the extreme popularity the practice of tent cities has gained throughout the US cities, at the moment it composes a political movement that has succeeded to mobilize officials in the direction of considering its establishment and further development as an alternative for transitional housing for the homeless population. Last but not least, the proper development of such transitional settlements could potentially be useful in cases of emergency and receive crucial and mobile populations such as refugees.

Reasons to study tent cities

temporarity - ephemerality

flexible spatial arrangements

occupation of public spaces & properties

low-cost development

incorporation of sustainable living systems

potential to become self-sufficient communities

address to the homeless population

potential to be applied for crucial and mobile populations such as refugees

Table 01: List of reasons to research on Tent cities

EMERGENCE OF THE PRACTICE - BRIEF HISTORY

Since the rise of modern industrialism in the latter half of the 19th century homeless camps have been constant fixtures within US cities. After the Civil War, with the expansion of the national rail system and the new markets it opened up, did cities witness the emergence of large squatter camps on their outskirts, the so-called tramp colonies or jungles (Wyman 2010). Often located near train stations or along roads, many jungles became deeply rooted, serving as way stations for a new proletariat of migratory and seasonal workers (Herring 2015).

From the 'jungles' of the late 19th and early 20th centuries encampments re-named to the 'Hoovervilles' of the Great Depression (DePastino, 2003; Mitchell, 2012), after Herbert Hoover who was President of US due to the onset of the Depression and was widely blamed for it. 'Hoovervilles' developed in hundreds across the US during 1930s and they have provided poor people a space to build self-made shelters and communities. Among the cities that hosted these communities, Seattle in Washington is remarked to have eight Hoovervilles during that era (Berner 1992).

In recent decades, the widespread presence of urban street encampments has again re-emerged under the name 'Tent Cities' (Speer 2014). In general terms, 'Tent Cities' compose a microcosm of urbanization being carried out by the destitute of the 21st century (Heben 2014).

Like many informal settlements across the country, homeless encampments had existed for more than a decade, so we can assume that it is not a product of neither the Great Recession nor the uneven recovery (Herring 2015). Instead, the roots of mass informal encampments are first and foremost creatures of urban policy. They can be better described as reactions and partial solutions to multiple crises of ongoing penal and welfare restructuring of the local state dating back to the early 1980s (Herring & Lutz 2015).

DESCRIPTION OF THE ENCAMPMENTS

As 'tent city' can be defined a well-rooted homeless encampment, often with a larger number of inhabitants and some level of organizational structure. There is no set point at which an encampment becomes a tent city, rather it is an abstract label that is adopted by its inhabitants and the surrounding community (Heben 2014). Each manifestation of tent city is unique and differ significantly in terms of size, members profile, structure, organization, legal state and local support that might receive from the surrounding community.



Photo 06: Self-built house in Hoovervilles, in USA

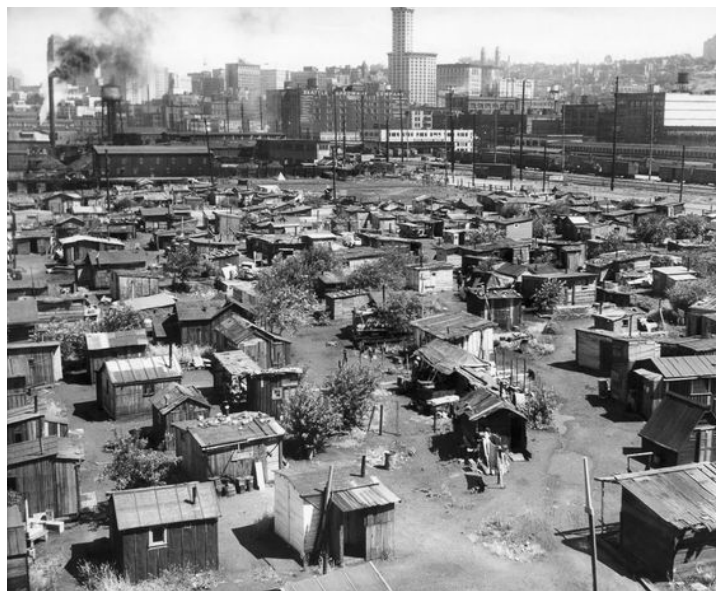


Photo 07: Hoovervilles, homeless informal settlements in USA during the Great Depression

Tent cities can range in size from two individuals to several hundred, all of whom live in a community with one another, and find shelter under tents, tarps, and other makeshift housing materials. The residents may consist of the chronic homeless, as well as more recent victims of the housing crisis or job loss. Similarly, the selected locations vary. They are located in vacant lots, under sheltered freeway underpasses, in wooded areas, in public parks, on other public lands, on church property or on privately donated land. (Loftus-Farren 2011). Homeless camps can be found in cities rich and poor, big and small, liberal and conservative (Herring 2015). They emerge both in cities experiencing growth and rapid gentrification and in those experiencing decline and disinvestment (Herring 2015; Herring & Lutz 2015). They range from the tech corridors of San Jose and Seattle, to the post-industrial outskirts of Detroit and Providence, to the college towns of Ann Arbor and Eugene (Herring 2015).

This fact indicates that the phenomenon of homelessness in the US is not dependent on territorial economic features or social class concentration on the same territories. On the contrary, it is suggested to be a result of a general scarcity of affordable housing and the incompetence of the national alternative housing system to include and satisfy all the unhoused population.

Another significant characteristic of tent cities is the different level of permanence of the structures. Though some tent cities have evolved into more permanent dwellings and others have been developed using old cars, trailers and other structures, many homeless encampments are less structurally permanent, consisting of actual tents and less secure building materials. The impermanence of the structures is not always a negative factor, especially where tent cities are used as an interim solution and local governments are working to improve affordable housing options (Loftus-Farren 2011).

The settlements are diverse both socially and formally, including self-described eco-villages, political occupations in city hall plazas, and makeshift campsites in church parking lots (Herring 2015).

Photo 08: Whoville, tent city in Eugene, Oregon



Photo 09: Right to Dream Too, tent city in Portland, Oregon

Photo 10: Tent City 3, hosted by University Congregational in Seattle, Washington



Photo 12: Dignity Village, homeless community in Portland, Oregon



Photo 11: Kenton Women's Village in Portland, Oregon



Photo 13: Community First!, homeless community in Austin, Texas

Some are unauthorized and survive with little support from the local community, while others receive considerable support from local governments, non-profits, and religious groups. Local governments, considering the tent cities development, might work to improve the safety of structures and the comfort of life for residents (Loftus-Farren 2011).

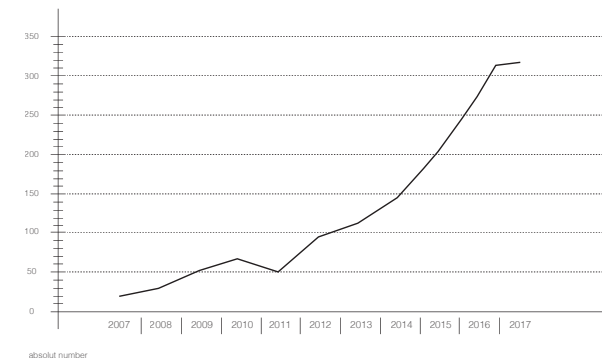
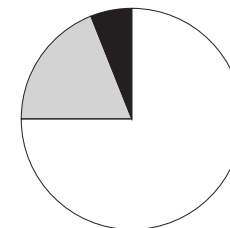


Diagram 09: Number of homeless encampments reported among 187 cities in USA ²⁴

Three-quarters of the reports which recorded the legal status of the encampments during the period 2007-2017 showed they were illegal, 4 percent were reported to be legal, 20 percent were reported to be semi-legal (tacitly sanctioned) (NLCHP 2017; Herring 2015).



legal encampments
 semi-legal encampments
 illegal encampments

Diagram 10: Legal state of homeless encampments among 187 cities in USA ²⁴

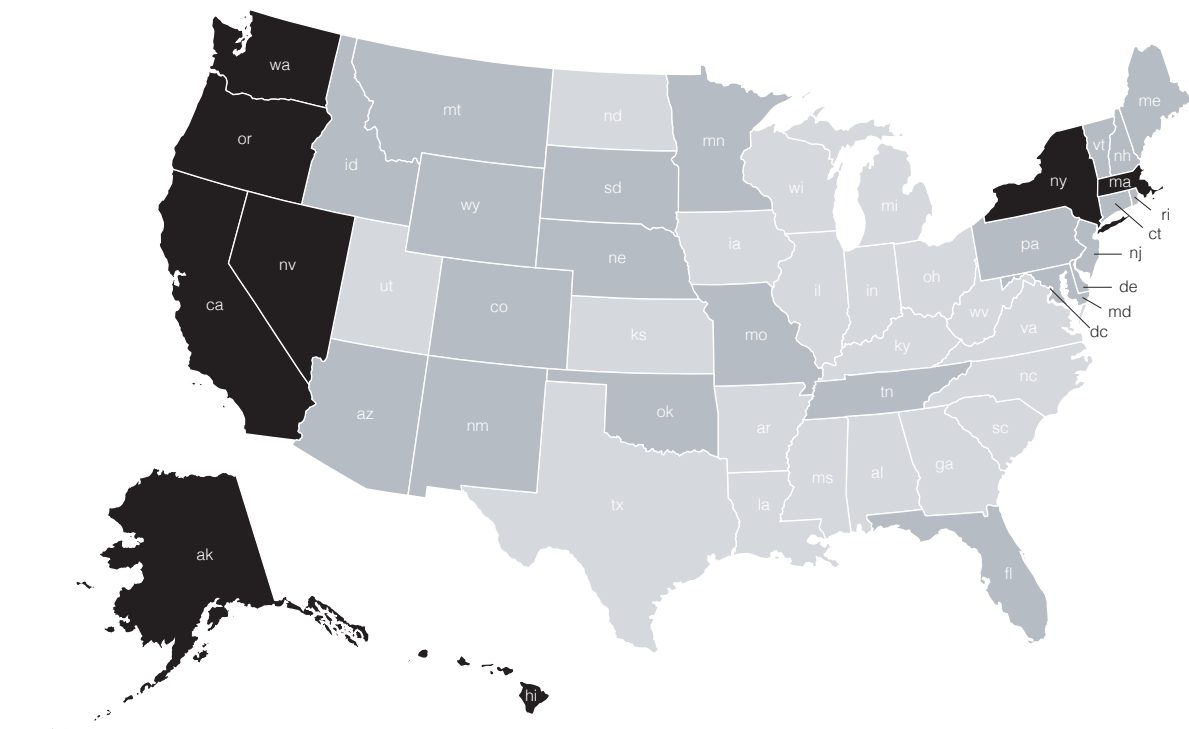
The maintenance and function of the most established cases is often supported by external partners through donations or funded by individuals, businesses, NGO's and other organizations and fundraising events. Often local businesses and professionals have donated and/or discounted their products and services. In some cases, residents might pay a program fee if or when they are able, some through a housing subsidy and some through their income source. Not being able to pay does not necessarily exclude a potential resident (Second Wind Cottages 2019). Other tent cities are permeated by non-monetary exchange principles and the contribution of the residents is offered in manners of performing functional and general works for the community (Speer 2014).

Moreover, the residents in many cases have promoted alternative aesthetics by creating diverse structures out of recycled materials and championing the self-made home as a work of art (Speer 2014).

Mass encampments, with fifty or more residents, have become increasingly common across America today. Unique homeless encampments were reported almost in every state. California had the highest number of reported encampments by far, but states as diverse as Iowa, Indiana, Louisiana, Michigan, Oregon, and Virginia each tallied significant numbers of reported encampments (Tent City, USA 2017). Since the turn of the millennium, more than three dozen cities have accommodated camps of this scale for a year or more (Tent City, USA; Herring 2015) while more than one-quarter of the encampments had been there for more than five years (NLCHP 2017).

Considering that tent cities have existed in the United States for decades and appear to have increased in size and prevalence since the start of the economic crisis, it seems reasonable to assume that they will not disappear in the near future (Loftus-Farren 2011). Rather, they are becoming semi-permanent features of the cities where they occur.

²⁴ Data are based in the 2017 Report of National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (see more in NLCHP 2017.).



less than 10 10-25 25-50

Diagram 11: Number of people experiencing homelessness per 10,000 people, by state, 2018

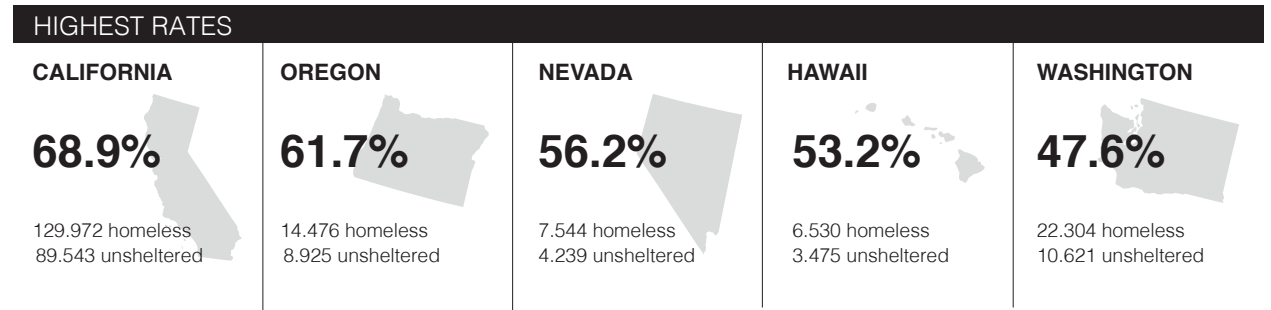


Diagram 12: States with the highest rates of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness, 2018

State	City	Tent City
Arizona	Tucson	Safe Park
California	Fresno	Village of Hope New Jack City and Little Tijuana
	Oakland	The Village
	Ontario	THSA
	Sacramento	Tent City in American River Safe Ground
	San Jose	The Jungle
	Ventura County	River Haven
Florida	St. Petersburg	Pinellas Hope Village
Illinois	Chicago	Tent City in Chicago
Michigan	Ann Arbor	Camp Take Notice
New Jersey	Camden	Transition Park
	Lakewood	Tent City in Lakewood
New Mexico	Bernalillo County	Tent City in Bernalillo County
	Las Cruces	Camp Hope
New York	Newfield	Second Wind Cottages
Oregon	Eugene	Opportunity Village Whoville
	Portland	Dignity Village Right to Dream Too
Tennessee	Fayette County	Freedom Village
Texas	Austin	Community First! Village
Washington	Olympia	Camp Quixote
	Seattle	Nickelsville Tent Cities n. 3 & 4
Wisconsin	Madison	Occupy Madison

Table 02: List of reported Tent Cities in USA by state and city



Photo 14: A poster designed by Seattle-based group, Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets



Photo 15: The Camden bench design in London

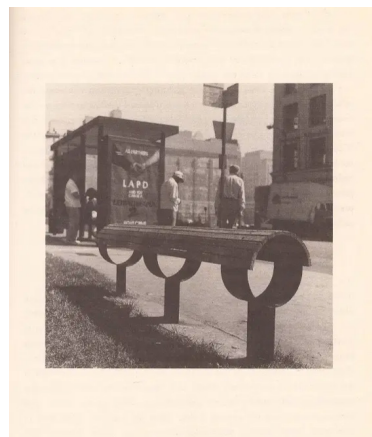


Photo 16: 'Bum-Proof' bus bench in L.A. (Davis, 2006)

REASONS FOR INITIATING THE PRACTICE

revitalization & penalizing policies

Over the past three decades, numerous cities across the globe have implemented 'quality of life' policing campaigns criminalizing the basic activities and behaviours of homeless individuals. Scholars have traced the rise of 'anti-social behaviour laws' that give police new authorities to expel homeless people from public spaces (Herring & Yarbrough 2015; Mitchell 1997; Vitale 2008), novel techniques of banishing homeless from entire districts (Beckett & Herbert 2009), new modes of surveillance (Flusty 2001), architectural interventions to prevent homeless loitering (Soja 2000; Davis 2006) and even bans on charitable provisions of food (Mitchell & Heynen 2009)—all measures designed to regulate visible poverty by means of spatial exclusion.

It was in the early 1980s that homelessness — or, the basic daily actions of people who cannot afford to rent or own a place to live — began to be increasingly viewed in criminal terms, and since then the trend has only accelerated. As the authors of *No Safe Place* (2014), a recent report on the criminalization of homelessness in America, put it:

"Imagine a world where it is illegal to sit down. Could you survive if there were no place you were allowed to fall asleep, to store your belongings, or to stand still? For most of us, these scenarios seem unrealistic to the point of being ludicrous. But, for homeless people across America, these circumstances are an ordinary part of daily life. . . Homeless people, like all people, must engage in activities such as sleeping or sitting down in order to survive. Yet, in communities across the nation, these harmless, unavoidable behaviours are treated as criminal activity under laws that criminalize homelessness".

In an attempt to get rid of the homeless population the majority of U.S. cities have now passed ordinances making it illegal, to camp, rest, loiter, sit, lie, or loaf in public places, to share food or sleep in cars (Wagner 2012; *No Safe Place* 2014; Herring 2015).

A recent study on the criminalization of "efforts to feed people in need" describes municipal laws that restrict or eliminate basic acts of civic compassion by prohibiting individuals or organizations to share food with homeless people without a permit, and by requiring that groups that distribute food meet strict safety regulations. Such policies constitute the fastest growing anti-homeless campaign in the country (Share no More 2014) and have been characterized by the urban geographer Don Mitchell as the "annihilation of space by law". By redefining what is acceptable behaviour in public space these laws seek simply to annihilate homeless people themselves. "We are creating a world in which a whole class of people simply cannot be, entirely because they have no place to be" (Mitchell 1997).

Many scholars have identified this trend as evidence of an emerging model of urban governance, through which the police are enlisted to 'purify' streets and sidewalks due to increasing pressure to redevelop and revitalize the urban core generating characterizations of a 'punitive' (Cohen 1979), "revanchist" (Smith 1996), 'post-justice' (Mitchell 2011) or 'post-welfare' city (Morgen & Maskovsky 2003). And since these efforts are usually enforced most vigorously in prime downtown areas, illegal camps usually crop up on the edges of the cities. It was well understood that the laws that applied downtown wouldn't be enforced on the edge — that you could (illegally) construct a shanty or put up a tent without citation while also (illegally) warming yourself by a fire, cooking a meal, having sex, urinating or defecating, drinking alcohol and taking drugs — all the usual activities of people who live in houses (Herring 2015).

To a significant degree today's tent cities are a shelf-help urban practice which response to these intensifying efforts to rid streets and parks of the evidence of homelessness — the evidence of our collective social failure. Tent City 3, Tent City 4 ²⁵

²⁵ In Seattle, in the early '90s, a local non-profit called Share/Wheel established a tent city to help people who had been displaced as a result of an anti-camping ban; today the group runs Tent City 3 and Tent City 4 (Herring 2015).

and Nickelsville ²⁶, in Seattle, Washington; Dignity Village and Right 2 Dream Too, in Portland, Oregon; Quixote Village, in Olympia, Washington; Safe Park, in Tucson, Arizona; and Occupy Madison Inc., in Madison, Wisconsin are some of the homeless shelf-helped communities in resistance to the increasingly punitive regulations. All have emerged in reaction to the criminalisation of destitution and have tight connections with local advocacy groups while some of them have registered as non-profit organisations. They articulate their agendas and organise their activities via websites or Facebook and unlike the squatter camps on the urban edges, the protest camps often stake out central and symbolic spaces (Herring 2015).

shelter conditions

Although the new tent cities have been shaped by anti-homeless laws, their growing ranks are the result as well of a long-term crisis in shelter management and policy. Several scholars have asserted a crisis of welfare provision in the form of perpetual shelter shortages and repulsive shelter arrangements that lead homeless people to prefer illegal encampments and accordingly advocates and city officials to recognize such encampments as legitimate shelter alternatives (Herring 2015; Herring & Lutz 2015).

The constant pressures on the short-term social service agencies, from meals to beds to showers to medical check-ups, point out the unmet shelter needs due to underfunded and understaffed facilities in U.S. (Herring 2015). Within the United States, remains a large gap between the number of homeless individuals and the availability and desirability of homeless shelters - a gap that has grown as a result of the recent economic crisis - aggregated in both emergency shelters and

²⁶ In 2008, homeless people and advocates pitched 150 bright pink tents in an industrial zone and dubbed it "Nickelsville," to protest the policies of then Mayor Greg Nickels. Today Nickelsville is a type 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a website, mailing list, and PayPal account claiming: "We are not simply homeless here, we are activists for the entire population of homeless in this city." (Herring 2015).

transitional housing programs. The lack of traditional shelters forces many homeless individuals to seek alternatives options, including tent cities (Loftus-Farren 2011). But the dysfunctions of the system go well beyond questions of capacity. As stated by Herring (2015) homeless campers affirm that the problem with municipal shelters is not simply the lack of available space but rather the strict and often depersonalised atmosphere they so often encountered (Herring 2015). Shelters usually impose a number of rules and restrictions for their residents that is not always possible to be followed because the habits and time schedules of the homeless people are shaped in a distance from the regular ordinary setup. In addition, shelters have been characterised by an individualistic, unfriendly atmosphere which lacks security over personal belongings and where violent conflicts often occur. Last but not least, shelters and transitional houses most of the times offer shared-accommodation solutions to their residents undermining the right of unhoused people to privacy. In general, shelters have been repeatedly characterised as controlled and surveilled spaces (Speer 2014; Loftus-Farren 2011; Herring & Lutz 2015).

Yet, homeless people living outside the shelter system, on city streets and in encampments, are also subject to spatial control by homeless shelters. For years, officials at local homeless shelters and service providers have successfully lobbied the city to evict the homeless encampments that surround their facilities, in part due to the perception that encampments are a financial liability, (Speer 2014) indicating that US homeless management system is tied to the logic of neoliberal poverty governance (Willse 2010). "The management of housing insecurity is itself an economic enterprise ... An actual elimination of housing insecurity and deprivation would also mean an end to the service and knowledge industries proliferating around managing and studying populations living without shelter" (Willse 2010: 174-175).

Neoliberal cities increasingly assign homeless governance to private shelter operators and housing developers (Speer 2014). In this way, the poor become objectified and they are seen as "assets" that can be

captured through marketized models (Roy 2010; Speer 2014). The U.S. privatised welfare programs amount to a "vast redirection of public money for corporate benefit" Harvey (2005: 156) creating a poverty industry that sustain a vast and bloated non-profit sector (Funciello 1994).

In most U.S. cities, the primary mechanism for homeless management is composed of private corporations and non-profits organizations that collectively request and allocate funding and work to create a comprehensive vision for homeless management, Unfortunately, the available models of combating homelessness are rooted in privatization, competitive funding, and profit, rather than compassion or care for the homeless. Neoliberalism is so entrenched in the American poverty management system that it is often impossible to shift into new modes of governance. In this way, institutions devoted to compassion and care for the homeless become stuck in the neoliberal pattern of promoting their own private interests (Speer 2014).

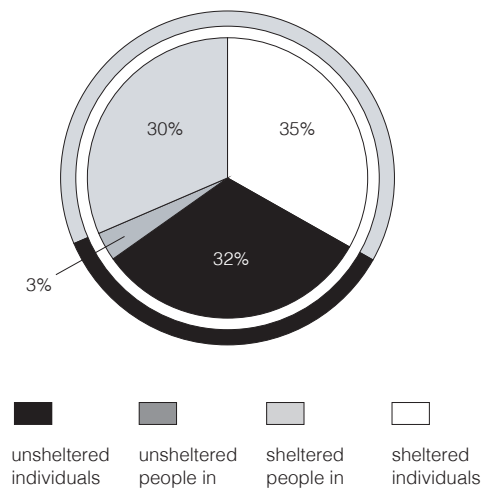


Diagram 13: Homelessness by household type and sheltered status, 2018.

As a result, the choice for living in encampments can be interpreted once again as a response to the mechanisms of the neoliberal governance. Urban policy in U.S. apart from deleting every trace of poverty out of the revitalised city centres, aspires even to eliminate all remnants of spatial freedom, by monitoring and disturbing any kind of homeless' behaviour that is not aligned with the model of the shelter provision system.

economic crisis

A secondary factor, yet significant, for the growing sizes and the expansion of the tent cities today is the recent financial crisis and the consequent housing crisis in USA. The number of urban encampments has increased since the 2008 housing crisis, with family and child homelessness on the rise (Hunter et al. 2014). In the period 2007-2017 the number of encampments drew a 1,3 percent increase in the number of unique homeless encampments reported in the media (Tent City, USA 2017). Based on a review of news reports, during that period the authors identified more than one-hundred camps in cities across the nation (Speer 2014; Tent City, USA 2017).

In US in total, between 2007 and 2008, 1.6 million people found themselves in a homeless shelter for some period of time. Furthermore, during the same one-year period, the number of homeless families (compared to individuals) increased. Also, the number of sheltered homeless individuals in suburban and rural areas increased by 9 percent between 2007 and 2008 (Loftus-Farren 2011).

According to Herring (2015) most of the economic crisis affected population that resided tent cities during that period argued that their salaries were not enough to sustain conventional housing and at the same time higher than the determined limits for subsidised housing. For this category of the population the pro-existent tent cities seemed to be the only solution left for shelter.

Although the economic recession proliferated the numbers of dwellers of the tent cities several articles (Herring 2015; Herring & Lutz 2015; Speer 2014)

argue that the economic crisis is not a reason for the creation of such communities but only a factor for the expansion of the phenomenon.

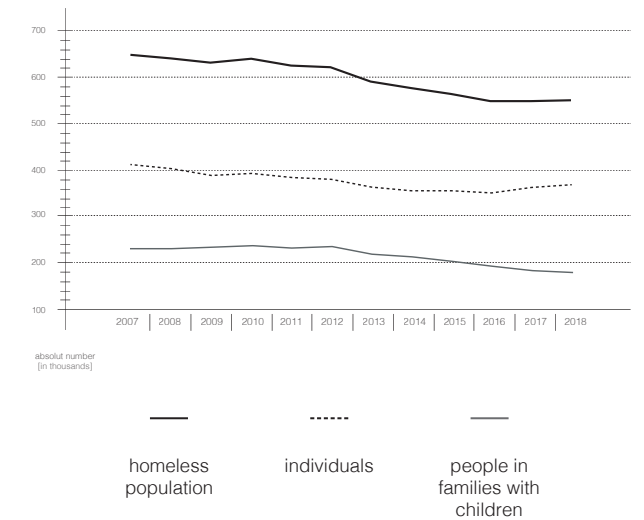


Diagram 14: Estimates of people experiencing homelessness by household type and year.

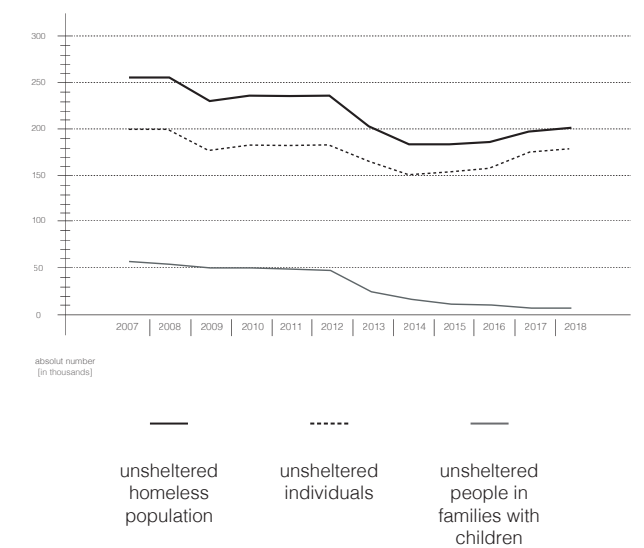


Diagram 15: Estimates of unsheltered people experiencing homelessness by household type and year.

BENEFITS FOR TENT CITIES RESIDENTS

Tent cities provide considerable benefits to homeless individuals that are absent in homeless shelters or life on the streets. Among the benefits²⁷ of living in encampments instead of shelters, residents mentioned privacy, autonomy on everyday schedule, security of their belongings and the chance to stay with their family, partners and pets. But for most homeless campers the really crucial difference had less to do with personal comfort than with the more ineffable matter of dignity²⁸. To this point, we should consider the names of the legal encampments: 'Dignity Village', 'Village of Hope', 'Community First!', 'Right 2 Dream too', 'Opportunity Village'. Herring (2015) and Loftus-Farren (2011) describe that camps are preferred than shelters primarily because can provide residents a sense of community, stability, increased self-reliance and most importantly the potential for self-governance and self-organization.



community

Several of the benefits associated with tent cities can be considered within the concept of community. Tent city residents gain neighbours and friends when they join an encampment. This is so valuable to tent city residents and stands in stark contrast to the isolation of life as an individual on the streets (Loftus-Farren 2011).

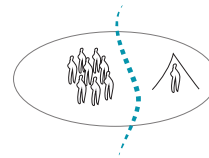
In contrast to most homeless shelters, tent cities also provide residents the opportunity to live with partners. Living with a partner can be very difficult within the shelter system, as shelters generally segregate men from women unless a couple has children, in which case they are housed as a family. One homeless encampment in Ventura, California, was created in part as a direct response to the rules against couples and pets that exist in many homeless shelters (Tent Cities in America 2010; Loftus-Farren 2011).

²⁷ "Out here in the camp I at least have a bit of the freedom I'd been waiting for those twelve years." : Geoff, a forty-four-year-old African American at Sacramento Safe Ground (Herring 2015)

"It may only be a tent, but this is the only privacy I can afford. When I first became homeless it drove me crazy, being out in public in parks or cafés all day, and then coming back to the shelter to sleep in public with no privacy. When I zip up my tent, I can read, watch a movie, do whatever. I can store my things here, so I don't have to lug around a cart of stuff all day, and I know it's safe. It's my last piece of space, and the shelter doesn't give you that." : Tony, a thirty-seven-year-old white man at Seattle's Tent City 3 (Herring 2015)

"I camp here because it's the only way I can stay with my family. My social worker wanted me to go into the shelter, but if I did that I'd have to give up my dog who I've had for seven years, and me and my boyfriend would have to stay at different places. These guys are all I got." : Carol, forty-nine, a white resident of F-Street Camp in Fresno (Herring 2015)

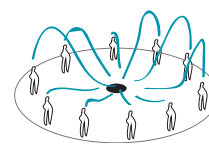
²⁸ "In the shelter you're forced into dependence. You're served food, people clean up after you, and you have no control over your day-to-day schedule. In the Village, we're not a burden to anyone." : Brad, sixty, longtime truck driver, resident of Village of Hope (Herring 2015)



autonomy

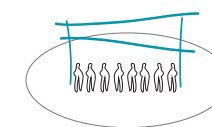
Another benefit offered by tent cities is the chance for greater autonomy. This element of autonomy allows residents a measure of independence unavailable within the shelter system (Loftus-Farren 2011).

According to Loftus-Farren (2011) the residents of a tent city in Oregon have described the shelter system as an oppressive, depressive, repressive environment. Others have stated that in shelters there are mandatory wake up times and bed times, as well as specifically allotted shower hours and several other restrictive rules. Undeniably the extent of freedom and autonomy is much greater than that offered within the shelter system. Other members of encampments have expressed a deep sense of self-reliance and individualism, and a strong distaste for reliance on government institutions.



self-governance

The sense of autonomy that many residents feel in encampments does not mean that tent cities lack rules. Rather, in many tent cities residents have created participatory systems of self-governance that allow individuals to shape the contours of their own community. Most tent cities have restrictions on conduct, that each of the residents should sign and follow. In many cases such restrictions are self-determined against drug and alcohol use (Loftus-Farren 2011).



political organization

The combination of community and autonomy can also foster increased political mobilization and participation. Residents are in constant advocacy of their right to housing and they organize and support their right to establish permanent homeless encampments and communities as a solution by communication with city and state government leaders. Similarly, other encampments have engaged with the public, government, and other tent cities through use of wikis and websites. These examples illustrate the organizational and political benefits that can also attach to tent cities (Speer 2014; Loftus-Farren 2011).

Recent mass encampments had initially occupied symbolic spaces of the city to attract political and media attention to the lack of affordable housing and criminalization of homelessness. By occupying under-utilized city land that could be used for affordable housing or visible public spaces encampments seek to draw attention to and politicize the issue of homelessness. (Herring & Lutz 2015). As stated by Mitchell (2012), tent cities today provide access to uncontrolled space and an opportunity for people to voice their unique political and social demands (Mitchell 2012; Speer 2014).

All the large camps of Seattle involve organizing meetings, rallies, sit-ins, fundraisers and other activist repertoires aimed against displacement, dispersion, criminalization, poor shelters and lack of affordable housing (Herring & Lutz 2015). In 2006, campers in St. Petersburg, Florida formed "Operation Coming Up" in protest against the lack of available shelter. Homeless campers demanded public bathrooms, safe places to sleep, and an end to arrests for life-sustaining needs (Hunter et al. 2014; Speer 2014).

'TENT CITIES' COMPARED TO 'INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS'

A point that should be clarified here is that despite the fact that tent cities could be arguably counted as an informal housing solution and even as arrangements of informal settlements, they differ significantly from what is traditionally called 'informal settlement' or 'slum'.

To start with, an important difference is detected between the main purposes of the two practices and consequently the location where they take place as well as the permanence of each settlement. Informal settlements have traditionally been shaped by the most poor populations in problematic, undesired and often peripheral areas of cities globally, as districts of permanent residence where also informal economic activities are held to support the livelihoods of the residents. On the contrary, tent communities have initially emerged in US as transitional settlements, occupying strategical zones that would facilitate the mobility of temporal workers (Herring 2015). Recent tent cities, organised by the homeless and supported by activist groups and other organisations, arose also in strategical locations for their purpose. They manifested in popular cities and occupied central public spaces aiming to protest for social and economic inequality and claim free space in the city for the temporary settling of the homeless population. Today, "tent cities are Americans' de facto waiting room for affordable and accessible housing...the tent constitutes a political anti-statement, a temporary escape from the sprawl of modern life, and a valuable lifeline for those edged out of a home against their will..." (Lumpp 2013). Accordingly, it can be argued that 'slums' compose permanent, long-term sets of habitation where often governmental interventions seek to improve the existing living conditions, while tent encampments make up transitional, short-term settlements for the homeless population until a permanent and decent housing solution will be found by governments. At last, despite the manifestation of tent cities as protest demonstrations in central

and visible locations, their establishment by official authorities is generally accompanied by spatial segregation in unwanted and problematic areas too.

The reflection of duration can be further demonstrated in the physical configuration of the two types of settlements. Although both informal housing solutions have emerged as a strategy for economic survival when residents construct and set their homes themselves and housing generally takes a "nonstandard form" in comparison to typical homes, the scale and permanence of 'slums' - or 'colonias' in the US - are much greater than those of tent cities (Loftus-Farren 2011). Even if some tent cities have evolved into more permanent dwellings, and others have been developed including old cars, trailers, and other structures, many homeless encampments are still less structurally permanent and consist of actual tents and less secure building materials. In comparison, 'slum' residents build fairly permanent homes over time, as resources become available. Despite the use of sub-standard materials many families eventually have improved their dwellings into durable, much more stable and sometimes unexpectedly well-maintained structures (Loftus-Farren 2011; Krishna et al. 2014; Khalifa 2010). However, the impermanence of the structures is not always a negative factor, especially where tent cities are used as an interim solution.

Another significant distinction between informal settlements and tent cities is the legal circumstances under which they have developed. Many informal settlements were established in purchased property (Loftus-Farren 2011), while tent cities are usually set in public space or donated property. In many cases, informal settlements were established when it was still legal to purchase rural land for residential purposes, even when such land lacked access to public services or provision of basic infrastructure (Loftus-Farren 2011). Later on, legal occupational status was given also to many slum dwellers in the hope that they would be more willing to improve their own circumstances (Mahabir et al. 2016). As a result, local government actors have few regulatory tools and can exert less control over the development of slum settlements compared

to tent settlements which have developed in non-purchased land and are more integrated in the municipalities. Nevertheless, due to the lack of secure tenure tent cities might relocate every certain periods of time²⁹ and are more likely subjects of forced evictions in comparison to slums, where there is no similar threat for the residents (Loftus-Farren 2011; Krishna et al. 2014).

A further distinction can be found on the populations that these two informal types of housing address to. While tent cities consider to host homeless and often economical marginal populations, many slums and other informal settlements have developed over time into well-serviced neighbourhoods so that the cities they occupy are economically unsustainable without their populations. (Dovey & King 2011) Besides, the idea that only the impoverished populations seek for informal housing solutions, is disproved by the recent tent cities, where apart from the chronically homeless, a number of nomads, anarchists, and survivalists have chosen to live on the fringes of mainstream society for as long as society has forgotten them (Lumpp 2013). Today, also a big amount of low or middle income families reside tent cities after they were affected by the economic crisis (Herring 2015; Herring & Lutz 2015; Speer 2014).

Moreover, the living conditions differ between slums and tent cities. The term 'slum' can refer to informal areas suffering from problems of accessibility, narrow streets, the absence of vacant land and open spaces, very high residential densities, and insufficient infrastructure and services (Khalifa 2010). The complexity of such settlements coupled with their scale often makes it difficult for improvement interventions to be operated. In contrast, the ephemeral character of tent cities along with the lack of land ownership leaves more opportunity and flexibility to the communities on how they arrange

and re-arrange their settlements. Yet, the lack of proper infrastructure and basic services renders a common problem for tent cities as well (Herring 2015; Herring & Lutz 2015; Loftus-Farren 2011; Speer 2014), but the potential support by local governments to improve the living conditions in such communities is much easier to accomplish. Also, slums are frequently characterised by squalor, overcrowding, high crime rates, and a lack of basic human needs (Lumpp 2013), when tent cities originally defend the right of their residents to privacy and the majority of them follow self-designed conduct regulations against negative social behaviours and use of substances. In addition, tent cities are communities with primary purpose to sustain the living of their residents - through the provision of shelter and nourishment - while the dwellings as well as the surrounding spaces in slums are used for numerous supplementary informal economic activities (Sheuya 2008).

Last but not least, a significant difference that have been identified among a number of established tent cities is their small environmental impact and the sense of community. Tent cities are a pragmatic way to widen the safety net for any community of people at immediate risk of losing their home and though they are not a long-term solution, they may prove to be sustainable. One of the most notable examples is Dignity Village in Portland, Oregon, which has evolved from a traditional tent city into an "eco-village," along with help from local non-profit organisations and community donations. Dignity Village considers itself a part of the Green Movement. The houses are made from recycled materials, the amenities include an organic farm, a compost toilet and waste removal and recycling provided by the city. "The goal is simple: to create a safe, sanitary place to live autonomously" (Lumpp 2013). Generally, it is much easier for tent cities to receive support by local organisations on issues of shared management compared to slums, due to their nature.

²⁹ Tent City relocations can vary between 3 months (Tent cities 3 & 4 in Seattle, Washington) and 5 years ('Right To Dream Too' in Portland, Oregon) depending on the leasing agreement with the municipality or the land owner.

DIFFERENCES	SIMILARITIES
<i>purpose for initiating the practice</i>	<i>lack of proper infrastructure</i>
<i>lifetime of settlements</i>	<i>lack of basic services</i>
<i>scale & permanence of structures</i>	<i>segregated & undesired locations</i>
<i>property tenure</i>	
<i>environmental impact</i>	
<i>flexibility on living conditions improvement</i>	
<i>addressed populations</i>	
<i>delinquency evidence</i>	

Table 03: Comparison between Tent cities & Informal settlements

To sum up, people without shelter simply request personalised, autonomous, non-controlled and non-secluded spaces to live, eventually the same spaces that everyone desires as their home. The fact that the real-estate market in modern cities doesn't leave any affordable chance for housing for low-income individuals or families or for those who are not able to pay; but also the leading approach of the social care policy on providing scheduled and shared housing to these groups has established an unequal response on the housing conditions that different socio-economic groups deserve. The people that withstand this principal system and refuse to accept the existing social care solutions, show up in public spaces by occupying that spaces and independently form informal encampments as a DIY urban practice that express better what homeless people consider as home.

Tent cities demonstrate how, when formal systems fail to meet the most basic needs of all citizens, people will inevitably develop their own solutions. And with a closer look, one will find that these communities often embody positive dynamics that have been forgotten by the formal systems that they replace - including personal autonomy, mutual aid, direct democracy, tolerance, and resourceful strategies for living with less. In beginning to think about a future with more sustainable housing strategies, these are some of the core values that should guide us (Heben 2014).

Usually, homeless gatherings tend to be small, movable and often hidden in 'invisible' urban spaces. Nevertheless, the practice of 'tent cities' illustrates how these modest gatherings under the proper organisation and encouragement can develop in large, established and overt claims for available space and decent housing conditions for everyone.

The focus in the next paragraph is on those homeless encampments that through different means have attained a certain level of permanence and have grown beyond the size of a few individuals. It is in these more established and visible tent cities that the benefits of communal living can be most clearly seen and also where the homeless have the chance to express strongly their desires and autonomously participate in the design decisions for their standards of housing. Often these examples exhibit more permanent structures and accompanied facilities and quest for permanent legalization. Nevertheless, it is also often the case that these larger encampments exhibit many of the drawbacks and difficulties associated with informal housing, but also that their potential authorization may come along with not so well-considered regulations.

Responses on Tent cities

Regardless of the prominent nature of the contemporary urban policy, it is far too simple to conclude that city managers and developers are only interested in squeezing money out of the downtown landscape and in the process they dismantle homeless occupations or seclude homeless people in suburban areas.

On the contrary there have been several official reactions supporting the demands and claims of the homeless. As tent cities in the US have remerged in the public view, growing in size and numbers, reactions both within the general public and between local governments have been varied. The varied responses may be partially explained by the varied nature of tent cities themselves (Loftus-Farren 2011).

Some individuals perceive tent cities as a sign of ingenuity and innovation while others point to the inability of local governments to provide social care for their homeless populations stressing the injustice of leaving the homeless to live in substandard conditions. Still others emphasize the blight and nuisance that homeless encampments can bring upon surrounding neighbourhoods (Loftus-Farren 2011).

PROHIBITION OF TENT CITIES

Local communities and government officials have frequently responded to the increasing prevalence and visibility of homeless encampments with distaste and threats of eviction. Specifically, many local governments have expanded the use of traditional policies that criminalise homelessness (Loftus-Farren 2011) to dismantle ²⁹ camps and evict their residents (Herring 2015). As Speer (2014) states most of the evictions were devastating.

²⁹ Tent City in Fresno, Camp Hope in Ontario, American River in Sacramento, the Slough in Stockton, the Bulb in Albany — are a few of the camps that have been evicted, just in California, in the past few years (Herring 2015).

In many cases, local residents in the neighbourhoods that show high concentration of homeless camps are disturbed and worried that the vicinity with the camps will decrease the area's property values, asking thereby for their neighbourhoods to be 'revitalised' (Speer, 2014).

Many local governments have turned also to health and safety codes (Loftus-Farren 2011) in order to prevent the development of tent cities. Sanitation, and habitability concerns have been motivations for the closure of several tent cities (Seelye 2009; Loftus-Farren 2011). These concerns range from the absence of running water or proper means for sewage disposal to lack of electricity and the structural stability of dwellings. Apart from the matter that lack of proper infrastructure can result in widespread health hazards, advocates address also the injustice of relegating impoverished individuals to substandard living conditions (Loftus-Farren 2011).

Furthermore, in many US cities, social stigma against homeless encampments is tied to a representation of them as filthy and ugly, and against their residents as criminal and mentally ill. The perception of insecurity within and around tent cities usually give officials the excuse to remove encampments from visible spaces and spatially seclude homeless populations in institutions, jails or remote areas, when at the same time ensure the representations of cities centres as clean, safe and attractive to consumers. These representations drive policy makers to consider homeless spaces as tolerable only if they are easily surveilled, segregated, and invisible to the consuming public, fact that leads to their systemic marginalisation and the generation of inefficient shelter and housing facilities (Speer 2014).

As a result, many cities are responding with punitive law enforcements. More specifically an attempt for a national survey of policies on encampments documented in a Report by the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty in 2017 recorded that among 187 cities in US, 33 percent prohibit camping city-wide, and 50 percent prohibit camping in particular public places. Also, only 50 percent have either a formal or informal procedure for evicting or allowing

encampments. A mere of five cities (2.7 percent) have some requirement that alternative housing or shelter will be offered after the removal of an encampment, and only 20 (11 percent) have ordinances or formal policies requiring notice prior to clearing encampments and storage provisions for the possessions of the residents after the encampment is evicted (NLCHP 2017).

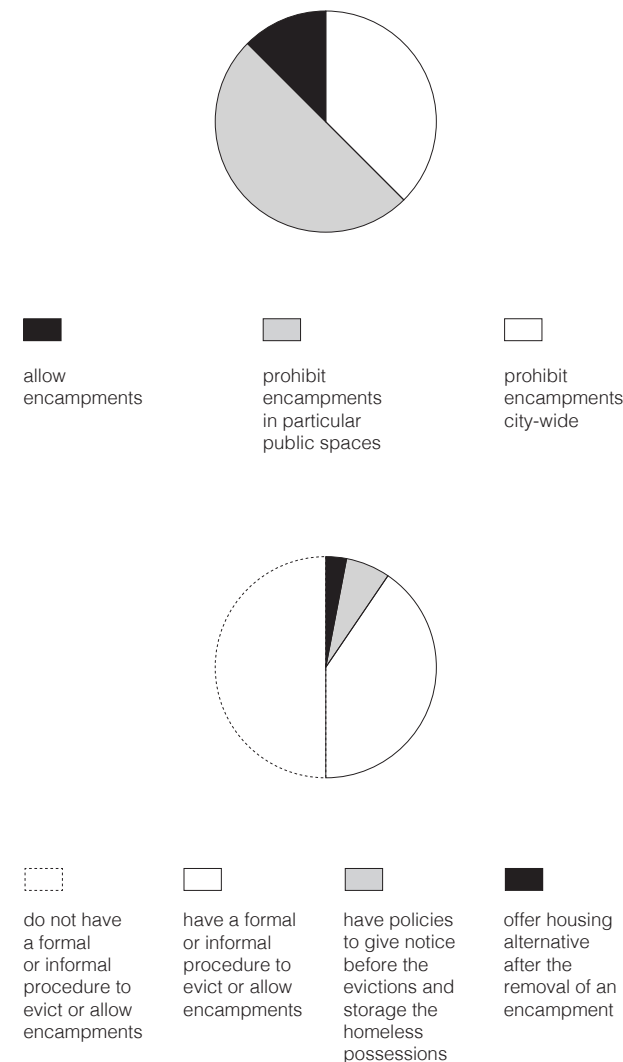


Diagram 16: Ratio of policies on homeless encampments among 187 cities in USA ²⁴

According to the same analysis, western cities have more formal policies than any other region of the country and are more likely to provide notice and storage (NLCHP 2017).

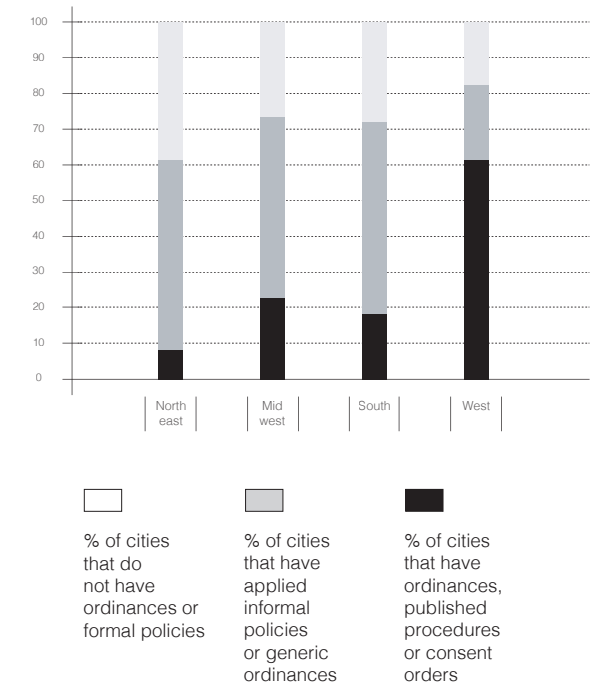


Diagram 17: Geographical differences on local ordinances addressing the treatment of homeless encampments among 187 cities in USA ²⁴

Evictions of tent cities flow from multiple social, economic, environmental and political pressures that should be addressed. However, while society seeks to 'rehabilitate' people, homeless in response resist by asserting the counter narrative of campers as victims of police violence and brutality rather than criminals. By re-emerging in public and re-occupying urban spaces (Speer 2014) they apply exceptional paradigms of self-sufficient and self-governed communities and with the support of solidary groups they attempt to eliminate the deficiencies of their settlements in the first place. In this way they fight the held misconceptions for the homeless population.

SUPPORT ON TENT CITIES DEVELOPMENT

Although many cities have sought to remove the informal settlements of the homeless, often forcefully, others have responded with toleration on the existence of the camps.

Following the vast expansion of tent cities in the American landscape, a large defence movement has emerged in several US cities by political and activist groups, social support organisations and academic studies claiming the development of tent cities as an advantageous alternative of transitional social care provision. For instance, some years ago in Seattle³⁰, Washington, planners acknowledged the tent cities run by Share/Wheel as a “viable temporary living option” and “lower cost alternative to more permanent and costly housing options” (Herring 2015). Based also on Loftus-Farren (2011) tent cities generally require less economic support from local governments than do homeless shelters and other forms of subsidised housing.

Therefore, proponents proclaim toleration for the illegal camps and initiate dialogues for their authorisation while they continuously organise campaigns to create better, more substantial, and sometimes even permanent alternatives by tackling the potential drawbacks of the current encampments. Advocates further argue that providing the homeless with legal, self-organised, and self-sufficient spaces will improve the public’s perception of a population often

perceived as disorderly or dependent.

As a result a number of American cities have adopted experimental approaches other than arbitrary evictions or criminalisation, or at least they seek for new ways to address the phenomenon in order to lessen the number and negative consequences of encampment evictions (NLCHP 2017).

Although a cohesive national strategy and legislation on how to integrate tent cities both in the transitional social care system and in the socio-spatial realm of contemporary cities is still lacking, there is a large number of official or un-official policies implemented on local scale that seek to address concerns about homeless encampments more effectively, more humanely, and at lower cost (NLCHP 2017).

The main concept of the new wave of policies focuses on the toleration and authorisation of the informal encampments, until more efficient and adequate housing solutions will be realised. In some more progressive cases, and often in areas that face chronic difficulties to tackle homelessness, policies seek to integrate homeless encampments as permanent urban features by assisting their development, improving the living conditions and provide social support to their residents.

Despite the fact that few cities have actually legalised homeless encampments, there is a number of state and municipal ordinances (NLCHP 2017) with the use of which various cities and states in the USA try to support the existence and further development of tent cities, and they are listed below.

Policy	State / City
Authorisation of religious organisations to host encampments in their properties	State of Washington, Fresno, CA, St.Petersburg, FL
Revision of zoning laws to permit temporary encampments on public or private property for short-term period	Seattle, WA
Permission on city commission to consent for temporary encampments on city property	Sarasota, FL
Prohibition of anti-camping law enforcement in public spaces unless a transitional housing offer is first made	Sarasota, FL, Indianapolis, IN
Authorisation of encampments unless criminal activity/ health code violation occurs	Milwaukee, WI
Commitment of municipalities to ensure adequate provision for sanitation and hygiene needs in existing encampments through ordinances	San Francisco, CA, Seattle, WA
Requirement of alternative housing to be offered for all residents before an encampment eviction	Indianapolis, IN, San Francisco, CA, Charleston, WV, Clearwater, FL, Miami, FL, Wichita, KS
Authorisation of encampments if shelters are in full capacity	Santa Cruz, CA, Boise, ID
Authorisation of encampments until new units of low-income housing will be built to cover homeless population	Los Angeles, CA
Integration of encampments as permanent transitional housing alternatives with adequate hygiene conditions and co-located services in the property	Las Cruces, NM
Permission of camping during overnight hours in certain public properties	Vancouver, WA
Permission of limited safe parking options for those who are living in vehicles	Eugene, OR, Los Angeles, CA, San Luis, CA, Santa Barbara, CA, San Diego, CA
Initiation of pilot programs that permit/subsidise individuals to host tiny-houses for homeless in their private property	Seattle, WA, Portland OR
Authorisation of religious and non-profit organisations to establish tiny-house villages in public or private property	State of Oregon, Austin, TX
Permission of construction of stable and mobile tiny-houses (ADU - accessory dwelling unit regulation)	State of Oregon

³⁰ SHARE/WHEEL is the combined advocacy efforts of the Seattle-Housing and Resource Effort (SHARE) and the Women’s Housing Equality and Enhancement League (WHEEL). It constitutes a self-help group of homeless and formerly homeless men and women that manages indoor shelters and tent cities in King County.

Table 04: Local ordinances that support the development of Tent cities in USA

As we can see today, cities and states across the US have turned to sanctioned encampments through several types of zoning ordinances (Herring 2015; NLCHP 2017), including the adequate provision for sanitation and hygiene needs on the sites (NLCHP 2017; Speer 2014). However, integrating encampments policies are still in an initial stage and vary significantly from state to state. For instance, in New Mexico permanent encampments are allowed with a co-located service centre, while Washington State permits religious organisations to temporarily host encampments on their property. In Seattle, WA, encampments can use private or public property through short-term leasing contracts, while in Vancouver, WA, limited overnight self-sheltering encampments are permitted on city property (NLCHP 2017).

Furthermore, in order to address homelessness some local governments have at least ensured clear notice in the event of encampments displacement as well as provision of adequate housing alternatives and storage of belongings. In other cases, states provide limited safe parking options for those who are living in vehicles and pilot programs that permit, or even pay for, residents to host 'tiny homes' in back yards to house persons experiencing homelessness (NLCHP 2017).

Analysing the policies that have been implemented in most cases is clear that the authorisation of encampments throughout American cities have two main intentions.

On one side, some policies aim to keep the homeless population in safe districts where individuals can meet their basic needs and store their possessions legally, until opportunities for more affordable housing or adequate shelter where they can be relocated will be available. Instead, other policies intent to sustain the existing encampments and by improving their living conditions, such as creating connections with adjacent infrastructure systems and building safer and more permanent structures, to support their evolution into efficient, low-cost and more sustainable communities.

In both cases and although it is clear that not all the aforementioned policies address primarily and solely to homeless people and their gatherings in camps, it is certain that the existence of a more tolerant legislation on urban encampments has allowed external organisations, local communities and individuals to get involved and support the development of homeless communities. In this way it became easier to mobilize wider crowds and seek in more organized ways for physical or economic assistance to advance the existing encampments or build more adequate settlements for the homeless.

Consequently, the experimentation with new approaches of urban forms through the temporary or permanent authorisation of homeless encampments has resulted in myriad different opportunities and typologies of affordable housing, while it pointed out more effective and considerate ways on how transitional housing services should be designed.

Whether this is the primary intention or just the result of a combination of established policies which followed an era of brutal evictions and multiple cries of the homeless population for accessible and safe place in the city, makes a little difference, as a step has already been done towards a more just socio-spatial distribution of the contemporary urban space.

Some examples of established improved homeless settlements are presented in next paragraph in more detail.

TENT CITY URBANISM

Regarding the policies towards the authorisation of homeless tent cities, it is worth to mention another point which is mainly listed in the last three policies of the table 04 and refer to the right to construct tiny-houses and even develop tiny-house villages.

The initiative of the tiny-house movement has been initiated by the state of Oregon and can be traced back to 1997 when Portland debuted a progressive ADU (accessory dwelling unit) regulation, allowing homeowners to build tiny-houses in their backyards or adjacent to their houses by right (Stephens, 2018).

This move helped to create a sustainable and small space design culture which combined with the sharply rising costs of housing and the city's quirky sensibilities, has sky-rocketed tiny-house living in Portland and has triggered a new spreading phenomenon - that of 'tiny house communities' - in several cities of Oregon and other proximate states such as Washington, California, New Mexico, Texas but also in New York and Wisconsin (Johnson, 2014; Stephens, 2018). Tiny-house living is overall a social movement that promotes financial prudence, economic safety, shared community experiences, and a shift in consumerism-driven mindsets (Kilman, 2016) to create more conscious and self-sufficient communities.

The recent financial crisis fueled the growth of the tiny-house movement offering an affordable option to a vast part of the population that lost their homes. During the same period and the simultaneous growing phenomenon of 'tent cities' several encampments formed around such communities, initiating a dialogue on implementing tiny-house villages as a solution to homelessness.

Since then, the relevant legislation has assisted a number of American cities to contribute to the solution of shelter and affordable housing crisis by offering the opportunity to their citizens to live a more simple, cheap and sustainable life. A number of religious organisations and non-profits are more and more interested to create coalitions and use their

properties for the development of such communities for the homeless (Stephens, 2018).

With their low-cost and relative ease of construction, tiny-house communities have been tested as solutions for the homeless in Seattle, WA, Olympia, WA, Portland, OR, Eugene, OR, Fresno, CA, Austin, TX, Ithaca, NY, St.Petersburg, FL and other cities. While such communities originally lacked electricity and heat, non-profits have stepped in to help provide amenities (Lewis, 2017).

Perhaps the most ambitious proposal into this direction has been initiated by the urban planner and designer Andrew Heben (2014) by introducing the concept of 'Tent City Urbanism' which explores the intersection of the 'democratic tent cities' organized by the unhoused and the 'tiny house movement' led by people looking to simplify their lives by downsizing their environmental footprint. In his concept, Heben promotes the local support of tent cities and the progression from unsanctioned camps to sanctioned tiny house villages, as well as the physical and social organization that occurs along the way. Heben defends 'Tent City Urbanism' as the key solution for infilling the growing gap between the street and conventional housing options.

The tiny house villages represent cottage-houses communities built by their residents, volunteers and skilled builders with the support of local governments, external organisations and social service institutions. A tiny house in the US can be any residential structure under 400sqm. The communities usually include sharing facilities but offer the privacy and character of a single-family home. They often incorporate renewable energy systems, agricultural activities and water management systems so that they create a sustainable and self-sufficient environment for their residents.

They present an opportunity to not only address the cost and over-sized nature of our limited existing housing options, but also to rethink the social isolation that it has come to embody. By building small and sharing resources within a village model, financial costs and environmental impact are minimized while opportunities for casual social interaction

are maximized. This low-cost housing option can potentially appeal to a vibrant mix of people blurring the line between the housed and the unhoused (Heben 2014).

All in all, pressures for the authorisation and experimentation with tent cities by advocacy groups has led US local governments to implement strategies that often neither over-regulate tent cities, such that they cannot develop at all, nor they permit their unlimited development, as is often seen in slums. Rather, local governments use the proximity of homeless encampments in order to improve their conditions and provide assistance to their residents, while they adjust local legislation so that they can foster an environment in which homeless encampments can easily find support and evolve to more advanced and self-sufficient communities. Like that, the improved homeless settlements can be a temporary stepping-stone towards more permanent housing solutions. In such manner local governments ostensibly respect the right of every person in safe, accessible and legal place to be and store belongings until permanent housing is found, but also honor the decision of the unsheltered to reject the unsuccessful current shelter provision system and form their own ephemeral communities.

Photo 17: The Tiny House project of Opportunity Village, in Eugene, Oregon (Davis, 2006)



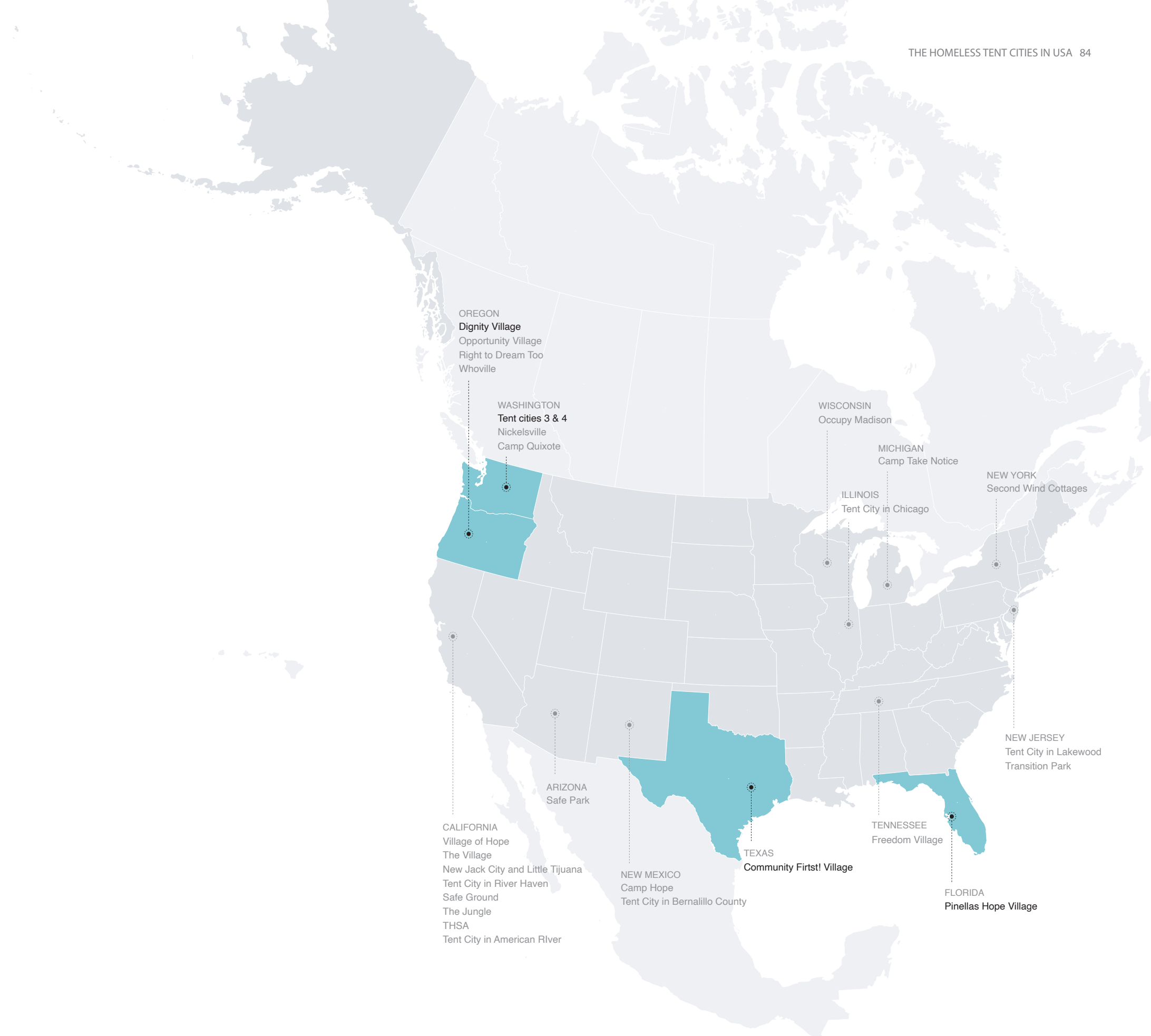
Examples of authorized homeless settlements

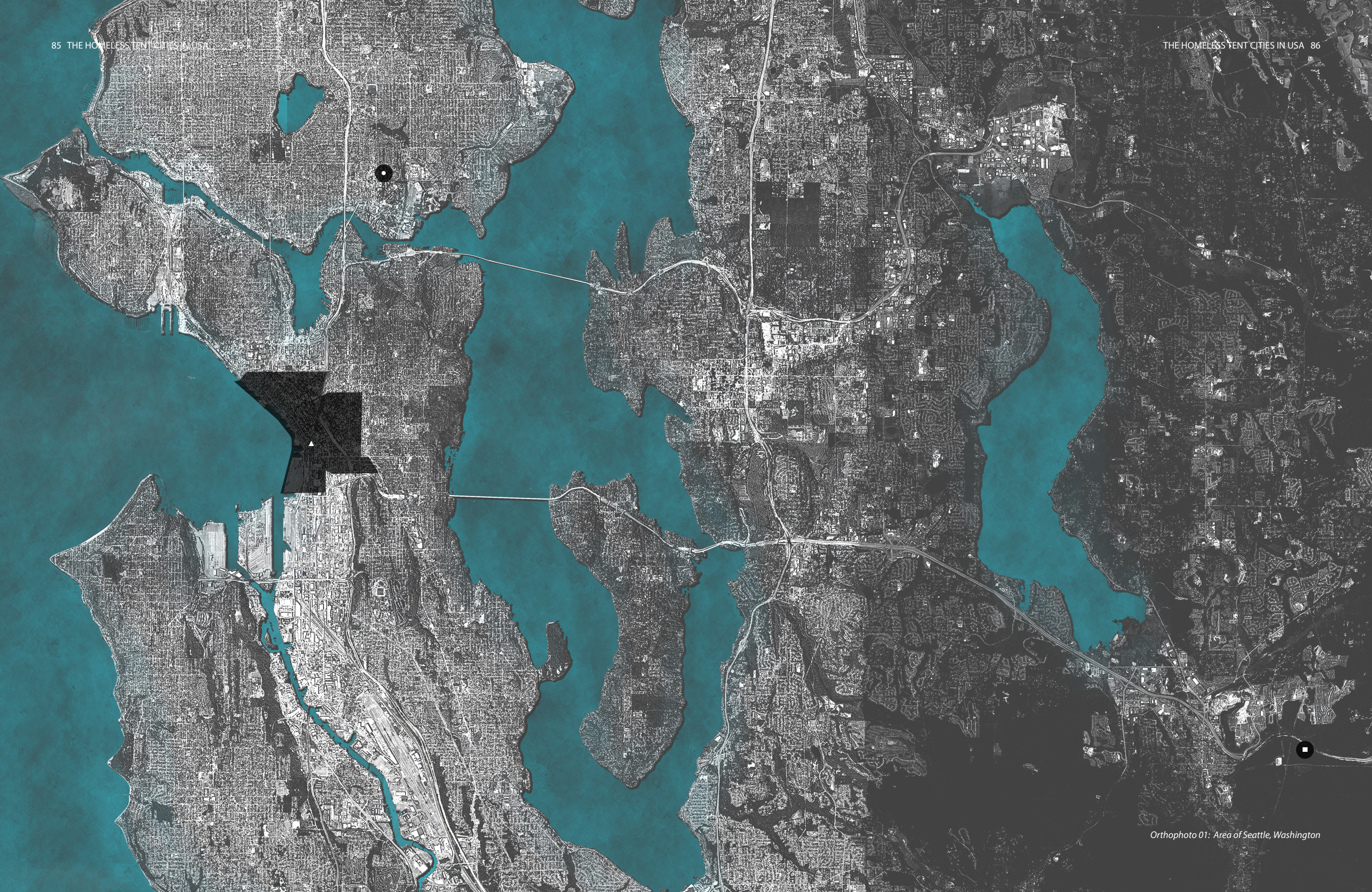
In the next pages, 4 examples of established homeless settlements are presented. Some cases refer to 'tent city' settlements while others have been developed beyond the status of encampments, constituting by the time authorised villages that include a variety of more permanent structures compared to tents, such as tuff-shed houses, improvised houses using old vehicles, campers, makeshift houses, and other types of homeless communities. Most of them are based on the self-helped practices of the homeless but there are also examples of villages that were initiated by external organisations as responses to the expansion of tent cities. Some of the settlements are self-governed while others are supported and managed by non-profit and charity organisations.

More specifically, the examples can be categorised in the following typologies which will be described in the next paragraphs.

<i>typology 1</i>	Democratic Tent Cities Tent cities 3 & 4, Seattle, WA
<i>typology 2</i>	Tiny House Villages Dignity Village, Portland, OR
<i>typology 3</i>	Affordable Villages Community Firtst! Village, Austin, TX
<i>typology 4</i>	Tiny House Shelters Pinellas Hope Village, St. Petersburg, FL

Table 05: Typologies of established homeless settlements in USA





Orthophoto 01: Area of Seattle, Washington

Tent city 3 & Tent city 4

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

In Seattle, Washington, Share/Wheel - a self-managed community of homeless and displaced people - has maintained Tent City 3 and Tent City 4 for more than a decade by arranging for the encampments to be sited in church parking lots (Herring 2015) and on parish properties throughout the greater Seattle area (www.sharewheel.org 2019).

The community started its action in 1990 during the protest 'Goodwill Gathering' at Myrtle Edwards Park in Seattle downtown, when for two weeks homeless people gathered in the park to stay together and safe. In 1998, after a long period of support by establishing shelter provisions, storage lockers and offering supplementary assistance programs, the community asked for and received permission to do a shelter summit in tents, on public grounds. Though, the city offered them a traditional municipal shelter in return, which they refused arguing for a public-land encampment. Since then and after a long way of evictions from public property, as well as fine threatenings to private-land donators, the new-elected municipality permitted the practice of the tent cities on private parking lots setting forth its basic operating principles, in 2002 (www.sharewheel.org 2019).

Out of the initial 7 tent cities of the community, today, only 'Tent City 3' and '4' still operate. They are structured on individual and communal tents, and constitute portable, self-managed communities that serve up to 100 homeless men and women. The camps usually stay at one location for about 90 days. They are democratically organised and operate with a strict Code of Conduct which requires sobriety, nonviolence, cooperation and participation. They include a food preparation area, and they own an official website where they communicate their current location, their needs and their accomplishments (www.sharewheel.org 2019).

- Tent city 3
- Tent city 4
- ▲ Seattle downtown

<i>since</i>	1990
<i>campsite</i>	parking lots, parish properties
<i>legal status</i>	city semi-sanctioned
<i>organisation status</i>	shelf-governed community
<i>structures</i>	tents
<i>facilities</i>	cooking area sanitary facilities port-a-lets toilets occasionally electricity & internet
<i>stability status</i>	temporary (av. 90 days)
<i>habitation period</i>	short-term
<i>capacity</i>	100 people

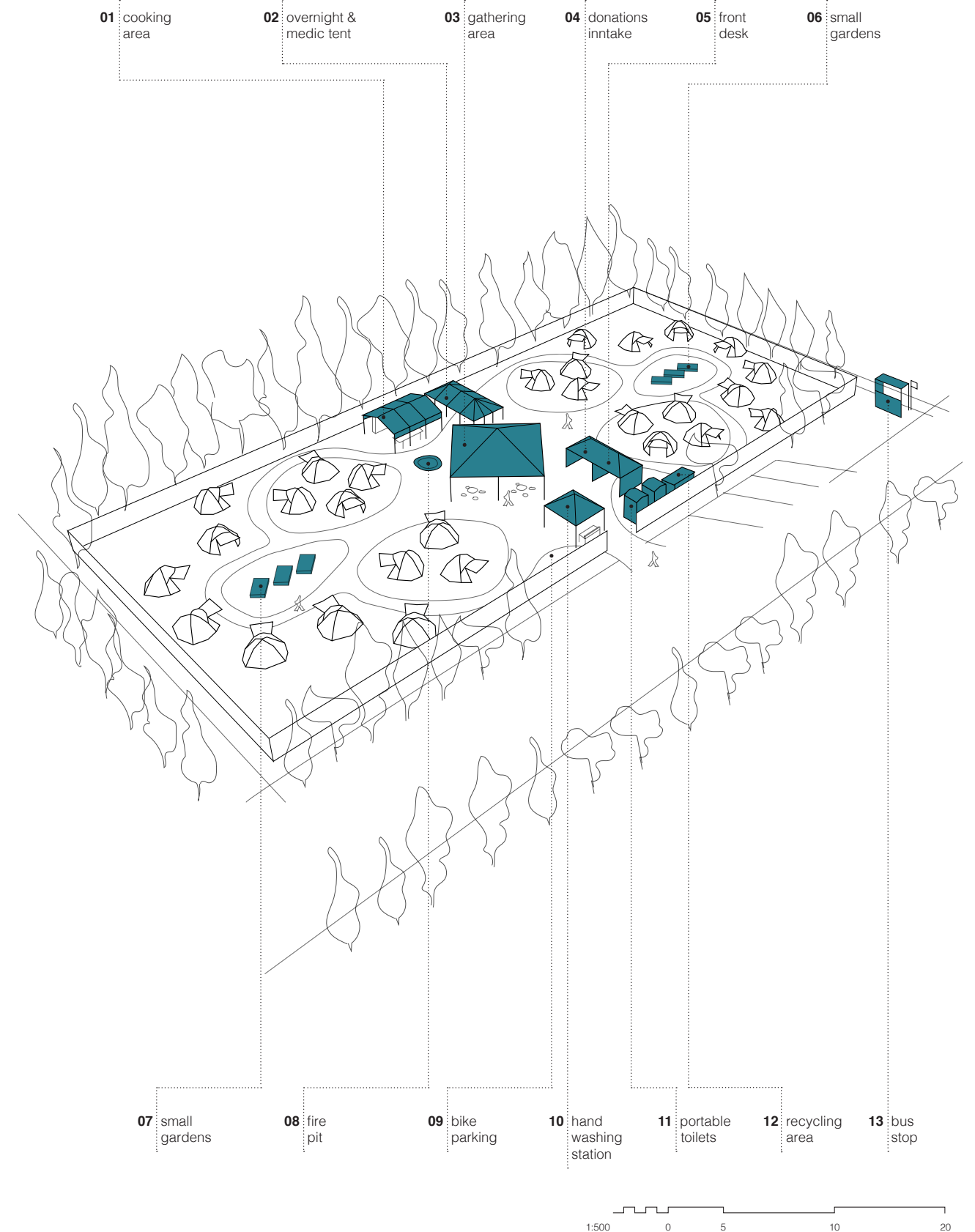


Photo 18: Tent City 4 in Seattle, Washington



Photo 19: Cooking facilities in Tent City 4 in Seattle, Washington

Photo 20: Campsite in Tent City 4 in Seattle, Washington





Dignity Village

PORTLAND, OREGON

In Portland, Oregon the case of Dignity Village started as both a camping protest by a group of committed homeless activists, and a viable alternative to sleeping on the streets and in doorways. It emerged as a transient portable tent city which occupied various high-profile public spaces with their residents packing their belongings into shopping carts and pushing them in parades to their next location every time, they asked to leave a campsite. After a year of struggle, Dignity Village registered with a non-profit status and divided in three new encampments after the last demand for relocation. One of the groups moved to an industrial area in NE Portland, Sunderland Yard, on a municipal-owned land shared with the lot of the municipal leaf composting facility.

Even the location is not appropriate for habitation and quite remote from the city, the Village still sits there. After three years surviving in a temporary status, it was sanctioned as an official 'tiny house Village' by the Portland City Council, under a city code that allows 6 municipalities to designate up to two sites as campgrounds to be used for 'transitional housing accommodations' for persons who lack permanent shelter and cannot be placed in other low income housing. The statute notes that these transitional campgrounds may be operated by private persons or non-profit organizations.

With the support of many friends and volunteers, Dignity Village gradually evolved from tarps and tents to four-walled, permanent tiny house structures. Residents should pay a small contribution every month to cover the operating expenses, while the rest operating budget comes from micro-business revenues and private donations. Dignity Village covers all their operating expenses through this fund, including utilities such as electricity, internet, waste removal, port-a-potty service and water (Dignity Village 2019).

 Dignity Village	
 Portland downtown	
<i>since</i>	2000
<i>campsite</i>	industrial site
<i>legal status</i>	city-sanctioned
<i>organisation status</i>	shelf-governed community, non-profit organisation
<i>structures</i>	tiny houses
<i>facilities</i>	running water sanitary facilities port-a-lets toilets occasionally electricity & internet green house microbusinesses
<i>stability status</i>	permanent
<i>habitation period</i>	2 years
<i>capacity</i>	60 people

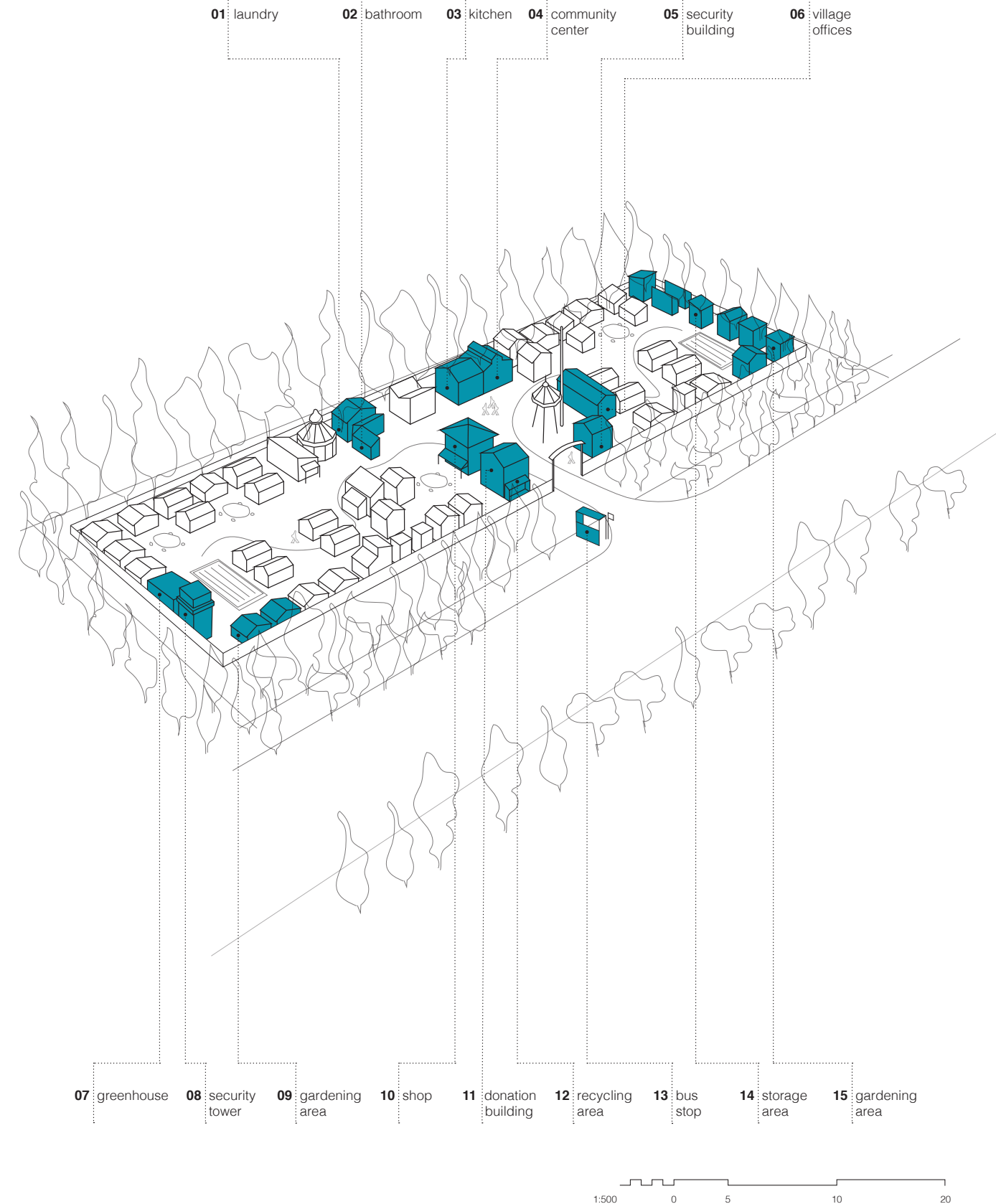


Photo 21: Tiny house, in Dignity Village in Portland, Orgeon



Photo 22: Structure in Dignity Village in Portland, Orgeon



Photo 23: Vegetable gardens in Dignity Village in Portland, Orgeon



Photo 24: Area of entrance in Dignity Village in Portland, Orgeon



Community First! Village

AUSTIN, TEXAS

Another effort is located in Austin, Texas, where a Catholic group called 'Mobile Loaves and Fishes: MLF' has developed a masterplan of a community consisted of clusters of micro-homes, RV's, and large canvas tents on twenty-seven acres of purchased land under the name 'Community First! Village' (MLF 2019; Kimble 2018).

MLF started as a social outreach service that through the support of thousands of volunteers provides food, clothing and other life-sustaining items to homeless men and women of Austin in a daily basis, since 1998. Today, MLF has grown to become the largest prepared feeding program to the homeless in Central Texas and to have multitude of connections with the homeless community as much as with several organisations in the county of Texas (MLF 2019).

Based only in donations and volunteering work, in 2015, the community initiated an affordable permanent housing program and a supportive community that aims to host chronic homeless men and women formerly living in the streets or in informal tent cities in Austin. As a result, a few hundred homeless people are enabled to rent tiny dwellings for modest sums, ranging from \$225 to \$430 per month (MLF 2019; Kimble 2018). Many of the residents have the opportunity to get employed on-site and at the same time to contribute in the building-up and maintenance of the village (Kimble 2018).

While the initial intention was to set the community within the city - a proposal that gained the support of the municipality who offered a long-term ground lease on city-owned land - the neighborhood resisted intensely and as a result the community had to relocate outside the city limits (Kimble 2018). Today, the village includes all the basic facilities for its residents as well as spaces for complementary activities (MLF 2019) such as a community organic garden where chickens and bees are raised and an outdoor movie theater (Herring 2015; Kimble 2018). In the works are included

- Community First! Village
- ▲ Austin downtown

<i>since</i>	2015
<i>campsite</i>	low-density area outside of city limits
<i>legal status</i>	city-sanctioned
<i>organisation status</i>	private community
<i>structures</i>	tiny houses, RV's, tents
<i>facilities</i>	running water sanitary facilities electricity internet organic garden microbusinesses open air cinema workshops medical clinic
<i>stability status</i>	permanent
<i>habitation period</i>	long-term
<i>capacity</i>	200 people

a medical clinic and a columbarium, underscoring the ambitions of the village to be more than a short-term or transitional place (Herring 2015).





Photo 25: Open air cinema in Community First! Village in Austin, Texas

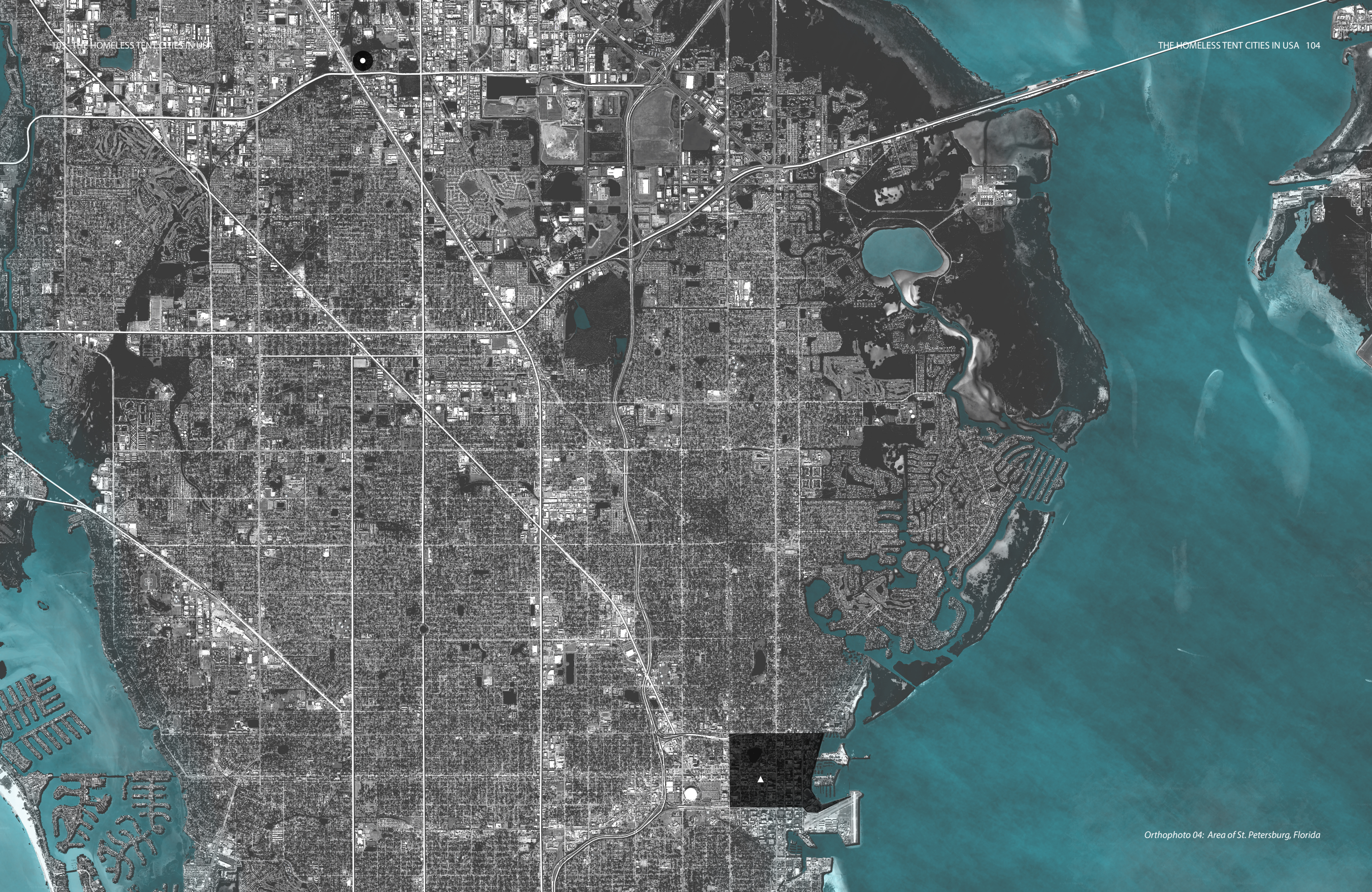
Photo 26: Tiny house in Community First! Village in Austin, Texas



Photo 27: Tiny houses in Community First! Village in Austin, Texas

Photo 28: Vegetable gardens in Community First! Village in Austin, Texas





Orthophoto 04: Area of St. Petersburg, Florida

Pinellas Hope Village

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Pinellas Hope launched in 2007 as a temporary emergency shelter for over 250 homeless men and women. It is located in Clearwater, a wooded area north of the city of St. Petersburg, on a 20 acres land owned by the Catholic Diocese that at the same time manages the community (Green 2009; Pinellas Hope 2019).

Pinellas Hope replaced a tent city that was formerly set in St. Petersburg's downtown and was forced to close after a violent police eviction. The new encampment was welcomed by the municipality of St. Petersburg which contributed \$250,000 and assistance to prepare the land (Green 2009).

Pinellas hope receives its residents after police and social workers' references (Green 2009). Each resident is assigned a case manager who assists in the pursuit of self-sufficiency, job and housing placement and provides help up until six months after residents leave the shelter (Pinellas Hope 2019).

The campsite is constituted by amenities like a kitchen and a food hall, bathrooms and showers, a laundry room, a community center, and education rooms with few computers for residents to look for jobs and prepare resumes (Green 2009 ; Pinellas Hope 2019). Even though accomodation was initially based only in single-person tents in neat rows (Green 2009), in 2015 and 2017 the organisation added in total 13 prefabricated buildings comprised by 156 efficiency apartments that were subsidized to be affordable for low income individuals and former residents of the shelter. These units are known as 'permanent supportive housing' as the residents still receive case management and support services as needed (Pinellas Hope 2019). The camp's operation costs \$2.6 million a year, half of which money are received in food and other items donations (Green 2009).

Compared to democratic tent cities Pinellas Hope is run top-down and the rules are formed by the employees rather than with a system that involves the residents. This fact has resulted in the lack of a

- Pinellas Hope Village
- ▲ St. Petersburg downtown

<i>since</i>	2007
<i>campsite</i>	industrial area outside of city limits
<i>legal status</i>	city-sanctioned
<i>organisation status</i>	religious organisation
<i>structures</i>	tiny houses, tents, prefabricated structures
<i>facilities</i>	running water sanitary facilities electricity GED classroom computer lab medical service
<i>stability status</i>	permanent
<i>habitation period</i>	long-term
<i>capacity</i>	250 people

community environment and gives the idea of an outdoor homeless shelter (A Visit to Pinellas Hope 2010), which demonstrates some common drawbacks that shelters impose on their residents. In the case of Pinellas Hope these are the prohibition of families as residents, adherence to certain time schedules and religious conversion (Green 2009).

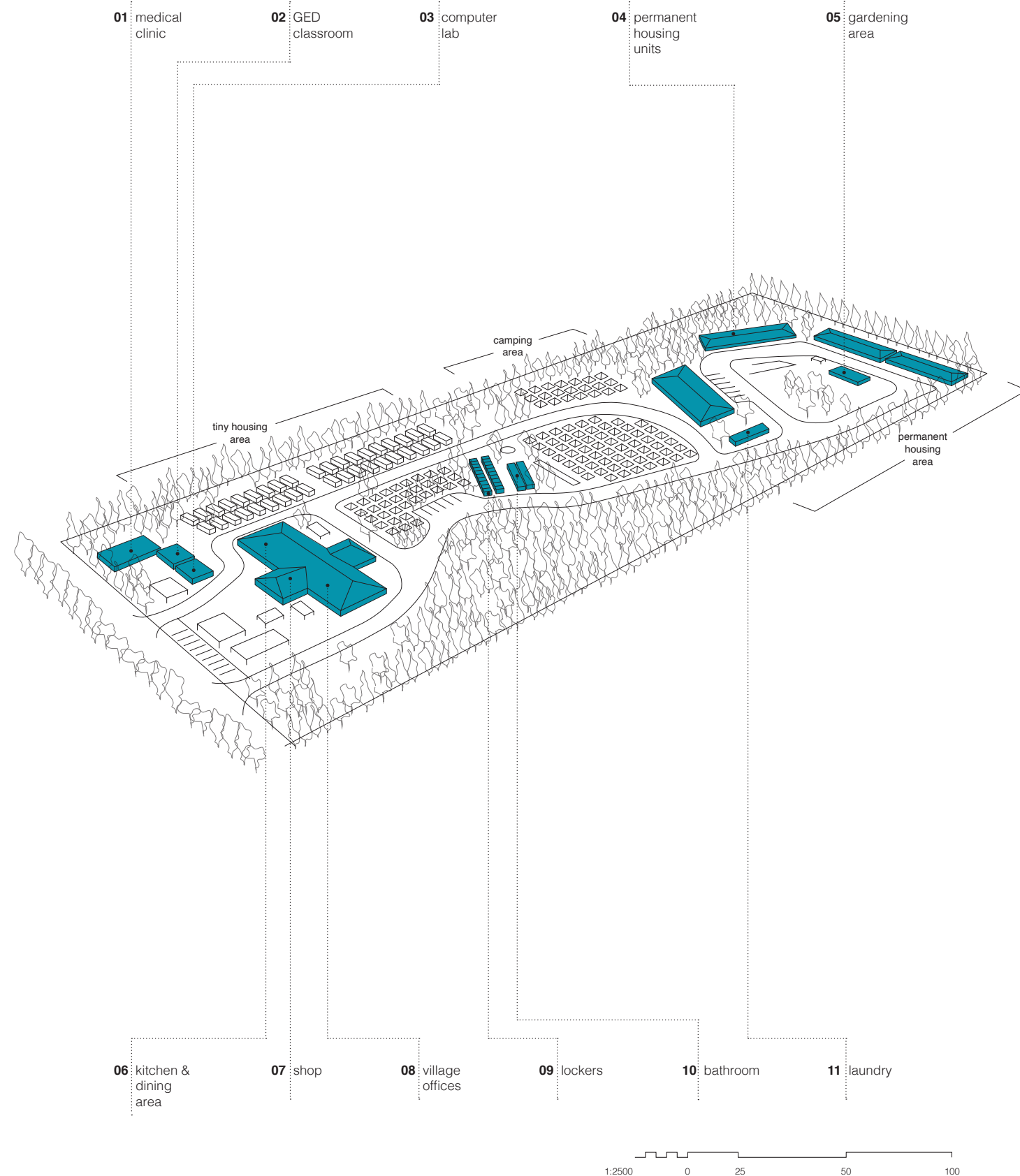




Photo 29: Campsite, in Pinellas Hope Village in St. Petersburg, Florida

Photo 30: Permanent houses in Pinellas Hope Village in St. Petersburg, Florida



Photo 31: Tiny houses, in Pinellas Hope Village in St. Petersburg, Florida

Photo 32: Common spaces in Pinellas Hope Village in St. Petersburg, Florida



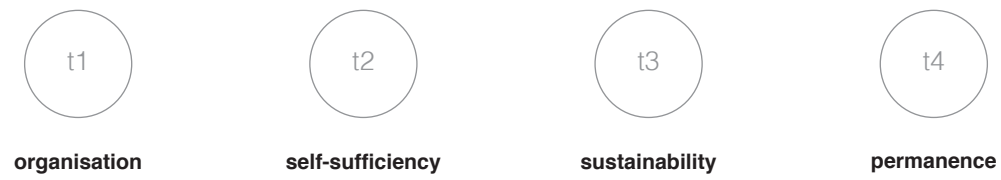


Diagram 18: Comparative advantage of each typology of established homeless settlement

<i>typology 1</i>	<p>Democratic Tent Cities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> semi-sanctioned shelf-organised short-term allowance in public property tent structures
<i>typology 2</i>	<p>Tiny House Village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sanctioned shelf-organised - NGO long-term donated property shelf-built tiny houses
<i>typology 3</i>	<p>Affordable Village</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sanctioned private organisation owned property tiny houses - vehicle dwellings - tent structures
<i>typology 3</i>	<p>Tiny House Shelters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> legal religious organisation - NGO owned property affordable apartments - tiny houses - tent structures

Table 06: Typologies of established homeless settlements

AUTHORISATION FRAMEWORK

In first sight, these improved communities are undoubtedly improvements over the illegal camps. For the most part conforming to local building, health, and safety codes, many feature on-site toilets and showers, laundry facilities, shared kitchens, communal gardens, propane heating, electricity, wi-fi, real beds, and personalised decor and some even have computer labs and libraries. Most of the new communities maintain websites detailing their various amenities (Herring 2015).

However, it is clear that the character of the authorised encampments and tiny-house villages presented vary from state to state, indicating the lack of a cohesive national strategy on the immediate development of the informal practice of tent cities.

For instance, in Seattle, WA, although the settlements are the least developed in structural terms and often located in remote or inappropriate areas, they demonstrate a strong autonomous organisation and political status and seemingly the adoption of their communities in the municipal building code legislation have been accomplished as a result of their bottom-up strategies and resistance.

In Portland, OR, Dignity Village consists the best practice of homeless community typology so far. In spite of being located in an industrial site, which is inappropriate for habitation, it should be considered that the self-reliance village has initiated, built and maintained by the homeless community itself with the assistance of external synergies. The community created a non-profit organisation in second stage to make use of the existing legislation so that can ensure its permanency as well as to improve its premises. The village is now autonomous and self-dependent.

In Austin, TX, the tiny house community have been developed and sustained mostly due to the support from partnerships of charity groups with multitude other stakeholders, including local governments. In these cases, the spirit of community and self-reliance prevails, and the governance norms

are shaped based both on the residents and the supporting organisations views, although residents are charged a small rental cost.

The last example of St. Petersburg, FL, evidence the complete incorporation of the homeless practice of tent cities in the regular pre-existed system of shelter housing in a cheaper and ostensibly more community-based approach, but still distant from any self-reliance and self-governed effort applied by the homeless themselves.

In all of the instances presented, the community spirit as well as the political status can be clearly verified by the architectural and artistic features on the structures and the settlement environment.

In order to be successful, legalised camps require adequate planning, consultation, and collaboration with all stakeholders, most especially the homeless residents of the camps (NLCHP 2017). However, it is clear that the authorisation of such communities by local authorities implies certain regulation frameworks that often defy some of the fundamental reasons for their creation in the first place. The support frequently received by officials to establish a more hygienic, structural safe and more permanent living environment in such communities comes along with indications on organisation and governing patterns as well as exclusionary locations, re-manufacturing homeless' self-sufficient housing efforts back into the dependency state of the surveilled and secluded shelter system.

Thereby, the current sanctioned tent cities or tiny-house homeless communities in US address the making of homeless camps as both a symptom and a tool of poverty governance by municipal agencies (Herring & Lutz 2015). In some cities officials have been eager to utilise such communities as a flexible and low-cost expansion of the municipal shelter system (Herring 2015), raising questions on whether and how novel community models can remain unspoiled by being engaged in the - arguably unsuccessful - shelter and transitional housing policy.

In addition, concerning the development of such

settlements, some view them as regressive forms of affordable housing which at the same time are equally moulded by an inadequate welfare state, unable to prevent homelessness or contain the condition indoors (Herring & Lutz 2015). As stated by Speer (2014), the institutionalised tent cities operate like shelters but are comprised of tents or outdoor sheds, growing concerns that the new forms of legal encampments constitute a quick-fix, low-cost solution to the immediate problem of relieving homelessness that largely ignores the more fundamental problem of ensuring decent housing for all citizens (Herring 2015).

Also, the legal encampments are usually situated in undesirable zones on the urban margins and isolated areas (Herring 2015; Speer 2014) which makes them function as complementary - rather than contradictory - strategies to the pre-existing exclusionary policies of the local state (Herring & Lutz 2015), reinforcing injustice by spatial discrimination (Soja 2000). "Portland's Dignity Village is bordered by a compost dump and state prison. After an effort to locate in central Austin, Community First! settled for a parcel of land bounded by a fence marking the city limit. The tent cities of Seattle relocate every three months, from one parish to another, a practice that eases the anxieties of property owners even as it heightens the stress of homeless campers. . ." (Herring 2015)

The authorised camps are simultaneously highly controlled. Local governments have implemented a variety of strategies to control sanctioned encampments, including relocating them to more palatable locations, issuing individualised permits to approved residents, revising local zoning ordinances, requiring homeless communities to partner with host agencies and sponsoring organisations and to have pre-approved city permits. At the same time, sanctioned encampments are often fenced in and highly surveilled and they are obligated to the strict enforcement of rules and regulations (Loftus-Farren 2011; Speer 2014).

Yet, the most important difference between the democratic tent cities of the first typology and the authorised villages of the last typology is that

the latter - which consists the most established and officially legalised villages - is not managed by homeless communities, but by an outside authority (Speer 2014).

Usually, cities that amend local law to accommodate encampments disallow any 'ad hoc' or autonomous tent city formation (Loftus-Farren, 2011). Thus, it's all too clear that the emergence and persistence of authorised encampments are not a signal of a 'post-punitive city of care' but rather a crisis response to the ongoing criminalisation of the poor and the failures and shortcomings of social care policies (Herring & Lutz 2015).

What should be stressed here is that although improved homeless settlements can give us useful examples of how to approach homelessness, the two last typologies of 'affordable villages' and 'tiny shelter communities' should be distinguished from self-governing and democratic tent cities. It is important to note that sanctioned encampments often provide amenities that illegal tent cities do not— sanitation infrastructure, access to regular meals, and security. Sanctioned camps also create opportunities for residents to access much-needed services, such as healthcare or counselling. However, it should be mentioned that the primary reason for the formation of tent cities is the resistance of homeless people to controlled and hyper-regulated shelter housing solutions.

While cities seek to produce urban space that is easily surveilled, autonomous homeless communities threaten this goal. US cities have dealt with self-made encampments either by destroying them or by co-opting them completely. These co-opted tent cities often undermine residents' freedom and are aimed at controlling homeless populations. The concept of the 'co-opted tent cities' captures the dual qualities of care and protection on the one hand and surveillance, control and segregation on the other (Speer 2014).

As a conclusion, the case study of tent cities in the US gives us a clear evidence of the discriminating manners official bodies employ when addressing the authorisation of informal urban practices of social context, as opposed to informalities of entrepreneurial or cultural character that, as extensively analysed in previous chapter, have better chances to hold financial advantages for neighbourhoods and cities.

Through the investigation of the urban practice of homeless for descent housing opportunities and of the official responses that the practice received, we come to the agreement that official urban policy (in the US) ignores and marginalises the novelty of autonomous and self-determined housing models of the homeless. The prevalent urban strategy of dealing with the informal homeless communities is to push them out of the public view or to enable their existence in secluded, marginal territories where often a number of regulations is enforced in variable forms to guaranty their surveillance and control.

The spatial marginalisation applied on the homeless undeniably leads to their social marginalisation too, creating all kinds of misconceptions about a dangerous and dependable population by the surrounding society, which has precisely been refuted by the organisation of the autonomous tent cities and the thriving advantages stemming from the practice. Instead of bringing these advantageous paradigms closer to the society just by allowing their existence in public view, urban policy chooses to keep them apart feeding in this manner the increasing socio-spatial exclusion of the homeless population. The question rising here is whether there is chance that the alternative community systems initiated by the homeless will find place in modern cities, regardless their organisational and physical attributes, rather than being forced to relocate in the outskirts - in correlation with the notion weather there is a chance for "difference" and "diversity" to find place in the core of a neoliberal society rather than lying in the margins.

What is largely absent and should be directed by the urban policy, however, is a critical assessment of both the benefits and drawbacks associated with tent cities, as well as a cohesive consideration of a context that can sustain their development in beneficial terms both for their residents and the surrounding environment.

Tent Cities as a revolutionary DIY urban practice

Apart from the benefits tent cities offer for the residents, the informal self-help practice of the homeless have drawn wider meanings for the established norms of the neoliberal urban space introducing new opportunities for the architectural norms and the systems of order of our cities through the acceptance and implementation of such innovative, sustainable and alternative housing examples. Especially in a momentum that switching to more sustainable lifestyles would make a real difference for our future, experimenting with new models of housing planning is a matter that should seriously concern urban policy.

MEANINGS FOR THE NEOLIBERAL URBAN SPACE

Spaces such as tent cities, often represented as leftover, decaying, unplanned or forgotten spaces are part of the dynamic constitution of broader urban processes and imaginaries rather than gaps within the urban fabric (Harris 2015). Without following official functions or norms, these spaces are available for people to create their own meanings and uses and compose a starting point to explore urban dynamics (Speer 2014).

While large encampments are considered a policing problem in many US localities a number of local officials have come to regard them as innovative and even humane policy solutions (Herring & Lutz 2015).

Although tent cities in the USA are evidence of 'contemporary capitalism in full flower' and must be eliminated if a just city is to arise, simultaneously they challenge the 'production of capitalistic space'. They provide a model for the next page in our urban societies: as a taking of land, as non-commodified and cooperative forms of property and social relations,

as organisation space (Mitchell, 2013; Harris 2015) or overall as a sign of difference within the homogenous neoliberal urban space (Speer 2014).

Henri Lefebvre argued that capitalist cities seek to produce space that is conducive to profit, easily surveilled, and homogenous. Also, he claimed that "tension between difference and uniformity is one of the underlying contradictions of capitalist space . . . and the right to difference is rooted in the everyday concrete struggles of those who are excluded and who must resist the domination of property norms." (Speer 2014).

In US these three goals have resulted in the concentration of homeless people in a series of surveilled and controlled spaces. Yet homeless people have pushed back by creating alternative spatial practices and representational spaces and demanding their right to the city. While revitalisation forges ahead, homeless communities produce their own sub-cities to survive in an increasingly commodified urban landscape. In demanding a right to space, tent city residents counter the official narrative of the entrepreneurial city. Tent cities insist that space is not a commodity to be bought and sold and that the city is not an asset to be privately owned (Speer 2014).

Nevertheless, the right to the city is not just about reclaiming material urban space but also about resisting dominant representations of space (Speer, 2014). Ruddick (1996) argued that tent cities automatically insert themselves into the political discourse by occupying urban spaces designed for other users and these politics are the result of struggle between competing interests including homeless people's demand for their right to the city.

Furthermore, tent city residents have often rejected shelters and housing projects and championed a notion of the encampment as home. As people live collectively in tents and shanties, the right to the city becomes a struggle for the right to the encampment, rather than a demand for the provision of traditional physical shelter. Despite this, policy often treats all homeless people as equally unsheltered, whether they reside in a community of tents and shanties or sleep in the open on a sidewalk (Speer 2014).

Homeless advocacy groups have used the "right to the city" to defend housing rights for the homeless stating that all homeless people have a "right to adequate housing", promoting shelters and private houses as a provisional measure. In such a manner the "right to housing" formulation reduces the right to inhabit the city to a mere right to a habitat that often takes an individualised, monetised, or highly governed form. In modern society it is unacceptable for people to live anywhere but governed or privately-owned spaces. In these circumstances, the right to housing and shelter can deny the homeless the right to inhabit the city. Although the right to housing and shelter are imperative, they are not sufficient to ending homelessness (Speer 2014).

As Mitchell (2003, pp. 19-21) urged, the right to housing is not enough. On the contrary, "the right to the city demands more than just houses and apartments: it demands the redevelopment of the city in a manner responsive to the needs, desires, and pleasure of its inhabitants, especially its oppressed inhabitants." (Speer 2014)

Today, tent cities' homeless campers consistently demand their right to create their own self-built structures and collective, non-commodified communities without the threat of eviction. By demanding their right to camp, homeless are enacting other rights as well: their right to use space without conforming to the bonds of monetary exchange, their right to live collectively, and their right to define for themselves what constitutes the meaning of home (Speer 2014).

Under capitalism, spaces that fail to please the senses of middle-class consumers are viewed as anathema to the production of profit. Thus, homeless encampments are rejected for not conforming to capitalist notions of aesthetics. Yet campers highlighted the political economic reality of waste and championed a representation of the encampments as sanitary. They created alternative infrastructures in the camps and sought to de-commodify existing infrastructure. In doing so, they struggled for a non-capitalised means of dealing with unwanted waste. Similarly, they re-infused the waste of capitalistic society with use value

by reusing old materials to build homes as well as art (Speer 2014).

In all of these instances, homeless shaped an alternative and even a sustainable response to spatial norms rooted in property relations and exchange and championed their right to difference in the face of capitalist conformity (Speer 2014).

Proposal

IV

—

Design of ephemeral settlements

04

The following chapter includes first a brief analysis of the homeless condition and the administrative responses to homelessness in the city of Lisbon. This is an effort to acknowledge the similarities between the homelessness management strategies endorsed both by American and European institutions, but also to demonstrate how the differences among the strategies in which authorities approach the issue affect homeless' spatial behaviour and types of informal occupation.

Furthermore, the chapter integrate a holistic strategy for the design and development of ideal ephemeral shetlements for the population that experience temporary or permanent condition without shelter, based on the paradigm of US DIY informal practice of 'tent cities'.

The strategy aims to the establishment of an autonomous and shelf-sufficient community which is proposed to be applied in a determined area in close vicinity to the city center of Lisbon. Also, a self-organisational pattern is recommended, as through the analysis of 'tent cities' there is evidence to be the key factor for the success of homeless' social integration.

The spatial configuration of the ephemeral settlement is desribed in detail through maps and drawings that respond in a selected site of intervention and illustarte all the required facilities and spaces to cover the necessities of the community. In addition, some strucure and infrastructure solutions are proposed.

At last, the chapter embeds the opinion over the initiative of three potential stakeholders in the city of Lisbon, following the interviews that took place for the purpose of this thesis.

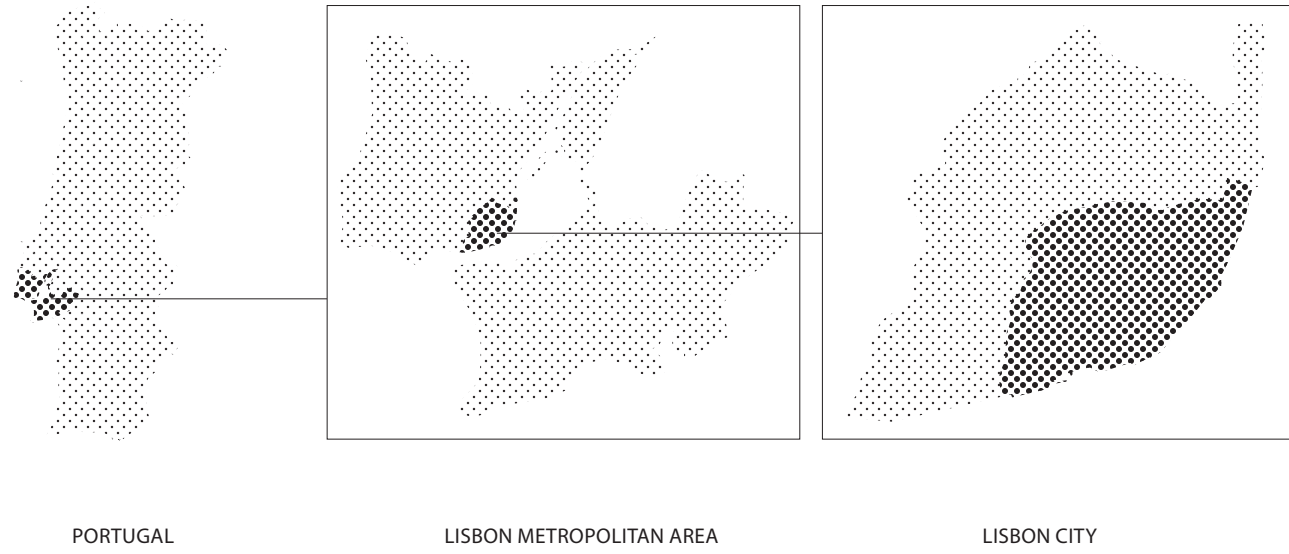
³⁰ Most of the information over the situation of homelessness in Lisbon is received by personal communication and interviews with several organisations that operate in favour of the population without shelter in the city.

After exploring the grassroots practice of homeless tent cities in the US, the present thesis intends to propose a strategy and shape a number of guidelines according to which ideal types of self-designed and self-built settlements can be proposed as temporal solutions for homelessness in European cities. This idea is essentially based on the evident insufficiency of the current strategies and the prevalent mechanisms that address homelessness both in US and European cities and attempts to provide an alternative transitional shelter option inspired by the DIY efforts of the homeless community.

By proposing the development and by supporting the revolutionary initiative of shelf-made and shelf-governed homeless communities, the aim is to achieve both practical and psychological benefits for the homeless population in contemporary cities as well as to increase the social interaction and the reception of difference by enriching the physical and organisational diversity of urban space. In addition, an essential objective of the proposal is to encourage citizen-participation and activate the concept of 'the right to the city' by giving the opportunity also to neglected social groups to express their necessities and desires by shaping the city.

The configuration of the new settlements is further underlining how simplicity, temporality and affordability can indicate new spatial perceptions in more sustainable and resilient manners and offer a crucial input in a momentum that ephemerality plays a determined factor in urban design.

The example of Lisbon



REASONS FOR SELECTION

Homelessness has been always a crucial issue for the city of Lisbon and even if certain factors could arguably reinforce the phenomenon today, they are certainly not the main causes of it.

Being one of the countries of the European South, Portugal has always been low on the spectrum of socioeconomic characteristics compared to other European Union members, a fact that usually makes one of the most obvious factors that generate social inequalities.

This is a result of the low levels of wealth generated in Portugal compared to other European Countries due to the nature of its economy (based mostly on agriculture, transport and services - not important industrial sector). Also, this fact could be further interpreted due to its historical and political situation as it has been under an authoritarian regime and hence financial conservatism (Minder 2018) for more that 40 years.

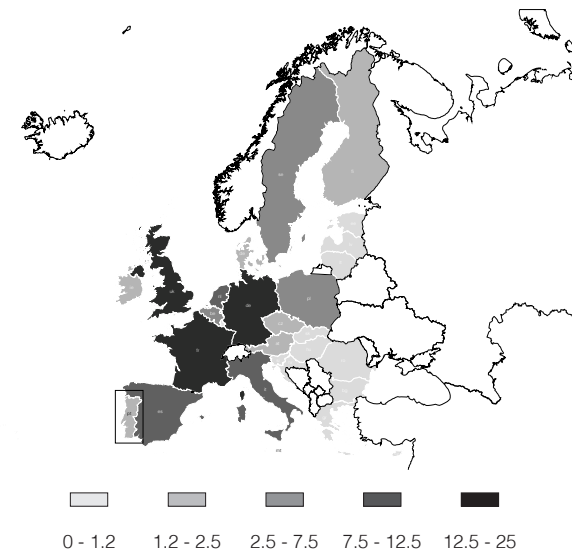


Diagram 20: Share in total EU GDP by territory of EU countries, 2017.

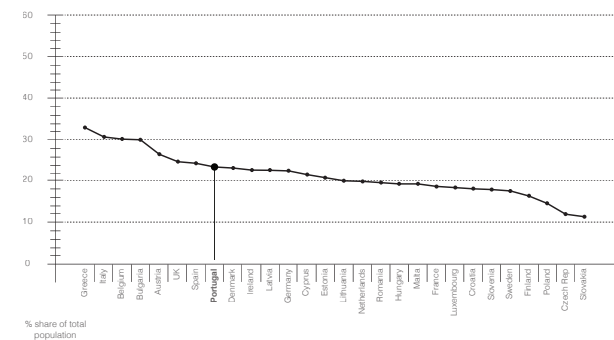


Diagram 19: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion among EU countries, 2017.

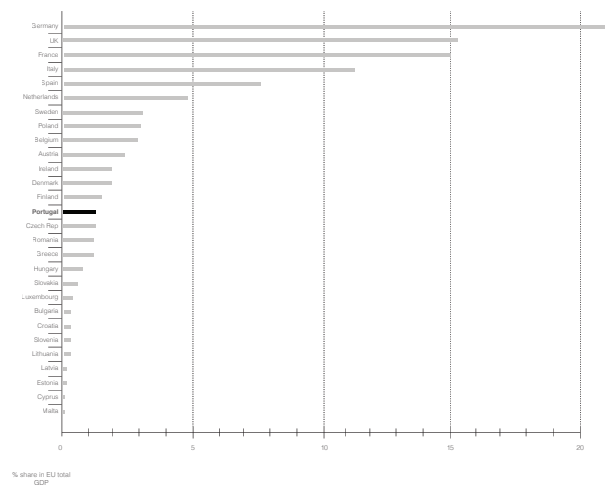


Diagram 21: Share in total EU GDP by EU countries, 2017.

Another critical reason for experimenting the creation and implementation of homeless settlements in Lisbon is the rapidly changing character of the city itself, including the implications that this fact will bring along for the less privileged economic groups of dwellers.

The profile of the city of Lisbon the last 10 years (2010-2020) can be pictured by an increased touristic and immigration influx from richer European or International countries. As a result, like other European capitals, Lisbon has undergone a fast process of gentrification and a significant rise on property values. This could be explained through the increased property sales to foreigners (Idealista 2019, August; October) as an approach of the native population to get through the overburden of property ownership that has caused during the economic crisis.

According to data from the International Bank for Payments (BIP) and the National Statistics Institute (INE) Portugal is amongst the Eurozone countries where property prices have increased the most since 2010. "Housing prices in Portugal have increased in the last decade. In nine years, they have increased by 16.6%, above the average of 3.3% in the eurozone and above the world average of 15.4%. Portugal ranks seventh in the list of euro countries where these figures have increased most since 2010" (Idealista 2019, September).

Moderate rate of employment and the relatively low wages accompanied with the sudden outburst of the rental cost have led lately a large number of low income social groups, who used to live in central areas, to get displaced and even to face homelessness temporarily or permanently, a danger that is expected to grow more and more the following years (Correia 2019; Xavier 2019).

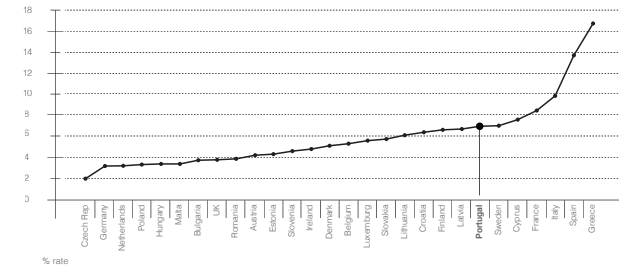


Diagram 22: Unemployment rates among EU countries, 2019.

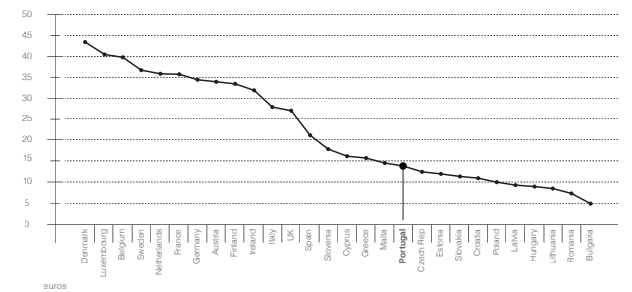


Diagram 23: Hourly labour costs, 2018.

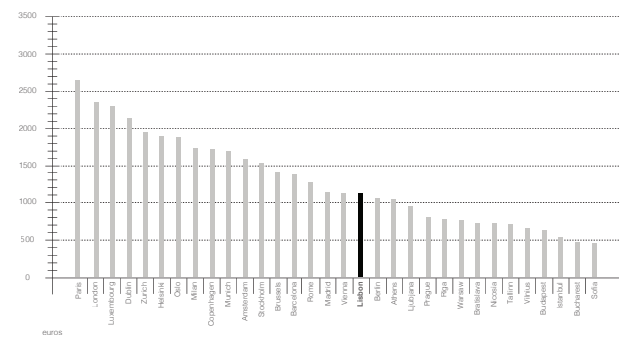


Diagram 24: Average monthly rental cost for apartments in various European capitals, 2018.

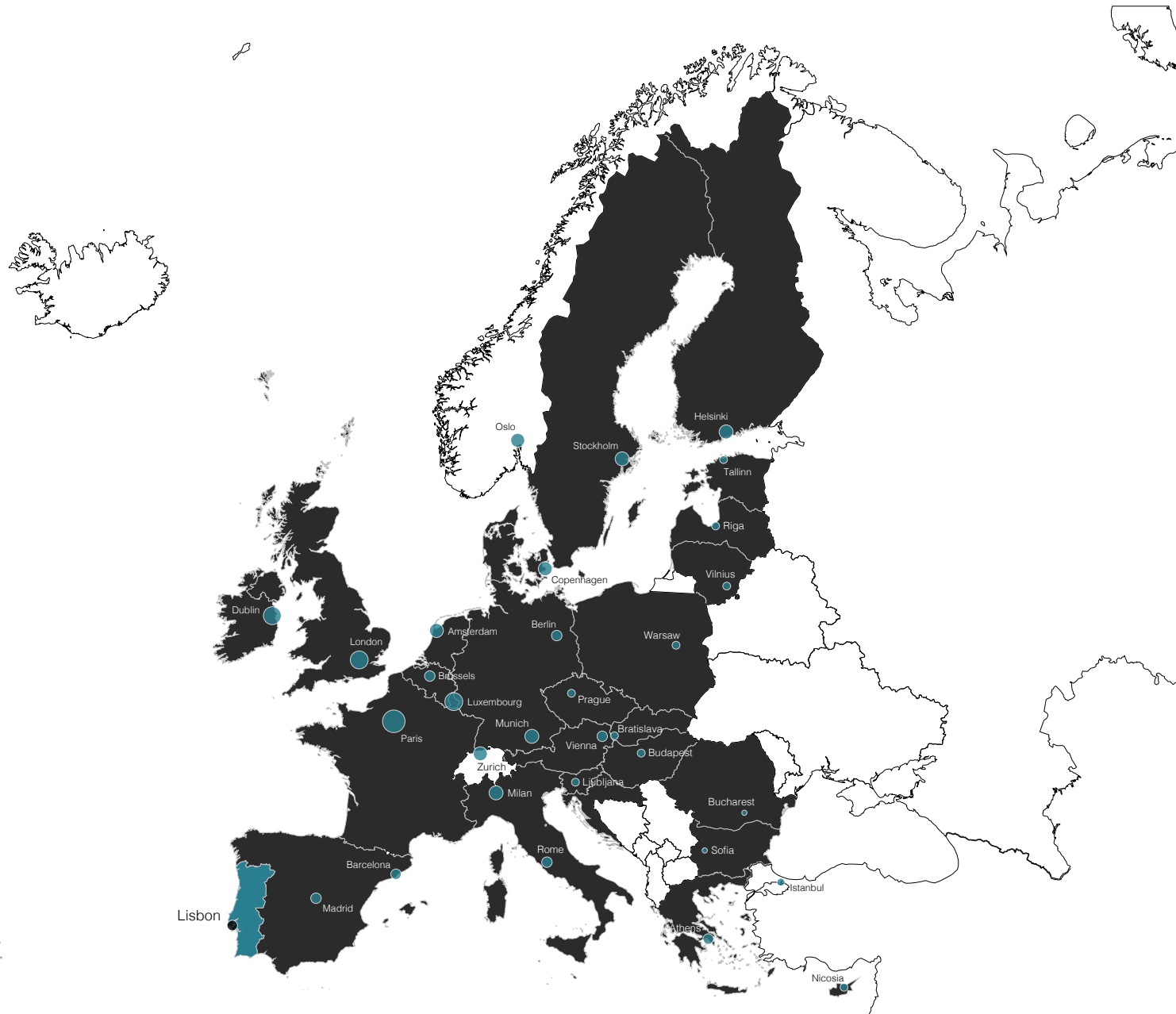


Diagram 25: Average monthly rental cost for apartments in various European capitals, 2018.

The referred groups include elderly population, immigrants, low income and large families, sex workers (Xavier 2019) and generally individuals or families that are economically sustained on complementary financial support. The average fiscal complement in Portugal is 180 euro (Correia 2019) while the average price for renting a room today is 400 euro. It is important to mention that this price has been doubled just in the past 7-year period (Correia 2019).

Last but not least, although Lisbon has traditionally been a city of social inequalities taking into account the long period of colonialism and the great flux of immigration, it might be for the very same reasons that Lisbon has been repeatedly characterised as ‘the city of tolerance’, in a sense of equal integration of all diversities.

Therefore, it could be argued among other reasons that the selection of Lisbon could shape a very suitable example for the application of an innovative and even radical proposal as such as ephemeral homeless settlements establishment inside the urban limits. This assumption is based both on the exceptionally tolerant social governance policies that Portuguese authorities show amid sensitive and marginal groups, and perhaps on the consequent result of such policies, which is the peaceful co-existence and shared use of the same public spaces by multiple groups and their formal or informal practices.

Accordingly, due to the socio-economic characteristics of the inhabitants, the increasing gentrification processes that nowadays take place but also because of the tradition of the local authorities in more inclusive governance models, the city of Lisbon makes up an ideal case of European city to investigate the objective of the present thesis, meaning the willingness of policy makers to endorse the informal practices of the marginalised homeless population as innovative socio-spatial experiments.

	Average Price	Range
1 bedroom Apartment in City Center	895 euros	600 – 1.100
1 bedroom Apartment Outside of Center	628 euros	440 – 800
1 bedroom in City Center	560 euros	430 – 730
1 bedroom Outside of Center	370 euros	270 – 500

Table 07: Monthly rental cost for housing in Lisbon, 2019.

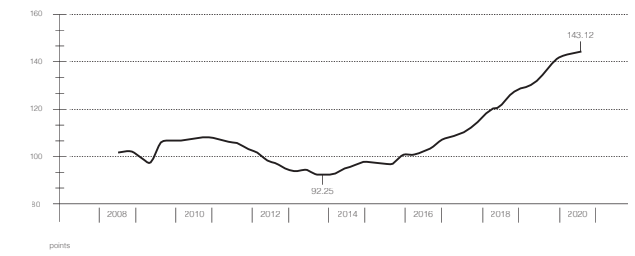


Diagram 26: Residential price index in Portugal, 2008-2020.



Photo 33: Square Sao Domingos in Lisbon downtown

Homeless situation in the city center of Lisbon

PROFILE OF HOMELESS POPULATION

Although there are some common reasons and patterns amongst the population that is identified to be in condition without shelter, such as loss of employment, loss of social network, individuals that just released from prison (Correia 2019), substance addiction,

mental problems or new arrivals of immigrants and refugees (Marques 2019), the circumstances that bring someone to the 'street' vary significantly and can be described by a big complexity. Generally, there are two most frequently encountered patterns of causing homelessness; economic reasons and loss of social network (family and friends) (Correia 2019; Marques 2019). At the moment it is estimated that around 300-400 rough-sleepers³⁰ exist in the city of Lisbon (Nave 2019).

³¹ Rough-sleeper: a homeless person without roof, that usually seeks shelter on the streets.

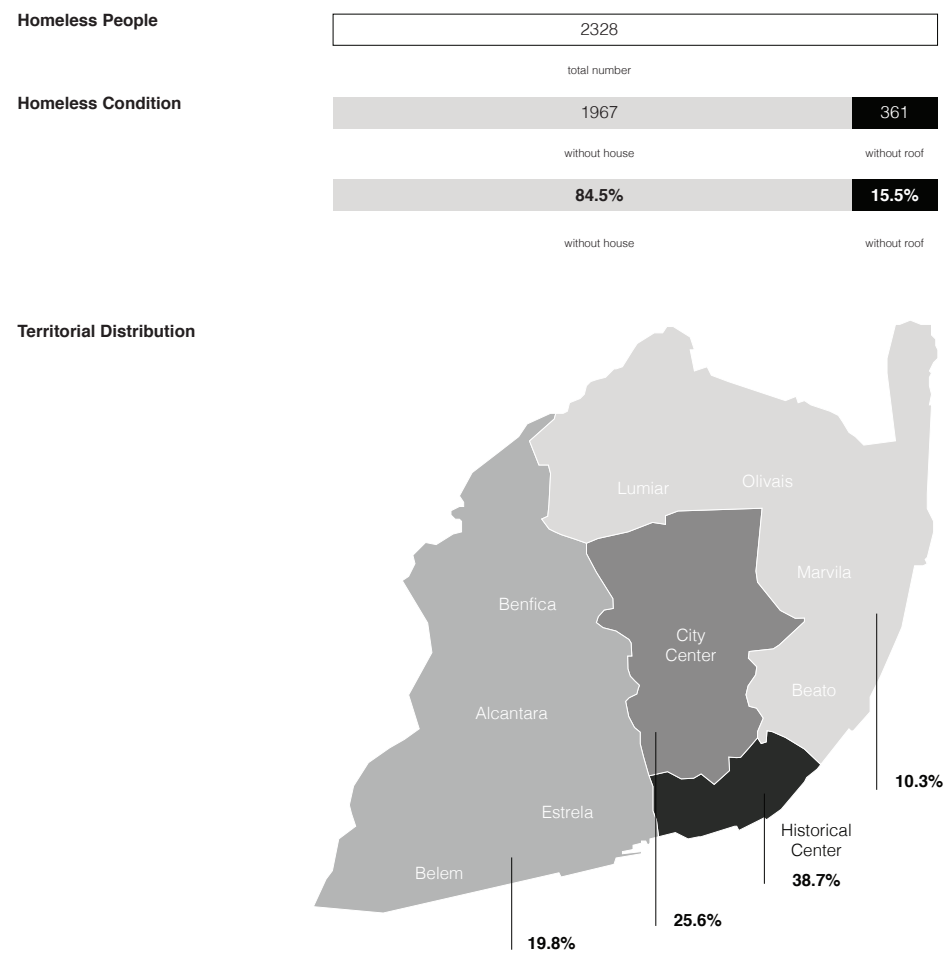


Diagram 27: Homeless profile in the city of Lisbon, actual number, condition, territorial distribution, 2019.



Diagram 28: Homeless profile in the city of Lisbon, gender, age, nationality, dominant problems, 2019.

HOMELESS HOUSING STRATEGIES

Despite the recent considerations over the observed and the expected rise on the homeless population numbers in the area of Lisbon, the national and regional strategy (ENIPSSA 2017-2023) over homelessness seems to remain persistent in traditional and often unsuccessful methods of housing support (Correia 2019; Nave 2019).

NPISA (Nucleus of Planning and Intervention for the Homeless) of Lisbon is instituted by representative members of the government, the city hall and a private catholic institution named 'Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa' and tries to congregate all the different associations, NGO's and private organisations that support homeless people to work together in the same direction, in accordance with the unified national strategy document ENIPSSA (National Strategy for the Integration of People in Homeless Situation) (Correia 2019; Marques 2019; Nave 2019). In other words, NPISA is a public organisation that determines the regional strategy over homelessness and prioritise the several social programs (housing and other manners of support) for which request governmental funding. These social programs are usually responses to several needs of the homeless community performed mainly by the associations, NGO's and other social organisations, including private and public shelters (Correia 2019).

housing first practice

While most of the non-profit associations in Lisbon promote individual housing for the integration of homeless through the practice 'Housing first', municipal and national governments still support and invest in shelters (Nave 2019). This is a quite paradox decision considered that the cost between the two practices is averagely the same and at the same time 'Housing first' practice has proved 90% successful (Marques 2019; Nave 2019) compared to the shelter system that both in the national and international spectrum has turned out to be insufficient to the needs and the integration of the homeless.

According to Americo Nave ³² executive director of association CRESCER, "...if people prefer to live on the street for 20 years, it is proven that shelters are an unsuccessful solution, and the question raised is why policy makers still invest on the shelters...Housing first is not a more expensive investment that shelters and it has a 90% success, meaning that 90% of the cases they never go out in the street again..."

As 'Housing First', as has already mentioned, can be described the provision of private houses, included in the normal real estate market and funded by the state, to homeless individuals or families. The houses are offered regardless of the working status or the profile of the resident and are equally scattered in the city (Nave 2019). Nevertheless, the practice gives priority to cases of chronic homelessness (living averagely 15 years on the streets) (Correia 2019; Marques 2019; Nave 2019). At the moment 80 houses have already assigned to homeless in Lisbon expecting 100 more houses during the next year (Nave 2019).

Based on André Correia ³³ "Housing First' in Lisbon is attributed mostly to people with certain characteristics, as for instance some kind of dependency (addiction) or mental illness", and therefore do not respond easily for cases of people who do not have these characteristics. Accordingly, the emergence of new housing support practices it would be certainly beneficial for other categories of the homeless population and particularly for people that are new on the streets and it is easier for them to get integrated.

shelter system

Regarding to the shelter system in Lisbon, it is composed by 7 private shelters which are funded by the government, 4 of which are inside the city (Correia 2019). Each shelter features a different typology regarding to the social group that addresses. For instance, some shelters direct only to workers while others only to mothers with children or to people that consume substances (Nave 2019). The capacity varies from 50 to 300 residents (Nave 2019), usually in shared dormitories and evidently the smaller the shelter it is the better the living conditions (Correia 2019).

However, it is very difficult to find empty places in the smaller shelters leading to the most frequent attribution in the larger ones (300 residents) where people have repeatedly testified discontent due to strict rules and schedules (Correia 2019; Marques 2019), unpleasant behaviours and atmosphere, overcrowded spaces and dirtiness (Correia 2019) and often violence incidents (Nave 2019). Therefore, homeless people prefer to stay on the street rather than in this kind of shelters (Correia 2019; Nave 2019), where they feel more independent and safer (Nave 2019). "Rough-sleeper situations don't want to go to shelters because their rules don't match their needs. Shelters have the same structures and rules for 30-50 years for all the people without differentiations between different homeless cases." (Nave 2019)

³² personal communication on May 6, 2019

³³ personal communication on May 7, 2019

TYPES & CHARACTERISTICS OF OCCUPATIONS IN PUBLIC SPACE

The insufficiency of the applied methods for housing support lead a large number of the homeless population to seek for shelter in the urban space, also in Lisbon. Although the primary reason for bringing people to rough-sleeper situation is the inefficiency of the transitional housing provisions themselves in both examples of USA and Lisbon, the authorities' responses on public space occupations differ significantly.

In many southern European countries, and particularly in Portugal the government and the police maintain a quite neutral and passive attitude against several types of informality compared to the US, including homeless urban occupations for shelter. Moreover, sleeping in open spaces it is not nationally illegal (Nave 2019) compared to some Northern European countries and states of USA.

"Lisbon has a very tolerant policy amongst rough-sleepers compared to other cities in Europe" (Correia 2019). "Usually, there are no arrests, but is more possible that the police may ask homeless people to move out of certain public spaces." (Nave 2019). According to André Correia "...the police permit homeless to stay in some places while in other places they do not. For example, a lot of people used to live in the main square of the city in the past, where there is a lot of well protected space to sleep, but now it is not permitted because of the proximity to the municipal buildings."

In contrast, it is more likely that complaints for long-term homeless gatherings will be initiated by the neighbouring community or if an urban development project is planned in a certain area. In these cases, the hygiene department of the city will execute a subtle eviction by removing the belongings of the homeless people when cleaning the streets, and if so, it is not possible to collect them back (Correia 2019; Nave 2019).

But neither this happen very often (Correia 2019). The city hall works closely with the NGOs for the protection and the support of the homeless population (Nave 2019). A number of non-profit organisations involve city-funded programs to detect homeless people in the urban space and depending of each case give proper information on the available social support responses that they can receive. As for example: shelter, job, minimum national income etc. (Correia 2019).

types of occupations

Generally, the tolerant behaviour by the side of the authorities might be one important factor that compared to the US the homeless community of Lisbon has not been so widely organised neither in terms of spatial behaviour, in the sense of forming large collective settlements, nor politically, since homeless people still use public spaces for sleeping and storing their belongings without being disturbed most of the time.

For this reason, in Lisbon, it is not so common to encounter homeless encampments of the scale they occur in US, where collectivity and solidarity among the community of homeless plays an essential role for the resistance against frequent and violent evictions and arrests by the police.

According to Rita Pereira Marques ³⁴ it has been observed that is not very easy for the homeless population in Lisbon to develop feelings of community and belonging by themselves, even if they sleep and live close to each other. This fact is closely related to survival. "Survival is always first...if something is not functional anymore, homeless people will easily go away from the other gatherers." (Marques 2019).

Nevertheless, the different homeless spatial gatherings in the city are frequently comprised by small groups rather than isolated individuals (Correia 2019). There are cases where tents are used for sleeping but also cases where people just use mattresses, blankets and cardboards.

³⁴ personal communication on April 29, 2019



Photo 34: Homeless overnight occupation of the main square of Lisbon, Praça do Comércio



Photo 35: Homeless self-made house in Bella Vista, Lisbon

**MAP 01. SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF HOMELESS GATHERINGS
IN THE CITY CENTER OF LISBON & RELEVANT SERVICES**

- homeless gathering
- meal distribution route
- meal distribution location
- public washroom
- homeless association
- highway
- railway
- train station
- historical center
- city center
- other central neighbourhoods
- suburbs
- airport
- monsanto hill

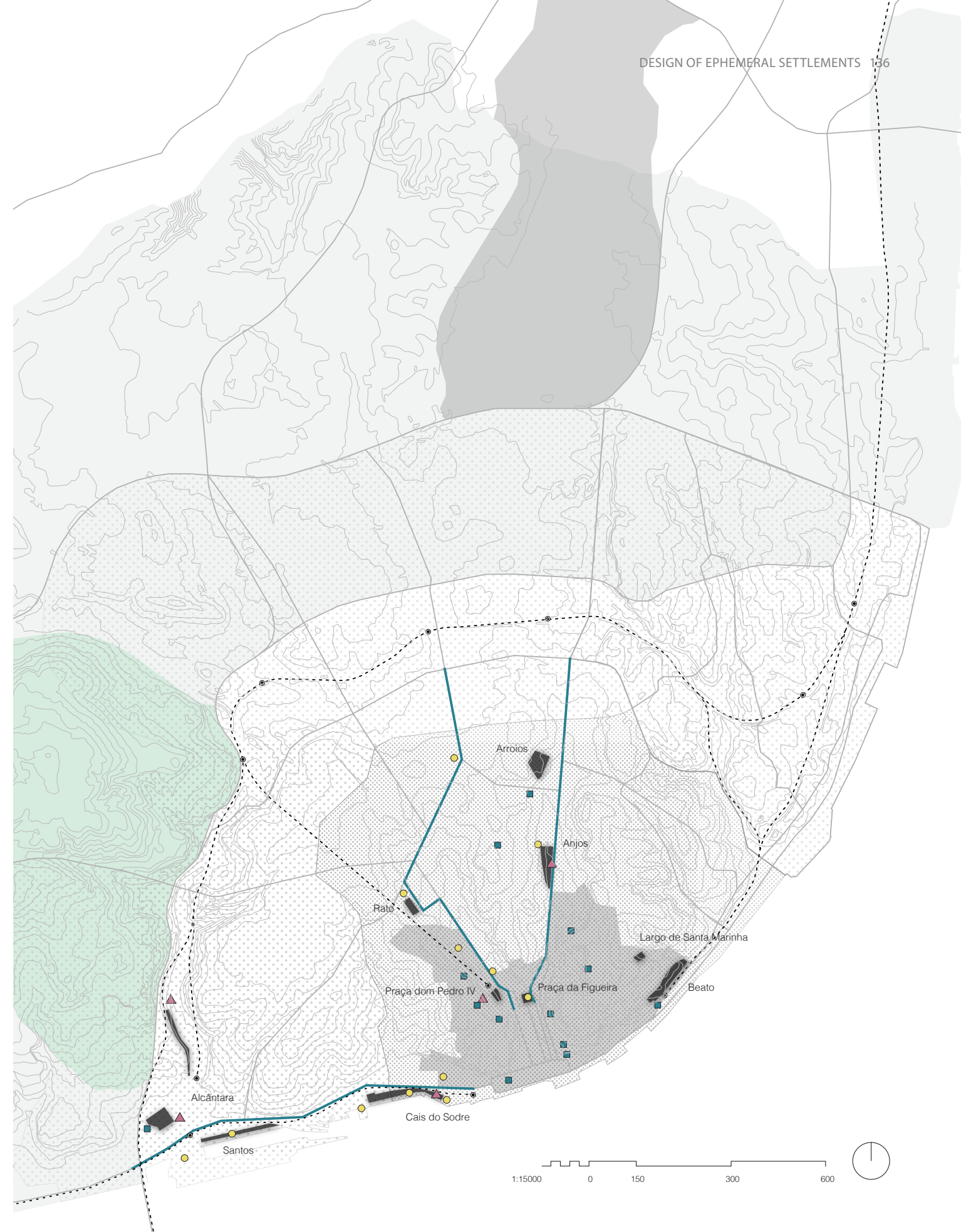


Photo 36: Homeless gathering in Praça dom Pedro IV, Rossio, Lisbon



Photo 38: Homeless gathering in Praça da Figueira, Lisbon



Photo 37: Homeless gathering in Largo de Santa Marinha, Lisbon



Photo 39: Homeless gathering in Beato, Lisbon

Photo 40: Homeless gathering in Arroios, Lisbon



Photo 43: Homeless gathering in Anjos, Lisbon



Photo 41: Homeless gathering in Rato, Lisbon

Photo 42: Homeless gathering in Santos, Lisbon



Photo 44: Homeless gathering in Cais do Sodre, Lisbon

spatial distribution

The data collected for the city of Lisbon witness a higher accumulation of homeless population in more central neighborhoods which can be explained due to the existence of more services in these areas. Furthermore, as it is illustrated in the map 01, in the same central areas the homeless gatherings tend to consist by small groups that appear scattered in the urban space rather than congregated around the same area and forming communities.

location selection

As claimed by all the interviewees that work with associations that offer support to homeless people of Lisbon, the reasons for selecting certain locations in the city are first and foremost the physical characteristics of the place. It is always preferred to be a sheltered space, protected from rain and wind (Correia 2019; Nave 2019). Usually, location is also chosen because of its proximity to social services points such as canteens or any places that meal deliveries occur, several non-profit organisations that support the homeless community, public washrooms (Correia 2019) supermarkets – where they can collect the discarded food at the end of the day and other services. In general, the factors mentioned constitute also the reasons that homeless gatherings tend to occur in the city of Lisbon, rather than homeless' intention to form a community (Nave 2019).

Visibility or invisibility does not play such an important role for setting a settle spot either (Correia 2019), while often homeless seek to be out of the centre of attention (Nave 2019) and almost never to be visible intentionally, as a means of protest which has been the case with many 'tent cities' in the US.

facilities for the homeless

Finally, as it worths to be mentioned that there are some services scattered in the city of Lisbon that even if not always intentionally designed for the homeless, today serve quite well the population that lacks permanent shelter.

The services include firstly a well distributed network of public bathrooms mainly inside the historical neighbourhoods of Lisbon, which originally used to serve the citizens of the city in the past when houses didn't have private bathrooms. The public bathrooms are maintained in a very good condition and are available for use certain hours per day.

Also, a network of public lockers is placed in different locations in the city for the homeless people to store their possessions. This project has been running since 2013 by an association called ACA (Associação Conversa Amiga). There are 60 Solidary Lockers at the moment in the city of Lisbon distributed equally in 4 locations. The key for each locker is assigned to one person for a period of 3 months. If the contact is lost the locker will be kept for one month. The city hall has financed the 60% of the project and the rest is funded by sponsors and crowd-funding. (ACA 2019).

Lastly, there is also a number of public unused buildings that are recently offered by the municipality to several associations that organise and deliver lunch and dinner to the homeless, so that for certain hours per day can receive the homeless community to take their meals in a more comfortable and dignified manner. The program was proposed and initiated by the association CASA (Centro de Apoio ao Sem Abrigo).

Photo 45: Public toilet in Alfama, Lisbon



Photo 46: Solidary lockers in the city center of Lisbon

To sum up, briefly comparing the situation around homeless in the USA and in Lisbon two main outcomes are revealed.

Firstly, the methods of housing provision that are promoted to support the homeless population are quite aligned in both cases and have been proved equally insufficient or not entirely comprehensive and responsive for all the different categories that homeless population make up. The result of the systematic failure of official mechanisms to respond to homeless necessities has in both cases led to the informal occupation of public space as a shelter solution which in turn urges the exploration of new housing support methods.

Secondly, the basic difference between the two examples can be found on the responses by the authorities towards the informal occupation of urban space. While in most areas in the US, local governments have reacted to the phenomenon by harsh evictions and penalisation, in Lisbon, officials respond in more receptive manners by applying relocations less frequently and in more subtle ways. This fact has been the determined factor for the massive resistance by the homeless population in the first case triggering the sudden manifestation of organised tent settlements in visible sites which later managed to gain official authorisation, in comparison to the unplanned spatial gatherings of the homeless in the latter situation, which can be better described as a matter of spontaneity and place suitability.

Last but not least, it should be mentioned that apart from the authorities behaviour, the availability of public facilities that unrestrictedly cover the basic needs of the homeless population, explored through the example of Lisbon, leaves us with clear evidence of how little is needed eventually to secure the survival of people that experience homelessness.

This is what in this project is called the 4 key necessities to survive homelessness and the design of ephemeral settlements that follows has based primarily on these 4 elements :

food - washroom - roof - storage.

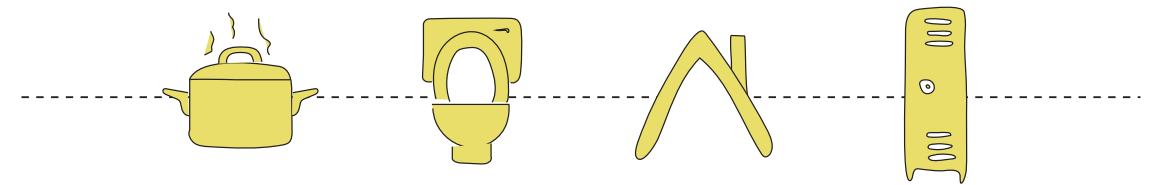


Diagram 29: Key necessities to survive homelessness.

Design of homeless ephemeral settlements

Regardless the discrepancies in the existing spatial and organisational arrangement of the homeless occupations between the American and Portuguese examples (see pp. 141) there are some acknowledged advantages for the residents of 'tent cities' which should not be overlooked, such as increased safety, the sense of 'belonging', and higher rates of self-motivation and successful social integration.

Hence, the recent economic crisis, coupled with affordable housing shortages and the inadequate reach of social services for the homeless, but also the refugee crisis emphasises the urgency of considering the practice of 'tent cities' in a holistic and analytical manner, and embracing it as a temporary housing solution for the population that lack shelter (Loftus-Farren 2011) not only in US but also in European cities.

The development of ephemeral settlements will make space for the emergence of the advantages originating on the self-help practices of the homeless, will increase the socio-spatial integration of one of the most socially excluded groups and will give the opportunity to urban policy makers to generate useful feedback on the ways the overall social care provision system should be re-structured.

As it was already presented, contemporary urban policy intend citizenship participation in the planning and design process by just being more tolerant and receptive towards self-support informal activities that appear in the urban space. However, it has been suggested that in the authorisation process of such activities the priority is frequently given to cases which underlie economic development for the city or its main allies, while practices seeking for broader socio-spatial justice either remain completely neglected or are authorised by being fully or partially co-opted into the systems they initially fight - as in the case of the 'tiny-house shelters' which has been presented in previous chapter.

The present research suggests that urban planning should equally treat the informal activities of marginalised social groups affirming their crucial meanings for survival and dignity regain, and through their official performance examine simpler and more sustainable ways to organise and build contemporary cities.

Though 'tent cities' might seem marginal to the society, for the population they serve are absolutely central. Planners should address therefore the informal practices of the homeless population of the US as experiments of DIY Urbanism for the broader homeless community in order to revise the existing social structures and shape better living environments for the vulnerable groups of our cities in the long term. Instead of ignoring, dismantling, relocating or assimilating into unsuccessful mechanisms of social provision the self-made efforts of homeless, urban planning should address the real causes of their emergence and promote the co-existence of different forms of housing encouraging the emergence of a more socially and structurally diverse city.

Urban policies should serve and protect all members of the community and such, criminalising or dismissing the practices of the unsheltered, including those forbidding public sleeping, camping, sheltering, storing belongings, sitting, lying, vehicle dwelling, and panhandling should be repealed, or stop being enforced (Tent City, USA 2017) in direct and indirect manners.

On the contrary, it is high time for urban policy in many contemporary cities, to get inspired from several local initiatives and form a cohesive strategy for the authorisation of existing or the design of new homeless settlements as a temporary, transitional and relatively affordable housing provision option, including possible ways of supporting the proper development of these communities.

Tent cities generally require less economic support from local governments than do homeless shelters and other forms of subsidised housing (Loftus-Farren 2011). This is not to say that local governments should solely rely on the establishment of ephemeral settlements to combat homelessness, or that they should neglect other efforts to house and service their homeless populations. However, so long as municipalities remain unable to aid the homeless in attaining desirable or even habitable housing, it is unjust and dismissive to disregard the benefits offered by self-help solutions. Often, the argument against temporary solutions is that people need permanent homes and the focus should be on low-income housing, but in the absence of such solutions, homeless people need a place to sleep, shelter themselves, and store their belongings and most importantly own the right to set up their own communities (Tent City, USA 2017; Loftus-Farren 2011).

The next and last paragraph includes a holistic strategy on how to accomplish the development and proper function of ideal ephemeral homeless settlements in European cities, taking as starting point a concrete proposal in the city of Lisbon.

VISION

“The development of ephemeral settlements for people who experience temporary or permanent homelessness, based on the intersection of ‘urban campsites’ and ‘small-scale housing communities’, giving an intermediate housing option between rough-sleeping and conventional housing.”

OBJECTIVES

The development of ephemeral communities will:

1. receive unsheltered populations as alternatives to conventional shelters and subsidized housing options
2. give the opportunity to their residents to become autonomous and self-sufficient by establishing circular economy systems
3. minimize the residents' living costs and environmental footprint
4. generate chances for social interaction
5. promote social integration, without forcing for social alignment
6. address social diversity by eliminating exclusion
7. address and accept the diversity of urban space
8. introduce ephemerality in urban and housing design

STRATEGY

STAGE 1

legislation

Adjust municipal legislation to permit camping, vehicle dwelling and construction of small-scale housing units (below 50sqm.) in urban districts.

incentives

Design of a number of incentives for external organisations & businesses to support the project. (economical incentives for planners, construction services, food businesses, supermarkets, individual experts etc.)

location selection

Determine urban districts where the development of ephemeral settlements will be permitted, considering public unused property, vicinity to social services, proximity to urban services and social interaction opportunities.

health standards

Integrate selected sites into urban networks of water, electricity supply and sewage.

basic infrastructure

Provide basic infrastructure in the selected sites by constructing permanent shared facilities (toilets, washrooms, cooking areas, gathering spaces, workshops etc.) financially supported by governmental and local subsidies.

STAGE 2

invite residents

Residents settle in the new settlements, residing in individual tents in an organised camping site.

organisation

A committee responsible to guide the first stages of the community's development, structured by NGO's, advocacy groups and other organisations or individuals, work close to the residents to provide the required social support, inform on legislation matters and assist the community to form an independent organisation body and set its governance and operation conduct.

STAGE 3

social reception - partnerships

The new settlements are introduced to external partner groups who embrace and support the development of the communities - homeless community, NGO's and other organisations working with homelessness, neighborhood community, experts, volunteers.

The external partners and volunteers will initially assist the community by means of supporting basic needs and offering advanced knowledge, experience and methodologies on how to lead in self-sufficiency over the operation and maintenance of the settlement.

resources

Collect useful resources for the development of the settlements by external partner groups and neighborhood communities.

- food resources and clothes
- unused and recycled resources
- second hand housing and building equipment
- building materials
- knowledge on construction and installation of sustainable systems

This step can be performed by implementing methods of crowdfunding, donation, sharing knowledge workshops and governmental subsidies.

STAGE 4

self-construction

The residents with the support of their partnerships start building more safe and permanent housing units in form of individualised, small scale houses (tiny houses).

farming

At the same time, the residents start cultivating their own food resources and operate the required works to develop an independent agricultural unit in site.

sustainability

With the assistance of partnerships the residents are trained in installation of sustainable power, heating, cooling and water management systems that will ensure the sustainability of the housing units and the farm, and potentially replace or supplement the existing provisions and shared facilities.

STAGE 5

independence

The external committee remain close to the community in order to ensure stability, safety, autonomy and a level of self sufficiency.

new arrivals

After the first generation of residents have accomplished a level of independence and have moved in small scale housing, the settlement invite newcomers who will be hosted in the camping area. The older residents will integrate the newcomers in the community by sharing their knowledge, experience and methods.

The external committee has now a minimised role and provide support only when is needed.

STAGE 6

new communities

The first successful communities will operate as prototypes and will guide the development and establishment of new ephemeral settlements by supporting the new communities and sharing their experience in organisational and construction matters.

At this point, external assistance by governments and organisations is minimized.

This process can make up a circular economy system and a continuous model of recycling knowledge and experience in order to promote self-support and self sufficiency to the wider homeless community.

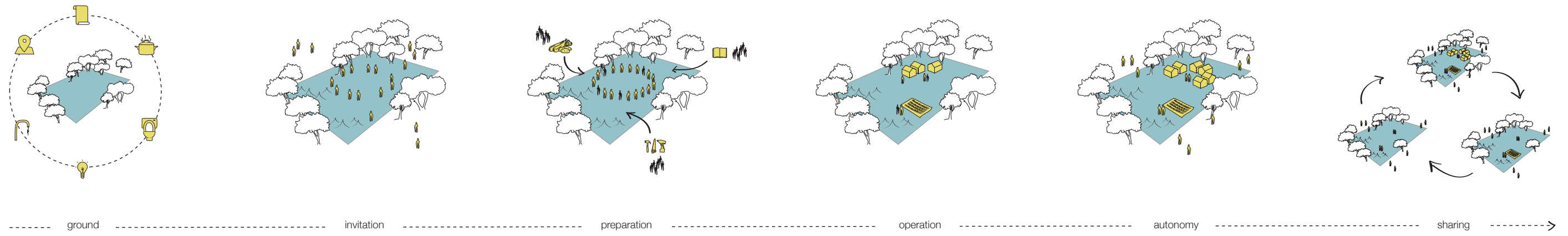
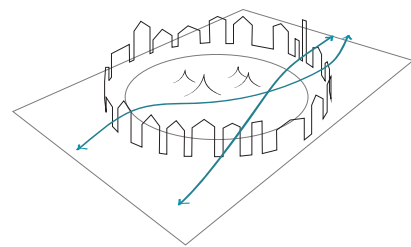
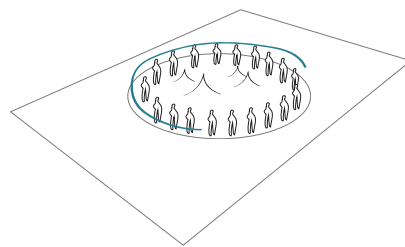


Diagram 30: Strategy for the development of autonomous homeless ephemeral settlements in urban districts.

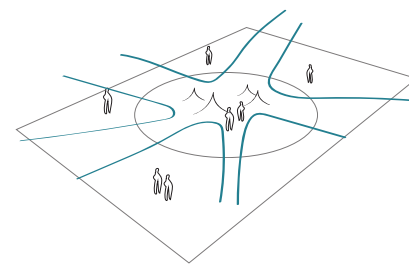
GUIDELINES



ACCESSIBILITY



GOVERNANCE



SOCIAL INTERACTION

SPATIAL CONFIGURATION

ORGANISATION

Location

Integration in the urban network & not in segregated districts
 Proximity to public transportation
 Proximity to social care services
 Equal allocation of different communities in the urban network
 Vicinity to organisations & services that can ensure social interaction with the neighbourhood

Infrastructure

Provision of sanitation & cooking facilities
 Inclusion of settlements sites in the water, electricity and sewage urban network
 Inclusion of settlements in the waste management network
 Incorporation of certain areas on site for agriculture activities
 Incorporation of sustainable systems for power generation, heating, cooling, water management and farming

Structures

Authorisation for urban public or unused properties to host homeless settlements
 Arrangement of shared facilities in semi-permanent structures on site
 Arrangement of private housing units in ephemeral structures : tents, vehicles and semi-permanent structures : tiny houses
 Provision of donated, recycled, second hand or wasted material & equipment for the development of the settlements

Governance

Autonomous organisation without external supervision or management
 Application of participatory models of governance
 Self-design of applicable rules and regulations
 Acceptance of diversity, non-discriminatory barriers application

Partnerships & social interaction

Encouragement of partnerships with local businesses and organisations
 Connection with advocacy groups and NGO's
 Arrangement of events and activities to increase social interaction and obtain support from the surrounding residential community

Diagram 31: Key concepts for the development of autonomus homeless ephemeral settlements in urban districts.

Table 08: Guidelines for the development of autonomus homeless ephemeral settlements in urban districts.

SPATIAL CONFIGURATION

The development of ephemeral communities can offer an alternative to life in shelters and on the street and serve as a valuable interim solution while governments continue to address the root problems that lead to homelessness. Thereby, such experiments can, and should, fill a gaping hole between the current government responses to homelessness and the conventional housing options. Below, there is a better explanation of the guidelines for the successful development of ephemeral communities.

legislation

Acknowledging some serious drawbacks from the analysis of the US 'tent cities', local governments should facilitate the development of ephemeral settlements by preparing the legislation ground which will allow the development of such settlements in advance. This can be accomplished by changing local ordinances, attribute certain unused or underused urbanized lots for camping, vehicle dwelling and set the framework for the construction of small scale and ephemeral housing units, such as minimum space, height, building materials standards etc. The existance of relevant legislation will drive the homeless community but also external stakeholders easier to the development of such communities and will encourage the partnerships that are required for this accomplishment. Simulataneously, it will create a more friendly environment for the projects and will alleviate the oponents' concerns.

At the same time, local governments should design a number of incentives to attract those who are willing to participate in the different stages of the project. This can be achieved through: financial incentives to external partners and buisnesses, govermental subsidies to NGO's for the initiation of relevant projects, organisation of campains and activities to promote methods of sharing goods and knowledge.

location

Furthermore, it is undeniable that the model of ephemeral communities by the homeless would only be successful for their social inclusion if it provides physically and practically accessible and not socially and spatially secluded spaces to set in. By physically accessible is indicated any safe, stable, secure place to sleep and store one's possessions without fear of harassment or unplanned eviction, which is concurrently located in strategic, well-engaged places in the urban network and not separate from a city's dynamics, equally spread in the urban network and accessible to transportation and all the common urban services. A practically accessible place can be considered the one that does not apply discriminatory barriers and compelling participation to activities or subjection to religious practices (Tent City, USA 2017).

The social inclusion of the homeless population in this case takes a dual meaning by restoring the image of a marginalised population in the wider society and by bringing the wider society closer to long time neglected realities by the neoliberal city. By the integration of such settlements in central areas of cities the neoliberal space is seriously challenged while the chance for social reproduction of the city is highly increased.

Increased interaction with marginalised communities will introduce a concrete step towards the realisation of a diverse city and will inaugurate an innovation on the ways we perceive and shape our future cities.

infrastructure

One of the most important factors for the success of the new settlements is to ensure that living conditions will satisfy local health and safety codes by providing access to sanitation and water facilities, regular trash removal, and safe cooking facilities. For this reason, it is required the integration of the settlements' sites in the urban network of water, electricity and sewage as well as the provision of a minimum permanent permise to include these facilities. The assurance of hygiene and electricity services as well as proper habitation densities in the encampments will prevent potential environmental hazards, and wiill encourage the acceptance of the new projects by the surrounding community.

structures

Even though the new settlements design is based in ephemeral values, it is important to stress that local government support should focus into progressing the initial 'urban campsites' into small scale housing communities offering the opportunity for higher safety, stability and autonomy for the homeless. This opportunity will generate a number of side benefits for the residents as it has been analysed in the equivalent example of tiny-housing communities in the US. The concept of tiny housing promotes a general community and sustainable living in contemporary cities by establishing a simpler lifestyle on the basis of living in simpler housing units and generally trying to minimise redundant conveniences. The small scale housing structures are aimed to be constructed with donated, recycled or wasted materials by the residents themselves, under the guidance and support of partnerships with experts and volunteers who are willing to share knowledge and experience with the community. Local coverments should design methods to encourage the sharing of all kinds of resources with the communities including knowledge and guidance on several matters.

Furthermore, the incorporation of urban agriculture in the communities, such as vegetable gardens, greenhouses and farming activities, will ensure a more self-sufficient living for the destitute populations, as the supply of food resources compose the first in need.

The advance from tent to tiny house structures will assist also the acceptance of the novel forms of housing by the wider community and fight "not-in-my-back-yard" oppositions. At the same time the idea of self construction and self operation of the settlement will provide meaningful activities to their residents and help them to obtain autonomy, self sufficiency as well as usefull knowledge, experience and skills. It will offer also the further possibility for such communities to host other demographics - for instance people that want to downsize their environmental footprint and live in a simpler way (Heben,2014). The encouragement of interaction between the homeless and other social groups it will be beneficial in many terms including the regain of dignity by the chronic unhoused and the enhancement of community bonds shaping a social capital in the city.

ORGANISATION

partnerships

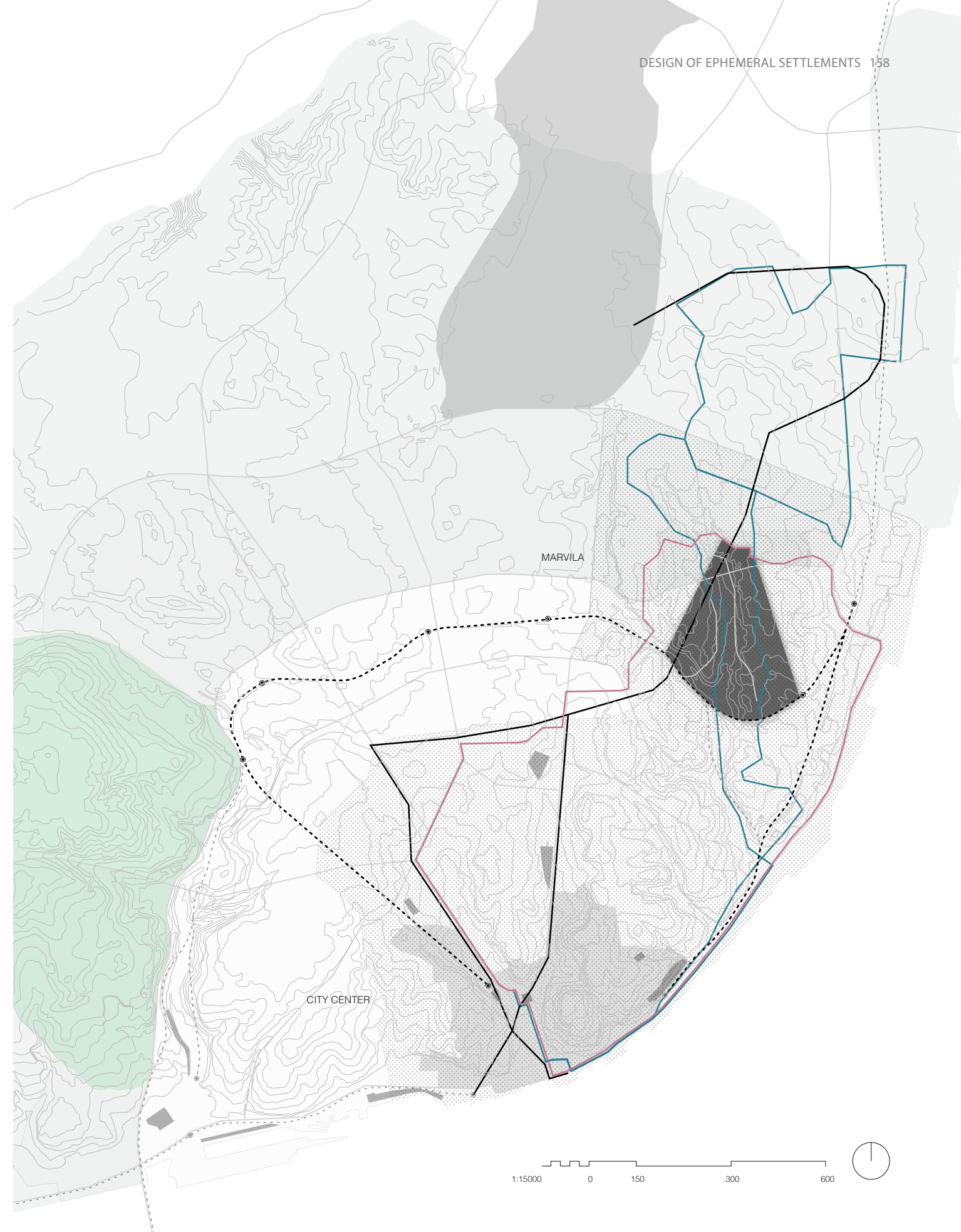
In addition, statutes and ordinances facilitating partnerships with local businesses, non-profits or other organisations to sponsor and support the ephemeral communities can help engage new resources and improve the success of the settlements. Social organisations and institutions should maintain a close collaboration with the new communities to provide support for the residents and work as intermediaries in the process of setting up new allies and new sources of assistance depending on the needs in each instance. They should also form a strong advocacy body together with the residents to ensure the survival of the communities by defending homeless rights and opinions in the political discourse.

governance

Finally, taking everything into account, neither the social organisations nor the local governments or any other synergies developed in this context should obscure the principal claim of the homeless to self organise and maintain their communities autonomously applying direct, local and often non-monetary models of governance. The delivery of services must respect the experience, human dignity, and human rights of those receiving them and must be guided by frequent and meaningful consultation with the people living in the new settlements. Any kind of support should be altruistic, sensitive and appropriate with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics (Tent City, USA 2017), avoiding strategies of control over the new communities. Only then there is a great chance for these places to thrive and by reproducing norms and behaviours into their boundaries to reproduce the spaces that surround them too.

MAP 02. LOCATION PROPOSAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EPHEMERAL SETTLEMENT

- LOCATION**
- proposed location
 - homeless gatherings
 - bus connection
 - bike connection
 - metro connection
 - highway
 - railway
 - train station ●
 - area of intervention
 - historical center
 - other central neighbourhoods
 - suburbs
 - airport
 - monsanto hill


















MAP 03. CONTEXT ANALYSIS & SUITABILITY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN EPHEMERAL SETTLEMENT

- unused lots 
- social housing 
- urban agriculture 
- park 
- proposed location 
- bike line 
- bus line 
- metro line 



MAP 04. PROPOSED SITE & SOCIAL INTERACTION CONTEXT

- proposed site 
- social interaction zones 
- notable buildings 
- supporting services 
- sports activities 
- working opportunities 
- spaces for recreational activities 
- potential lots for new settlements 
- suggested bike line 
- bike line 
- suggested bus line 
- bus line 
- metro line 
- traspostation stop 
- walking distance 

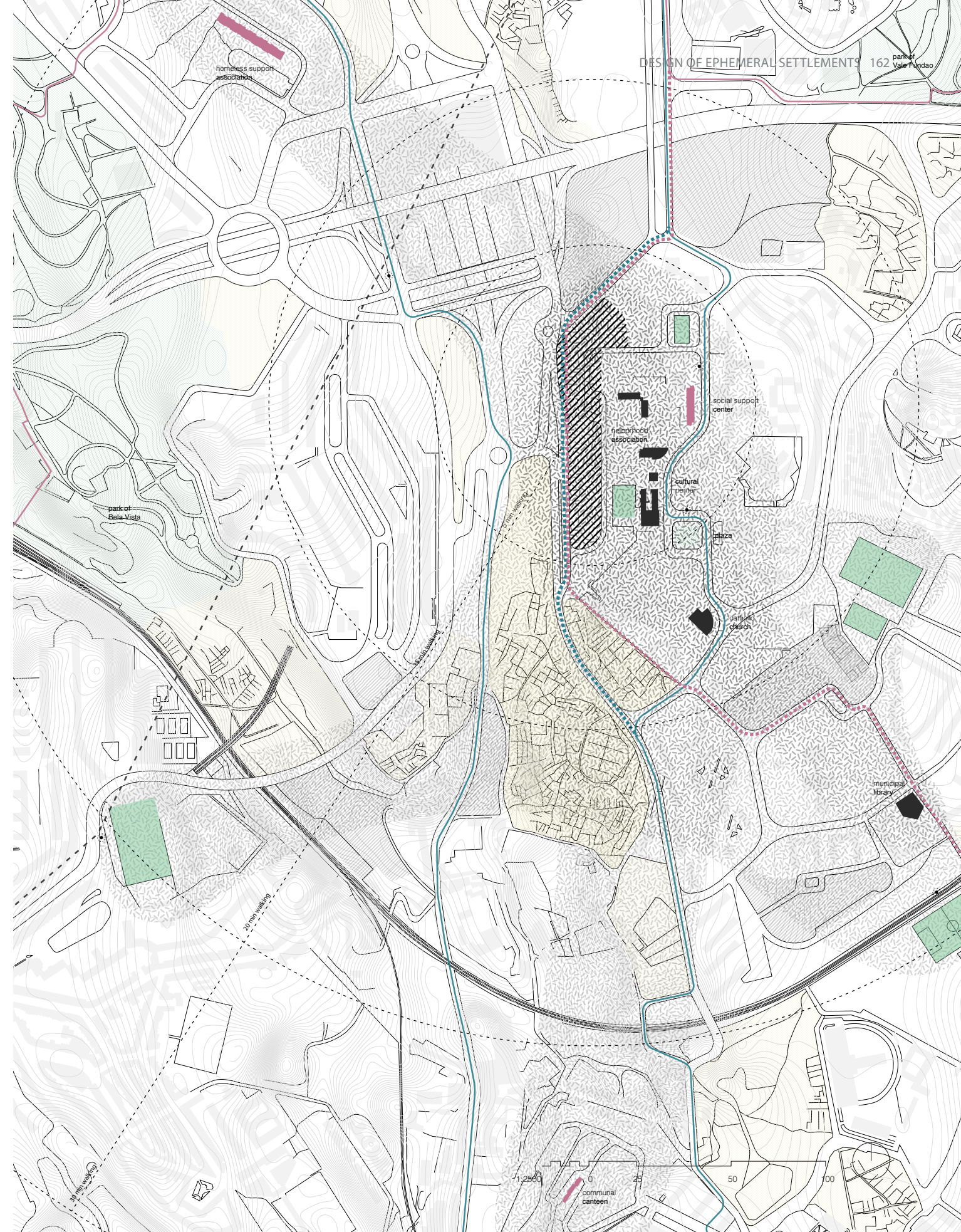


Photo 47: View of urban agriculture in the area of Marvila



Photo 49: View of urban agriculture in the area of Marvila



Photo 52: View of urban agriculture lot, south of intervention site



Photo 54: North-east view of intervention site



Photo 48: View of social housing in the area of Marvila



Photo 53: View of urban context south of intervention site



Photo 55: West view from intervention site



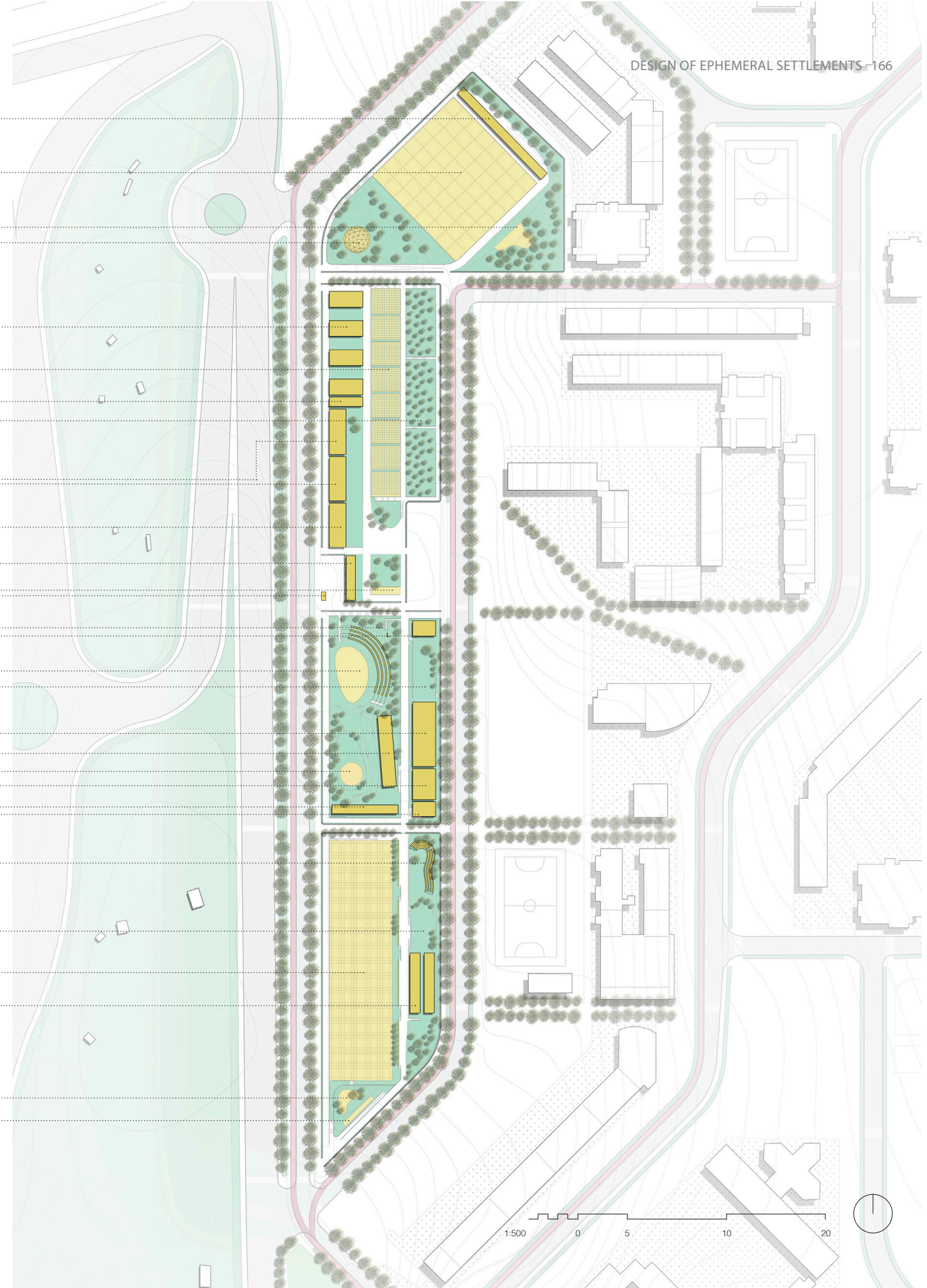
Photo 50: View of urban agriculture in the area of Marvila



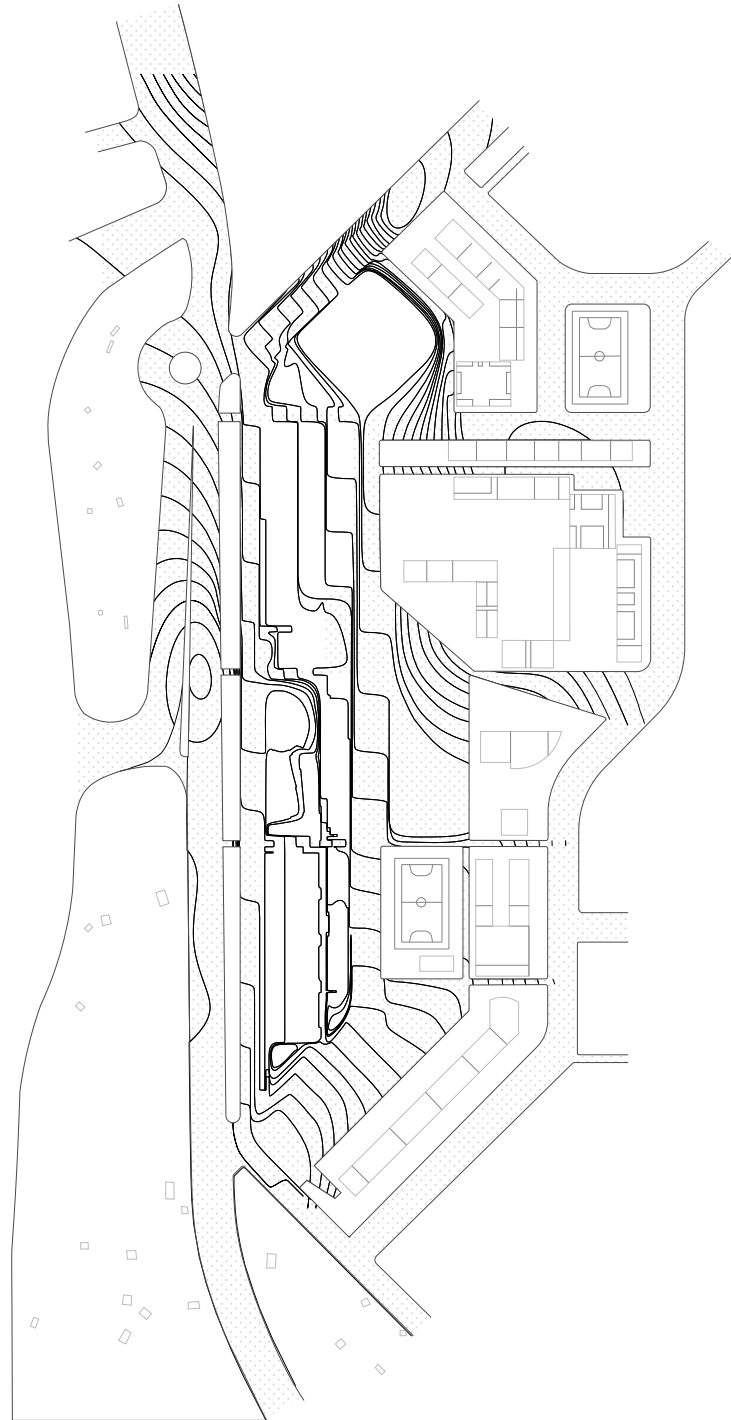
Photo 51: View of urban agriculture in the area of Marvila

MASTERPLAN

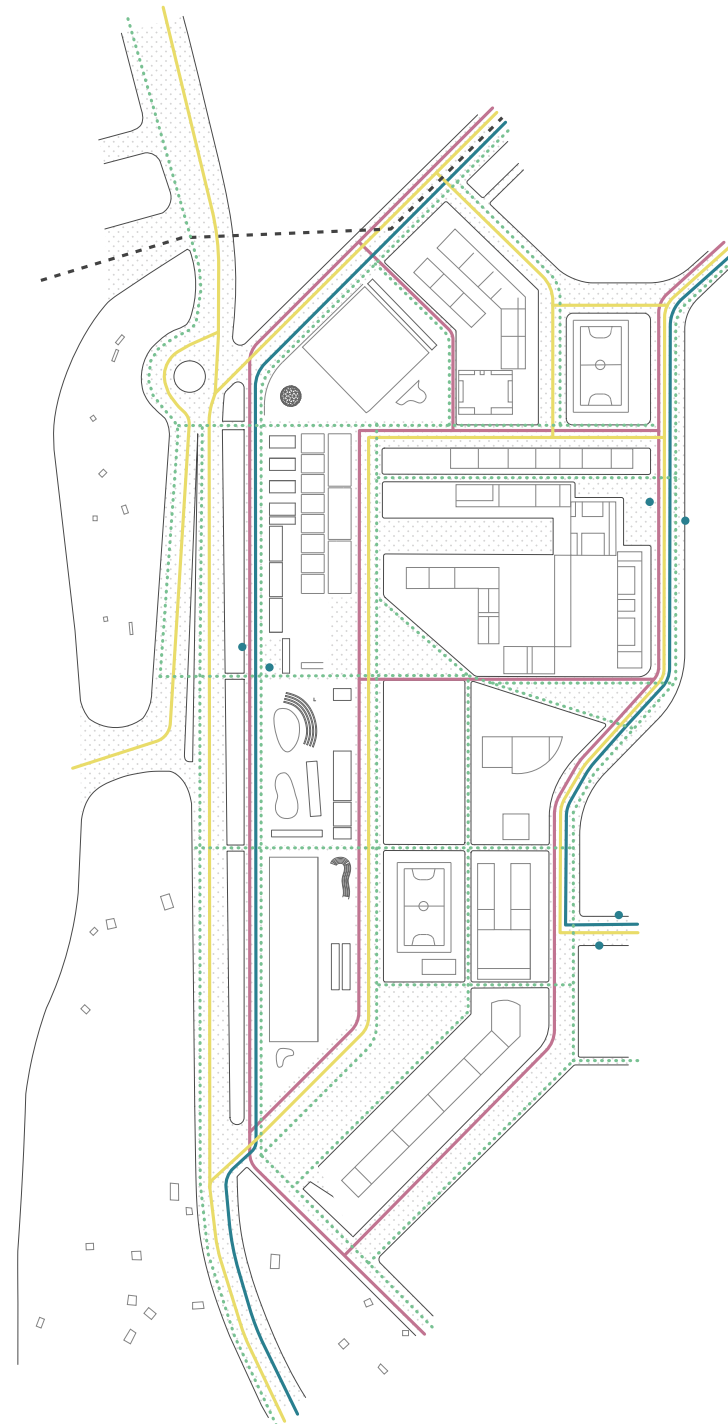
- 01 washrooms
- 02 permanent residential area : **tiny houses**
- 03 gathering area
- 04 activities pavilion
- 05 workshops
- 06 vegetable gardens
- 07 toilets
- 08 orchards
- 09 donations
- 10 administration
- 11 waste collection
- 12 bike parking
- 13 bust stop
- 14 root cellar
- 15 shop
- 16 cinema - theater
- 17 plaza
- 18 dinning area
- 19 community center
- 20 discussion area
- 21 kitchen
- 22 lockers
- 23 security building
- 24 laundry
- 25 clothing drying
- 26 temporary residential area : **camping site**
- 27 washrooms
- 28 gathering area
- 29 bike parking



DIAGRAMS

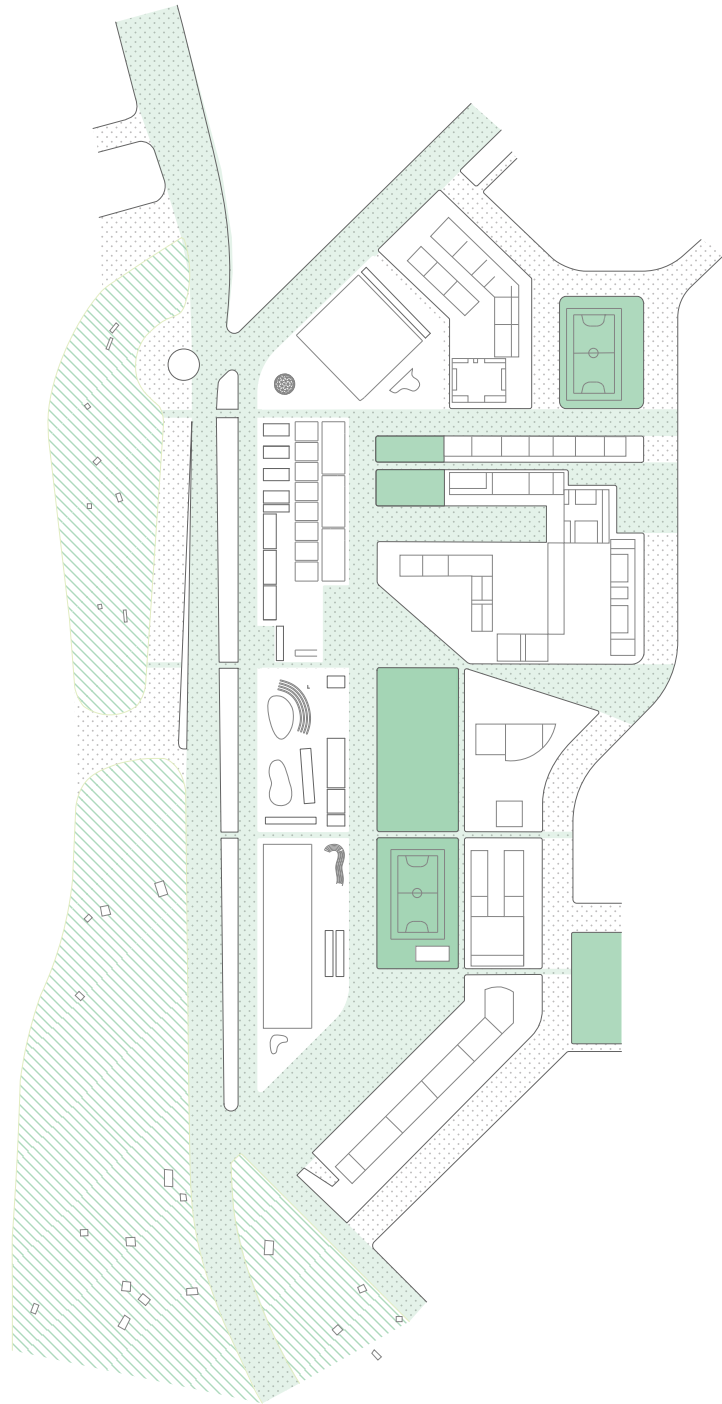


TOROGRAPHY



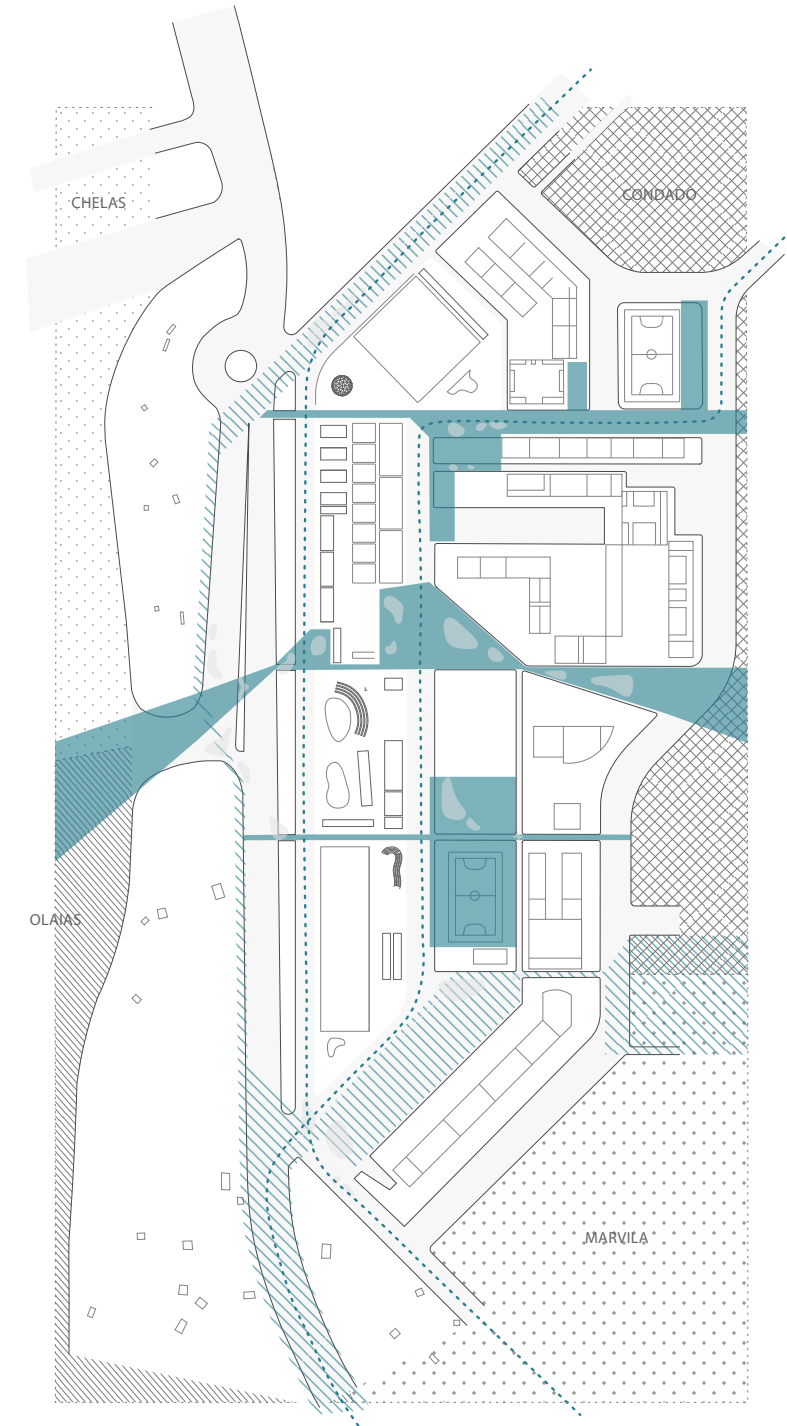
-
pedestrian
- bicycle
- bus
- bus stop
- car
- - - -
metro

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



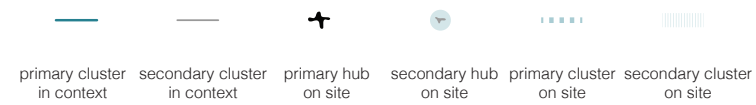
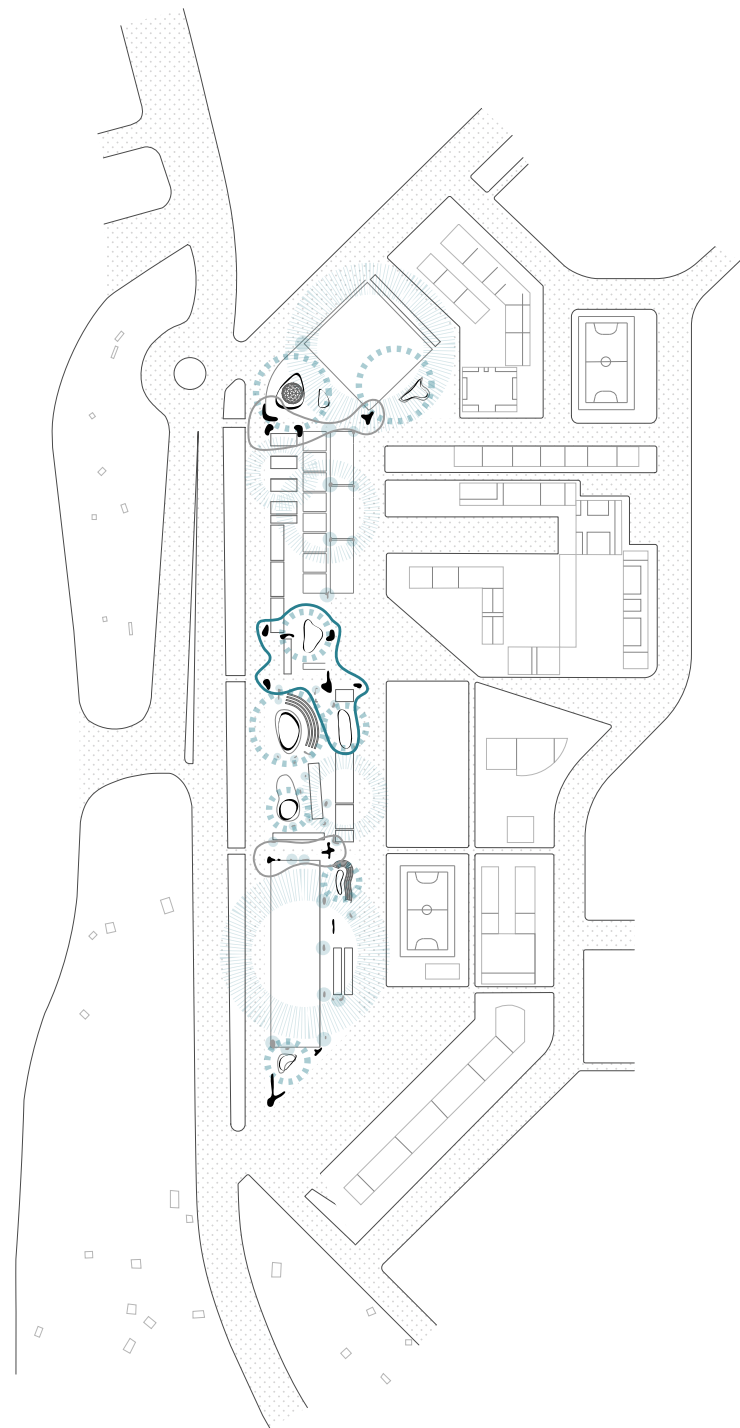
- facilities
- movements
- agriculture

PUBLIC SPACES

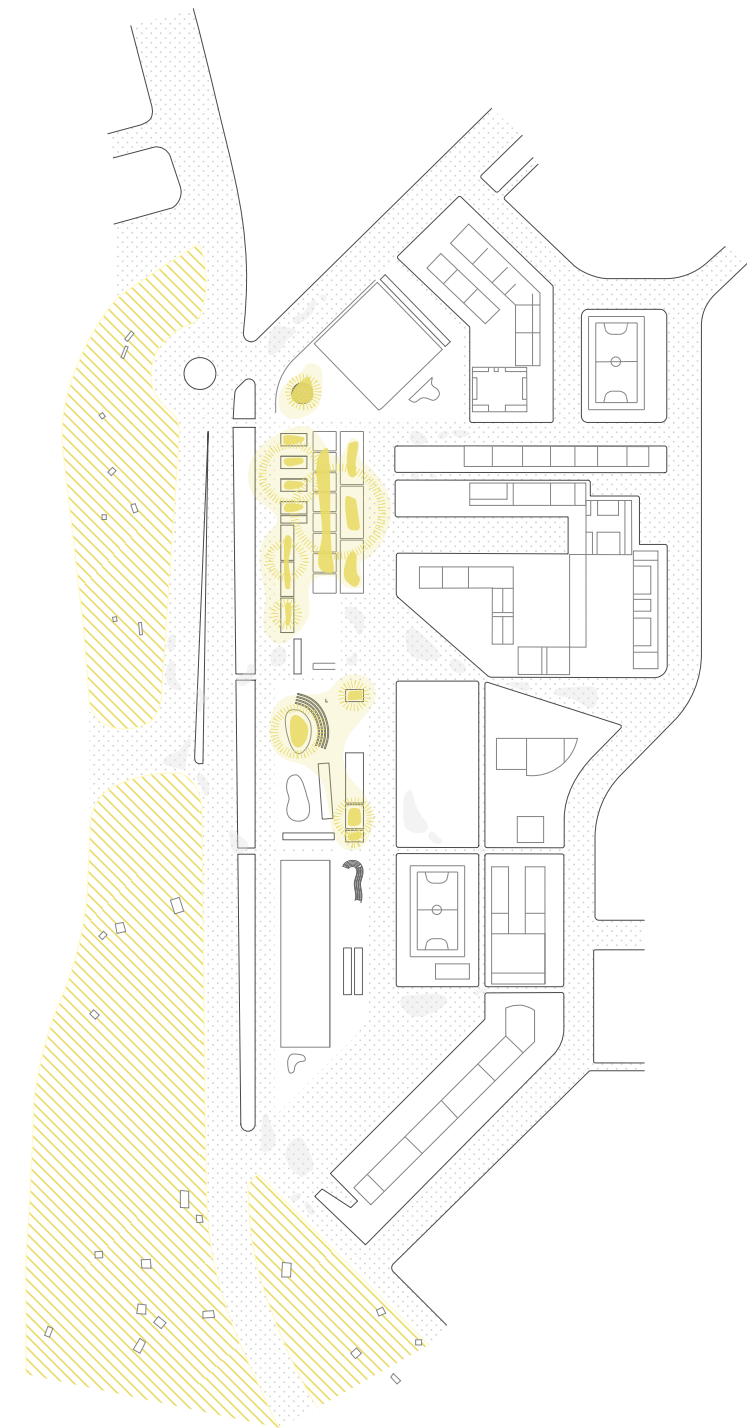


- crossing
- longitudinal
- marginal

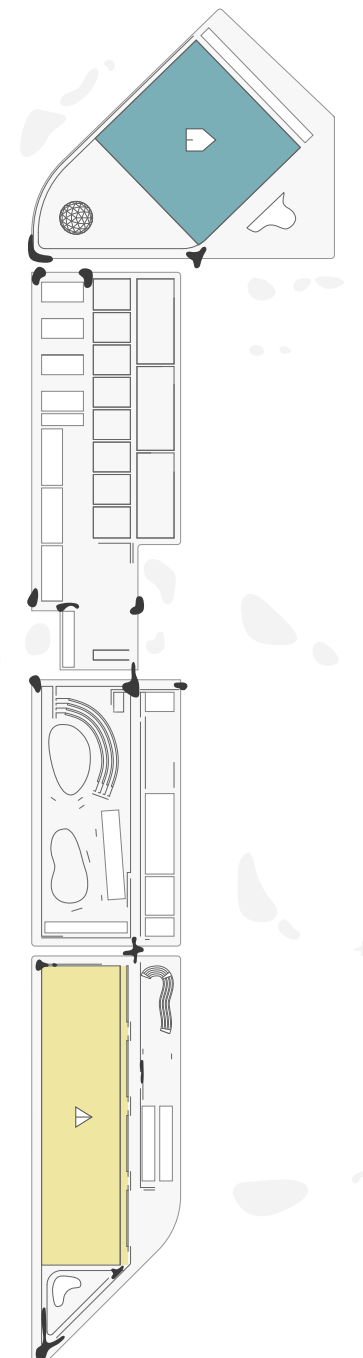
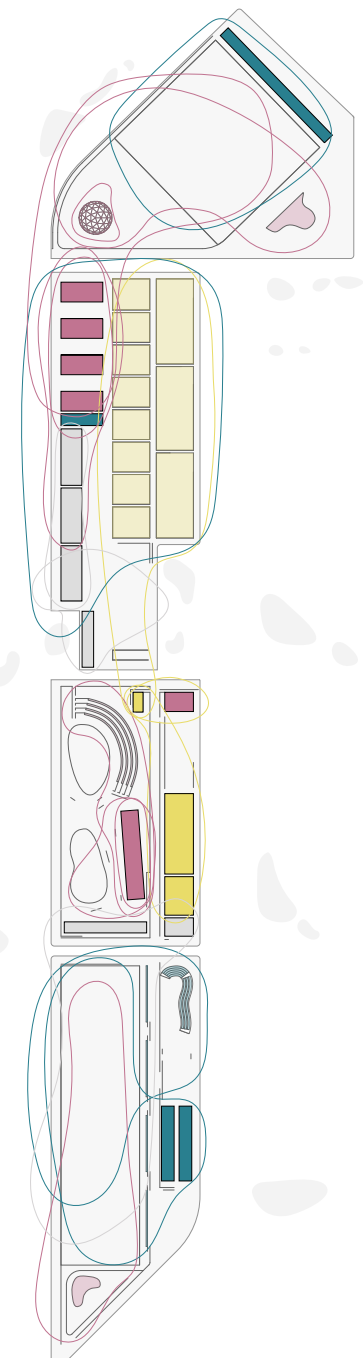
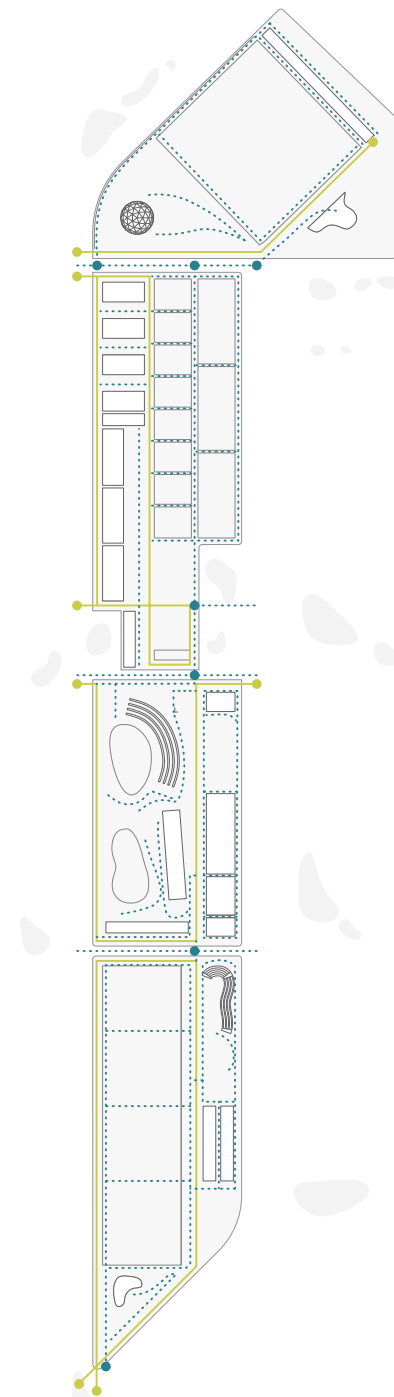
TRAJECTORIES



HUBS



WORKING OPPORTUNITIES



pedestrian path
 pedestrian entrance
 vehicle path
 vehicle entrance

community related
 food related
 water related
 storage & administration

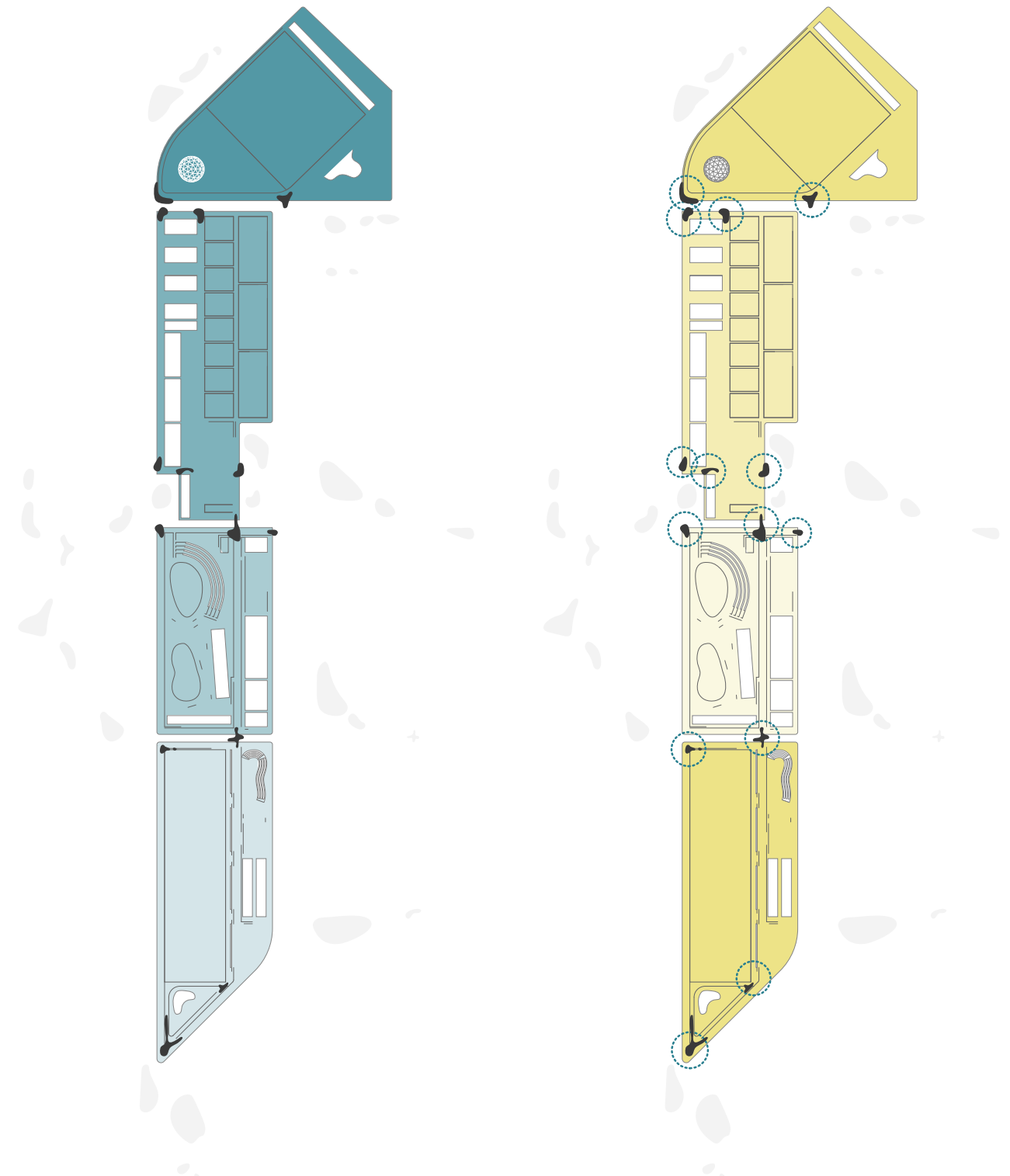
tiny houses
 tents

WATER DISTRIBUTION

CIRCULATION

FACILITIES

HOUSING



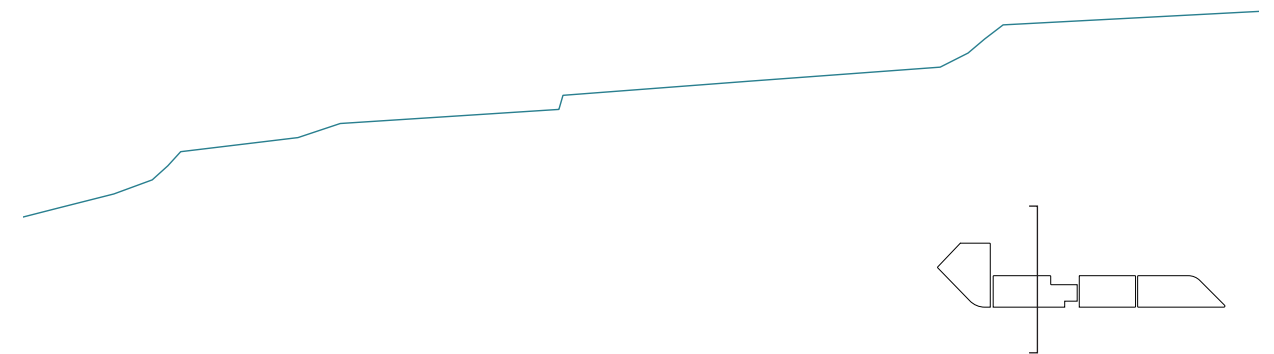
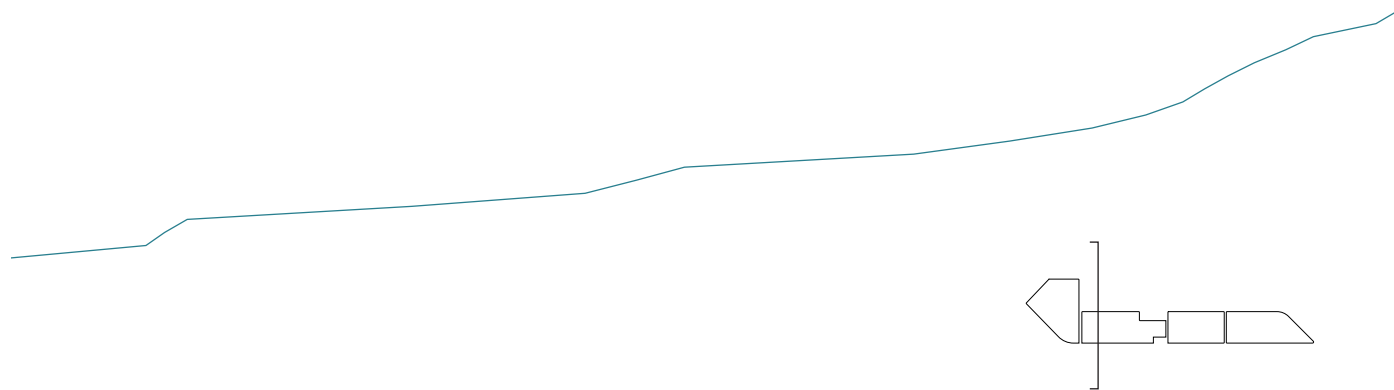
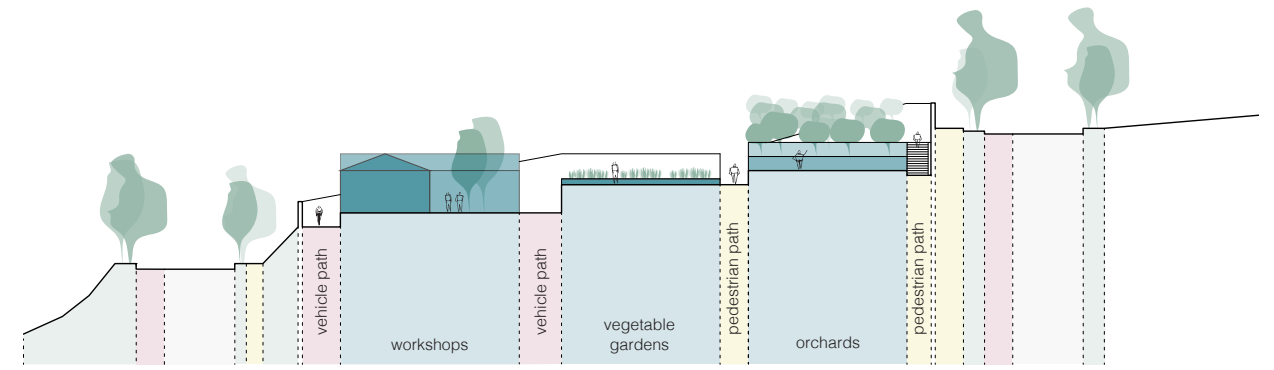
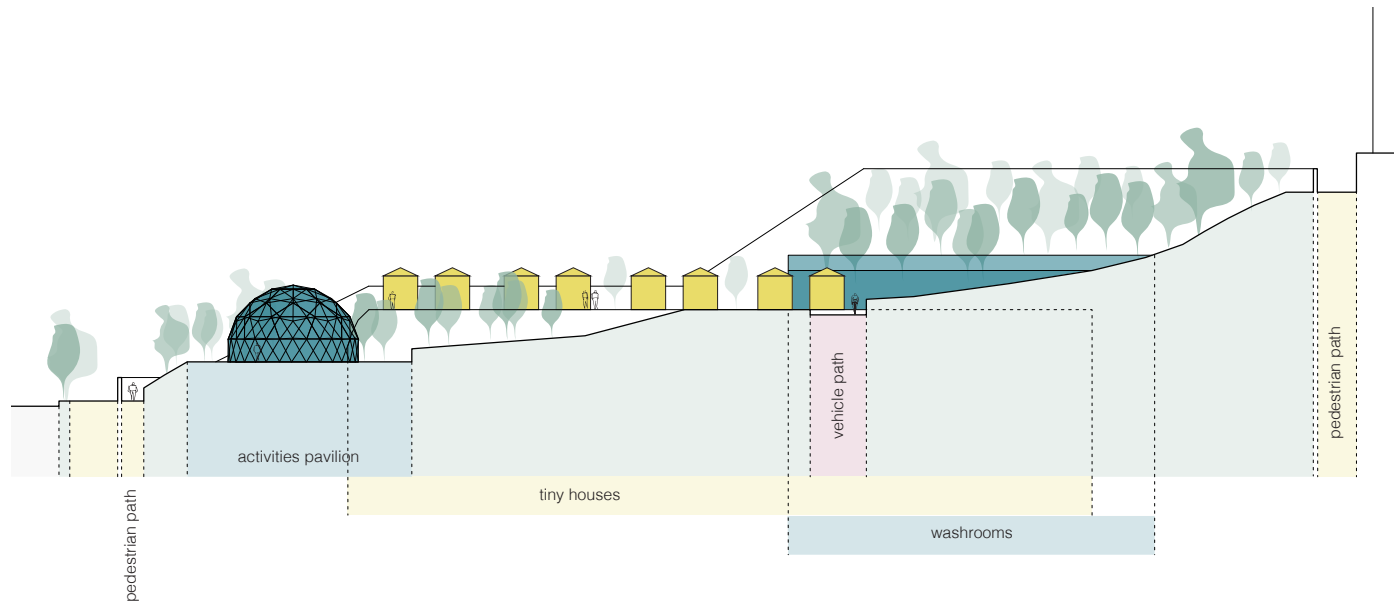
permanent  ephemeral

private  open to public

EPHEMERALITY

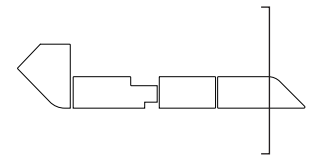
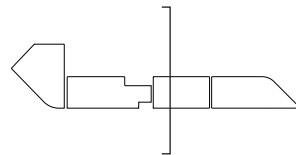
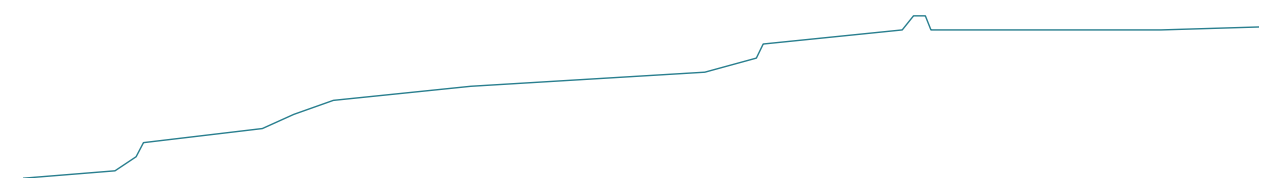
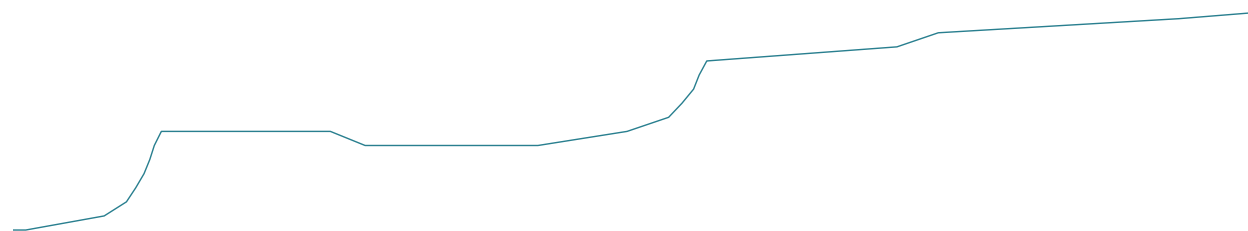
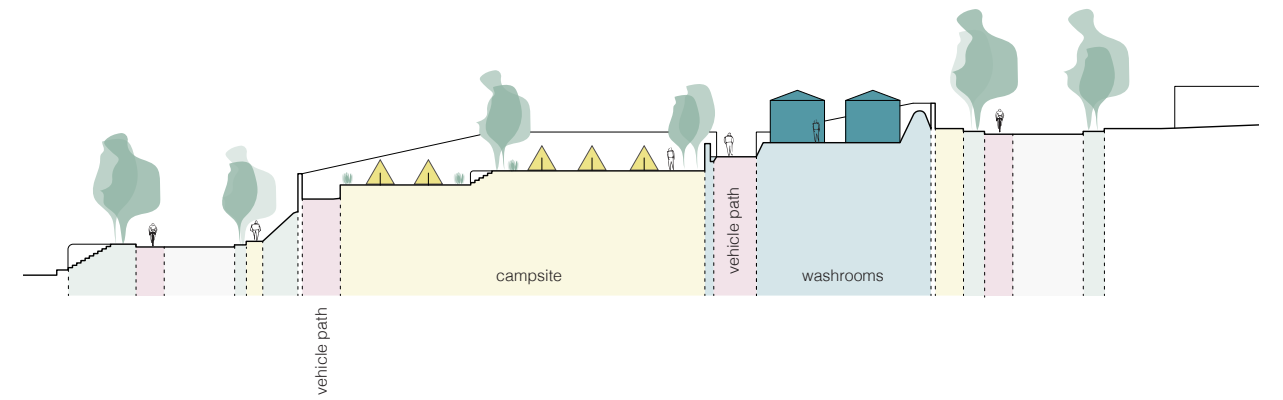
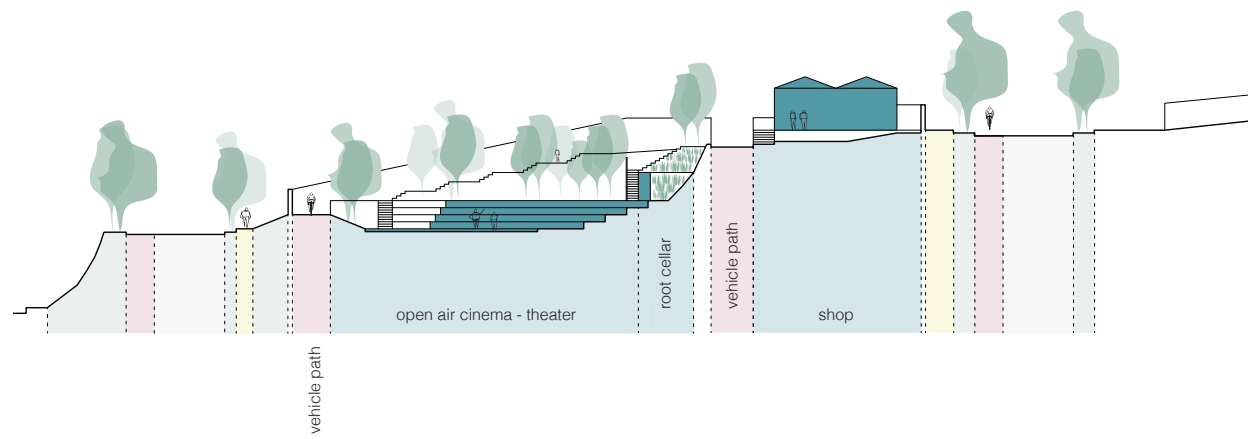
PRIVACY

SECTIONS



- common facility
- private housing
- facilities zone
- pedestrian path
- vehicle - bike path
- green zone
- street

- common facility
- private housing
- facilities zone
- pedestrian path
- vehicle - bike path
- green zone
- street

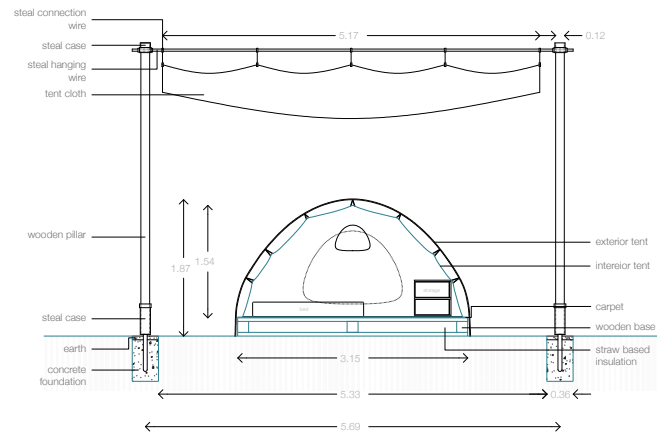
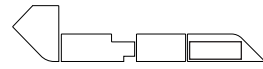


- common facility
- private housing
- facilities zone
- pedestrian path
- vehicle - bike path
- green zone
- street

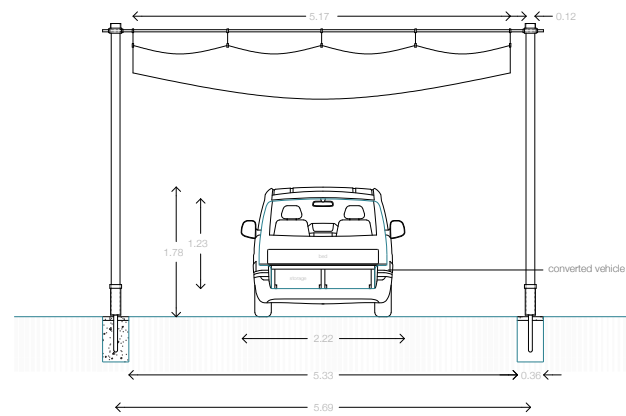
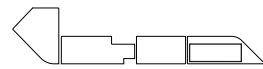
- common facility
- private housing
- facilities zone
- pedestrian path
- vehicle - bike path
- green zone
- street

STRUCTURE TYPOLOGIES

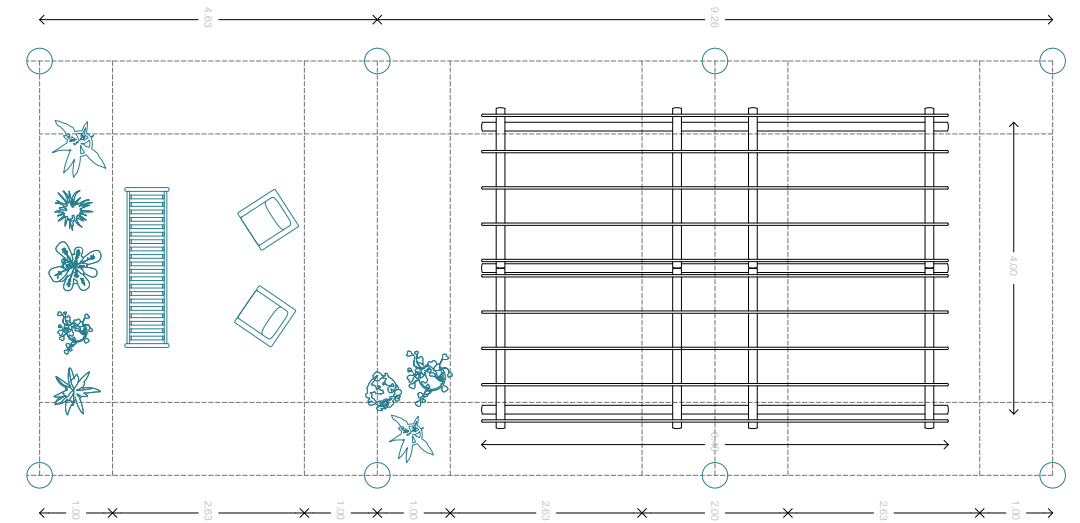
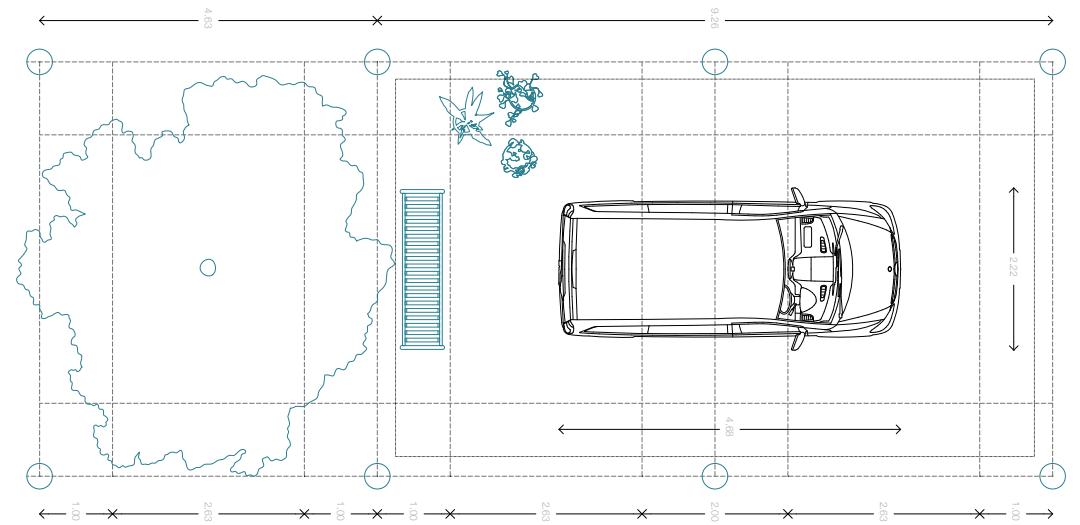
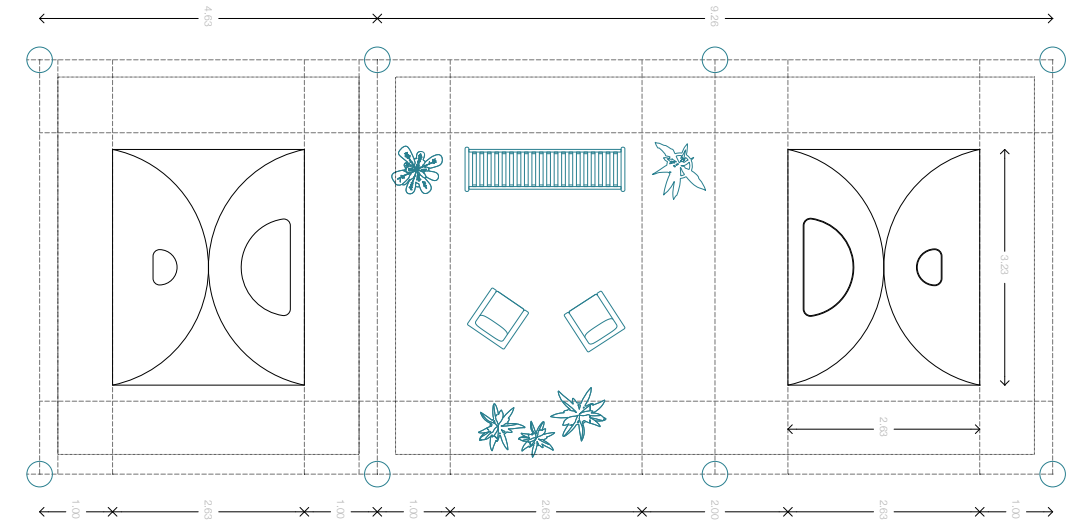
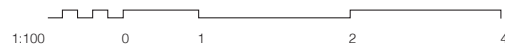
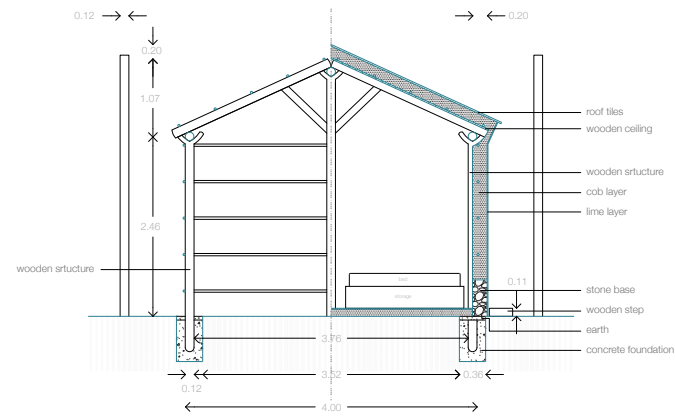
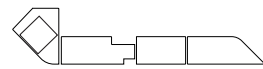
Sleeping Tent



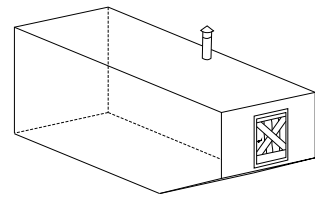
Sleeping Vehicle



Tiny House

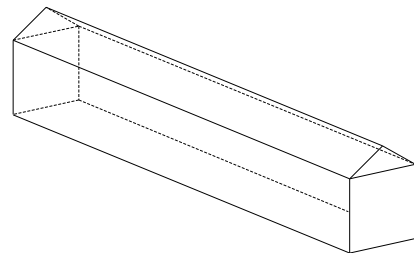
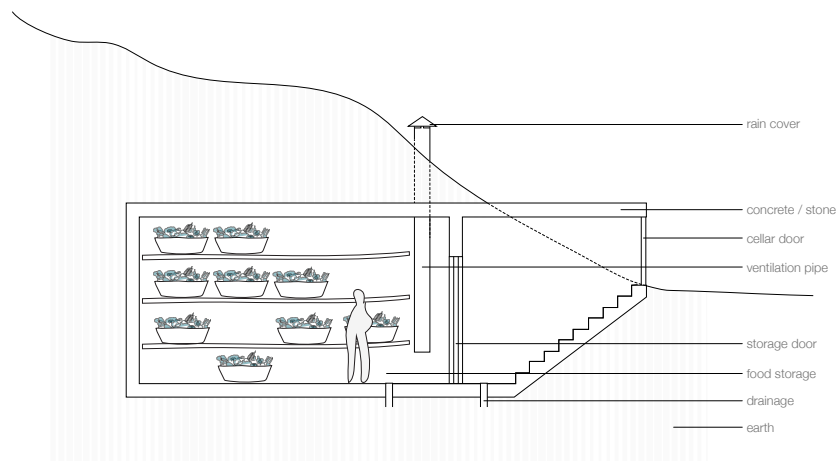


INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS



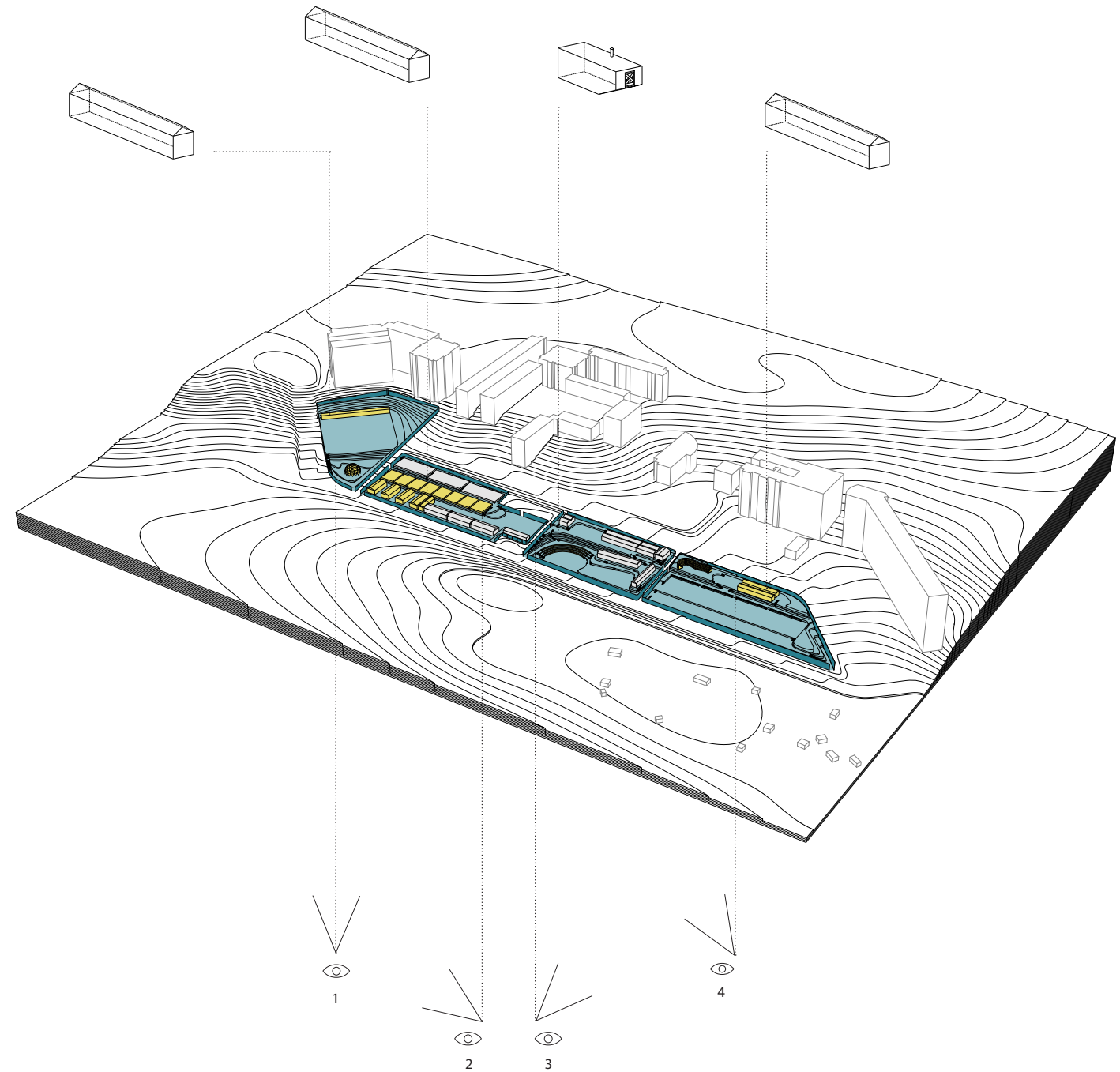
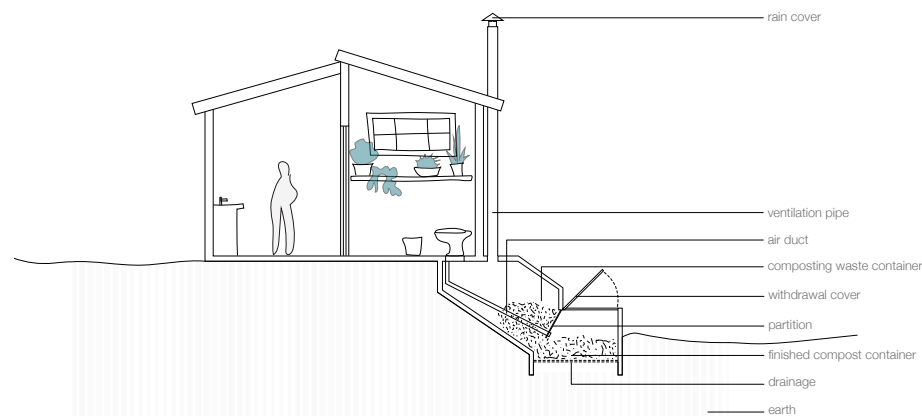
Root Cellar

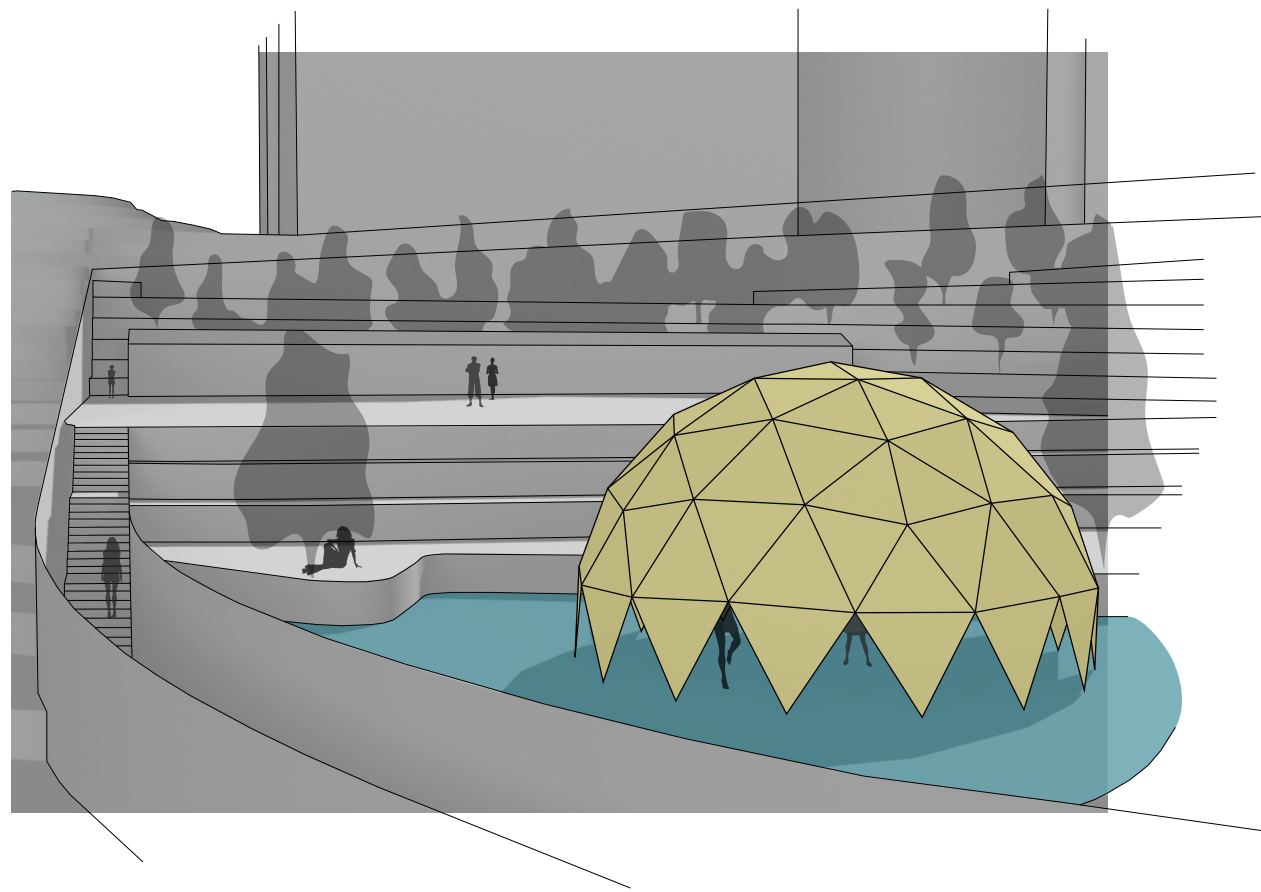
A root cellar is any storage location that uses the natural cooling, insulating, and humidifying properties of the earth. They are typically used by farmers and gardeners to store raw and pickled vegetables. It can also store canned and preserved food. To work properly, a root cellar must be able to hold a temperature of 0° to 4.5°C and a humidity level of 85 to 95 percent.



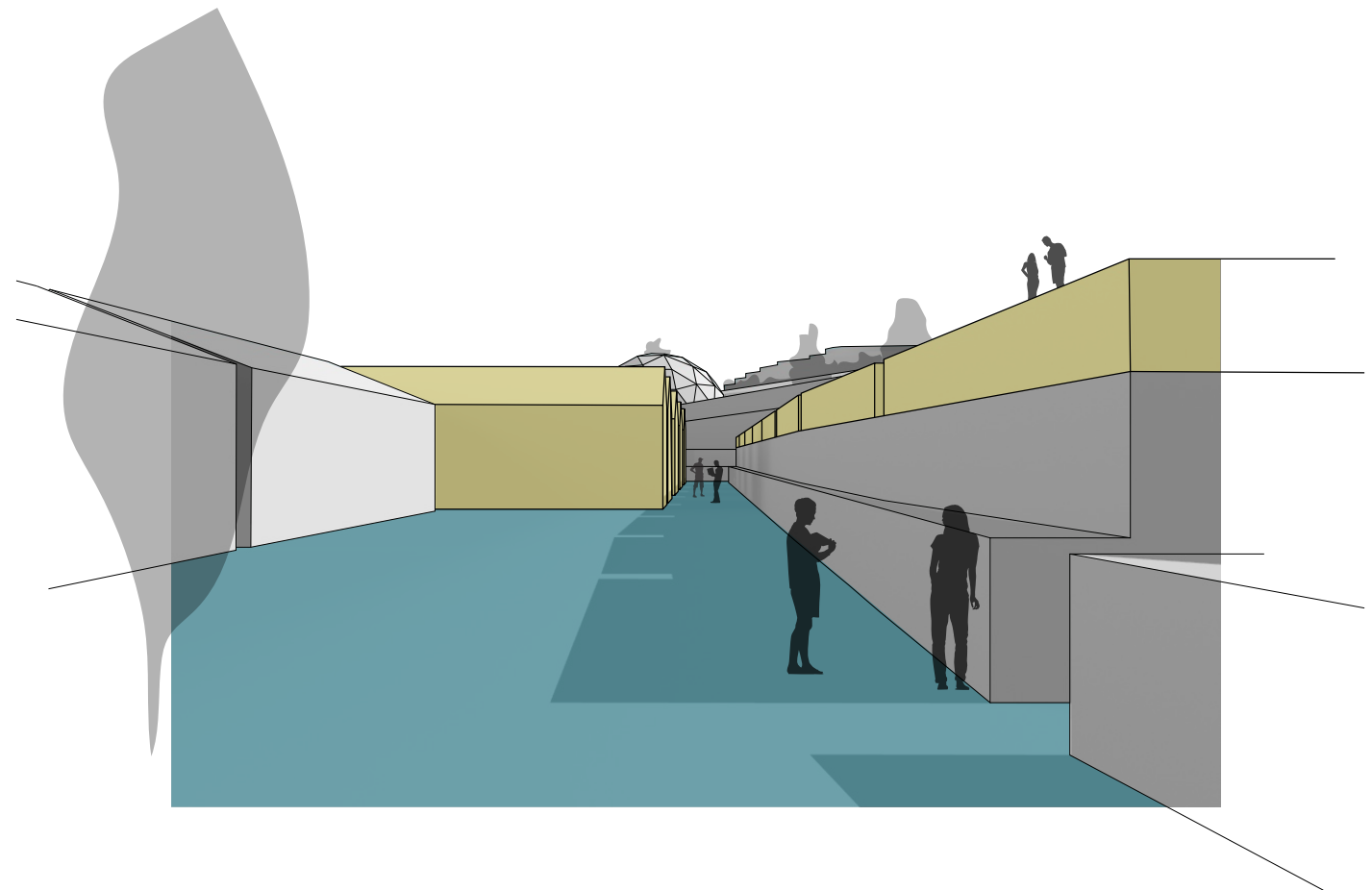
Dry Composting Toilets

A composting toilet is a type of dry toilet that treats human excreta by the biological process of composting. Composting is carried out by microorganisms (mainly bacteria and fungi) under controlled aerobic conditions. Dry composting toilets use no water for flushing. This process leads to the decomposition of organic matter which when is mixed with organic kitchen waste can slowly turn into organic fertiliser for agricultural purposes such as vegetable, herb and flower gardens.

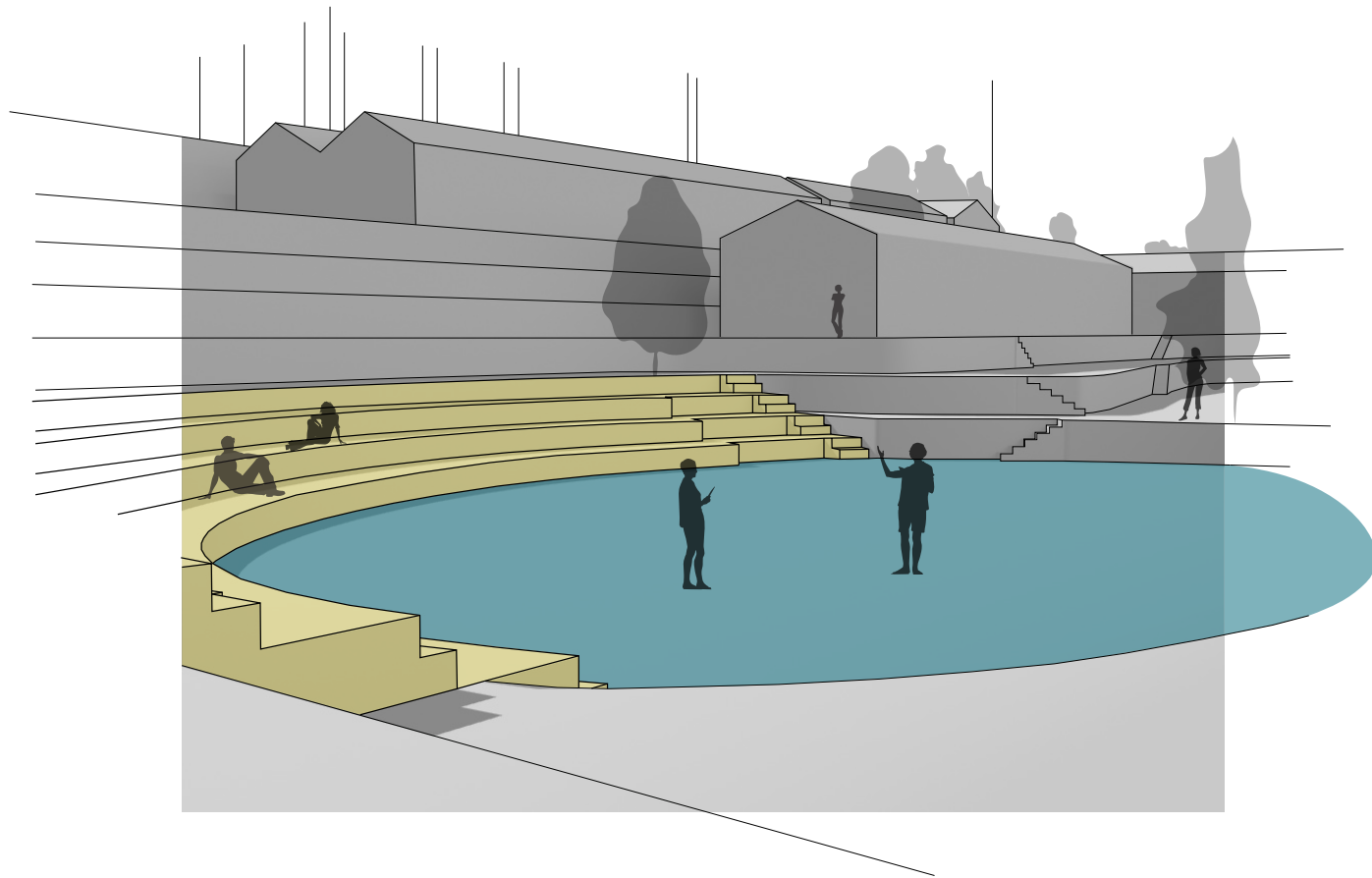




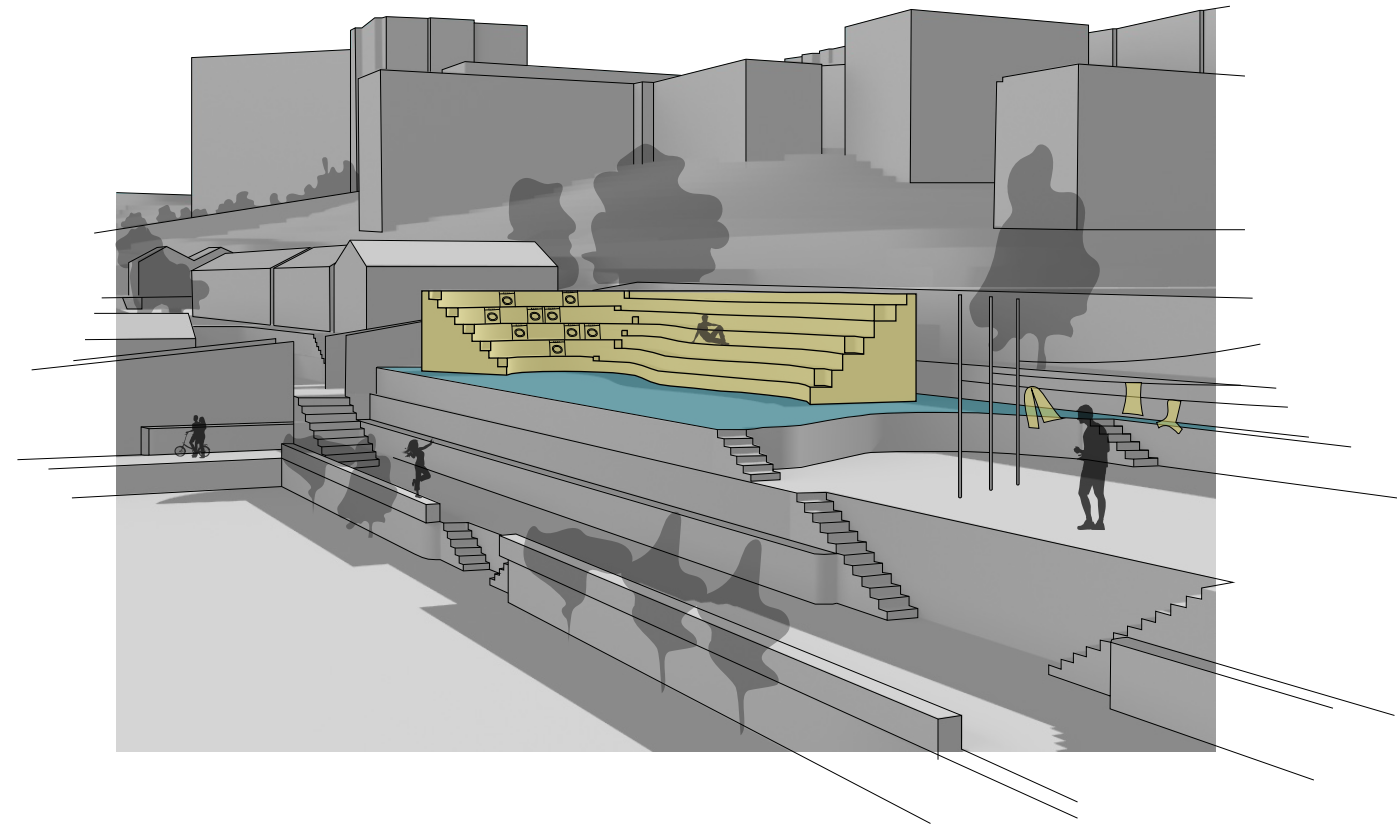
1 Pavilion



2 Workshops + Gardens



3 Theater - Cinema



4 Laundry

Conclusions

v

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Coming to a conclusion, after the execution of this thesis there are some significant findings that should be underlined.

First of all considering the main research question on whether it is possible that DIY urbanism initiatives can represent practices for the social inclusion of sensitive groups in contemporary cities, I could say that a clear answer assumes more than one factor to be examined.

The synthesis of the present thesis and especially the formation of a strategy for the development of DIY ephemeral homeless settlements as well as the design intervention on a determined place that has been eventually proposed in its context, can assure that certainly an initiative of this kind can be carefully planned and generate a significant and effective outcome. The same result is confirmed if we take into account the existing spontaneous efforts of the homeless communities that have studied in several US cities, but also a myriad cases of ephemeral or permanent social practices around the world, that out of any context of what means DIY Urbanism attempt to intervene and participate in the city making by prioritise their needs and ambitions for fair use of the urban space. All these practices have managed to be parts of the global normality and integral parts of everyday life in contemporary cities although they perform in informal, unauthorised or authorised manners.

In addition, the hopeful messages I received during the communication that I had with some potential stakeholders and partners regarding the realisation of the proposed initiative in the city of Lisbon, witness the willingness of contemporary institutions and organisations to get involved in similar community-based projects, of temporarity and flexibility acknowledging their significance for modern societies and cities, where social interaction opportunities have been minimized and social awareness has weakened. Apart from that, both through my case study on 'Tent cities' and through my personal communications about the homeless conditions and possibilities in the city of Lisbon I can recognise the multiple impacts and positive effects that DIY urban initiatives will bring not only for the

socially marginalised groups but also for the engaged and surrounding community when executed in local scale.

So, not only DIY initiatives can represent social practices but it is also likely that the implementation of such initiatives can perform more efficiently for the homeless community and other sensitive groups compared to the consolidated private-housing and shelter methods that have been merely applied from the authorities. The efficiency of these initiatives on the homeless population lies on the crucial feelings of belonging in a community, attaining self-dependency, securing privacy and shaping some kind of political organisation. When homeless people accomplish these qualities tend to feel more autonomous and secure and thus willing to make self-effort for higher social interaction and integration.

Nevertheless, in order to ensure the social inclusion of the homeless population in contemporary cities by designing and implementing ephemeral homeless settlements we should pay attention on the characteristics of these settlements so that they will be effective both for the residents and the surrounding community. These characteristics stress the spatial configuration of the settlements as much as their organisational methods.

Starting with the spatial configuration, the location of the settlements is of great significance and it should ensure proximity to social care and other services in the city in walking or cycling distances as well as it should provide access to public transportation. In order to achieve greater acceptance and maximise the opportunities for social interaction, it is also very important that the homeless settlements are well integrated into the urban context and not segregated on the city outskirts besides that they are equally distributed in different districts of the cities they occupy. The provision of the necessary sanitation and cooking facilities but also the incorporation of the settlements in the networks of water, electricity, sewage and waste management is essential as it guarantees the health conditions of the residents and improves the marginalised image for the homeless to the surrounding community. Some other important

aspects are the encouragement for agricultural activity and the incorporation of sustainable infrastructure in the settlements as well as the development of more permanent structures for housing such as tiny houses. These factors can play a significant role on the time endurance of the settlements and on the development of work opportunities for their residents.

At this point it is very important to underline that all these processes can be operated under the values of DIY urbanism by the homeless only if it is supported by a strong network of social associations and partnerships that aim to strengthen the interactions between the settlements and the wider city and engage more citizens in the contribution to the project. However the external management or supervision should be strictly avoided. The formation of autonomous organisations and the application of participatory governance patterns will help each community to be self-dependent and set the rules that respond better to its own needs and ambitions. This is one of the key elements for the expected self-motivation and hence the social inclusion of the homeless and the success of the DIY initiative.

Moreover, it should be highlighted that although the present research has shown noteworthy evidence on how an appropriate planning and designing process can attain knowledge and associate with citizen-led, ephemeral and informal practices, in order to promote projects that encourage social inclusion for homeless groups, there isn't a comprehensive solution for all cases. On the contrary different cases should be examined separately provided the pursuit of the most inclusive scenario each time. Despite the acknowledgement that the definitions of DIY, informal and ephemeral urbanism might sound promising, innovative, insurgent and even romantic we might encounter unexpected obstacles when trying to implement the same practices in different urban spaces and places. After all, one of the most crucial points in the theoretical discussion of this research is that what seems beneficial for one social group might be an inconvenience for another and as far as cities become more and more diverse this remains a subject of great attention.

Therefore, we should consider that although the proposed initiative might be a promising solution for the social inclusion of homeless in a certain place this doesn't necessarily make it successful somewhere else. In more detail we cannot reassure the suitability of urban space for a project of ephemeral structures, the willingness of the homeless population to participate in such projects, the availability of social organisations and external partners and the promptitude of local governments and the citizen community to accept and implement similar initiatives in distinct places. These points make the exploration of a more comprehensive strategy towards the confrontation of the issue of homelessness the subject of further research.

In fact, even when all factors agree with the suitability of the DIY initiative in a certain place, the final judgement lies on the opinion of the actual participants and on the future users of the same and the surrounding spaces. However, despite all doubts around the suitability and the success of the homeless ephemeral settlements, that's by definition the purpose of experimenting with citizen-led initiatives before designing more permanent mechanisms to tackle the same issues. The ephemerality of an urban experiment such as the one proposed in this thesis indicates that even if it doesn't succeed in all cases, it will definitely not have catastrophic social, spatial and economic impact on the cities where implemented and yet its failure will mostly leave useful information on which attributes should be improved.

All in all, the ephemeral character of similar initiatives as well as the degree of freedom for improvisation that is implied by the self-decision of the DIY strategy that they involve, feature these projects with a high level of risk but also with a great chance of producing innovative, diverse and socially rich spaces in our contemporary cities. It is very hopeful that urban planning is already studying methods to encourage and in many cases implement and experiment with such initiatives. What remains is to open them to more crucial and persistent issues too, such as homelessness. The encouragement for community participation in sensitive issues cannot bring anything but positive impacts for our societies and cities.

Annex

VI

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OPINIONS ON THE INITIATIVE BY INTERVIEWS

After the proposal of the present thesis perceived, I attempted to interview some stakeholders of the city of Lisbon that could be interested to examine the possibility of initiating an experiment of alternative transitional housing for the homeless population. The proposed experiment refers to the establishment of an ephemeral, shelf-built and shelf-governed homeless settlement based on the strategy and the guidelines that are extracted and designed through my study on the informal practice of 'tent cities' in the US. The main objective is to achieve both practical and psychological benefits for the homeless community of Lisbon and the city itself, as well as to increase social interaction and the reception of difference by enriching the morphological and organisational diversity in the city. The homeless ephemeral settlements ensure safer spaces and better hygienic conditions when at the same time consist an innovative proposal for city managers and decision makers.

Below are referenced the related opinions of the 3 main interviewees. The selected interviewees have been selected as potential stakeholders in the application of the initiative and they are all involved with the topic of homelessness in Lisbon. I would like to mention at this point that I tried to arrange some interviews also with the Municipality's department for Homelessness and the Catholic organisation 'Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa' in order to have a more diverse sample of opinions. Unfortunately, after several efforts I didn't manage to perform the interviews.

Americo Nave: Executive director of the association CRESCER, in Lisbon.

According to Americo Nave, the idea of an appointed area in the city of Lisbon to host an ephemeral community for the homeless population would not be very effective. In spite of the advantages that might be true for the residents of tent cities, he argues that the placement of many people living in a shared space would possibly cause a lot of problems and conflicts, and people will not easily approve such a solution although it may be temporary.

A similar example can be represented by the shelter system where an issue that often appears is that conflicts are usually handled aggressively by a security team instead with sensitivity by professional social workers, raising more concerns about the security that these spaces provide. On the other hand, he claims that people should be free to use any space they want until they are attributed to private houses.

However, the example of tent cities has shown that generally the communication and collaboration is increased among the residents in the communities compared to shelters or the 'street' and even if common spaces are shared, there is a major preservation of privacy.

André Correia: Coordinator of the association CASA, in Lisbon.

In contrast, André Correia believes that homeless people would be eager to participate in such an initiative. Allegedly, some people are too used to live on the streets that their habit can make even a private house unsuitable for their needs. Therefore, a settlement of tents or tiny houses could cover certain circumstances of homeless even for a longer term and it would be valuable for the city itself. A major part of the homeless population has faced so much marginalization and social exclusion that the benefits acquired by the fact of participating in a community can be more vital compared to sleeping in a normal room and bed or attaining privacy.

Furthermore, André Correia agrees that the location of the settlement plays a crucial role both in satisfying all of the needs of the homeless groups and in facilitating their social integration. Therefore, although it will be challenging to convince the municipality to provide a central area for this reason - due to the impact on the 'city's image', the financial loss of a potential development investment and the likely opposition by the neighbouring community - it will be **very critical** for the sustainability and success of the initiative.

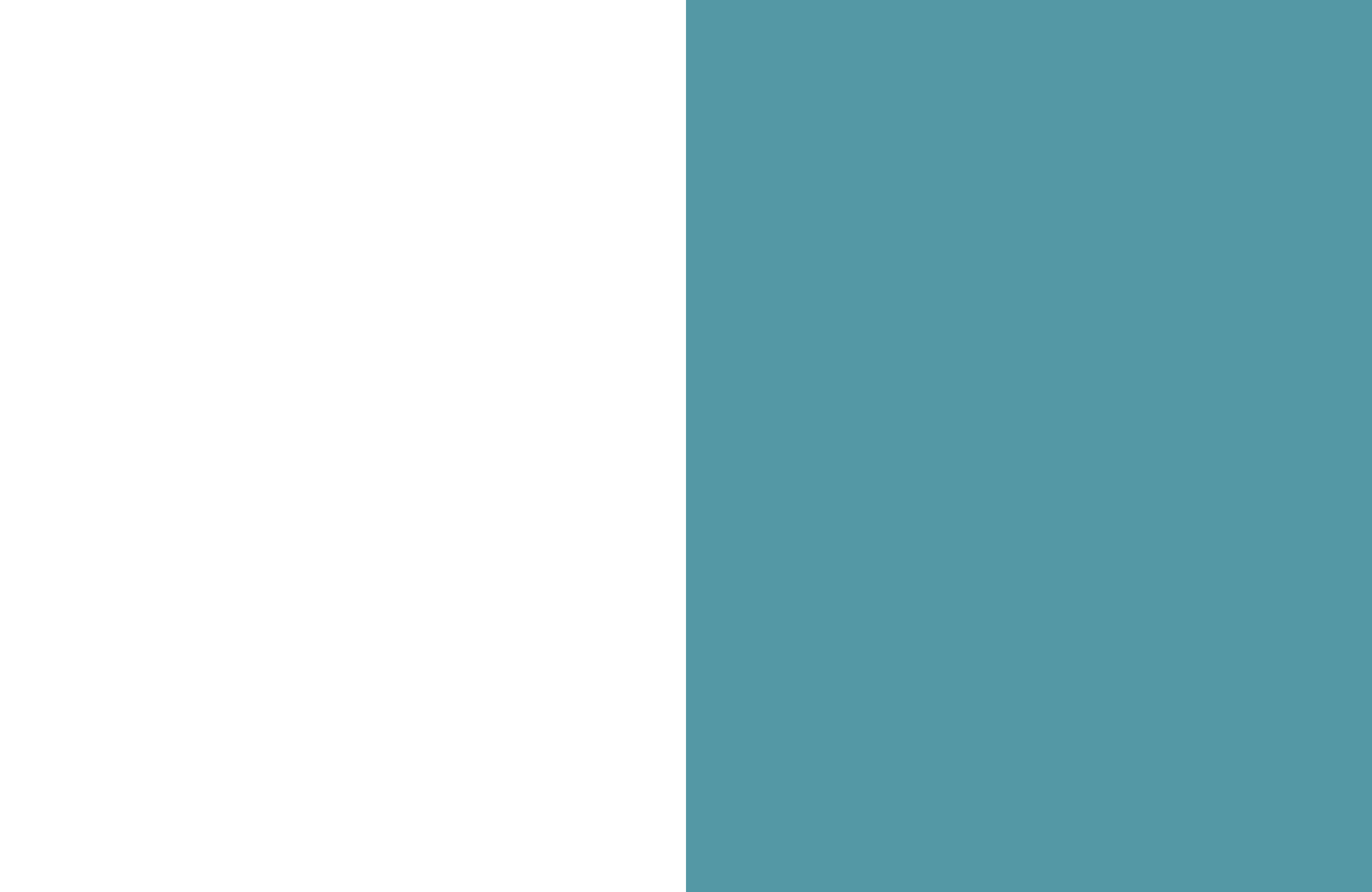
Jorge Barreto Xavier – Assistant Professor in ISCTE University, department of sociology, in Lisbon.

In accordance with Jorge Barreto Xavier, the initiation of such an experiment will be hardly accepted by the municipality and the wider community of the city of Lisbon, but not impossible given the selection of the proper stakeholders to undertake the project and a convenient location.

One concern that should be carefully thought is the difficulty to motivate different organisations to join and support a collective social movement for the homeless let alone to fund a program like that, which indicates an uncertain level of risk. Certainly, academic institutions will be keen on participating in the study of the initiative but as it is often the case, offering mostly a theoretical approach rather than accomplishing a concrete result. Instead, perhaps the most efficient way to initiate and achieve a result into this direction would be to stimulate the homeless community itself and to involve other solidarity groups as well, such as political groups, youth community and volunteers.

Last but not least, regarding the location of the settlement, it would be easier to be accepted and authorised in a low-income neighbourhood rather than in a middle class. "The poorer the community, the more solidary it is." Lower class will understand better the problems of the homeless and would be more eager to embrace and assist the development of a homeless community in close vicinity.

As stated by Jorge Barreto Xavier, the area of 'Marvila' in Lisbon might easily meet the requirements to build of a project like that today. As traditionally has been an incorporated district of urban agriculture in the city of Lisbon, it is surrounded by social housing neighbourhoods and it is the only area still available for urban development. At the moment, informal urban agriculture also occurs there.



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INTERVIEWS

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- Nave Americo, Executive director of the association CRESCER, Lisbon. Personal communication on May, 06, 2019 in CRESCER Association in Lisbon, Portugal.
- Xavier Barreto Jorge, Assistant Professor in ISCTE University, Department of Sociology, Lisbon. Personal communication on June, 26, 2019 in ISCTE University in Lisbon, Portugal.
- Marques Pereira Rita, Coordinator of training in the association CRESCER, Lisbon. Personal communication on April, 29, 2019 in CRESCER Association in Lisbon, Portugal.

