

# Making Cities for People

Social Sustainability & **UNSDG's**

# Gehl

**Ewa Westermark**  
Partner, Director and Architect  
[@ewawestermark](#) [@citiesforpeople](#)

**Gehl** are urban strategists and designers,  
who put people first.



Copenhagen



San Francisco



New York



Our purpose

# Making Cities for People

Our mission:

We work for cities and communities to be  
**equitable, healthy &  
sustainable**  
places for all



We know  
the built  
environment  
affects people's  
behavior and  
quality of life.



**We work globally  
with the challenges  
cities &  
communities face**

# **Why do the UNSDGs present an opportunity for Gehl?**

## Assessing the needs of our cities

# Revisiting our purpose and mission

Identifying  
challenges cities &  
communities are  
facing



# Aligning our purpose with the SDG framework

Urban resilience

Equal opportunity

Healthy neighbourhoods

Sustainable urbanization



For

Where



= By



# Gehl Social Sustainability

Who we work with



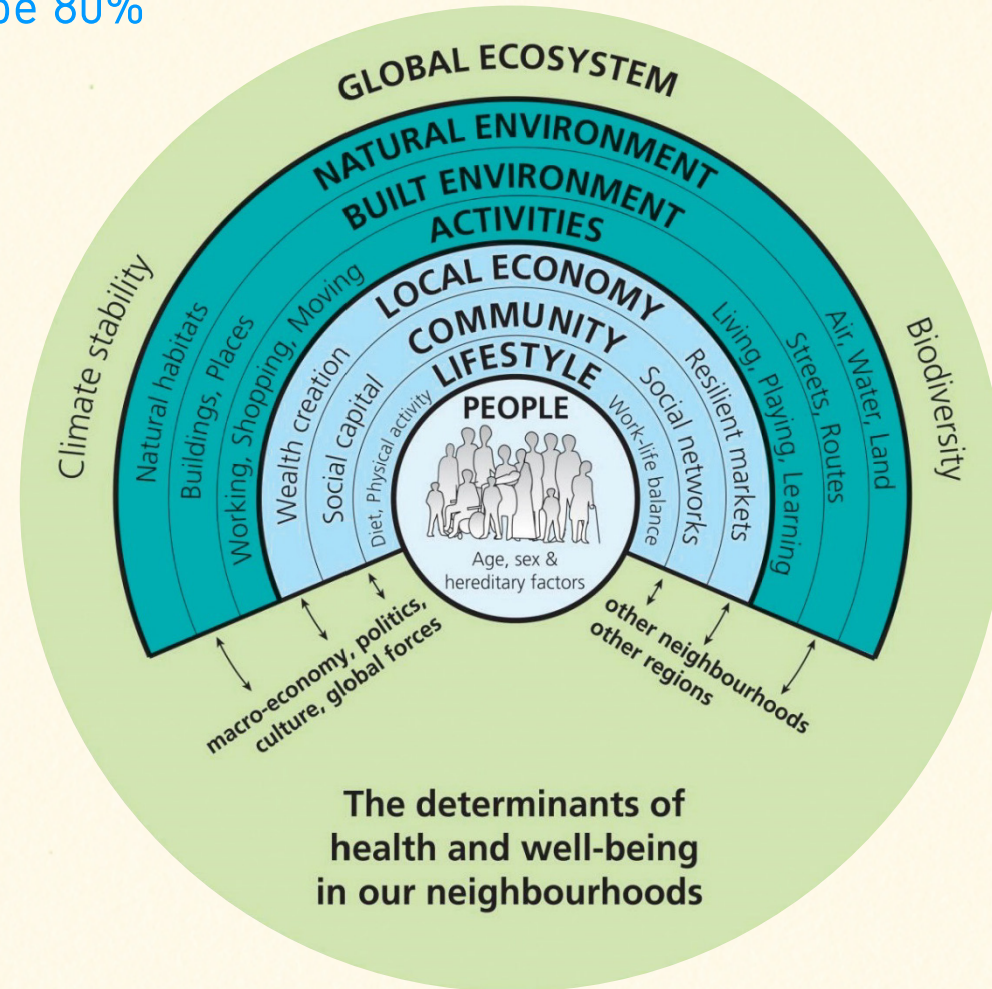
What we work for

Where we focus

# Social sustainability

– Good health and well-being

Environment, behavior, and socioeconomic factors shape 80% of a community's health

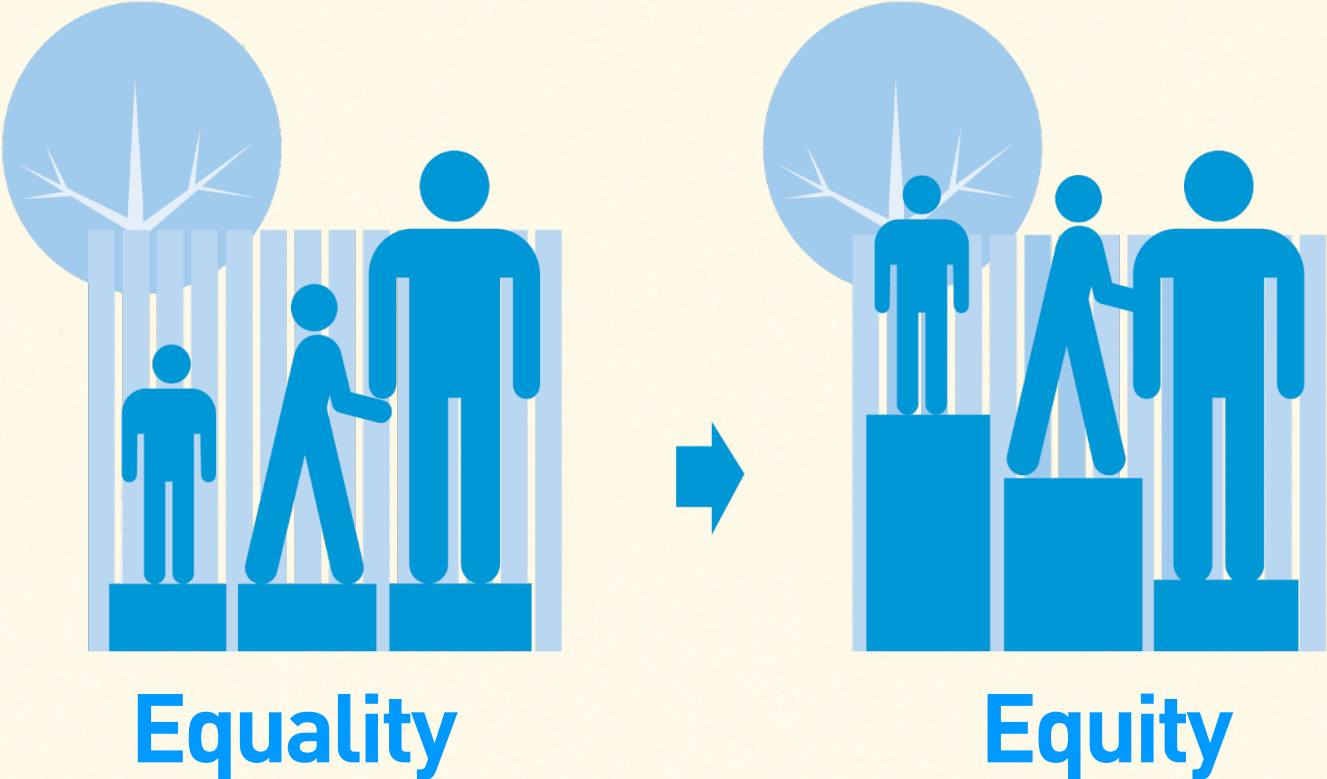


3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



# Social sustainability

– Reduced inequalities



**10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES

# Social sustainability

## – Gehl partnerships

We will work in **partnership to increase our scale and reach** as an organization and to solve problems through innovation

Gehl 2030  
Strategy:  
**Enabling Change**



# Gehl + social sustainability in cities and communities


**Gode liv i byen**

At måle på impact



**Gehl**  
Architects

**Public Life & Urban Justice in NYC's Plazas**



**Planera för människor**

Social hållbarhet kopplat till fysisk planering

World Health Organization  
European Commission

**Towards More Physical Activity in Cities**


Transforming public spaces to promote physical activity — a key contributor to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in Europe



**11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**




MKB  
Strategi för utrummen i Rosengård, firandöskor till Malmö och Urdokumentation i Öresundsregionen



**Gehl**

**Public Life Diversity Toolkit:** a prototype for measuring social mixing and economic integration in public space



**Gehl**  
Make San Francisco

Gehl projects



# Public Life & Urban Justice

Measuring social impact  
in NYC's plazas

Full report:

<https://issuu.com/gehlarchitects/docs/nycplazastudy>



Broadway  
New York  
2008 - 2010

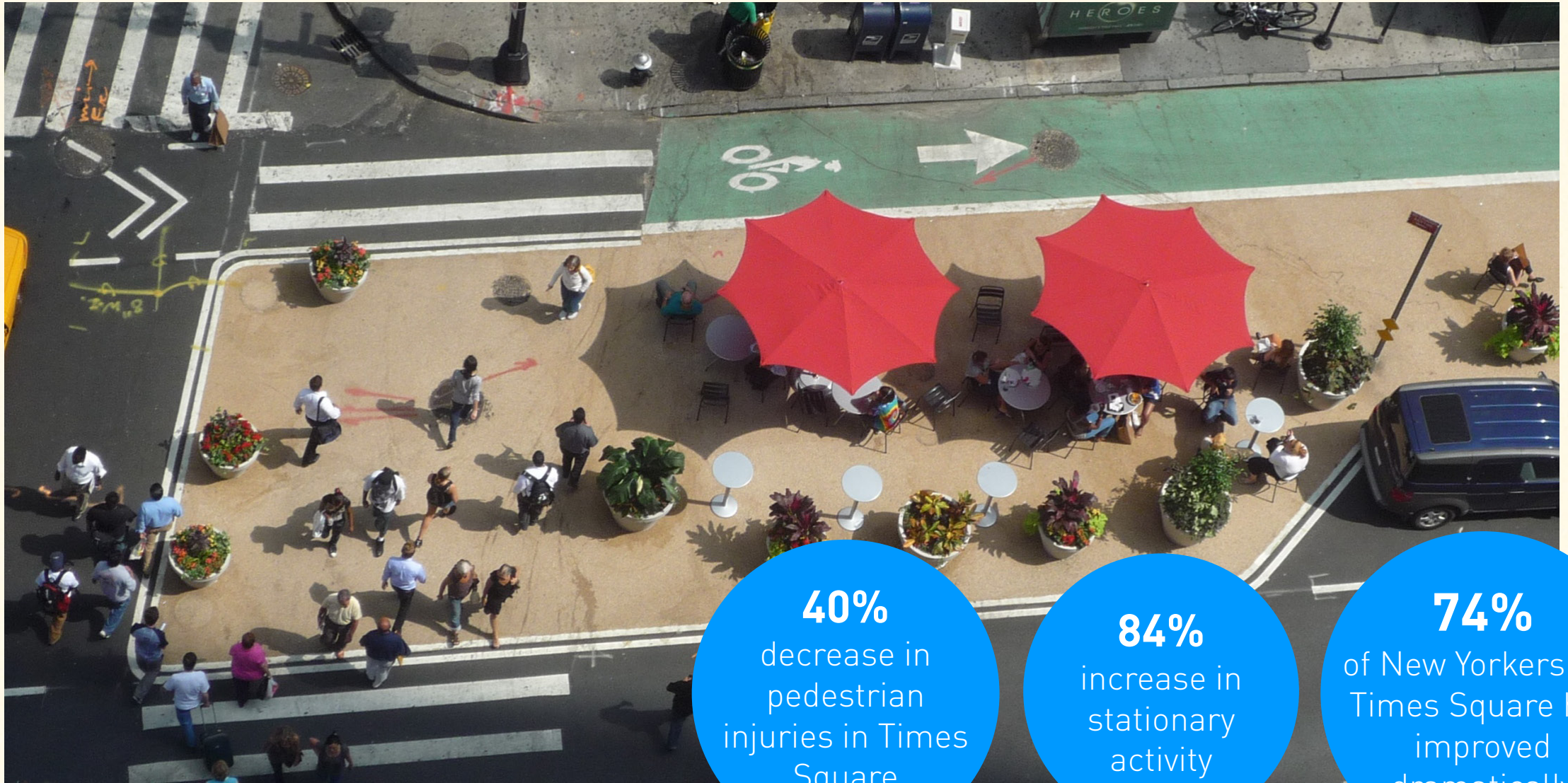
Before



after

Gehl

# Measuring impact



**40%**  
decrease in  
pedestrian  
injuries in Times  
Square

**84%**  
increase in  
stationary  
activity

**74%**  
of New Yorkers say  
Times Square has  
improved  
dramatically



# NYC Plaza Program

NYC DOT funds a limited number of new interim plaza projects per year.

NGO's and local community groups can apply for the right to receive DOT funding.

DOT partners with community groups that commit to operate, maintain, and manage

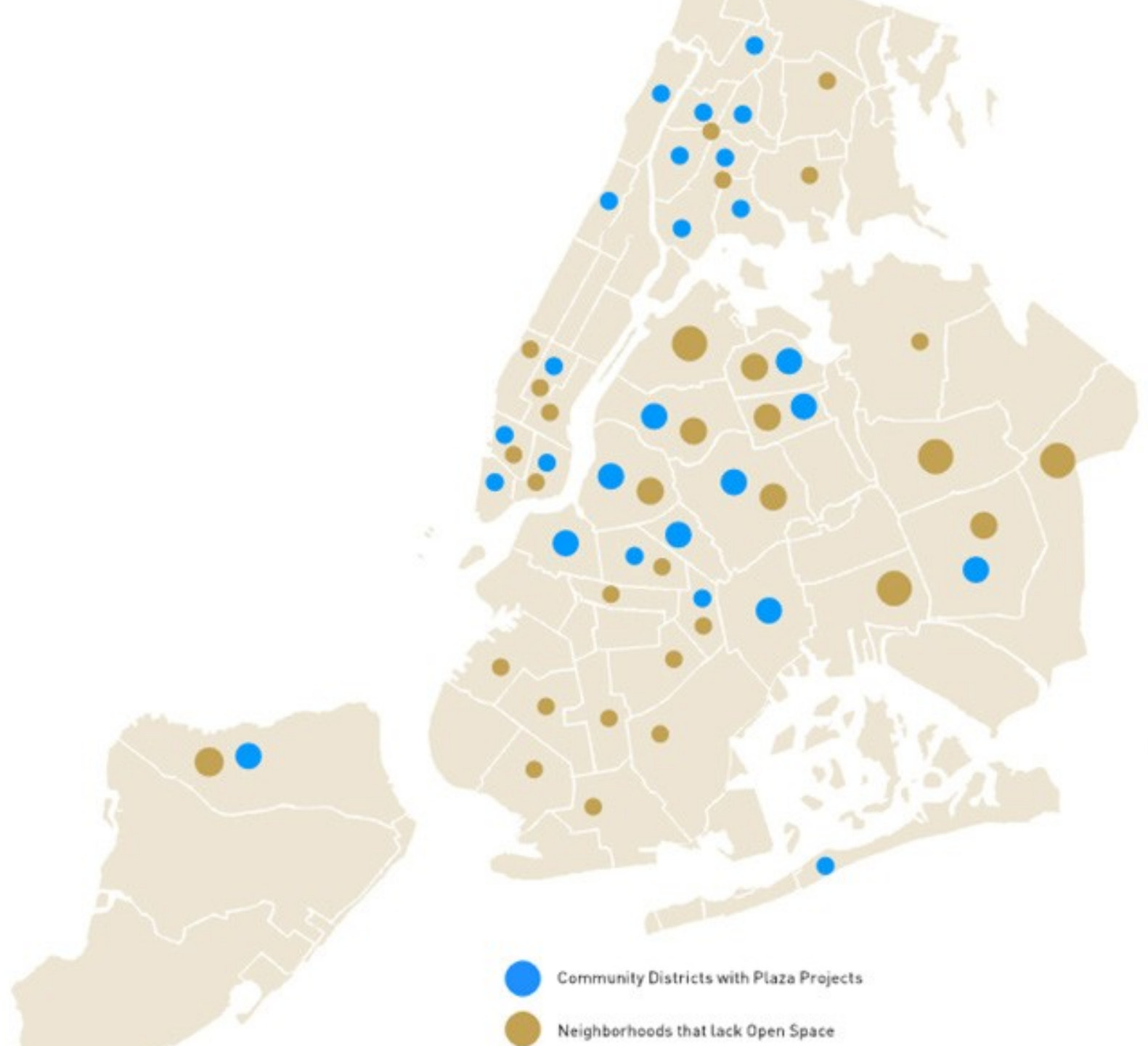


Putnam Triangle Plaza

# NYC Plaza Program

In the past 7 years 70 plazas have been created by turning underutilized space into new public spaces.

Prioritizing areas with few parks and lack of open space



## But what is the **Social impact?**



To begin to answer these questions, we need to understand **who feels invited and why.**

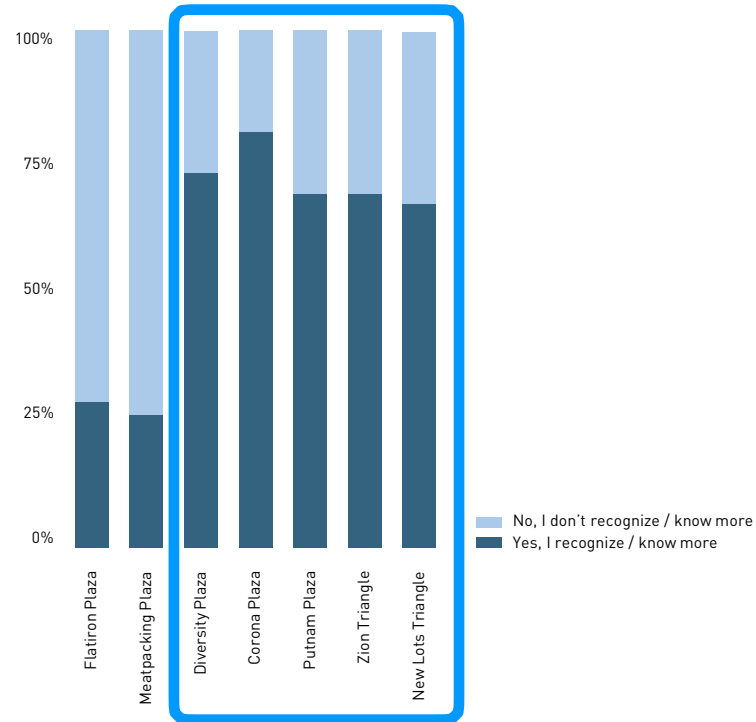
Plazas foster  
**social  
connections.**

**53%**

across all 7 plazas  
**recognize or know more  
people since  
the plaza opened**

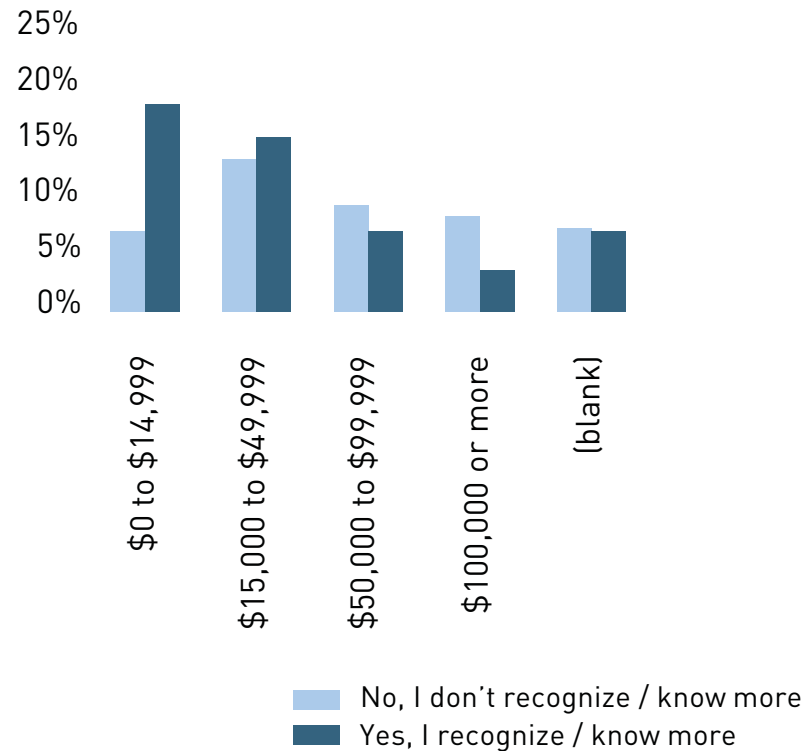


# Residential plazas with **more local and frequent users** correlated with **higher social interactions and recognition**



**75%**  
of the outer-borough plazas recognize or know more people since the plaza opened

Those earning less than \$50,000 were much **more likely to make new connections**



“Is this your plaza?”  
People identified the plazas as **‘theirs’**

**67%**  
felt a sense of ownership  
across all 7  
plazas



Gehl projects

# Adding air quality to city planning

Designing Thrive Zones for  
our youngest residents

- Fokus på børn – most vulnerable
- Arbejde gennem partnerskaber med fonde som Bvl og RWJ
- Inclusive healthy places

Mer info:

<https://gehlpeople.com/projects/air-quality-copenhagen/>



We measure and collect data to understand:

# AIR QUALITY

Google Air View measures Ultrafine Particles (UFP) and Black Carbon



# SMALL CHILDREN

Gehl measures where small children move and spend time

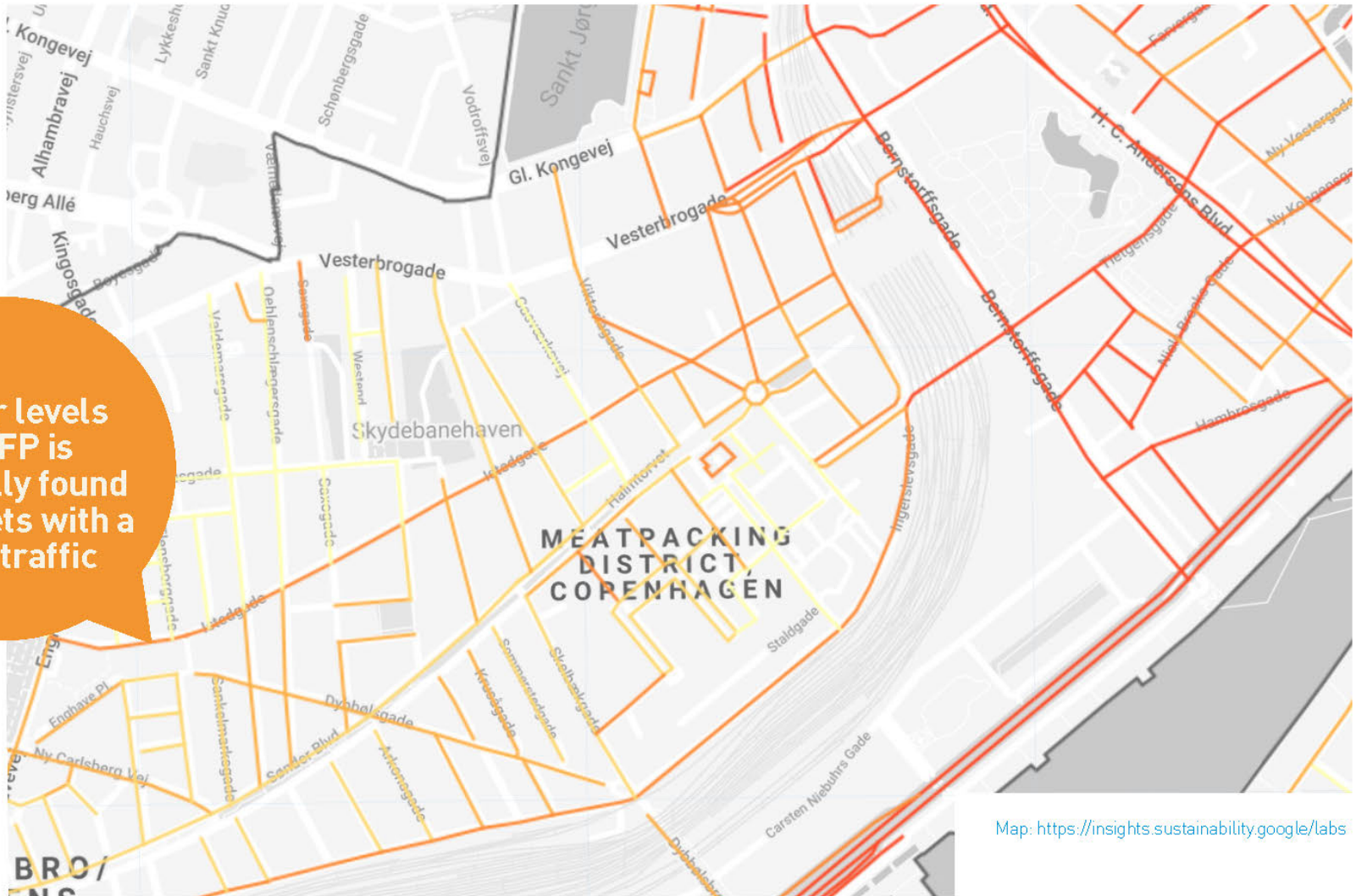


# We measure local air quality

Ultrafine Particles (UFP)

Higher levels of UFP is generally found on streets with a lot of traffic

Average UFP levels  
Colours have been changed to highlight local variability



Map: <https://insights.sustainability.google/labs>

**Dashboard** | Layout

Default  
Phone  
Device Preview

Size  
Custom size (1300 x 768)

**Sheets**

- Activity map
- Activity
- Observation area ...

**Objects**

- Horizontal
- Vertical
- Text
- Image
- Web Page
- Blank
- Button
- Extension

Tiled | Floating

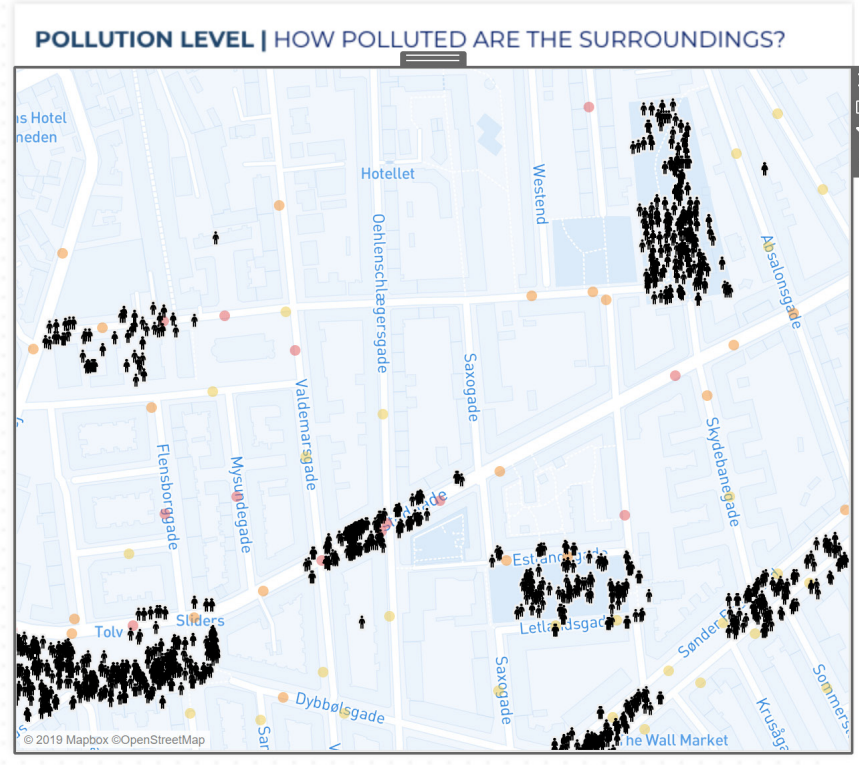
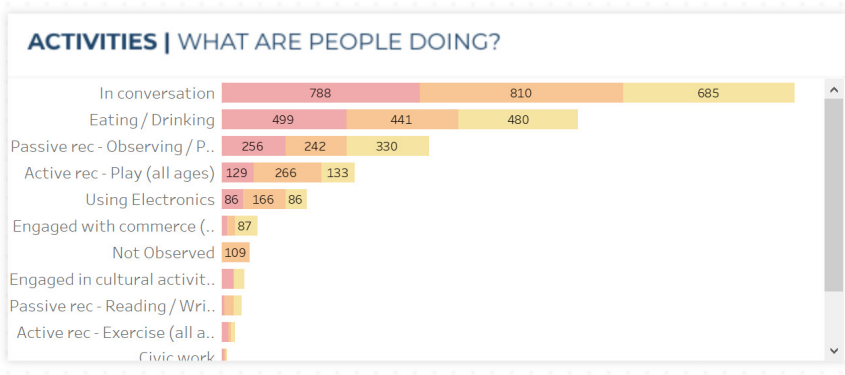
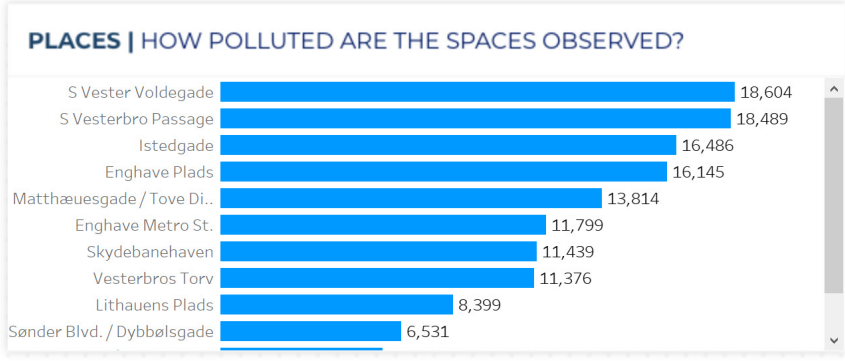
Show dashboard title

# AIR POLLUTION & ACTIVITIES | WHAT ARE PEOPLE DOING IN POLLUTED AREAS?



UFP critical level: 15.000 | Perceived Age: (All) | Observation type: Stationary | Perceived Gender: (All) | Day of Week: (All)

Pollution level: High (Red) | Medium (Orange) | Low (Yellow)



Show Me

For maps try

- 1 geo [Dimension](#)
- 0 or more [Dimensions](#)
- 0 or 1 [Measure](#)

May use spatial measure in place of geo dimension

**Dashboard** | Layout

Default  
Phone  
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Custom size (1300 x 768)

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# AIR POLLUTION & ACTIVITIES | WHAT ARE PEOPLE DOING IN POLLUTED AREAS?



UFP critical level: 15,000

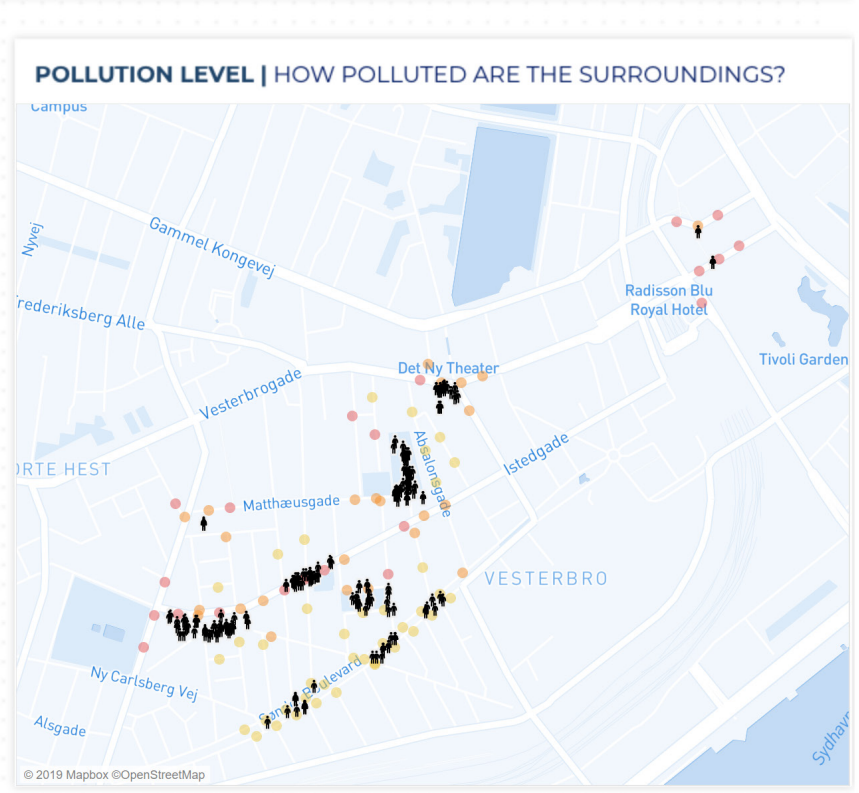
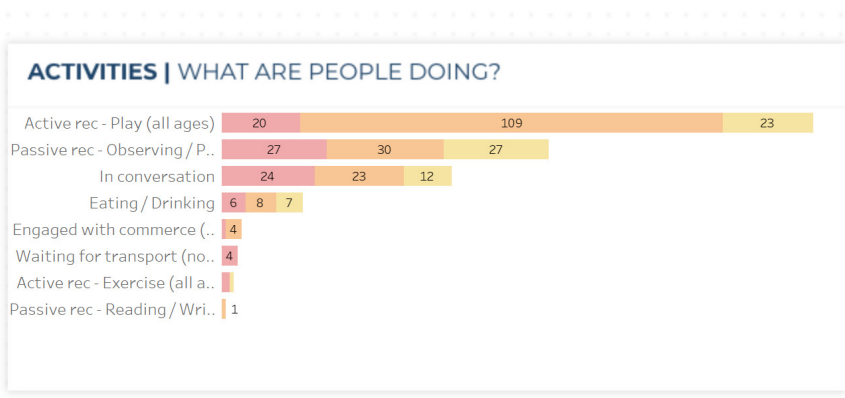
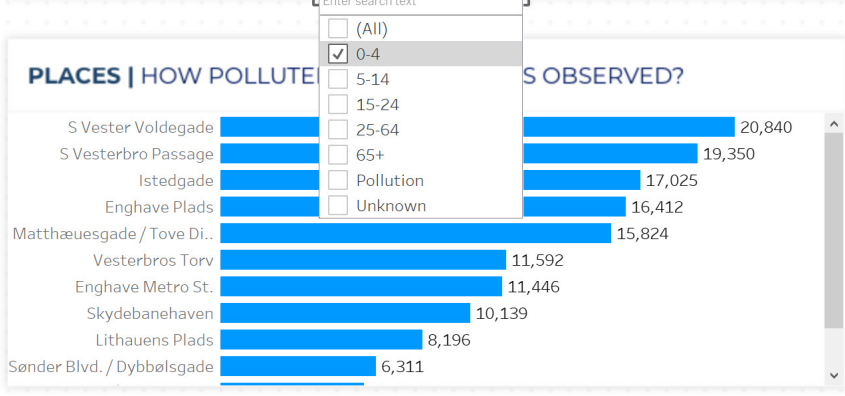
Perceived Age: 0-4

Observation type: Stationary

Perceived Gender: (All)

Day of Week: (All)



Pollution level: High (Red), Medium (Orange), Low (Yellow)



Show Me

Select view

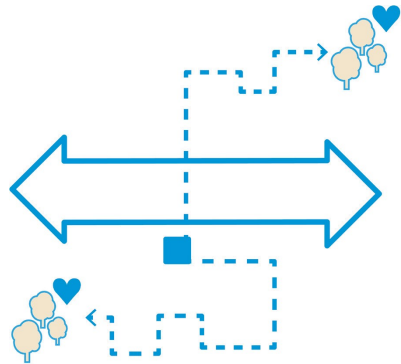
# The cleaner air network

-  Reduce exposure to air pollution
-  Invite to cleaner air routes and spaces



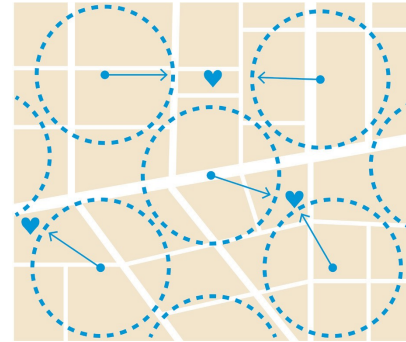
# District

## Design Principles - 1st draft\*



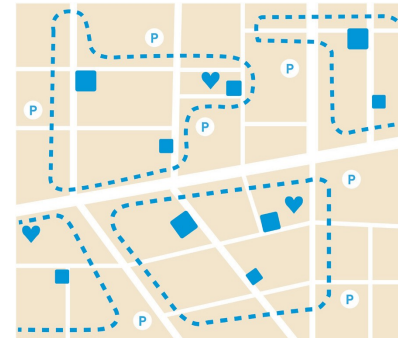
### Cleaner air routes & networks

a connected network of safe streets and spaces



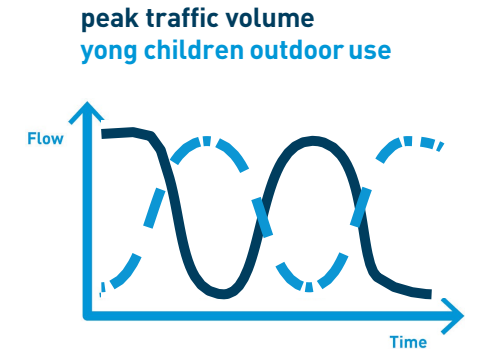
### 5 min walk to cleaner air places

at the pace of a 0-6 year old



### Cleaner air zones

Slow zones with reduced traffic volumes



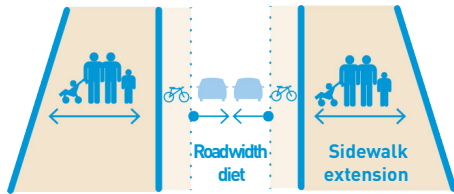
### Cleaner air time management

Regulate peak traffic to children's outdoor activities

\*The impact of the proposed design solutions on reducing exposure to Ultrafine Particles (UFP) are yet to be tested and evaluated.

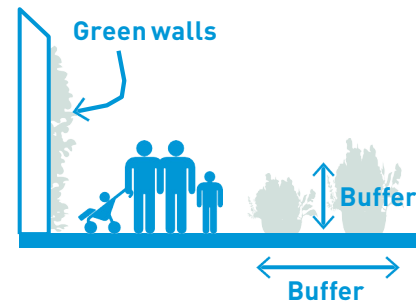
# Routes

## Design Principles - 1st draft\*



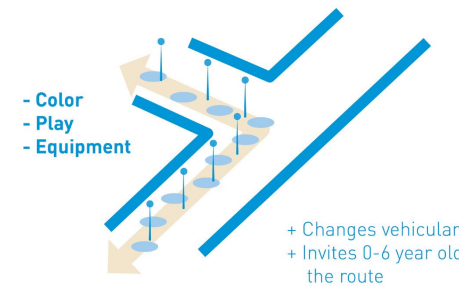
### Re-distribution of street & traffic calming

increased distance from traffic, more space for walking and cycling, traffic speed reduction



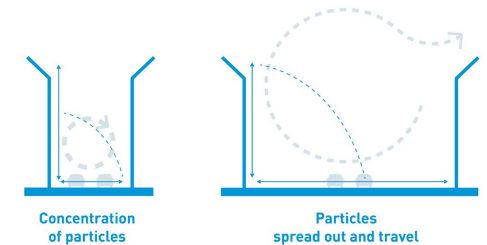
### Cleaner air street vegetation

green pollution buffer



### Cleaner air visual signals

guiding people to choose cleaner air routes and places



### Canyon effect traffic regulation

volumes of traffic related to street widths / building height ratio

\*The impact of the proposed design solutions on reducing exposure to Ultrafine Particles (UFP) are yet to be tested and evaluated.



We measured poorer air quality here

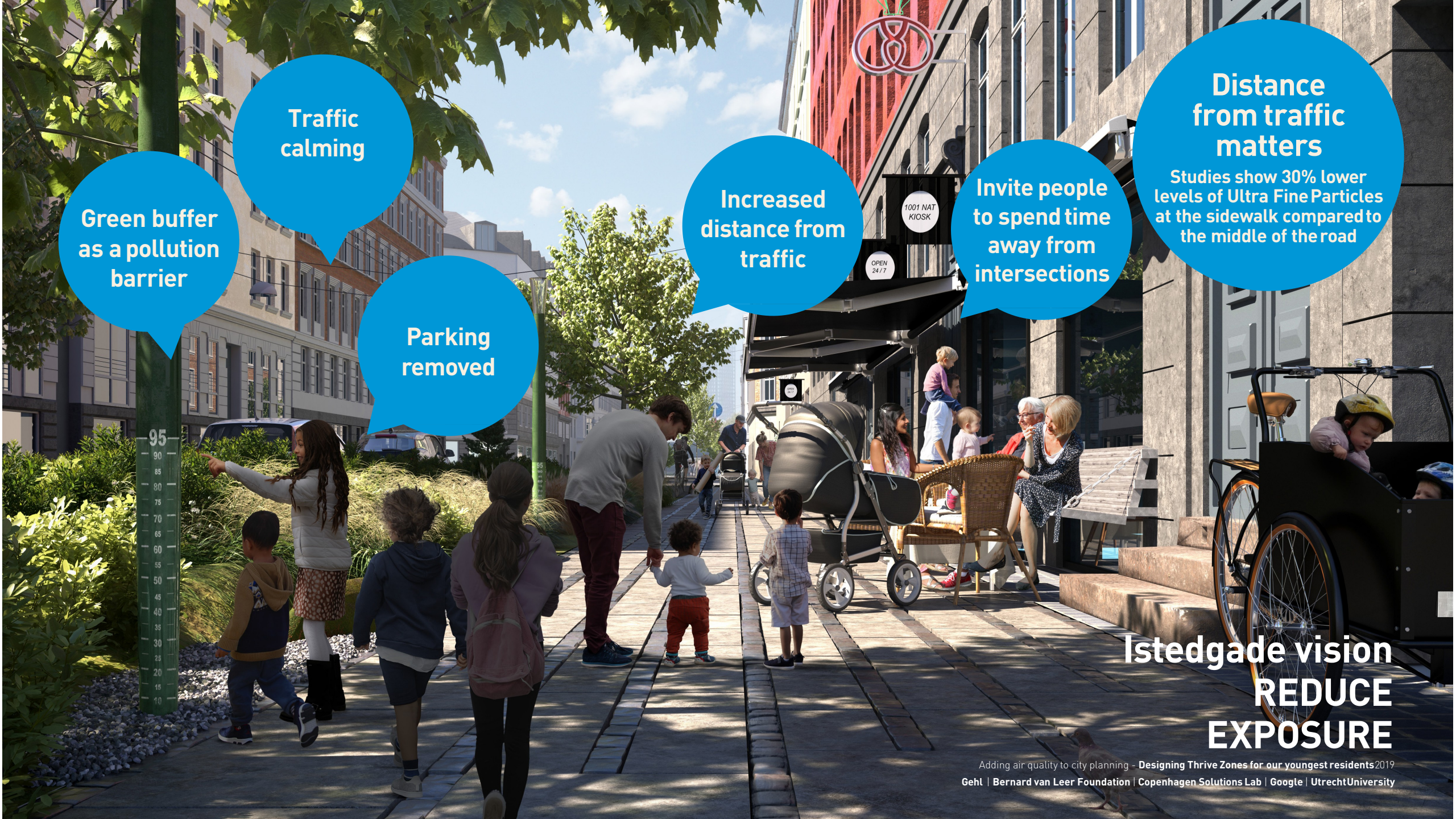
Heavy car traffic at peak times

On street Parking

Babies and their caregivers spend a lot of time here

## Istedgade Today





Green buffer as a pollution barrier

Traffic calming

Parking removed

Increased distance from traffic

Invite people to spend time away from intersections

Distance from traffic matters  
Studies show 30% lower levels of Ultra Fine Particles at the sidewalk compared to the middle of the road

Istedgade vision  
**REDUCE EXPOSURE**



THANK YOU!

Ewa Westermark  
[ewa@gehlpeople.com](mailto:ewa@gehlpeople.com)  
[www.gehlpeople.com](http://www.gehlpeople.com)  
[@citiesforpeople](https://twitter.com/citiesforpeople)

Gehl projects

# Inclusive Healthy Places Framework

A common framework for  
public health and urban  
planning & design

Full report:

[https://gehlinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Inclusive-Healthy-Places\\_Gehl-Institute.pdf](https://gehlinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Inclusive-Healthy-Places_Gehl-Institute.pdf)

# Change process starts by doing things differently



Until recently, there was **no common framework** for the **public health** and **urban planning & design** communities to do this.



In 2018 the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation worked with Gehl and a group of global advisors to create the **Inclusive Healthy Places Framework**, a **data-driven tool built on evidence** about the links between place and health.

The Framework can be used to **create and evaluate healthy, inclusive public places** that support health equity.

# Framework Overview

## 4 Guiding Principles

Overarching principles to shaping and assessing inclusive, healthy places

## 16 Drivers

Thematic policy & practice areas within each principle that create pathways to health equity

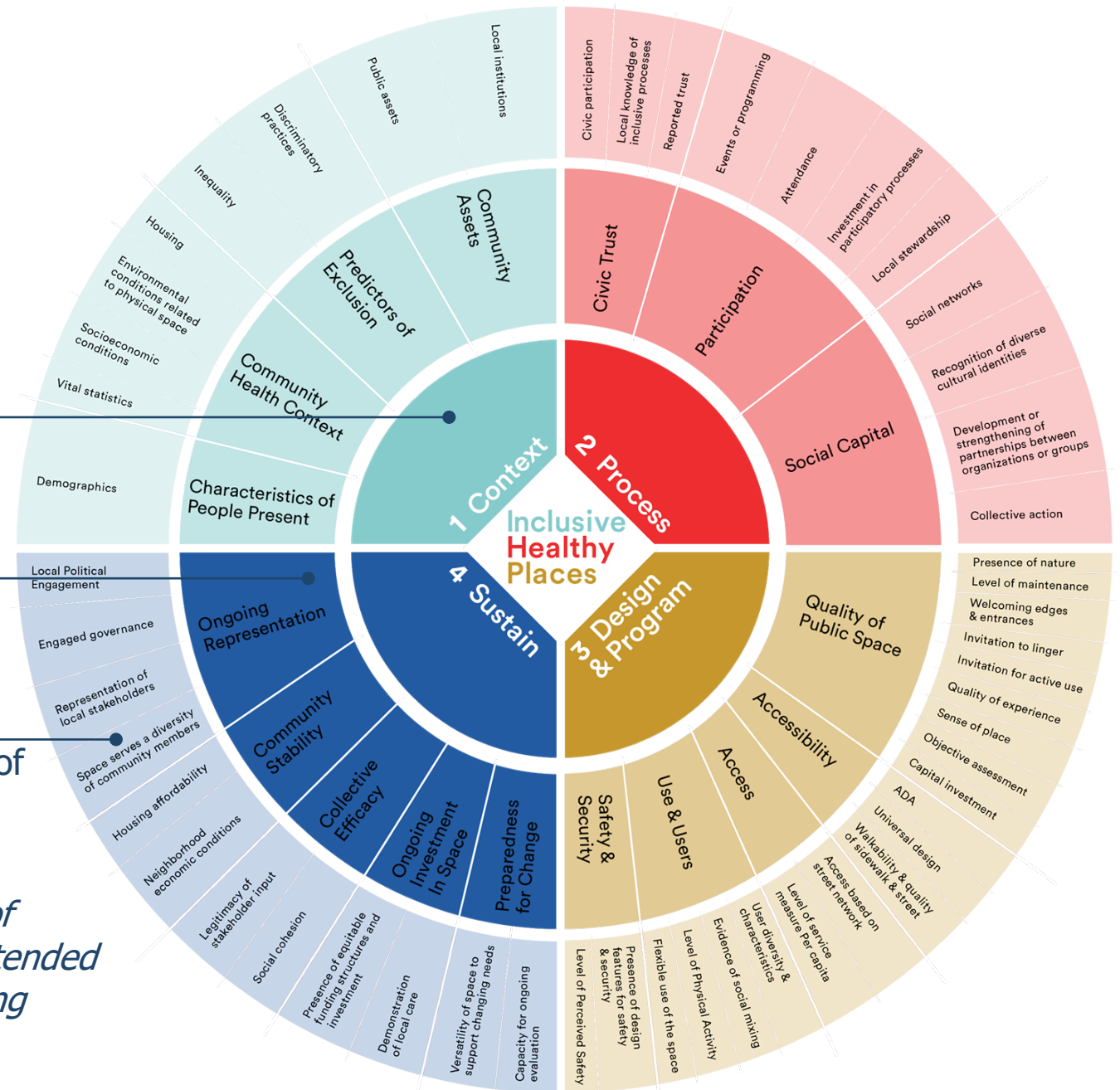
## 50 Indicators

Quantitative or qualitative measures that reveal status of and progress toward achieving goals related to drivers

## 158 Metrics

Units of measurement that support the indicators

*E.g., number of people who attended a public meeting*



# Who is the Framework for?

- ▶ **Built environment practitioners**, including planners, designers, policymakers, and others who are working to shape their communities by focusing on health and inclusion
- ▶ **Public health professionals and policymakers** who are engaged in issues connected to place and the social determinants of health
- ▶ **Community leaders, directors of community-based organizations, advocates, and others who need evidence-based metrics** to demonstrate the value of inclusionary processes and outcomes that leverage and build on local assets
- ▶ **Engaged community members and residents** who bring vital knowledge and lived experience

Gehl projects

# Social sustainability and physical planning

Designing Thrive Zones for  
our youngest residents

Full report

[https://utveckling.skane.se/siteassets/publikationer\\_dokument/tema\\_pm\\_final\\_web\\_lowres.pdf](https://utveckling.skane.se/siteassets/publikationer_dokument/tema_pm_final_web_lowres.pdf)

**Gehl**





# Planera för människor

Social hållbarhet kopplat  
till fysisk planering

TemaPM  
September 2016

Gehl



**Workshop 1**  
Lomma  
4:e februari 2016  
Tema socialt hållbara  
**Offentliga rum &  
tillgänglighet**



**Workshop 2**  
Ängelholm  
11:e mars 2016  
Tema socialt hållbara  
**Funktioner &  
generatorer**



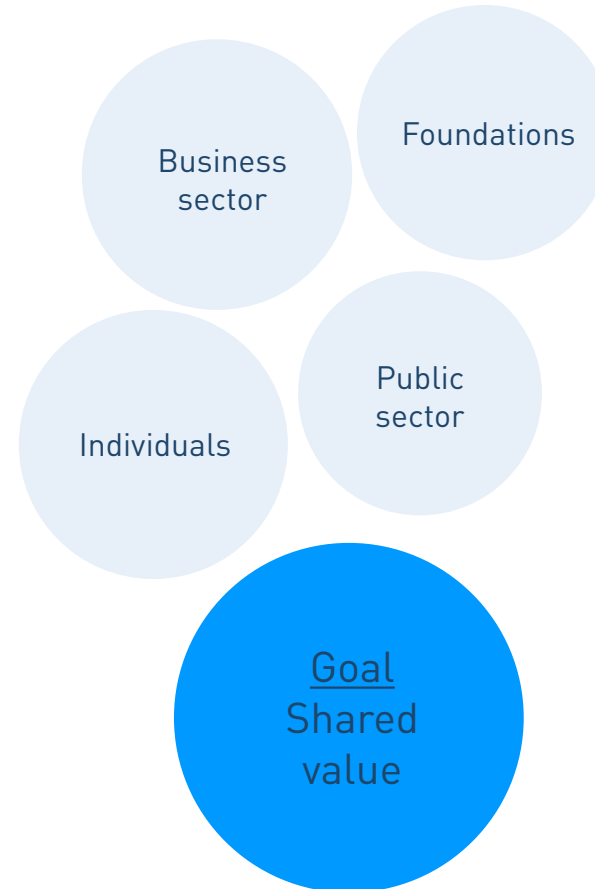
**Workshopserie**  
om social hållbarhet  
kopplat till fysisk  
planering

**Workshop 3**  
Hör  
21:a april 2016  
Tema socialt hållbar  
**Samverkan**

Traditional role  
**Reactive**



Facilitating role  
**Proactive**



1

## Livsmiljöer som underlättar samspel och möten

- Människors sociala behov
- Tillit och trygghet
- Vardaglivets mötesplatser
- Gemenskaper



2

## Förbindelser och rörelsefrihet för alla

- Bryta barriärer - koppla samman
- Tillgänglighet och rörelsefrihet
- Invitera och integrera
- Det demokratiska gaturummet



3

## Allas lika rätt till ett väl fungerande vardagsliv

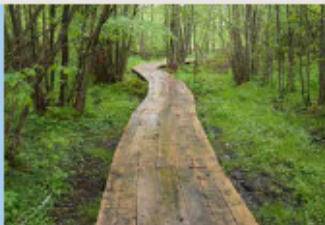
- Den blandade staden
- Goda uppväxtmiljöer
- Att bo och arbeta
- Service och vardagsfunktioner



4

## Fritidsliv som stärker gemenskap och hälsa

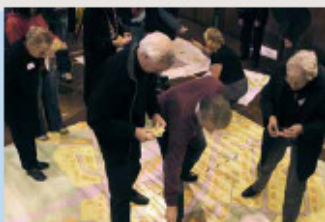
- Det grönas sociala betydelse
- Föreningslivet
- Sport och fritid
- Kultur och bibliotek



5

## Allas rätt till delaktighet i samhället

- Förankring
- Känsla av delaktighet och ägarskap
- Medskapande
- Dialog 2.0 - att involvera och lära



## Stöd till utveckling av social konsekvensbeskrivning (SKB)

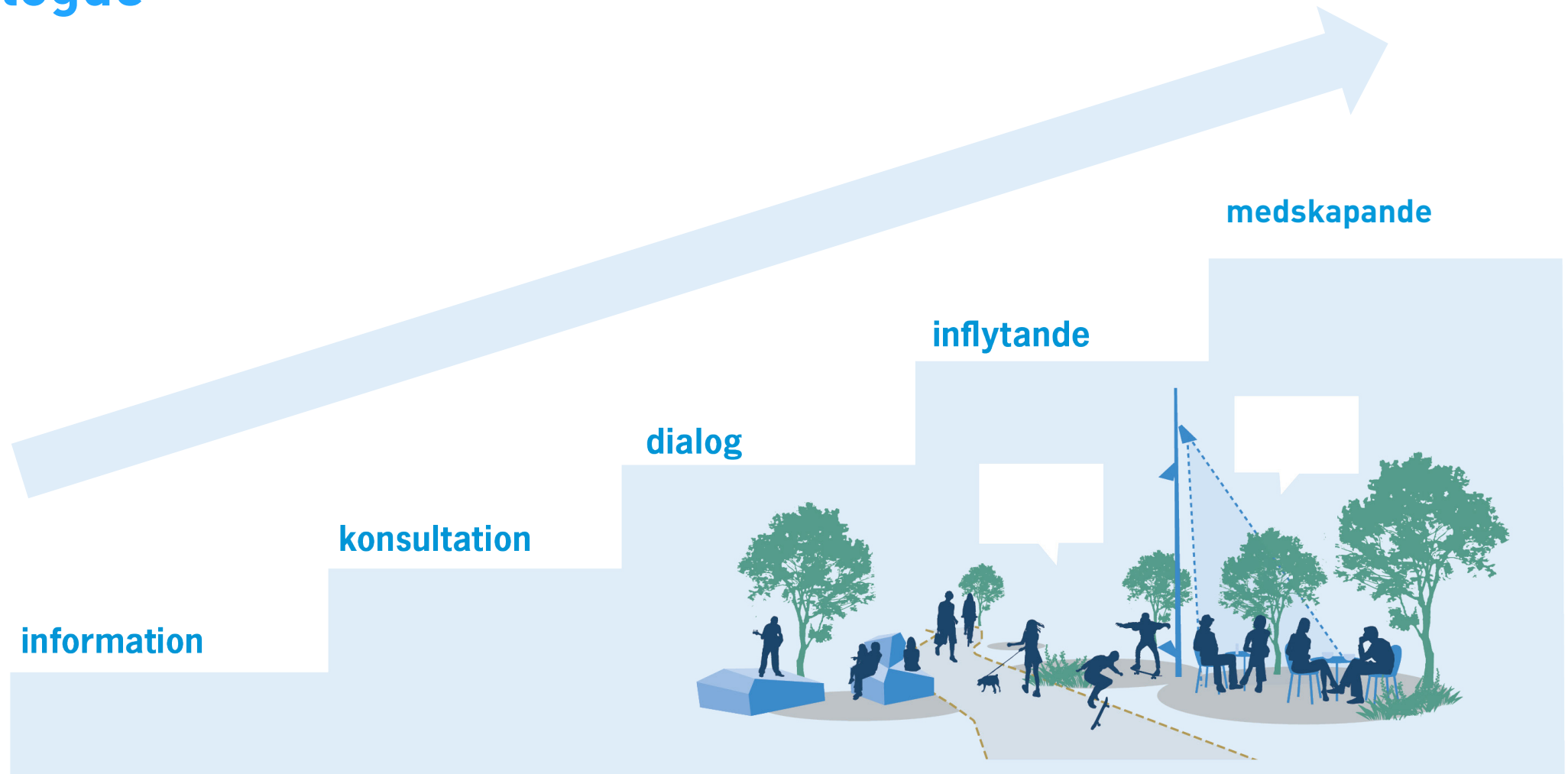
“ Det viktigaste med en SKB är processen! Både processen för att ta fram själva redskapet, och processen att göra själva SKB bedömningen

*Citat av Marianne Dock, Programarkitekt, Stadsbyggnadskontoret, Malmö stad*

	1. Sociala aspekter	2. Valda folkhälsomål eller andra kommunala, regionala eller projektrelaterade mål	3. Ansvar
Samspel och möten			
Rörelsefrihet			
Vardagsliv			
Fritidsliv			
Delaktighet			

Bedömningen görs genom hela processen i dialog med en bred grupp med representanter från olika discipliner, perspektiv och förvaltningar

# Step up on the ladder of dialogue





**15.000  
participants  
provided  
feedback**

**73%  
run in to the  
festival by  
chance**

