



Aalto University
School of Engineering

The Significance of Travel Experience and the Challenge of its Operationalization (in Built Environment Planning)

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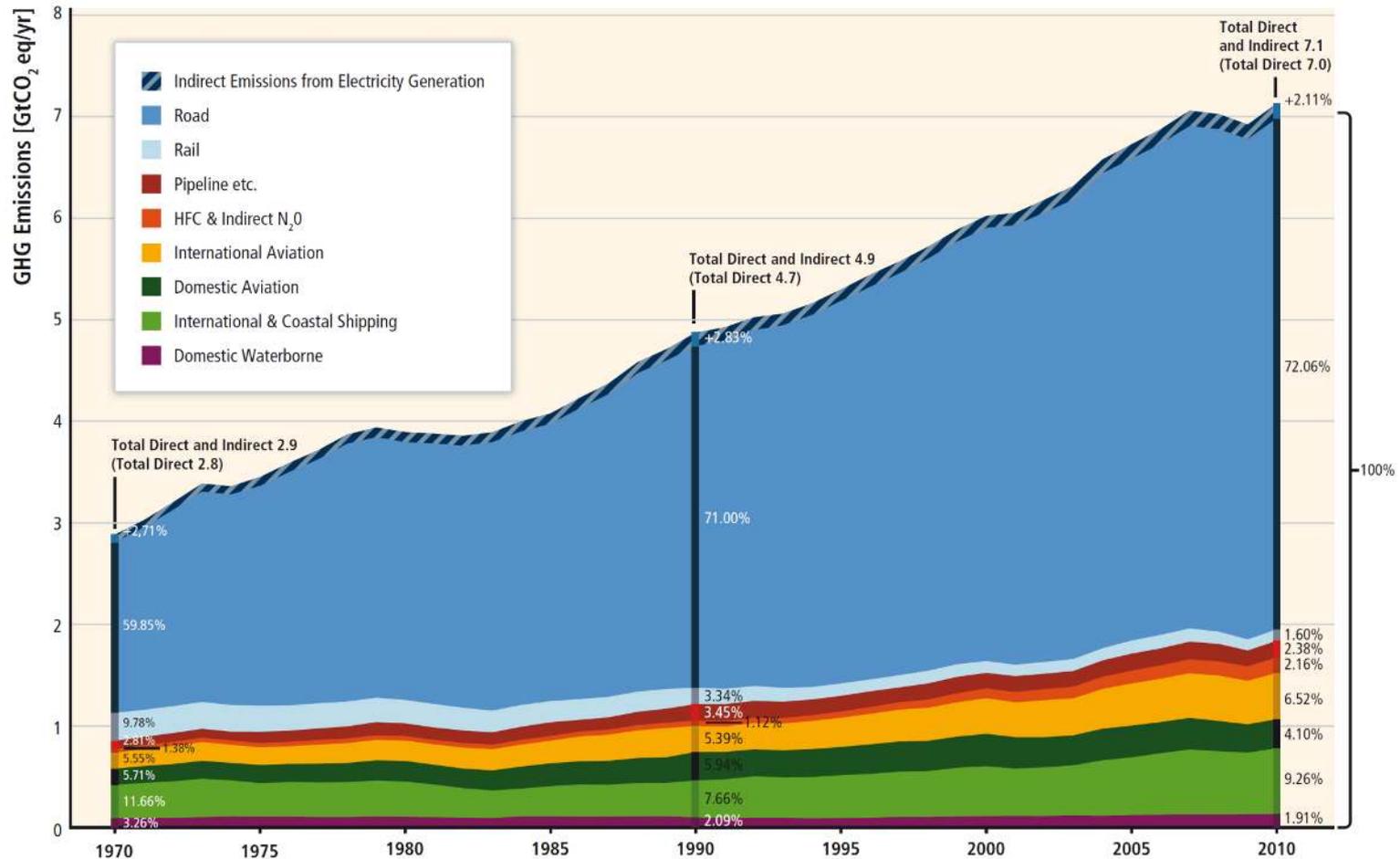
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Outline for Today

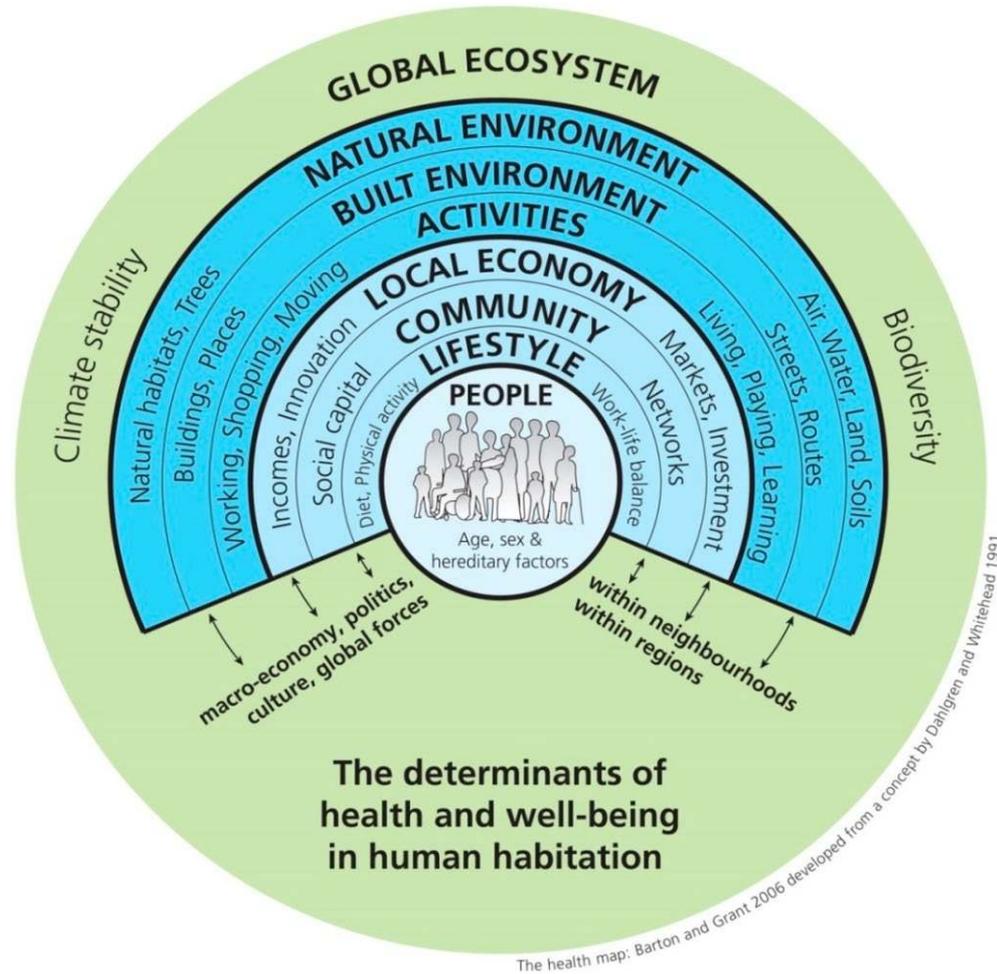
- Why we need to transition towards sustainable urban systems?
 - Why is everyday (travel) experience so important in this transition?
 - How have we tried to operationalize everyday (travel) experience in built environment planning?
 - What do we know about built environment planning?
 - How can we enhance organizational learning in built environment planning?
 - Some points of departure (knowledge → action)
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Why we need to transition towards sustainable urban systems?

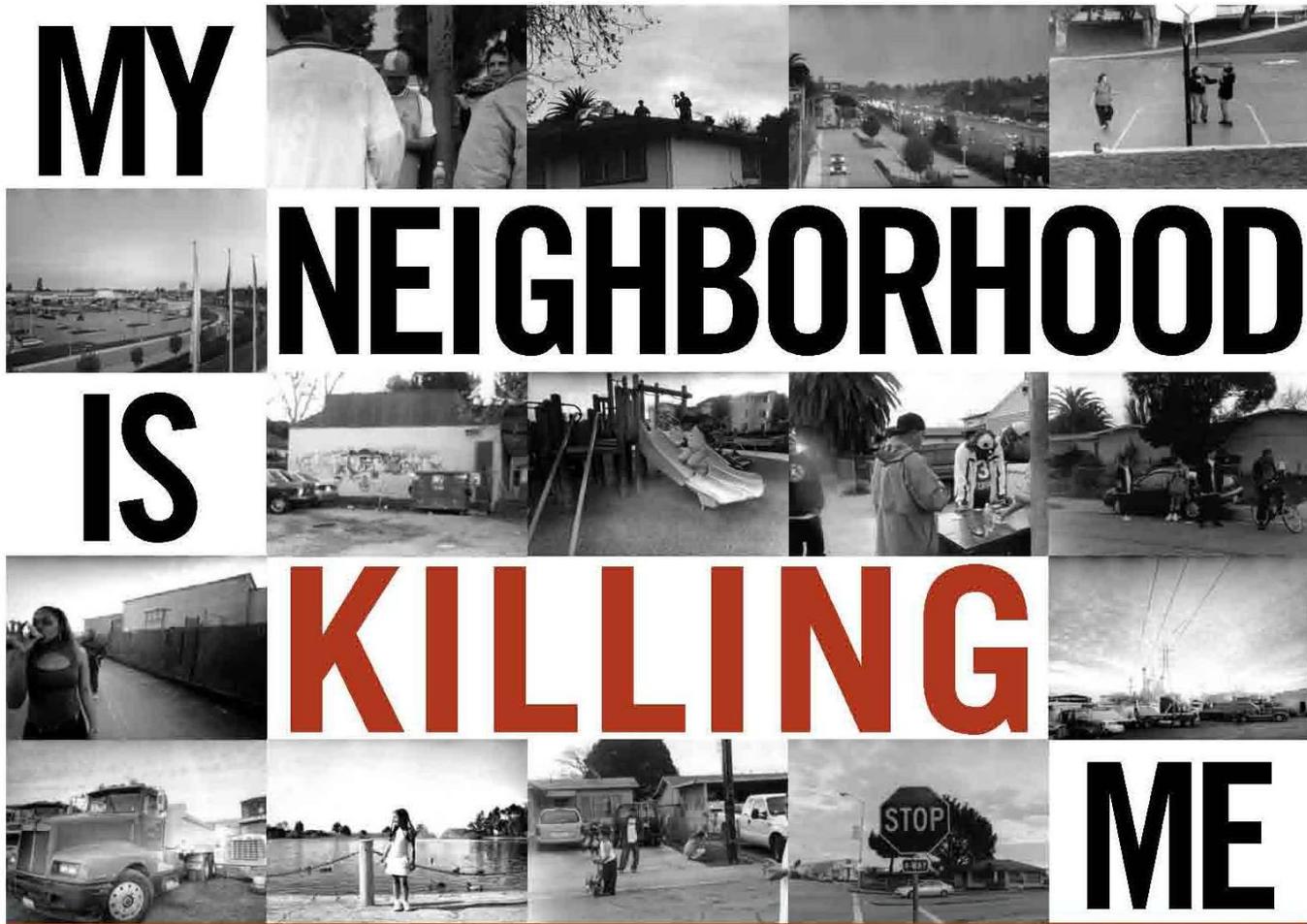
Climate Change?



Well-being?

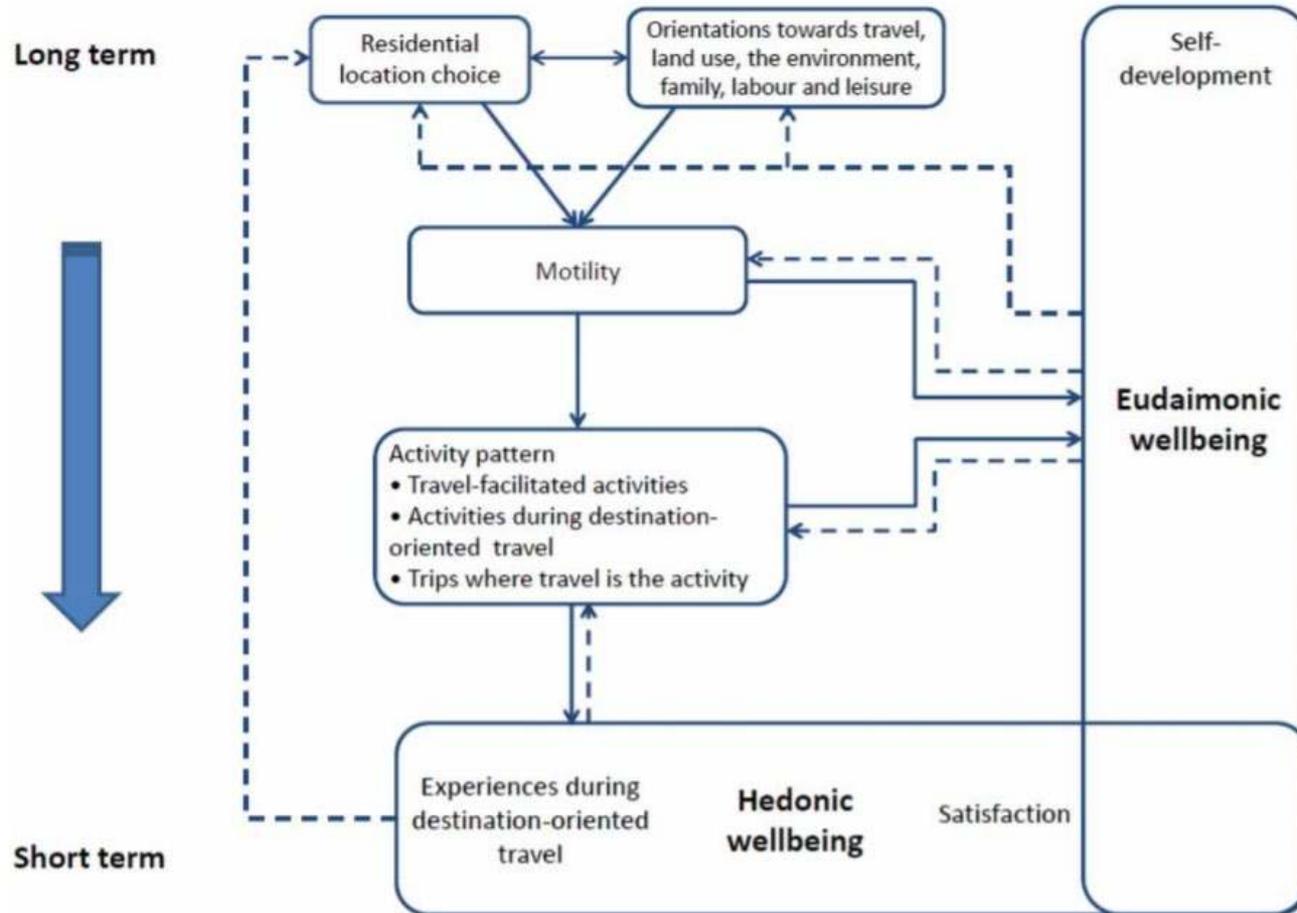


Injustice?



Why is everyday (travel) experience so important in this transition?

The obvious: Experience → Behavior



(de Vos et al, 2013)

Some answers ARE straightforward...



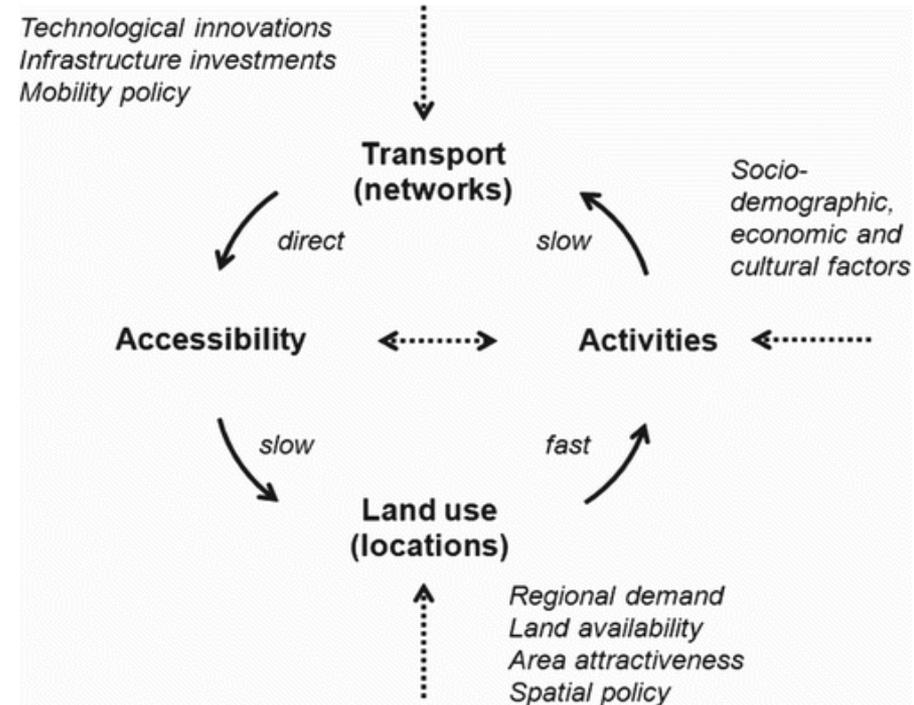
Or not...?



How have we tried to operationalize everyday (travel) experience in built environment planning?

Built Environment Planning in a (Long) Transition

- Towards integration of land use and transport planning
- Focus on accessibility (i.e., activities possible to reach within travel time)
- Experience while traveling?



Transport land use feedback cycle, and beyond (Bertolini, 2012)

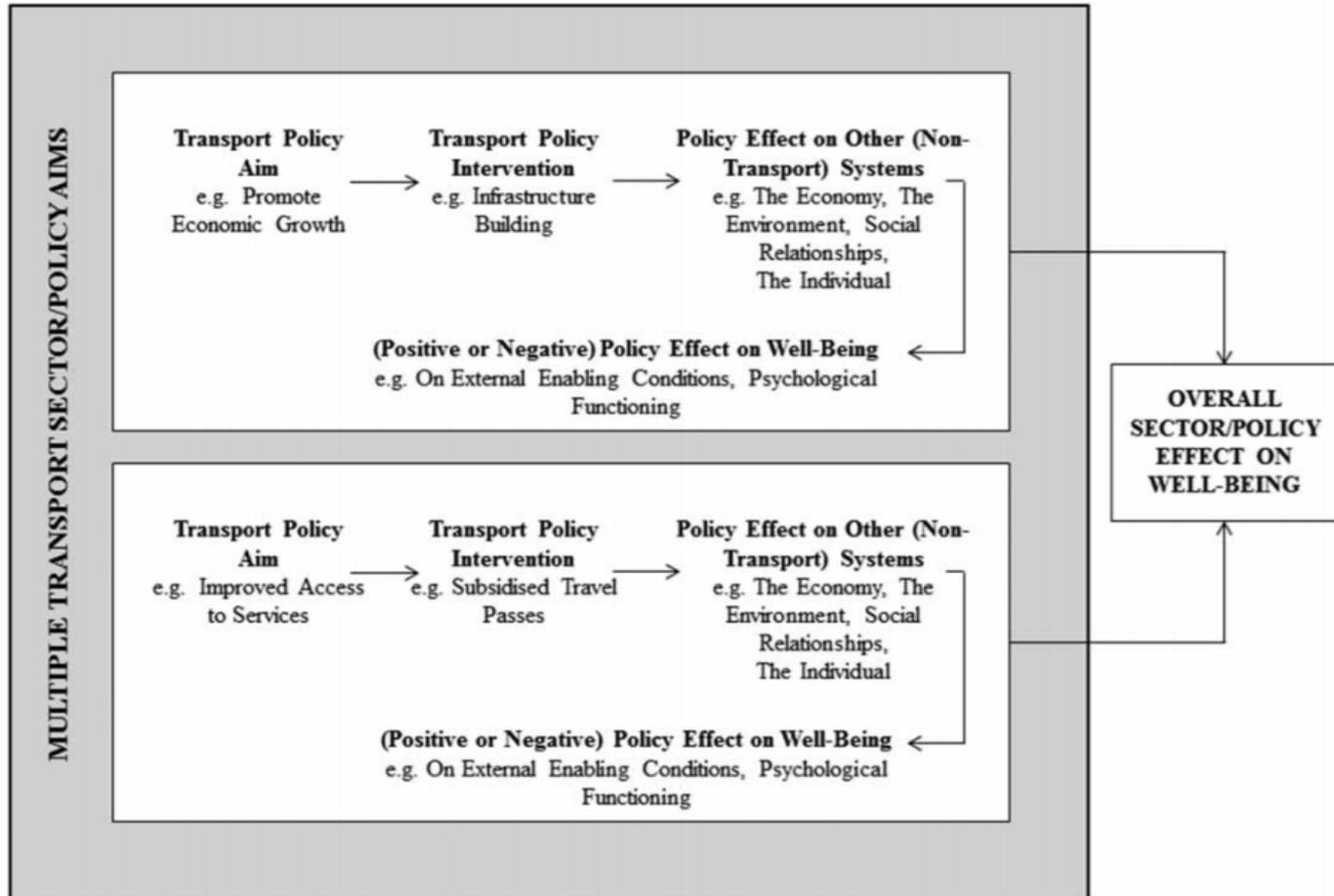
Measuring Travel Experiences through Citizen Participation

Two dimensions	Three dimensions	Negative	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	Positive
Affective dimension	Positive activation – Negative deactivation	Bored	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Enthusiastic
		Fed up	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Engaged
		Tired	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Alert
	Positive deactivation – Negative activation	Stressed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Calm
		Worried	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Confident
		Hurried	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Relaxed
Cognitive dimension	Cognitive evaluation	Travel was worst I can think of	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Travel was best I can think of
		Travel was low standard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Travel was high standard
		Travel did not work out well	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Travel worked out well

Challenges for Knowledge → Action

- How reliable data is in representing reality?
- Is data usable in this data management system?
- Can this data be used to identify concrete planning actions?
- Should we assign higher priority to positive or negative experiences?
- How do we deal with the diversity of citizens' opinions?
- . . .

How to use* travel experience data?



(Reardon & Abdallah, 2013)

What do we know about built environment planning as a complex process?

What is Planning?

- Planning is oriented towards shaping peoples' lives, and enhancing liveability and sustainability

→ People are complex, diverse beings, with a multitude of values and needs

What is Planning?

- Planning is about holistic understanding and systemic approach to the interdependencies in the built and natural environment, and beyond
- Infrastructural and technological systems are complex, resulting in non-linear and uncertain reality

What is Planning?

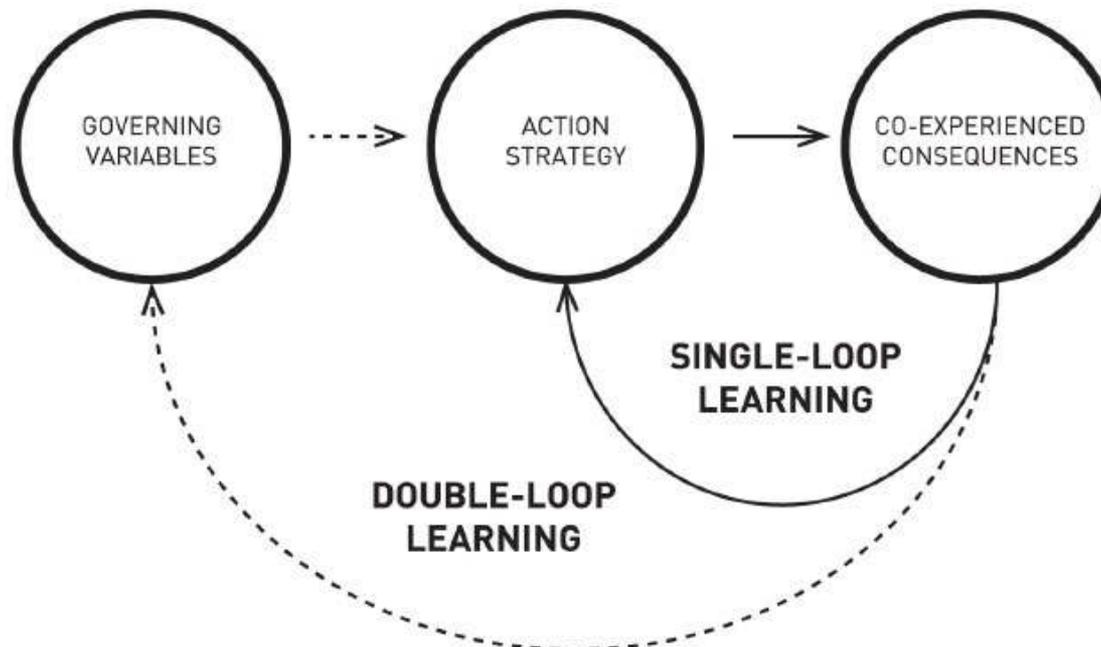
- Planning is a future-oriented activity, involving critical thinking about possibilities
- Multitude of possible and desirable futures

What is Planning?

- Planning is a practice of knowing, i.e., knowing as something that planners *do*
 - *Knowing what (cognitive/theoretical knowledge)*
 - *Knowing how (skills/technical knowledge)*
 - *Knowing to what end (moral choices)*
- Continuous process of learning and discovery

Planning as a Continuous Learning Process?

- Single-loop vs. double-loop learning



(Argyris & Schön, 1978)

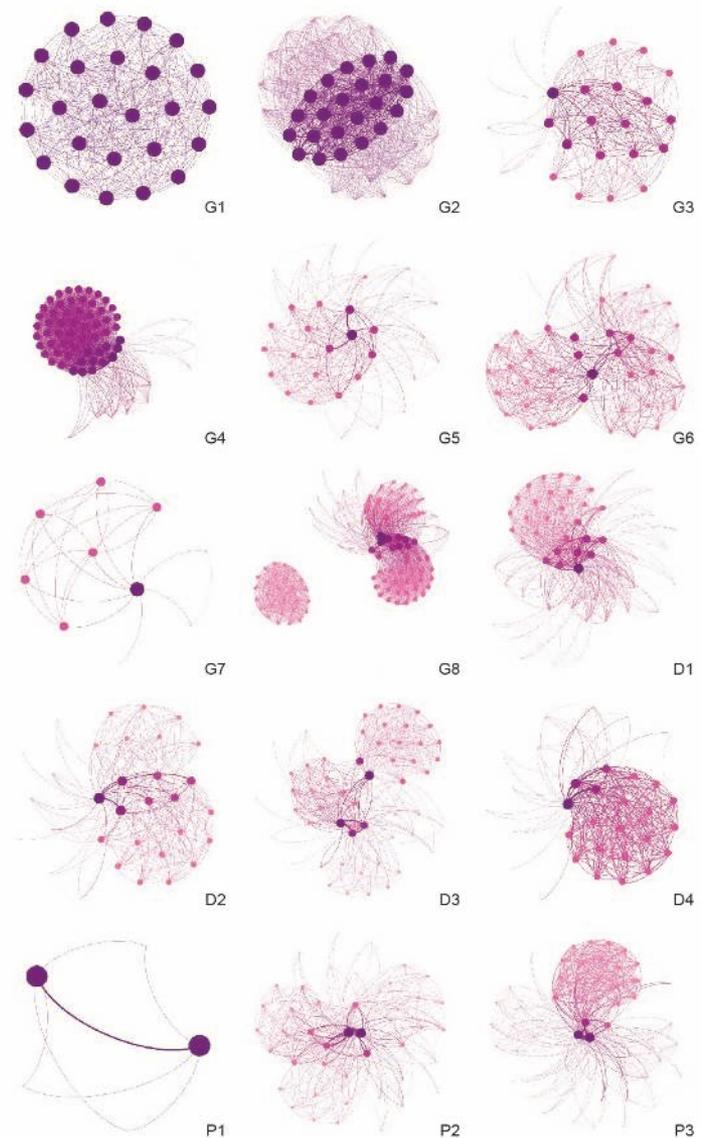
How can we enhance organizational learning in built environment planning?

For start: Enhancing process memory

- Understanding how planning practice are staged from above – funding, regulation, organizational structure, etc.
 - Understanding how planning practices are staged from below – software, data, values, relationships, etc.
 - Understanding the communicative dynamics of planning processes as parts of other processes – policy-making, urban development, climate change, etc.
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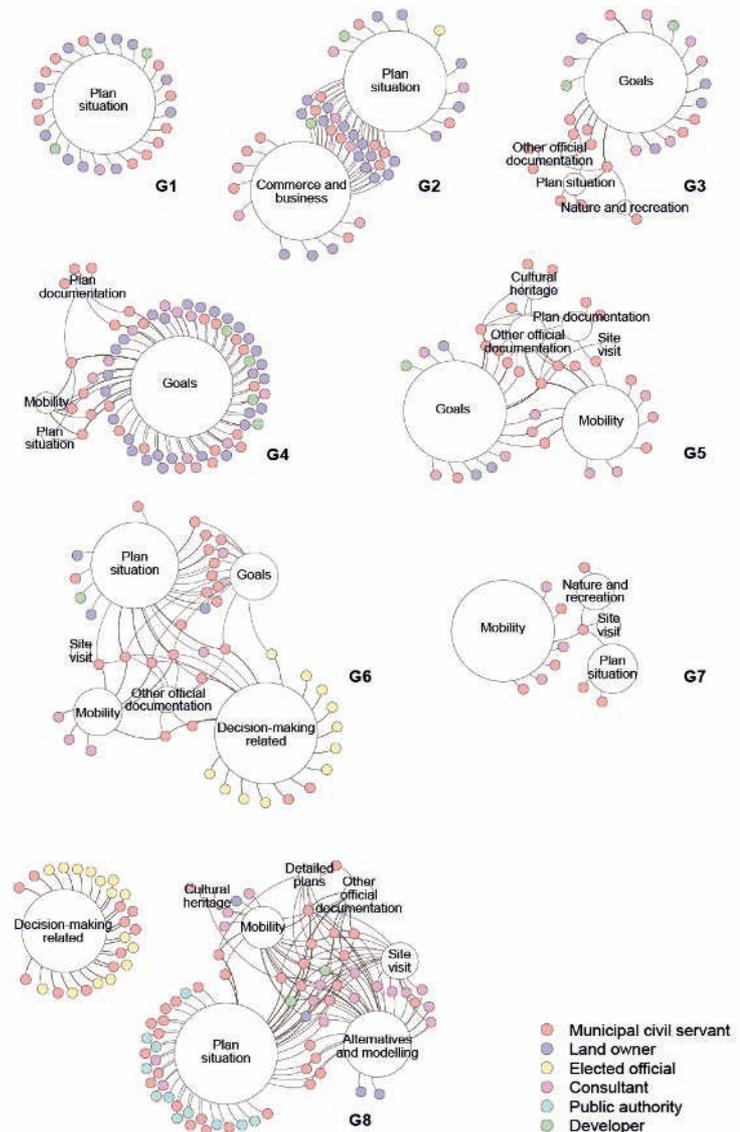
Example 1 – Communicative dynamics over several years

persons in
meetings

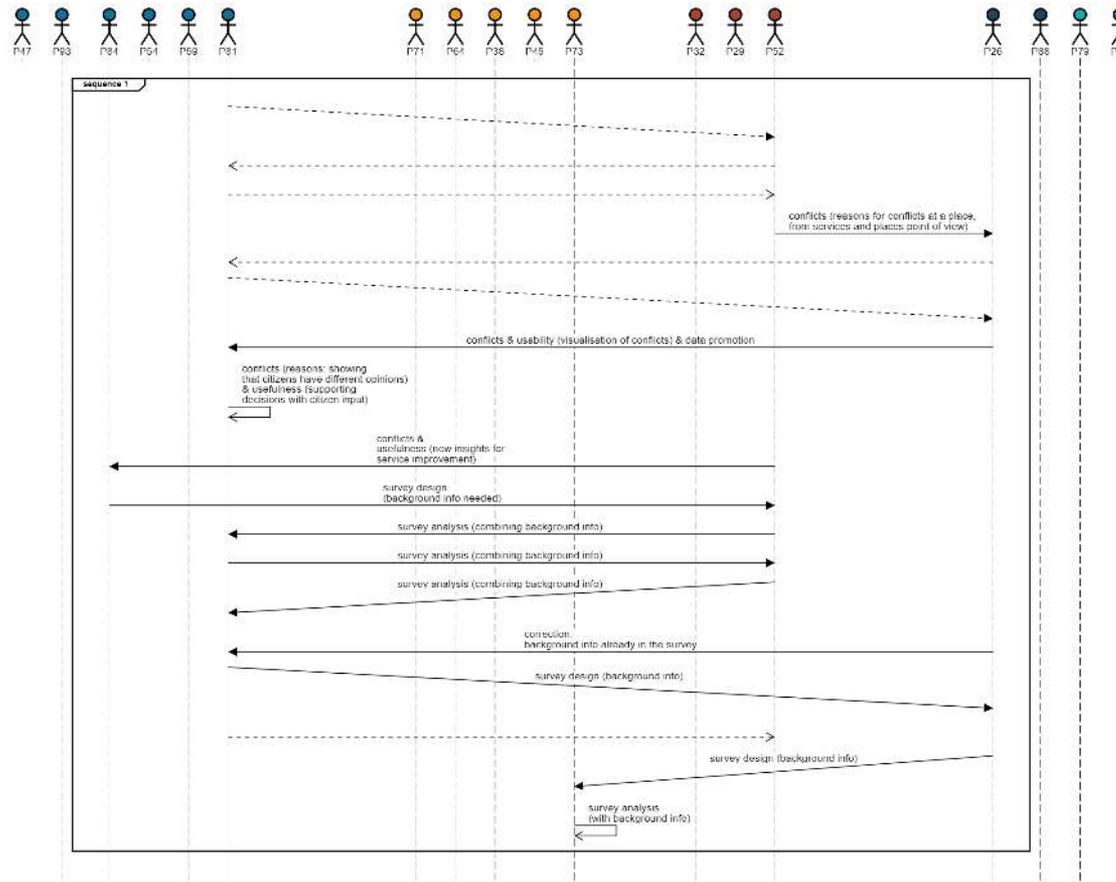


Example 2 – Communicative dynamics over several years

themes in meetings



Example 3 – Communicative dynamics in one meeting



**We have collectively, as humanity,
consistently failed to enable process
memory from our dynamic
organizations, and use it for enhancing
those organizations!**

**What if we had empathy for planners
as fellow humans facing enormous
complexity on their everyday basis?**

Let us depart with hope...

We choose to develop our planning processes, not because this is easy, but because this is hard; because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone!

– inspired by J.F. Kennedy

Thank you for learning!

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