

# Placemaking for Connections, Not Consumption

A handbook for creating real public spaces in Järfälla



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTENTIONS OF THE HANDBOOK	2
1.2 PLACEMAKING AS A TOOL FOR CHANGE	4
1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-CONSUMERIST PLACES FOR A COMMUNITY SENSE	7
1.4 IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS	9
<b>2. APPROACHING PLACEMAKING</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 ORGANIZE	17
2.2 ACTIVATE	20
2.3 MANAGE	27
<b>3. PLACES FOR CONNECTIONS NOT CONSUMPTION: FROM CONCEPT TO COMMUNITY</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1 HOW COULD NON-CONSUMERIST PLACEMAKING BE DONE?	32
3.2 FALKEN - FROM SILVER SCREEN, TO SOCIAL SCENE	37
3.3 PARK OF FOUR SEASONS	39
3.4 A SQUARE TO SHARE	41
<b>4. MOVING FORWARD</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>47</b>

# Introduction

## 1.1 INTENTIONS OF THE HANDBOOK

**“Places should, as far as possible, be multifunctional to best activate the space, maximize its use, and conserve resources.”**

**(Järfälla kommun, 2016, p. 22).**

As mentioned in the municipality of Järfälla’s comprehensive plan (Järfälla kommun, 2024), fostering social inclusion is an overall challenge in Järfälla. Furthermore, exclusion and segregation is reinforced by increased income gaps, which the municipality of Järfälla strives to reduce by creating inclusive communities. For creating a more inclusive Järfälla, the comprehensive plan highlights equal access to amenities, public services and green spaces. Additionally, the comprehensive plan stresses the importance of public engagement and inclusion of residents in decision-making processes to ensure a more equitable and inclusive Järfälla in 2050 (Järfälla kommun, 2024).

The municipality of Järfälla can be seen to have made significant strides in addressing social related challenges and a strong commitment to socially sustainable development, as well as community well-being. Promising efforts to overcome many social related issues in order to foster a sense of belonging and community feel in Järfälla have been made. However, we believe that there is always room for new suggestions, and that this handbook can provide the tools and guidance needed to further develop this progress.



## WHY A HANDBOOK?

According to The Michigan Municipal League (2017), handbooks work as a valuable tool for open communication and training. They create a shared understanding between management and employees of how things work, which gives a sense of clarity and transparency. Also, handbooks can mean saving time and resources as there is a decreased need of spending time on repetitive decisions or navigating tricky situations without guidelines (The Michigan Municipal League, 2017).

Developing a handbook focused on non-consumerist placemaking could be seen offering a way of how to create public spaces that strengthen community connections rather than commercial interests. Taking this approach prioritizes social interaction and community building, thus leading to a more vibrant and inclusive public realm for more residents, and supporting the municipality in fostering social inclusion.

## 1.2 PLACEMAKING AS A TOOL FOR CHANGE

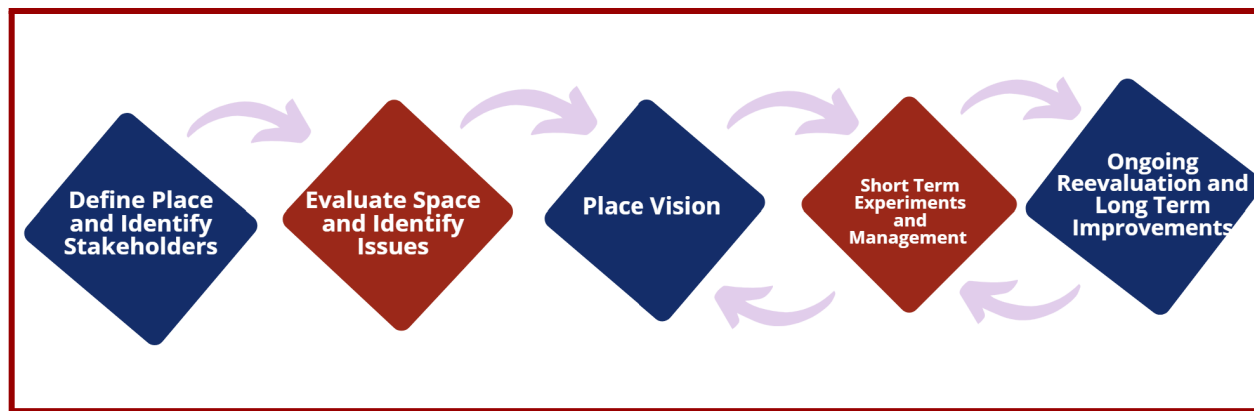
While popular today, placemaking is not a new concept. Its ideas are rooted back to the early 20th centuries, where focus in urban planning started to shift towards creating places of meaning (Goebel, 2020). Placemaking is a collaborative process that transforms public spaces by design and function into real spaces where people can connect, engage and create life (Wyckoff, 2014). As it revolves around creating places for people, through people, placemaking can therefore be viewed as more than just designing or building a structure, it is about creating places where people feel drawn to stay and thrive.

**“It’s Placemaking, not Placemade. It’s a process. You are never finished.”**

(Place Governance working group, 2015).

## THE STANDARDIZED STRATEGY OF PLACEMAKING

According to the Project for Public Spaces (2022), placemaking is a place led, community based, process. The Project for Public Spaces has a long history of developing placemaking as a notion, a process, and a tool for developing public spaces for connections. The project has also worked for many years to develop a procedure for placemaking while considering the uniqueness of each urban environment and public space (Project for Public Spaces, 2022).



The process of placemaking (Project for Public Spaces, 2022).

Drawing on Whyte (1980), placemaking is considered to be:

- **Adaptive**, thus allowing it to adapt to the changing circumstances
- **Flexible** in accommodating to different situations
- **Iterative**, a cyclical process where steps are created or modified.

## TYPES OF PLACEMAKING

### STANDARD PLACEMAKING

It can be used for both small and large scale, and can be implemented incrementally over time. (Wyckoff, M, 2014)

### STRATEGIC PLACEMAKING

Has the specific 'economic growth' goal. Large-scale initiative often in centres and nodes. (Wyckoff, M, 2014)

### CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Art and cultural is a core to this development Partnership based between private public, non profit & community. (Wyckoff, M, 2014)

### TACTICAL PLACEMAKING

Short-term, low-cost projects and activities. Often used in public spaces. (Wyckoff, M, 2014)

The most important thing to understand is that all four types aim to create **Quality places** where people want to live, work, play and learn.

To help us guide our choice to what specific placemaking type to apply in an area, the following questions inspired by the placemaking decision flowchart of (Wyckoff, M. 2014) can be applied in the decision making process:



### 1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF NON-CONSUMERIST PLACES FOR A COMMUNITY SENSE

Farahani (2016) points out an inseparable connection between place and its possibilities to facilitating or hindering a community sense, thus connecting the discipline of the built environment to a sense of community. According to Farahani (2016), a sense of community goes hand in hand with aspects such as civic participation and well-being.

Social life can be considered to have become increasingly commercialized (Streeck, 2012). Meanwhile, urban leisure environments can be seen to increasingly have become commodities of sorts, driven by their economic potential rather than their social values. Since commercialization of public spaces is not catered to all, rather attracting eager consumers with means to pay for leisure, economically driven urban leisure environments can be considered to not contribute to quality of life to all (Auld & Lloyd, 2003). According to Gehl (1987), places where consumption of goods and services is the main activity further contribute to inhibiting social interactions. The reason for this is that consumerist places can be seen attracting a certain enclave of upscale public and reinforce certain lifestyles, rather than contributing to social interactions between different groups (Gehl, 1987).

Highlighting a critique made by Streeck (2012), a consumerism-perspective prompts us to regard citizens as customers, rather than members of a community. This is since consumption-based communities are more individualistic and voluntary, lacking collective obligations and having looser ties (Streeck, 2012).

It can be argued that public spaces should contribute to promote active participation, rather than to passive consumption. For public spaces to act as a foundation for social connections, there is a need to highlight the inhibition which consumption driven activities entail. Further, it is of importance to design public spaces to promote active participation, to in turn enhance social connections and a community sense.

## WHO BENEFITS FROM NON-CONSUMERIST PLACEMAKING?

The UN's Agenda 2030 aims towards sustainable development for everyone, following the slogan "Leaving no one behind". A commitment made is to ensure more inclusive development with more inclusive access, more equal opportunities, as well as more inclusive economies (United Nations, 2017). Non-consumerist spaces, or spaces that are not targeted towards consumption, offer possibilities for participation in society and social interactions for everyone in a community, especially those who are often overlooked.

Similar for all groups, non-consumption focused places offer social interaction without having to spend money. For **parents on parental leave**, this could example imply them meeting with others in the same place in life to connect with. For **Kids and youth**, it could offer free spaces to play and hang out with friends to get solitude. For **elderly**, offering places of this type can be very important as they offer a place to connect with others, stay active and avoid isolation.

Research has further shown that public spaces positively impact property value (Madanipour, 2019). Furthermore, non-consumerist public places can still contribute to a thriving local economy, for example through hosting cultural events and providing gathering places can attract people who can support existing businesses (Zouras, 2020). This can interest private developers in building near these spaces to make their developments more attractive to buyers. Also, developing attractive public spaces can attract investments, which can benefit municipalities making their cities more competitive and encourage investments. Apart from the community, the public and private sectors can therefore benefit from this type of development.

## 1.4 IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS

**“All designs on the city are “collaborative” designs – even if in some cases the “collaborators” are not visible, welcomed, or willing.”**

**(Tonkiss, 2013, p. 12).**

As mentioned in the municipality of Järfälla’s comprehensive plan (Järfälla kommun, 2024), public engagement and inclusion of residents in decision-making processes are of importance to ensure a more equitable and inclusive Järfälla (Järfälla kommun, 2024).

Since placemaking is considered an iterative approach, meaning it requires constant revaluation, adaptation and modification (Whyte, 1980), it requires an active and continuous involvement of stakeholders. This is to create a sense of ownership that encourages long-term participation in maintaining the spaces. Furthermore, by including voices of the community, more inclusive approaches are ensured. Engaging stakeholders is crucial for the success of any placemaking project (Perrault et al., 2020). By involving a diverse range of individuals and organizations, we can ensure that public places are designed and managed to above all meet the needs of the community.

Based on the stakeholder map by Perrault et al. (2022), some identified target groups to engage in the placemaking process that might be excluded from consumption-focused spaces are mainly those members of the community with less economic means such as:



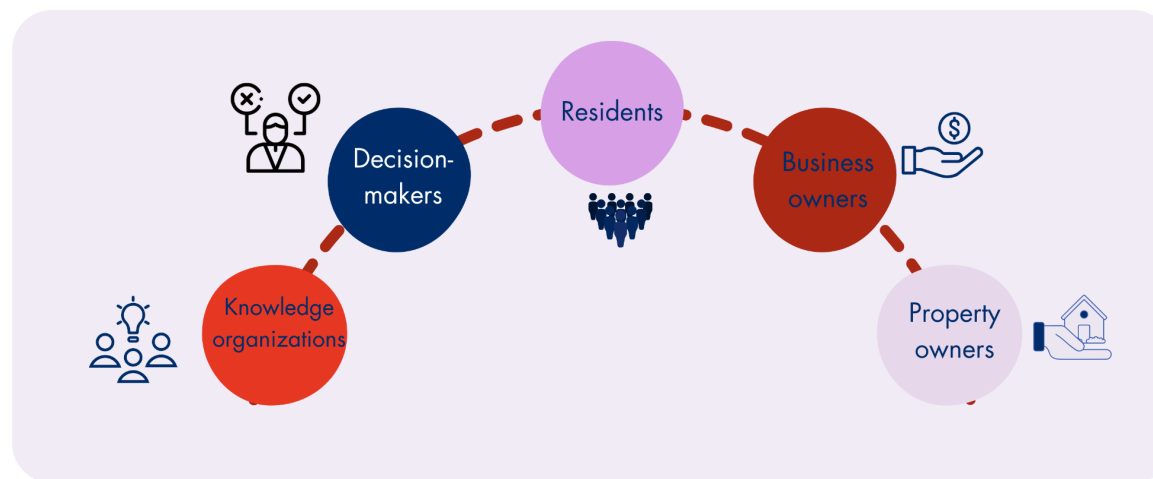
- Low-income families
- Kids and youths
- Elderly
- Students
- Parents on parental leave

Stakeholder map (Perrault et al, 2022)



Involving stakeholders in creating public places, it is not just about asking for their opinions, local knowledge of each unique place's challenges, opportunities and history is also uncovered (Perrault et al., 2020). Stakeholders' inputs lead to community-focused designs that reflect and adapt to the unique settings of each urban space (Project for Public Spaces, 2022). This collaboration of stakeholders also helps build a sense of ownership (Project for Public Spaces, 2022). When people feel that their ideas are being considered, they care more about the place (Perrault et al., 2020). This can lead to long-term success in sustaining positive functions in these spaces. The Nordic placemaking guide Perrault et al. (2020) also emphasizes early dialogues as it helps avoid conflicts later on. As it may be difficult to balance social needs and commercial interests (Li, J. et.al. 2022), this is especially important in non-consumerist spaces.

A successful placemaking strategy requires the active participation of diverse stakeholders to ensure that projects meet the needs of the community, are sustainable, and are widely supported (Perrault et al., 2020). Five critical stakeholders in the placemaking process are found to be decision makers, residents, business owners, property owners and knowledge organisations.



Decision makers, including government officials, urban planners, and policy-makers, play a significant role in placemaking since they establish the regulatory and financial frameworks that allow placemaking initiatives to succeed (Perrault et al., 2020). Furthermore, they have a significant role in funding the placemaking initiative. Residents are the core of any placemaking effort, as they are the primary users of the spaces being transformed. Their involvement ensures that projects are responsive to the unique cultural, social, and practical needs of the community. Moreover, engaging residents fosters a sense of ownership, which can lead to better maintenance and greater community cohesion. Without the input of residents, placemaking efforts risk being misaligned with local needs or being met with resistance.

Even if the focus in this handbook is on non-consumerist placemaking, local business owners are a key stakeholder. They have an interest in the community and vibrant public spaces often attract foot traffic, which can directly benefit nearby businesses. Business owners, have in this way, a direct interest in the initiative and can provide funding or sponsorship for placemaking projects and help organize events that activate public spaces. Property owners, whether they are private individuals, corporations, or housing associations, have a significant stake in placemaking efforts as well (Perrault et al., 2020). Improvements to public spaces often lead to increased property values, making property owners directly positive effects of successful projects. Property owners can act as financial partners, contributing resources to ensure the success of a project and can help in potential conflicts or concerns related to land use.

Knowledge organizations can be research institutes but also organizations that focus on placemaking initiatives (Perrault et al., 2020). These organizations can conduct studies on community needs, environmental impact, or economic feasibility, providing an evidence base for decision-making. They also play a role in educating stakeholders about best practices in placemaking, fostering innovation, and evaluating the outcomes of projects. Partnerships with knowledge organizations can lead to credibility of a project and ensure that it is guided by the latest research and methodologies.

Incorporating decision-makers, residents, business owners, property owners, and knowledge organizations into the placemaking process, can in this way, create a holistic and inclusive approach that maximizes the impact and sustainability of placemaking initiatives.

# Approaching Placemaking

## USING PLACEMAKING PRINCIPLES IN THE HANDBOOK

Drawing on the definition of placemaking from Whyte (1980), Wyckoff (2014), and influenced by the Project for Public Spaces (2022), as well as Perrault et al. (2022), this handbook identifies three key principles of a successful and sufficient placemaking. The principles are as follows:

### 1. To collaborate

Placemaking is a strategy of partnerships and joint efforts involving the community as the main driving force, cooperating with diverse stakeholders.

### 2. To balance design & function

This includes three optimals:

- Optimal physical design and functional space formation.
- Optimal mix of functions and usage in terms of activities and services.
- Optimal mix of social opportunities to connect and engage.

### 3. To transform 'public spaces' to 'real places'

This happens by prioritizing experience and activity following a 'big picture' approach, considering all physical and sentimental aspects of any urban environment. In addition, transforming a space to a place of meaning requires an iterative and experimental approach which allows flexibility and adaptability to the constant change of any urban environment characteristics.

## FRAMEWORK FOR THE PLACEMAKING PROCESS

The approach to be taken when working with placemaking through this handbook is to use the following framework consisting of three phases: organize, activate and manage. The framework is meant to be used to help identify key components and guide the process. The three key principles should follow the three phases continuously.



### Organize

- is about creating the right conditions for engagement given the specific place's characteristics, and the needs of people who will be interacting with the spaces.

This part of the process includes identifying key stakeholders to engage throughout the placemaking process



### Activate

- is about implementing the placemaking initiative and creating awareness amongst those affected.

This part of the process is where the placemaking initiative is chosen and implemented based on the current state of the place. This can include more or less changes in physical structures and is supported through promoting what the place has to offer. This includes ensuring active interaction with the space and others, thus being a basis for social cohesion and a community sense



### Manage

- is about maintaining the functions created in the places.

This part is a long term continuation of the placemaking process where results can be analysed and built upon. In this stage, it is possible to evaluate the initiative's impacts, assess which stakeholders are of importance to uphold positive results, and ensure optimal use of the space



# Organize

## ESTABLISH COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING

To organize is the initiating step of the placemaking process. This phase establishes the foundation upon which meaningful and sustainable placemaking efforts can be built. Before initiating placemaking interventions, it is essential to develop a comprehensive understanding of the space's current status, and the people that are connected to the space. It is therefore of importance to begin by mapping out the key characteristics of the space. As current conditions are mapped out, there is room for analyzing what can be developed according to what is wanted and needed. According to Placemaking for Public Spaces (2007), community-based participation is one of the most important aspects of an effective placemaking process. This should be done from a bottom-up approach in union with the public, and other stakeholders such as business owners, land owners, interest groups, and organizations.

## QUESTIONS FOR GUIDANCE

For initiating the process of mapping current conditions and needs, the following questions are developed to be used for guidance:

### PHYSICAL- AND FUNCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- What are the space's physical structures?
- What is the spatial layout in relation to surrounding places?
- What infrastructure is in place? E.g. roads, lighting and seating
- How accessible is the place by different modes of transportation?
- How is the place being used?



## SOCIAL- AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- What is the space's unique character, atmosphere, identity or history?
- What are existing social dynamics and interactions?
- Are some groups excluded from using the space?
- Are there tensions between current usage of the space?
- Have ideas or aspirations been voiced by members of the community?

## ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Who is the land owner?
- What economic activities are associated with the space?
- Which economic resources are available? E.g. volunteers, funding

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Which natural features are there? E.g. topography, trees, water

## STAKEHOLDER CONSIDERATIONS

- Which are key stakeholders to involve in the placemaking process?
- Are there existing collaborations or tensions between potential stakeholders?



**Activate**

## MAKE THE PLACEMAKING INTERVENTION

To activate is where the vision for the placemaking project comes to life. In this stage, initiative is chosen and implemented. The phase involves a range of activities, from physical alterations of the built environment, to creative strategies for promoting the place and encouraging community engagement and interaction. As a comprehensive understanding of the space's characteristics, and interfering considerations are established, researching previous examples of placemaking initiatives and their outcomes could inspire. Engaging the public and key stakeholders is however of greatest importance to get their perspectives and needs.

As mentioned, it is central in placemaking to consider community as the true experts of any development of this kind. They know their space best and understand its needs and potentials intimately (Project for Public Spaces, 2022). This is why in order to ensure the initiative reflects what the community wants, it is important to actively involve them during this phase. This can be done through workshops, surveys and other ways of participation.

Activating means creating a vibrant atmosphere where people above all develop a sense of belonging. Placemaking is not building something, it is about creating a place that people connect with. This requires going beyond design and considering factors that help strengthen this feeling. According to Lynch (1960). The interactions between the observer and the environment creates a great sense of belonging and it is impacted through many things like paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks, all together creating the 'collective memories' of a person about this environment.

The activate phase is also great to experiment with temporary, low-cost ideas. These quick, easy and cheap changes allow us to test things out, get feedback and adjust as needed (Perrault et al., 2020). This is absolutely essential for making the initiative grow and adapt to the changes of the community.

Finally this phase is all about making the vision real. This requires careful management, clear communication and strong collaboration between all those involved which ensures the project stays on track (Perrault et al., 2020).

## QUESTIONS FOR GUIDANCE

For making the placemaking intervention, the following questions are developed to be used for guidance:

### PHYSICAL- AND FUNCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- What is the intended use?
- What physical structures are necessary to add or remove?
- Are there available resources to maintain the physical structures?
- Are there any temporary solutions to test before making permanent changes?
- How adaptable is the function during different seasons or time of day?
- How can 'Flexible space management' which allows multiple actors to share and utilize a space based on availability and needs be implemented effectively?

### SOCIAL- AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- How can the community be involved in the process to express and meet their needs?
- Can the intervention support strengthening the space's unique character, atmosphere, identity or history?

- Which groups does the intervention target?
- Can the intervention address any existing social tensions or exclusion?

### ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- What is the budget?
- Can the intervention be made as part of another process? E.g. a development plan
- Who will fund the project?
- On how big of a scale can the interventions be made?

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Are there environmental challenges or goals that can also be addressed? E.g. enhancing biodiversity, reducing pollution or urban heat islands
- Can materials be reused?

### STAKEHOLDER CONSIDERATIONS

- Who is responsible for the project?
- Which responsibilities do the key stakeholders have in activating the space?
- How can the intervention strengthen collaboration between stakeholders?

## HOW CAN WE CREATE AWARENESS OF THE PLACE AND ITS FUNCTIONS?

To make a place active we need to know how to advertise it well. Getting the word out about a public place is about showing people what makes the space special and inviting. Here are some ways to do that:

- Telling the place's story and highlighting what makes it unique. Its history, design, cultural significance or the fun things you can do there. This can make people curious to discover the place (Ujang, 2012).
- Show people what's happening. When you let people know about the cool stuff going on , events programs, workshops..etc. This helps attract a wider range of audience. A good place equals various possibilities (Perrault et al., 2020.).
- Use different ways to advertise flyers , signs and even on social media (Perrault et al., 2020).
- Try to team up with local partners, work with nearby businesses and organizations to spread the word. This can create a sense of shared space which can help activate the space (Wyckoff, 2014).
- Lastly, make the place homely and inviting. Remember the basics of good placemaking is about maintaining a safe and comfortable drawing people naturally in (Perrault et al., 2020).

Learning from cases that worked before is key to a successful “Activate” phase. Here we introduce a few cases where this phase was optimal in terms of activating existing public spaces.

## THE CASE OF THE BRYANT PARK IN MANHATTAN

Restored from an unsafe environment to an iconic and successful public space. A classic successful placemaking initiative transformed the park into a safe social space in the 1980's (Project for Public Spaces, 2002). Their activation was through an aesthetic-focused redesign approach, by simply incorporating better visibility and seating as well as different platforms for diverse activities. In the context of placemaking and its relation to people's sense of belonging a study was made to assess the success of the park through online reviews and perceptions focusing on attributes like "design, essence, position and activity" (Fernandez et. al., 2022). The study showed that visitors frequently praise the design, expressing positive feedback about its aesthetics and functionality. The activities offered like relaxing or socializing also show a high sense of connection. Also the emotional connection to the park with very positive comments like enjoyable, vibrant, beautiful and peaceful. Another aspect the study revealed is the importance of the places proximity to other attractions or accessibility links. Altogether play a role in the success of this placemaking in terms of creating a sense of belonging among visitors.

## THE CASE OF EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Based on the argument that a successful placemaking includes adapting to the place's unique identity and challenges, Edmonton, Alberta offers a great example of how activating a public space can involve adapting and actively celebrating the unique challenges and opportunities that a winter presents (880 cities, 2020). Activating Edmonton included above all a shift in how people perceive winter weather, from negative to a positive experience. It involves addressing practical challenges like safety, transportation and isolation. This included creating inviting and functional public spaces for example designing elements that maximize sunshine, provide shelter from wind and ensure it is accessible for everyone so the place is used all year round. The activate phase also involved implementing various winter themed programs and activities like festivals, outdoor markets, ice skating rinks, snow activities, etc. Lastly, in order to activate the place the project worked towards boosting local businesses and activities creating opportunities for winter tourism and recreation.



# Manage



## A CONTINUOUS MAINTENANCE AND EVALUATION

To manage the placemaking initiative consists of a continuous maintenance and evaluation of the functions and impacts created. When the placemaking initiative has been made, it is important to not just think of it as a completed task. Evaluating actual impacts, both positive and negative, are also of importance as the results can be built upon. This can be seen following Whyte's (1980) procedure for placemaking where the process is seen as adaptive, flexible, and iterative (Whyte, 1980).

In this stage, it is further possible to assess which stakeholders are of importance to uphold positive results, and ensure optimal use of the space. Of importance is to continue keeping a user-perspective of the citizens.

## QUESTIONS FOR GUIDANCE

For evaluating the initiative, the following questions are developed to be used for guidance:

### PHYSICAL- AND FUNCTIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Does any physical structure need changing?
- How is the place being used?
- Has the intended use of the place changed over time?
- How adaptable is the physical structure and its functions?

Example of evaluating: If the usage of the place is other than intended, what can be changed to cater more to the usage instead?

### SOCIAL- AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Are there changes in the way that people interact with the place?
- Are there new social dynamics?
- Who interacts with, and within, the place?
- Are some groups still excluded from using the place? Or is another group excluded from using the place instead?
- Are there tensions between usage of the space?
- Have new ideas or aspirations been voiced by members of the community?
- Do citizens regard themselves more as part of the community due to the intervention?

Example of evaluating: If new needs and ideas are voiced by citizens, are there any simple solutions within the already made initiative?

### ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- How are economic activities supported or undermined by the intervention? Have any new ones emerged?
- Which economic resources are available to maintain the functions? E.g. volunteers, funding
- How has the initiative impacted property values?

Example of evaluating: If economic activities are supported by the intervention, are there any other places where a similar intervention would be applicable?

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Has the intervention had any environmental impact?

Example of evaluating: If an environmental challenge was addressed as part of the intervention, how well was it tackled?

## STAKEHOLDER CONSIDERATIONS

- Who is responsible for maintaining the placemaking intervention?
- Which stakeholders are still of importance to maintain the functions created in the place?
- Which stakeholders benefit from the initiative?
- Are there new stakeholders interacting with the space?

Example of evaluating: If there are new stakeholders interacting with the space, how can their knowledge and needs be utilized?

**Places for Connections, Not  
Consumption:  
From Concept to Community**

## 3.1 HOW COULD NON-CONSUMERIST PLACEMAKING BE DONE?

### EXEMPLIFYING THROUGH THE CASE OF JAKOBSBERG

Jakobsbergs centrum is operating as a central hub for municipal and public services and functions (Jakobsbergs kommun, 2024). The settlement of the Jakobsberg area is characterized by a rapid development starting in the 1960's- and 70's, thus clearly showcasing planning ideals of the time such as division of functions and spaces (Järfälla Kommun, 2016). A significant part of Jakobsberg centrum consists of a mall which is the main commercial site in the area. The mall offers different kinds of shops for durable goods, grocery stores, a library, cafés, restaurants, an old cinema, and public amenities.

The municipality has presented a strategy for sustainable urban development of Jakobsbergs centrum (Järfälla kommun, 2023) based on three themes being: green, productive, and equitable. The strategy aims to improve both the ecologic-, economic- and social aspects of sustainability. Some goals of the strategy entail strengthening conditions and meeting places for culture and associations, support sustainable development and create conditions for trade and services, as well as creating safe and attractive public places while integrating nearby areas (Järfälla Kommun, 2023).

## WHY FOCUSING ON JAKOBSBERG IN TERMS OF NON-CONSUMERISM

Jakobsberg as described before is a central hub for the municipality of Järfälla. However its position is being challenged by the expansion of Barkarbystaden where a new center is taking form and where important public amenities are being moved. Furthermore, Jakobsbergs centrum acts as an example of showing the problems with increasing commercialization of social life, and the restrictions of social interactions commercialized urban places create. Jakobsbergs centrum is therefore an area of interest to examine possibilities of regaining attractivity through placemaking of non-consumerist public spaces.

As mentioned before, creating public spaces that are not about spending money is really important, especially those that have limited resources, like low-income families, young people and elderly. Unemployment in Järfälla in general is rising. With the unemployment rate of Järfälla being higher than the Stockholm county average. The unemployment rate in Järfälla is 8.6%, compared to 6.9% unemployment in the county (Finnäs, 2024). In 2022, an analysis based on area types including what proportion lives in areas with different socioeconomic challenges showing that the biggest proportion of groups with significant /major socioeconomic challenges live around in the central parts of Jakobsberg center (Boverket, n.d). This indicates the benefits in creating inclusive public spaces making sure these areas are socially active and vibrant for everyone regardless of their social disparities.

Jakobsbergs centrum will be used to exemplify the presented approach. To concretize further, four different sites have been chosen. The first is an indoor space (the old cinema Falken), the second is a park (Riddarparken), the third is a square (Riddarplatsen), and the fourth is a space in between buildings. The aim is to show how placemaking can be applied to different kinds of places with various preconditions and needs, while applying a non-consumerist perspective on the urban development.

## OBSERVATIONS

Three key points have been identified as a problem statement for Jakobsbergs centrum. These have been gathered through site observations, as well as communication with residents.

The three key points are:

1. A “passing by” place, not a “stay and thrive” place
2. Underused
3. Mainly consumption-focused places

A site visit was conducted during the early afternoon since the desire was to observe the usage of spaces during working hours. What was observed was that there were mostly elderly, or parents with strollers being in the Jakobsberg Centrum area during this time of day. For the most part, people were passing by, rather than staying and interacting with the welcoming and thriving spaces which a main municipal node should be intended to have. Further observed was that there is great potential Jakobsbergs centrum’s already existing spaces. For example Riddarparken and the main square. By observation however, there is great potential for places to be used more through more or less simple solutions. Even though there are initiatives like “Huset på höjden” in Söderhøyden, and “Seniorträffen” which is a meeting place for elderly during daytime and youth during evenings in Jakobsbergs centrum, there are not a lot of non-consumerist alternatives of public places.

## VOICES OF THE COMMUNITY

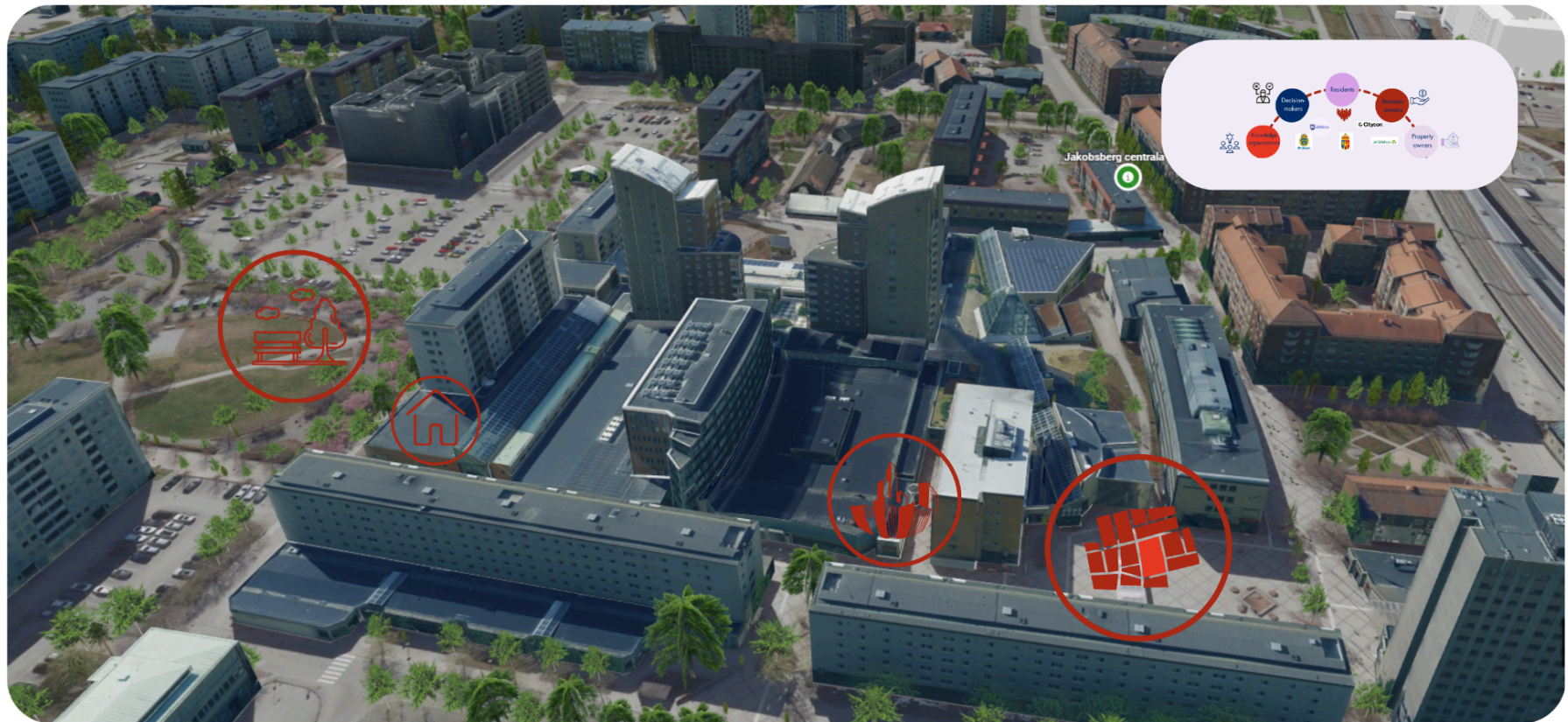
When asked about access to non-consumerist activities and/or places in Jakobsbergs centrum, citizens answered:



The expressed needs, together with observations, further motivated supplying the municipality of Järfälla with a handbook for how to work with placemaking initiatives focused on non-consumerist placemaking for fostering social inclusion.



## AREAS PROPOSED FOR NON-CONSUMERIST PLACEMAKING IMPLEMENTATION



## 3.2 FALKEN - FROM SILVER SCREEN, TO SOCIAL SCENE



An indoor alternative of a shared space can be especially important in a country like Sweden, with a challenging climate most times of the year. In Jakobsberg Centrum there is a cinema that has been closed down since 2017 called Falken. The space has been unused since and can be considered as an alternative to an indoor space that can be used for activities. Inspiration can be taken from different examples both in Sweden and abroad for indoor shared spaces. One good example in Sweden is “Garaget” in Malmö. Garaget is operated by the municipality of Malmö Stad and is originally a library but has a lot of other functions to offer, for example borrowing tools that can be needed in everyday life or taking part in lectures. There is a café in Garaget but there is a non-consumerist alternative in the form of microwaves supplied as well.



(Malmö stad, n.d.)



(Bagarmossens folkets hus, n.d.)



(Manor & Castle, n.d.)



(Filmstaden, n.d.)

Interviews conducted in Södertäljes library suggests that the indoor space was especially appreciated by its elderly visitors because the space is **free, it has toilets and it is warm**. Just like Södertälje, Jakobsberg also has a library that is well visited. The new Falken can be seen as a complement to the library. The core concept that is suggested for the present cinema is a non-consumerist meeting place that can host people during day-time as well as evening. The old cinema consists of two salons, but only one will be remade since it can be used for **lectures, seminars or booktalks**.

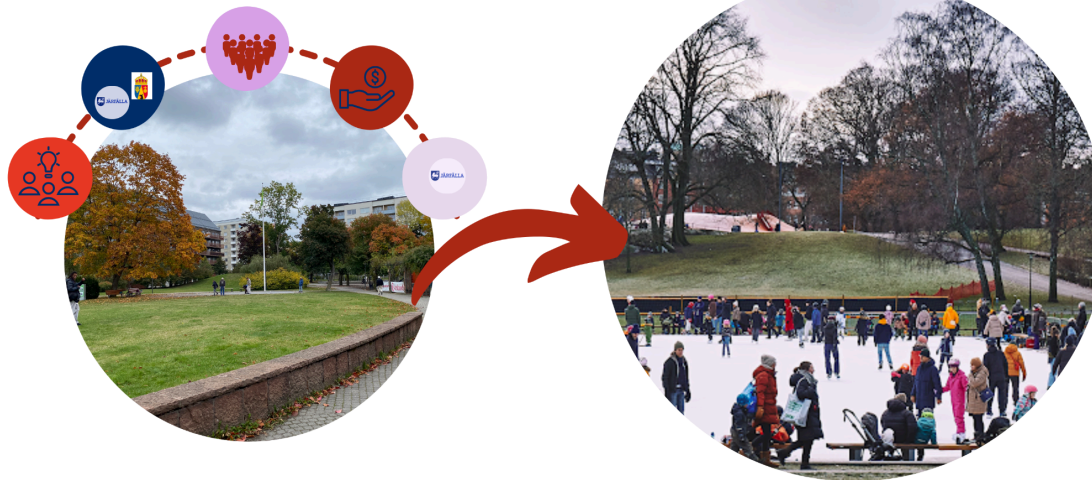
The aim is creating the possibility for intergenerational **spontaneous interactions**. To make this possible the new Falken will have both scheduled activities but also have places where people can meet spontaneously. The possibility of a cafeteria could be supplied but having alternatives as microwaves is important for those not willing to consume. Citycon owns the cinema and is therefore one of the most important stakeholders, as well as Järfälla municipality.



### 3.3 PARK OF FOUR SEASONS



Actors to consider



Riddarparken is a natural green part of Jakobsberg Centrum. Today it consists of a playground, a boul court and some benches. The aim is to create a vibrant outdoor space where people would like to spend time all year around. Creating a combination between a playful environment for children, fitness and exercise and creating seasonal activities like a water fountain that turns into an ice skating rink in the winter are some examples. Järfällas municipality's initiative "Sportoteket", where you can borrow sport equipment, can also support this since everyone may not have their own skates, helmets etcetera. Interactive installations can also be of importance including artwork and sculptures alongside outdoor gym or an event space. Creating an event space

could be an alternative for fostering social interactions including outdoor movie nights, markets or concerts and can be a natural part of Järfällafestivalen that had a return september 2024 after a few years of hiatus.



(Barn i stan Stockholm, n.d.)



(Stockholm Stad, 2024)



(Alingsås Kommun, 2024)

Here, the main stakeholder is the municipality of Järfälla.

### 3.4 A SQUARE TO SHARE



Actors to consider



The square is the first thing you are greeted by when you enter Jakobsbergs Centrum from the railway-and bus station towards Riddarplatsen. Some might even say it is the heart of Jakobsbergs Centrum. The square is surrounded by different types of commercial facilities and the activities on the square mainly consist of sale of flowers, food or clothes from portable shops. The aim is to provide a square where people want to stay and interact and not only pass by when they are not consuming. The alternative presented to achieve this through tactical placemaking. This includes adding more seating places on the square and not only surrounding, implementing more greenery and color. Adding color in for example benches can make a space more pleasant especially during winter when the greenery is not blooming. There are already features like sculptures in the square but the space may be more engaging and lead to

more interactions with interacting features like for example a big chess table. Another alternative is providing crayons for making ground paintings.



(Kai Bates, n.d.)



(Stock Cake, n.d.)



(Schacksällskapet Manhem, n.d.)

For the square, the municipality is the main stakeholder since they own it but those engaged in trade on and around the square are also stakeholders. Furthermore, it could be important to include residents in this alternative since they can provide good insights in what is needed and missing in the square.



## 3.5 IN BETWEEN BUILDINGS



### IN BETWEEN BUILDINGS

Actors to consider



There is an alleyway in the Jakobsberg centrum area which is located between a vacant store and Kronans Apotek. The alley is a passage from Riddarplatsen, leading to a stair up to one of the residential areas of the center. Based on the site visit the alley is dark and not very pleasant walking through or even walking by. Activating alleyways do not only provide a more enjoyable environment but can also provide accessibility creating passages that people would like to use more. To bring in light and to contribute to amenity, light strings can be hung between the walls of the alley. One of the walls can be remade into a paint wall where people can borrow or bring their own paint. Through this there is a possibility to interact with the place and others. There is a staircase in the end of the alleyway



that could be changed to add to the more inviting environment with material and color and will also make it easier to climb up and down.

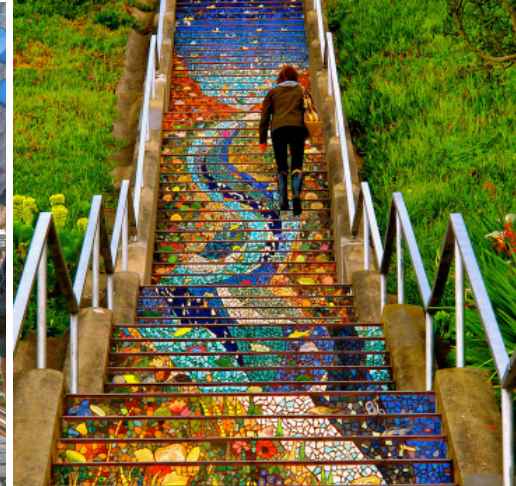
Citycon, Kronans Apotek and the municipality of Järfälla can be seen as the main actors here since the alleyway borders all their territory.



(Art Lab Gnesta, n.d.)



(Fialko & Hampton, n.d.)



(Yellofish, n.d.)

As mentioned, these alternatives are simply guides on how to implement non-consumerist placemaking in different forms of shared spaces. The focus has been on already existing places.

# Moving Forward

## FOSTERING SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND STRENGTHENING A COMMUNITY SENSE

With the support of this handbook for working with non-consumerist placemaking, the hope is to have provided new ways of fostering social inclusion through physical and functional interventions. The contribution of the handbook can be seen as part of the process for working towards the bigger goals of the municipality. As expressed in the municipal comprehensive plan (Järfälla kommun, 2024) there is a goal of more inclusive and vibrant living environments designed to promote equitable and healthy living. Furthermore, the strategy for a more inclusive Järfälla in 2050 includes increased accessibility to high quality meeting places, and development of places' character by building on their conditions and adding value (Järfälla kommun, 2024). As a result of non-consumerist placemaking initiatives that increase possibilities for interactions between citizens, the aspiration is to minimize social exclusion, strengthen a sense of community, and increase the overall well-being for more citizens.

## REFERENCES

8 80 Cities (2021). *Winter placemaking guide*.

<https://www.880cities.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Winter-Placemaking-Guide.pdf>

Auld, C. & Lloyd, K. (2003). Leisure, public space and quality of life in the urban environment. *Urban, Policy and Research*, 21(4), 339-356. DOI: [10.1080/0811114032000147395](https://doi.org/10.1080/0811114032000147395)

Boverket, (n.d), Segregationsbarometern ,Järfälla <https://segregationsbarometern.boverket.se/kommun/jarfalla/> Retrieved November 2024.

Farahani, L. (2016). The Value of the Sense of Community and Neighbouring. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 33(3), 357-376.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14036096.2016.1155480>

Fernandez, J., Song, Y., Padua, M. & Liu, P. (2022). A framework for urban parks: Using social media data to assess Bryant Park, New York. *Landscape Journal*, 41(1), 15-29. <https://doi.org/10.3368/lj.41.1.15>

Finnäs, J. (2024). Arbetslösheten ökar mer i Järfälla än i andra kommuner i Stockholms län.

<https://www.newsworthy.se/artikel/285028/arbetsl%C3%B6sheten-%C3%B6kar-mer-i-j%C3%A4rf%C3%A4lla-%C3%A4n-i-andra-kommuner-i-stockholms-l%C3%A4n>

Gehl, J. (1987). *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Goebel, M. (2020). Placemaking in planning: A simple buzzword or a new planning movement? *Topophilia*.

<https://doi.org/10.29173/topo23>

Järfälla kommun (2016) *Utvecklingsprogram för Jakobsbergs centrala delar*.

<https://www.jarfalla.se/download/18.6d168bc8154d2fa5d1fc451c/1464003466490/Utvecklingsprogram%20f%C3%B6r%20Jakobsbergs%20centrala%20delar.pdf>

Järfälla kommun (2023). *Strategi för hållbar urban utveckling i Jakobsberg*.

<https://www.jarfalla.se/download/18.1aeec46118af4c7ac5a2099b/1696515237180/strategi-for-hallbar-urban-utveckling-i-jakobsberg.pdf>

Järfälla kommun (2024). *Översiktsplan 2050 - Järfälla kommun*.

<https://www.jarfalla.se/byggaboochmiljo/stadsutvecklingochdetaljaner/oversiktsplanerochstrategiskadokument/oversiktsplan2050.4.20dd2ca2187db9c22d5f7b6.html>

Li, J. et.al. (2022). Defining the ideal public space: A perspective from the publicness. *Journal of Urban Management*, 11(4), 479-487.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jum.2022.08.005>

Lynch, K. (1960). *The image of the city*. Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press.

[https://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/1960\\_Kevin\\_Lynch\\_The\\_Image\\_of\\_The\\_City\\_book.pdf](https://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/1960_Kevin_Lynch_The_Image_of_The_City_book.pdf)

Madanipour, A. (2019). *Rethinking public space: between rhetoric and reality*. Springer nature limited.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331329382\\_Rethinking\\_public\\_space\\_between\\_rhetoric\\_and\\_reality](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331329382_Rethinking_public_space_between_rhetoric_and_reality)

Perrault, E., Lebisch, A., Uittenbogaard, C., Andersson, M., Skuncke, M. L., Segerström, M., Svensson Gleisner, P., & Pere, P. (2020).

*Placemaking in the Nordics: a guide to co-creating safe and attractive public spaces in the Nordic region*.

[https://linkarkitektur.com/sites/default/files/paragraph/field\\_files/Handbok%20i%20nordisk%20placemaking.pdf](https://linkarkitektur.com/sites/default/files/paragraph/field_files/Handbok%20i%20nordisk%20placemaking.pdf)

Place Governance working group (2015). *What is Creative Placemaking?* Lansing Placemakers.

<https://www.lansingplacemakers.org/what-is-creative-placemaking.html>

Project for Public Spaces. (2002). *Bryant Park*.

<https://www.pps.org/places/bryant-park#:~:text=Because%20of%20the%20stacks%20of,dealing%20and%20other%20negative%20activities>. Retrieved 13-10-2024

Project for Public Spaces (2007). *What Is Placemaking?* <https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>

Project for Public Spaces (2019). *A Playbook for Inclusive Placemaking: Community Process*.

<https://www.pps.org/article/a-playbook-for-inclusive-placemaking-community-process>

Project for Public Spaces (2022). *Placemaking: what if we built our cities around places? A placemaking primer*.

[https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5810e16fbe876cec6bcbd86e/6335ddc88fbf7f29ec537d49\\_2022%20placemaking%20booklet.pdf](https://uploads-ssl.webflow.com/5810e16fbe876cec6bcbd86e/6335ddc88fbf7f29ec537d49_2022%20placemaking%20booklet.pdf)

Streeck, W. (2012). Citizens as customers: Considerations on the New Politics of Consumption. *New Left Review*, 76, 27-47.

The Michigan Municipal League (2017). *Handbook for General Law Village Officials*, section 3, chapter 13.

<https://www.mml.org/pdf/resources/publications/ebooks/GLV%20Handbook%20-%202017.pdf>

Tonkiss, F. (2013). *Cities by Design: The Social Life of Urban Form*. Polity Press.

<http://ndl.ethernet.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/42989/1/21Tonkiss%2C%20Fran.pdf>

Ujang, N. (2012). Place Attachment and Continuity of Urban Place Identity. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Volume 49, 156-167. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812031102>

Wyckoff, MA. (2014). *Definition of placemaking: Four different types*  
[https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/375/65824/4typesplacemaking\\_pzn\\_wyckoff\\_january2014.pdf](https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/375/65824/4typesplacemaking_pzn_wyckoff_january2014.pdf)

Whyte, W. (1980). *The social life of small urban spaces: Project for public spaces*. Washington, DC: The Conservation Foundation

Zouras, E. (2020), 'Belonging' as a concept in placemaking: Exploring perceptions in Ikaria, Greece A study of belonging in the elderly in the Greek Blue Zone of Ikaria, KTH.  
[https://kth.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?aq2=%5B%5B%5D%5D&c=30&af=%5B%5D&searchType=LIST\\_LATEST&sortOrder2=title\\_sort\\_asc&query=&language=sv&pid=diva2%3A1592906&aq=%5B%5B%5D%5D&sf=all&age=%5B%5D&sortOrder=author\\_sort\\_asc&onlyFullText=false&noOfRows=50&dswid=8382](https://kth.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?aq2=%5B%5B%5D%5D&c=30&af=%5B%5D&searchType=LIST_LATEST&sortOrder2=title_sort_asc&query=&language=sv&pid=diva2%3A1592906&aq=%5B%5B%5D%5D&sf=all&age=%5B%5D&sortOrder=author_sort_asc&onlyFullText=false&noOfRows=50&dswid=8382)

## IMAGES

Alingsås Kommun (2024). *Museiparkens parkscen*. <https://www.alingsas.se/uppleva-och-gora/vara-scener/museiparkens-parkscen/>

Art Lab Gnesta (n.d.). *Gnesta Målarvägg*. <https://www.artlabgnesta.se/gnesta-malarvagg/>

Barn i stan Stockholm (n.d.) *Kungsträdgårdens isbana*. <https://www.barnistan.se/tips/besoksmal/kungstradgardens-isbana/>

Bates, K. (n.d.). *Fayetteville one of six U.S. cities selected for 'tactical urbanism' project*.

<https://fayettevilleflyer.com/2016/06/16/fayetteville-one-of-six-u-s-cities-selected-for-tactical-urbanism-project/>

Fialko, M. & Hampton, J. (n.d.). *Activating Alleys for a Lively City*. National Association of City Transportation Officials.

Filmstaden (n.d.). *Filmstaden Sergel*. <https://moten.filmstaden.se/lokaler/stockholm/biograf/filmstaden-sergel/>

Malmö stad (n.d.). *Besök Garaget*. <https://malmo.se/Uppleva-och-gora/Biblioteken/Vara-bibliotek/Garaget/Besok-Garaget.html>

Manor & Castle Development Trust (n.d.). *People are living longer than ever*.

<https://manorandcastle.org.uk/the-benefits-of-intergenerational-activities/>

Schacksällskapet Manhem (n.d.). *Här blir det uteschack i Göteborg i sommar*.

<https://schack.se/nyhet/distrikt-och-klubb/2022/06/har-blir-det-uteschack-i-goteborg-i-sommar/>

Stock Cake (n.d.). *Kids drawing outdoors*. [https://stockcake.com/i/kids-drawing-outdoors\\_1274334\\_919667](https://stockcake.com/i/kids-drawing-outdoors_1274334_919667)

Stockholms stad (2024). *Vasaparken*. <https://parker.stockholm/parker/vasaparken/>



United Nations (2017). *Leaving no one behind: Equality and non-discrimination at the heart of sustainable development*, The united nations system shared framework for action.

[https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported\\_files/CEB%20equality%20framework-A4-web-rev3.pdf](https://unsceb.org/sites/default/files/imported_files/CEB%20equality%20framework-A4-web-rev3.pdf)

Yellofish (n.d.). *19 Stunning Staircases Transformed by Artists Around the World*. <https://mymodernmet.com/stunning-stair-art/>