

**A dissertation submitted to the Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy of
Central European University in part fulfilment of the**

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

**CONTESTED SUSTAINABILITY AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS OF
GREEN CITY MAKING**

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May, 2016

Budapest

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION submitted by:

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Rather than understanding the city's role in and connection to global economic and ecological systems, green city policies are often dominated by technology and energy efficiency measures in general, and carbon control in particular. Targets and best practices are devised accordingly and in this way, cities are often reified and their borders re-conceptualized, producing a new discourse with political expectations for citizens to base their lives around green city goals. My research demonstrates a growing rift between 'green' and 'sustainable' where the emphasis on narrowly defined environmental initiatives creates a detachment from the balanced approach often sought after under the sustainability paradigm. To explore alternative ideas and move away from this dominant approach, I ask: *How do community groups contest green city policies; and, what are the implications of these contestations for sustainable lifestyles in particular, and sustainability in general?*

This dissertation investigates Copenhagen (DK) and Vancouver (CA) as internationally recognized green cities, through the right to the city, the politics of scale and urban neoliberal contestations to understand the contestations around sustainability and sustainable lifestyles, as a counter to the dominant techno-managerial approach. In response to a lack of empirical evidence on how 'sustainable lifestyles' is defined in practice, I focus on how 'sustainable lifestyles' is conceptualized in green city discourse by the City and sustainability-oriented community groups. I show how ideas of sustainability get sedimented,

translated, and (re)produced in accordance with measurement models to attain ‘greenest’ and ‘carbon neutral’ city titles. Along with policy documents, I analyze material collected from ethnographic field research as data. My findings are presented based on the following interrelated themes: (1) the ‘win-win’ framing of Copenhagen and Vancouver’s green action plans; (2) the associated imagining of green city subjects and the different conceptualizations of sustainable lifestyles; (3) translations of situated sustainabilities with examples from land and waste policies; and (4) the paradox of eco-gentrification shown through alternative food initiatives and their prefigurative politics.

My findings contribute to conceptual debates regarding sustainable lifestyles, where I question its appropriateness as sustainability vocabulary given that in practice sustainable lifestyles was often expressed as exclusive, privileged, individualistic and resonated with the dominant technological approach. These empirical examples and findings are important given the popularity and mobility of ‘green’ and ‘carbon neutral’ policies. I claim that there is now ‘too much green’ where negative socio-economic outcomes of environmental improvements are a strong possibility. I call for a continued critique of ‘win-win’ scenarios and close attention to confluences such as green and sustainable and with this, we should move forward with careful attention to the different articulations of sustainability in an unequal world.

Keywords:

sustainability, green cities, contestations, sustainable lifestyles, critical urban theory, political ecology, Copenhagen, Vancouver, Christiania, environmental politics, urban sustainability, eco-gentrification, politics of scale

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List of Abbreviations

AFI	Alternative food initiative
BROKE	Burnaby Residents Opposed to Kinder Morgan Expansion
CAD	Canadian dollar
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
CPH 2025	Copenhagen 2025 Climate Plan
CRIR	Christiania Researcher in Residence
CSA	Community supported agriculture
DKK	Danish <i>krone</i>
DTES	Downtown Eastside
EU	European Union
GCAP	Greenest City Action Plan
GHG	Greenhouse gas
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
KBHFF	<i>Københavns Fødevarerefællesskab</i>
LA21	Local Agenda 21
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SFU	Simon Fraser University
UN	United Nations

Introduction

[The municipality of Copenhagen] makes these ‘one-fits-all’ plans... They don’t consider that it might be that the project was wrong from the beginning, because the analysis is wrong that you can make a campaign that fits all people who live in different socio-economic structures. [Edvard interview, Miljopunkt Nørrebro]

Edvard’s frustration that the City makes and imposes ‘one-fits-all’ plans is important to the study of green city policies. Becoming ‘green’, conventionally associated with material environmental improvements, is an increasingly popular goal for local governments; however, Edvard’s statement raises sustainability-oriented questions, such as: who is the green city for? This statement also alludes to the underlying assumptions that are taken “from the beginning” in policy-making; the assumption that I challenge in this dissertation is the conflation between green (environmental improvements) and sustainable. This particular conflation obscures concern for social and economic inequality and hinders our understanding of how urbanization is tied to an exploitative neoliberal economic system. Deconstructing this conflation then opens up the possibility that green city policies could be *unsustainable*. Whitehead (2003) describes the politically neutral characterization of environmental policies and the treatment of green cities as an object – as “veneer” – and thus, I seek to examine the tensions that may exist underneath this veneer.

In this dissertation I show that Copenhagen (DK) and Vancouver’s (CA) green city policies represent one shade of green that do not necessarily benefit their entire socio-economically diverse population. I document and analyze community contestations over green city policies, shedding light on the many shades of green, at a time when technology and energy efficiency dominate approaches to environmental policy.

In the previous several decades, urban policy makers have been charged with a top-down post-industrial clean up in order to minimize the pollution associated with the function and expansion of cities. In accordance with a dominant (energy) efficiency logic (Princen 2005), green city policies often track targets and carbon emissions where ‘win-win’ scenarios and ‘best practices’ are shared with other cities. While energy efficiency has been a popular approach to achieving environmental goals, I follow scholars within the critical urban, ecological economics, and eco-socialist spectrum who problematize the heavy reliance on this idea (Foster *et al.* 2010, Harvey 2012, Jackson 2009, Princen 2005). While conventionally accepted as a solution to environmental changes detrimental to human life, energy efficiency is critiqued because it does not correspond with systemic or individual change:

Advocating (energy) efficiency is popular because it is easy to do. It involves no political risks, it sets no limits. It implies no value judgment. Everyone can go on and do the same as before, but now equipped with energy saving technology. With no one objecting, efficiency is sure to become a new cultural paradigm. But it will never inspire. (Rotor 2014)¹

As indicated, this technological approach may appear as apolitical. However, the institutions set up around implementing energy efficiency measures in cities have cultural ramifications and place boundaries around what is possible, even for everyday citizens (in sometimes uneven ways as I will show). The problem, as Krueger and Savage’s (2007) Boston case study highlights, is the narrow focus of green city policies and the displacements associated with environmental amenities (eco-gentrification), where the authors assert that “in terms of policy, however, sustainable development remains ultimately about environmental improvements and challenges, not issues of social justice *per se*” (216). Green city policy ‘solutions’ are then rendered as simply ‘band-aids’ or ‘fixes’, or specifically an “urban

¹ Presented at the Danish Architecture Center’s exhibition *Kan Det Bære? [Will It Sustain?]*; Copenhagen, April 2014; written by Brussels based architecture collective Rotor, who partly curated the exhibition.

sustainability fix” (While *et al.* 2004) that incorporate only environmental measures such as energy efficiency, that are suitable within a pro-economic growth system.

A host of concepts and buzzwords relate to green city policies, such as but not limited to: green cities, sustainable cities, smart cities, eco-cities, sustainability, sustainable (urban) development, and (urban) environmental sustainability. Many of these terms have become conflated with one another or used interchangeably, for example green and sustainable cities. In this dissertation ‘green city policy’ refers to recent municipal level policies that specifically center on the environment in cities, as reflected in the term’s conventional use, thus green city policies are one form of environmental policy. I then use ‘sustainability’ as commonly understood as the broader pursuit of balancing several ‘pillars’: social, economic and environmental. This separation is done to avoid conflating green with sustainable. While the terms ‘city’ and ‘urban’ are interrelated, I refer to the city as it is associated with a “present and immediate reality, a practico-material and architectural fact”, where Lefebvre notes that the “the city is a *mediation* among mediations”; and the urban is a process or “fabric” that influences the planet (not only cities) in material and non-material ways (Lefebvre 1996, 101-103).

Climate change² mitigation and adaptation measures have also been incorporated with green city policies and are viewed in a particular way, as a human caused, dire problem in need of fixing or control. Climate change is often portrayed as a threat, creating particular local concerns, for example sea level rise for coastal cities, and general global concerns.

² In the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s 5th Assessment Report (2014) climate change is defined as “a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings such as modulations of the solar cycles, volcanic eruptions and persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use” (20).

Sustainability, as a normative paradigm, often refers to present and future systemic solutions, to create a fair and just world that integrates social, economic and environmental concerns. This dissertation offers a critical reflection on the increasingly popular and ambiguous notion of sustainability; I explore this as a socially constructed and contested concept. Sustainability remains a vast and ambiguous approach and undertaking, thus to focus on the problem of conflating green with sustainable, I refer to Campbell's 'simple triangular model' discussed in his 1996 article, "Green Cities, Growing Cities, Just Cities?". He shows different pathways for the corresponding environmental, economic or socially just city, where overlaps, trade-offs and contestations are possible and the centerpiece of the triangle is the elusive balance or 'sustainable development.' I am not concerned with finding solutions in the sustainable development centerpiece, instead I focus on the difference between green and the centerpiece; after all chasing the centerpiece "may be too far away and holistic to be operational" (301). Campbell (1996) posits that the three triangle points may at times be competing and at others complementary, where "planners will find their vision of a sustainable city developed best at the conclusion of contested negotiations over land use, transportation, housing and economic development policies, not as the premise for beginning the effort" (304).

Research on green city policies often lacks social enquiry (Whitehead 2003; see also Bulkeley and Betsill 2005; Healey 2002). To counter the dominant techno-managerial method that permeates discussions and discourses of green cities, I focus on the conceptualizations of sustainable lifestyles, as this is often understood as a relatively radical effort for individuals to live more sustainably. Sustainable lifestyles research to date (Barr *et al.* 2011; Evans and Abrahamse 2009; Hobson 2006) demonstrates that there is a need for empirical insight into how 'sustainable lifestyles' is defined in practice, and not necessarily

by individuals, but within the context of societal change. My research attends to this gap by (1) demonstrating how sustainable lifestyles is defined in Copenhagen and Vancouver as they represent vanguard green cities; and (2) analysing the City-community contestations that arise from implementing green action plans. In other words, I am not interested in counting carbon or what kind of environmental values an individual holds, rather I seek to make sense of sustainability, to see how it is given meaning in certain cases and the politics of who the green city is for.

With the growing popularity of green initiatives and as cities around the world attempt to emulate the best practices of Copenhagen and Vancouver, my findings are relatable to more than these two vanguard green cities. As the world faces ‘planetary urbanization’ (Brenner 2014) and cities continue to physically grow, my research has relevance for urban policy makers, planners and community activists. My main research question that guides this dissertation is the following: *how do community groups contest green city policies; and, what are the implications of these contestations for sustainable lifestyles in particular, and sustainability in general?*

To answer this research question, I focus on two sub-questions:

- How is sustainability framed in green action plans?
- How are sustainable lifestyles and sustainability conceptualized and contested in relation to green city policies?

By focusing on these questions, I seek to uncover the politics of making green cities, often portrayed as an apolitical, technical endeavor; thereby race, class, and demographics, as well as socio-spatial and temporal (past, present and future) aspects are active in examples throughout this dissertation. I do this through two qualitative case studies of internationally recognized green cities: Copenhagen and Vancouver. Both cities have green action plans in which they detail their pathway to become the “world’s first carbon neutral capital”

(Copenhagen: “CPH Climate 2025 Plan”) and the “greenest city in the world” (Vancouver: “Greenest City Action Plan”). Several interrelated concepts from critical urban theory and political ecology, including the right to the city, the politics of scale, and urban neoliberal contestations, form a theoretical viewpoint to (1) analyse the politics of ‘greening’ in Copenhagen and Vancouver; and (2) attend to a theoretical blindness between environmental and urban research in studies of green cities.

I look at how sustainability, as a discourse, is contested in relation to green city policies in Copenhagen and Vancouver. While a fuzzy and vague concept (van Dijk 1997), I take discourse to mean “the close study of language in use”, where “language is constitutive: it is the site where meanings are created and changed” (Taylor 2001, 5-6); and where language can be understood through text, talk and interactions (van Dijk 1997). Discourse has an interactive relationship with culture, institutions, and identities. There are endless possibilities for sustainability and societal organization in general; discourse then gives clues to how and why one way is chosen and prioritized. I am particularly concerned with “the study of culture and social relations”³ where Wetherell *et al.* (2001) ask “how has it [discourse] sedimented into certain formations and ways of making sense and why those and not some other forms?” (5).

I collected data through field research in Copenhagen and Vancouver, including semi-structured interviews and participant observation. I was involved with two groups in my field research to document these contestations. Firstly, I engaged with City planners and staff regarding their green action plans to understand the dominant City discourse on sustainability. Secondly, I was involved with community groups, some formed in cooperation with the City and others not; these groups focused on a range of activities like transport,

³ As opposed to for example discourse analysis related to the psychological study of the self, or how social actors coordinate their positions, or conversation analysis.

food/farming/gardening, public space and alternative economies. As part of seeking variety in the contestations, I also participated in efforts that are not typically ‘counted’ in green city discourse: I lived in Christiania, a quasi-anarchist eco-village in Copenhagen; and in Vancouver I took part in efforts to resist an oil pipeline proposal. The transcripts of my field notes and audio-recorded interviews, along with websites, news articles, and Facebook posts form the body of my data. In order to triangulate this data, I conducted document analysis, desktop research, and literature reviews. This data was then open coded using framing and thematic analysis (Boyatzis 1998).

In this dissertation, I show that even cycling lanes and urban gardens are not exempt from the exploitation of the political elite or volatile market forces (eco-gentrification). These green city policies reinforce a particular vision of a privileged (sustainable) lifestyle, showing a significant gap between theory and practice, thus my research contributes to the growing debates of the neoliberal co-optation of green efforts and will ultimately question whether sustainable lifestyles is an appropriate concept for sustainability given its use in practice in Copenhagen and Vancouver.

Dissertation Roadmap

The following is a brief outline of this dissertation. The first two chapters provide the theoretical and methodological arguments, giving close attention to the research gaps and questions. Chapter 1 explores the current approach and problems with green city policies, where I develop a framework to analyse the contestations to such policies. Chapter 2 presents my methodology based on several qualitative methods to ultimately grasp this discourse through a multi-sited urban ethnography including semi-structured interviewing and

participant observation, as well as document analysis and literature review. I present the case study selection criteria and within-case sampling criteria (explanations of which institutions I focused on). The case backgrounds that cover Copenhagen and Vancouver's urban and environmental context and recent histories are presented in chapter 3.

The subsequent four chapters are arranged according to analytical themes. Chapter 4 examines Copenhagen and Vancouver's green action plans where I show the dominant framing to be in accordance with a 'win-win' approach, which leads into a discussion on the politics of scale, measurements, and borders. These plans and their models assert specific imaginaries of how one should live sustainably, which is explored in chapter 5. Here I explain how sustainable lifestyles is conceptualized, and how this connects to class privilege and geographic location (suburban versus urban) in Copenhagen and Vancouver, and the associated politics of exclusion in order to achieve green city status. Chapter 6 turns to translating different ideas of sustainability related land and waste policies. This is done through four examples: community contestations to density (high rises) in Grandview-Woodland; Christiania's decision to sell their land through an agreement with the Danish government; Copenhagen's 'carbon neutral' waste to energy incineration based on disposal infrastructure; and Vancouver's 'zero waste culture' and the treatment of marginalized binners as 'environmental stewards'. Chapter 7 looks at the paradox of eco-gentrification from a community level perspective centered on alternative food initiatives, showing the neoliberal barriers and exploitations to prefiguring situated sustainabilities. Based upon these four analytical chapters, in chapter 8 I discuss theoretical and methodological considerations where I attend to the notion of green cities, merge empirical evidence of sustainable lifestyles with current theory, and the implications for eco-gentrification. In the conclusions section I synthesize the main findings and overall similarities and differences between the cases.

Chapter 1

A Critical Approach to Green City Policy

Introduction

This chapter serves to build a theoretical framework by fleshing out the key concerns and research gaps in relation to green city policies. In an effort to politicize green city policy and remove the veil of political neutrality (Whitehead 2003), I move forward with Mössner's (2015) position that green city policies and their global promotion "must be understood as a process of gaining political power to decide, to exclude, to construct hegemonies, and to create and maintain social inequalities" (2). By concentrating on community contestations to green city policies, I illuminate the variations of these contestations, showing how certain groups are left out of the green city making process. I further use the concept of 'sustainable lifestyles' to move away from the dominant techno-managerial approach to green city policies. This focuses on the process and politics, rather than 'testing' the explicit policy goals.

In the first section, I outline the problems of synergy and appropriateness between environmental policy and sustainability by discussing neoliberalism more broadly. I then connect this to cities and urbanization, give examples of common green city approaches, and provide relevant literature on eco-gentrification that clearly demonstrates the need for carefully deconstructing assumptions and conflation regarding sustainability in cities. In the second section, I outline the conceptual approach that I take to address these problems, by addressing research gaps on sustainable lifestyles and green cities with three interrelated concepts that lie at the intersection of critical urban theory and political ecology: the right to

the city, the politics of scale, and urban neoliberal contestations. The right to the city corresponds with the exclusionary processes of green city policies; the politics of scale corresponds with the displacement and re-conceptualization of borders via green city policies; and urban neoliberal contestations corresponds with the concern for analyzing the City-community tensions that result from implementing green city policies.

1.1 Neoliberalism, the Environment and Cities

I first explore the context into which green city policies are nested – neoliberalism and its connection to and consequences for the environment, especially concerning economic growth and consumer culture. I then connect this to the dominant approach to green city policies, how this results in a particular and problematic way of measuring the success of the green city. I conclude the section with a discussion on recent literature on eco-gentrification as this concept demonstrates how accepting green as sustainable may disguise relevant social and economic problems or unintended consequences.

1.1.1 Neoliberalism and the Environment

Crucial to understanding the context of sustainability and environmental policies is the global neoliberal economic system. The central concern is the market which is supposed to provide economic growth, employment, profits and spur technological innovation; neoliberalism is often categorized as anthropocentric given its primary concern for human ‘development’ with the utilization of natural resources to serve economic ends (Magdoff and Foster 2010). Market conditions that foster such economic growth include: privatization, deregulation, commodification, and competition. I take commodification to mean the “process where

qualitatively distinct things are rendered equivalent and saleable through the medium of money” (Castree 2003, 278). The normative application of measurements like gross domestic product (GDP) has conflated material economic growth (and these market conditions) with human happiness and societal well-being (Pérez and Esposito 2010; Jackson 2009; Princen 2005; Baudrillard 1998). Through this conflation, neoliberalism in practice can “impose market rule upon all aspects of social life” (Brenner and Theodore 2002, 352).

This economic growth priority has cultural implications and is often linked to consumerism/consumer culture. With capitalism’s need to expand and seek profits comes the need for society to perpetually consume products to sustain this system, creating a scenario for planned and perceived obsolescence - despite clearly resulting in environmental changes that are detrimental to sustaining human life (Magdoff and Foster 2010). In the 1950s, economist Victor Lebow made this statement about the ideal consumption-driven economy: “our enormously productive economy demands that we make consumption our way of life, that we convert the buying and use of goods into rituals, that we seek our spiritual satisfaction, our ego satisfaction in consumption... we need things consumed, burned up, worn out, replaced, and discarded at an ever increasing rate” (as quoted in Pérez and Esposito 2010, 89). Consumer culture⁴ then easily corresponds with a priority of economic growth which requires increasing consumption rates, where this growth is measured to determine human well-being, or in Lebow’s words, satisfaction.

There has been an upsurge in devising solutions to detrimental environmental changes caused by such a system of accelerating commodification of natural resources and material consumption. Arguably the most popular environmental policy approach today has been

⁴ There is a difference between consumer culture and consuming culture/cultural consumption. The latter refers to the act of consuming cultural artefacts; my research concentrates on the former (see discussion in section 1.3.1)

through the sustainable development paradigm. Publicized internationally from the United Nations' 1987 Brundtland Report, Dryzek (1997) describes it as “a discourse of and for global civil society” (131). An underlying assumption of sustainable development is the ‘triple bottom line’ where economic, social and environmental pillars all not only positively correlate, but also have a realizable synergy. While sustainable development may have radical notions in its roots, political action, responses and outcomes in the decades since have not demonstrated such societal change. For example, policy attention has focused on ecological modernization, where instead of setting survivalist limits, this model claims that economic growth and environmental protection can go hand-in-hand (Dryzek 1997). This approach especially portrays technological advances and energy efficiency as key solutions to detrimental environmental changes.⁵

Scholars across the environmental spectrum are wary of the reliance on technological fixes. Foster *et al.* (2010) claim that “an economic system devoted to profits, accumulation, and economic expansion without end will tend to use any efficiency gains or cost reductions to expand the overall scale of production” (9). As evidence the authors refer to the “Jevon’s paradox” where the 19th century British neoclassical economist William Jevons refuted the idea that energy efficiency would compensate for resource supply shortages. Conversely, he argued that efficiency improvements would *expand* the economy and have overall multiplier and indirect effects; thus efficiency gains do not necessarily decrease consumption levels, and can even ‘backfire’ as consumption increases (Foster *et al.* 2010).

One significant argument is derived from Jackson’s (2009) *Prosperity Without Growth*, which has become a central text to explore the delicate middle ground that attempts to avoid problems with “unstable degrowth”, an overall contraction of the economy, and

⁵ See Princen (2005) for a detailed history of how the logic of efficiency expanded through industrialization.

“unsustainable relentless growth.” He argues that changing social structures is necessary, and substantiation for the capabilities of ecological modernization and technological efficiency to do so is grossly absent. Another often cited counter argument is Schumacher’s (1973) *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, which calls for “Buddhist economics”, where sustainability comes from the “maximum of well-being with the minimum of consumption” (61). In this statement Schumacher shows how difficult it has been to contest economic growth:

Anything that is found to be an impediment to economic growth is a shameful thing, and if people cling to it, they are thought of as either saboteurs or fools. Call a thing immoral or ugly, soul-destroying or a degradation of man, a peril to peace of the world to the well-being of future generations; as long as you have not shown it to be ‘uneconomic’ you have not really questioned its right to exist, grow, and prosper. (44)

This statement shows one reason why many environmental ‘solutions’ remain within the neoliberal economic growth paradigm. The typical argument against the call for a systemic change to the neoliberal economic system is that if consumption is reduced, the economy, and thus jobs and humans and development will suffer dramatically. As consumption is a main part of the economic equation, this argument is not a surprise. The tying of economic growth and societal well-being creates a warning that if consumption decreases, then societal well-being will be negatively affected.

This neoliberal context and the debates on identifying environmental problems and solutions are important for analyzing green city policies, especially as urbanization and neoliberal economic growth have a socio-spatial connection, as the growth of the world’s cities correlates with economic growth that favors surpluses and profits (Harvey 2012). Understanding the goals of green city policies requires a contextual understanding of the city’s role in neoliberal political structures and competing priorities within cities. The

following subsection then discusses the role of the city and how green city policy outcomes are typically conflated with sustainability.

1.1.2 The Role of the City and Current Approaches to Green City Policy

Examined in one of Harvey's most influential articles, the role of cities was once described as 'neoliberal economic growth engines' in a shift from managerialism to entrepreneurial urban governance. Harvey (1989) maintained that urban governance is significantly "oriented to the provision of a 'good business climate' and to the construction of all sorts of lures to bring capital into town" (11). This orientation where cities economically compete (interurban competition) creates vulnerabilities for citizens in cities as their lives are influenced by global economic trends and crises. As industry left city centers and policies transitioned to entrepreneurialism, many cities later latched onto Florida's (2005) "creative city" principles, which claimed that cities would economically grow if they lure the "creative class" through a "good business climate."⁶ The creative class consists of those working in knowledge-based industries such as entrepreneurs and engineers and thus Florida (2005) has argued that cities should cater to these economically promising populations. At the same time, smart city tactics developed, which centered on technological and efficiency improvements, especially concerning transport, information systems and managing urban growth (Vanolo 2013).

Along with this economic role, cities have simultaneously faced political urgency to be environmentally conscious – both from a global perspective, for example their GHG emissions, and also regarding the local environment, for example pollution in cities and its sometimes uneven distribution among the population. The United Nations' Brundtland Report (1987) is credited with popularizing sustainable development in general as well as

⁶ For a critique of Florida's creative class concept see Peck (2005).

giving attention to the environment in cities, with the United Nations' Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992) and the Agenda 21 plan often referenced as historical point in promoting local action (Bulkeley and Betsill 2005).⁷ It has been typical for green city policies and research to then narrowly focus on environmental materialities, overshadowing or excluding the social and economic outcomes related to environmental policies (Healey 2002). By evaluating cities with narrowly defined indicators and footprints, as I detail below, debate is centered on the technical side, meaning that “critical questions concerning the political struggles which take place in defining what urban sustainability might entail have been neglected” (Bulkeley and Betsill 2005, 43).

The relationship between economic growth and environmental protection is sometimes described as a ‘trade-off’ (e.g. ‘jobs versus the environment’), where environmental regulation is framed as too costly (see Campbell 1996). However, some urban policy makers and planners have taken up a ‘win-win’ green growth agenda, realizing that creating a green city can be economically advantageous (Jonas *et al.* 2011). The compromise of neoliberal environmental governance has been conceptualized by While *et al.* (2004) as an “urban sustainability fix”: a “*selective incorporation*” (552, emphasis added) comprised of pressures *for* local environmental policy-making (the economic benefits from environmental improvements, participating in multi-level environmental governance agreements, and pressure from citizens and NGOs) and pressures *on* local environmental policy-making (interurban competition, budget restrictions, and resistance to environmental regulations from businesses). In later work, the same set of authors (Jonas *et al.* 2011) specify one way in which the selective incorporation of environmental and economic policies occurs, through what they call the ‘politics of carbon control’, which shows how carbon has become a

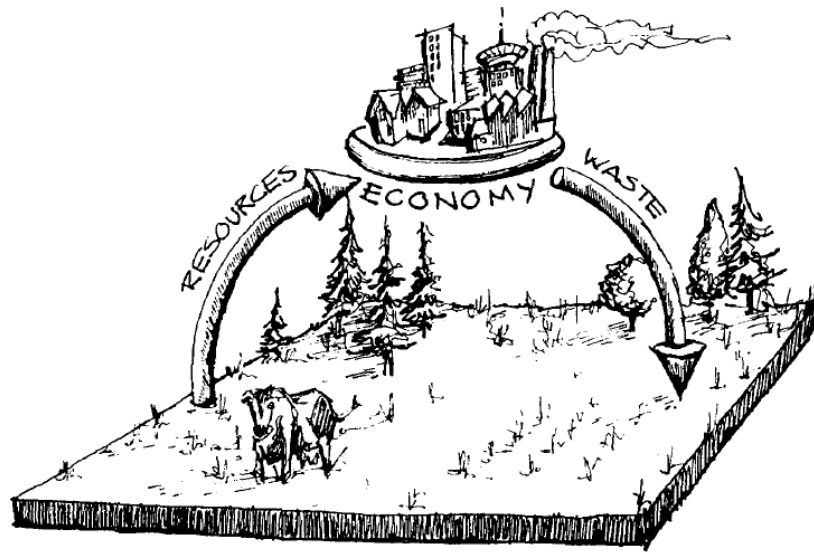
⁷ See Whitehead (2003) for a summary of international and EU sustainable urban development policies from 1972-1996.

principal focus in green city policies and discourses, where competition for the least carbon emissions stems from the logic of interurban competition. Similarly, Swyngedouw (2013) writes that CO₂ has been fetishized and commodified, where its ecological process has been reduced to an object “around which our environmental dreams, aspirations, contestations, as well as policies crystallize” (13). Thus, a common way to demonstrate sustainability in a city has been through calculating energy use and GHG emissions such as CO₂.

Newman (1999) considers sustainability in cities to be decreasing production and consumption “while simultaneously improving its livability, so that it can better fit within the capacities of the local, regional and global ecosystems” (as quoted in van Kamp *et al.* 2003, 7). Yet this attempt to synchronize livability and ecosystems is difficult within a neoliberal system as I explained above. A specific example of a popular ecosystem oriented approach is Rees and Wackernagel’s (1996) *ecological footprint* model (see Figure 1 for their illustration).⁸ In their study published in 1996, they found that Vancouver drew upon a bioproductive land area 200 times the city’s size to sustain its population. While they seek to avoid reifying the city with this measurement, they admit to the ecological footprint’s limits as a static model and one that often produces an underestimation, and further “it ignores many other factors at the heart of sustainability. It is certainly true that the ecological footprint does not tell the entire sustainability story - indeed, any single index can be misleading (consider the problems with GDP!)” (Rees and Wackernagel 1996, 231).

⁸ The ecological footprint model “estimates the quantity of any resource or ecological service used by a defined population or economy at a given level of technology. The sum of such calculations for all significant categories of consumption would provide a conservative area-based estimate of the natural capital requirements for that population or economy” (Rees and Wackernagel 1996, 227).

Figure 1. *The City's Ecological Footprint* (Rees and Wackernagel 1996, 228)



Aside from such models, there has been a rise in generic solutions and urban practices portrayed as universal rules⁹, as seen in Kenworthy's (2006) ten key steps to creating an 'eco-city', where he aligns with creative city tactics and advocates for technology with an emphasis on transport planning. He places all of the following into the final step: "all decision-making is sustainability-based, integrating social, economic, environmental and cultural considerations as well as compact, transit-oriented urban form principles. Such decision-making processes are democratic, inclusive, empowering and engendering of hope" (82). Here, I side with Whitehead (2003), amongst others, who make a clear criticism regarding this type of top-down urban development focus, as it does not account for the capitalist process; rather the city is foremost treated as simply a physical, measurable object. The connection between cities and economic growth, as well as selective 'fixes' for sustainability raise questions for how we understand, measure and model green cities.

⁹ See also Florida's creative class as mentioned above.

1.1.3 Eco-Gentrification

“While cities can boast about green space preservation, restored waterfronts and even new low carbon mass transit, are these developments truly sustainable?”
(Krueger and Savage 2007, 221)

Krueger and Savage (2007) raise an important question about the seemingly ignored difference between green city policy and sustainability. In this section, I describe the problem that arises from the conventional approaches to green city policies outlined above, by reviewing key literature on eco-gentrification (also referred to as ecological, environmental or green gentrification) and relate this to the current policy trend of ‘greening’ cities. Eco-gentrification demonstrates how accepting a place or space as sustainable through technomanagerial green measurements like carbon control may disguise relevant social and economic problems or unintended consequences.

“Building by building, block by block” – gentrification can be a slow and subtle process, and conventionally has not been framed as a problem; indeed, gentrification has often been celebrated because of the associated economic growth and new opportunities to garner investments (Logan and Molotch 1987, 115). Dooling (2009) devised the term eco-gentrification from her study of how the ‘environmental rationality and ethic’ used for improving green space for housed residents in Seattle displaced and excluded the homeless – findings that contest the notion that green city policies are beneficial for all residents. Eco-gentrification as a phenomenon is not entirely new, but is specific to the increase of green city projects, as it “describes the convergence of urban redevelopment, ecologically-minded initiatives and environmental justice activism in an era of advanced capitalism” (Checker 2011, 212).

Checker (2011) found that eco-gentrification is especially sensitive to the prioritization of economic growth over social justice concerns. That is, the City and developers coopt and commodify the efforts of local residents to improve their surroundings (by either ‘cleaning up’ or adding ecological benefits) as this attracts more affluent residents who often seek a trendy green lifestyle. Checker’s ethnographic case study of Harlem’s environmental justice history shows that while the City proposed a new park¹⁰, locals contested this given their experience with increased property values and displacement from improvements in the area. The community’s priorities, as displayed through their opposition, show the contrast between the City’s priorities, which “emphasized metrics, outcomes and evaluation-mechanisms of technocratic governance” (222). Similarly, Quastel (2009) documented eco-gentrification in Vancouver, when real estate developers promoted a community garden on their vacant lot under the guise of a pro-environmental agenda, while admitting it was good for advertising and to discourage homeless squatters. These examples stress that green city policies may involve trade-offs or paradoxes, which ultimately challenge ‘win-win’ scenarios.

While there are benefits from environmental improvements in cities, such as public parks, Wolch *et al.* (2014) cite how environmental justice oriented attempts to rectify the unequal access (racial/income) to green space may lead to what the authors term as an ‘urban green space paradox.’ When environmental improvements leads to higher property values, “such housing cost escalation can potentially lead to gentrification: the displacement and/or exclusion of the very residents the green space was meant to benefit” (235). In order to carefully deal with this issue, Wolch *et al.* (2014) discuss Curran and Hamilton’s ‘just green enough’, where efforts to combat this include “small scale and scattered sites” as well as

¹⁰ As part of PlaNYC 2030 - Bloomberg’s green action plan with goals to lower carbon emissions.

involving the local community, anti-gentrification and affordable housing policies (241). Checker (2011) then raises an important question regarding who will be empowered from such an improvement, for who is it sustainable?

To move away from the techno-managerial approach to green city policies, I focus on the concept of sustainable lifestyles and concentrate on how it is defined in practice in green cities. This is important to ‘unmask’ the politics of green city making and to reveal the contestations to green city policies. The current political context where green city policies are selected for their fit with lowering carbon or ecological footprints and economic opportunities has a significant influence on urban institutions and infrastructure that shapes everyday life for the world’s growing urban population. Within this context lies a governance shift that pressures the local state to foster the “behavioural changes needed to make significant progress in terms of challenging unsustainable lifestyles” (While *et al.* 2004, 566). Harvey (2012) alludes to this as he writes that urbanization has “brought with it incredible transformations in lifestyles. Quality of urban life has become a commodity for those with money, as has the city itself in a world where consumerism, tourism, cultural and knowledge-based industries, as well as perpetual resort to the economy of the spectacle, have become major aspects of urban political economy” (14).

1.2 Sustainable Lifestyles

It is clear that the need to understand the relationship between green city policy and sustainability requires further empirical scrutiny. This section first analyzes relevant research gaps on conceptualizing sustainable lifestyles, and second, the different influences and perspectives of sustainable lifestyles. I find that examining the ‘external driver’ for

sustainable lifestyles represents a research gap, and use this to explore the contestations over sustainability through a critical approach that I detail in section 1.3.

1.2.1 Conceptualizing Sustainable Lifestyles

As stated earlier, neoliberalism is deeply connected to consumerist lifestyles. Pérez and Esposito (2010) explain this “hyper-materialistic mode of life” in terms of a global addiction that “associates personal success, happiness, and well-being with the purchasing of material possessions” (88).¹¹ Sustainable lifestyles on the other hand does not seem to have such a recognized definition. There have been many attempts to define sustainable lifestyles, some reflective of a sustainable development discourse more than others. I do not discuss all of them here, but provide several examples to show a key difference I find relevant for a move away from the techno-managerial approach.

In a conventional, sustainable development inspired manner, Scott (2009) defines sustainable lifestyles as “patterns of action and consumption, used by people to affiliate and differentiate themselves from others, which: meet basic needs, provide a better quality of life, minimize the use of natural resources and emissions of waste and pollutants over the lifecycle, and do not jeopardize the needs of future generations” (1). This definition has environmental sustainability as a goal and concentrates on consumption and emissions, where individuals differentiate themselves through their engagement in a variety of pro-environmental behaviors.

¹¹ For example of the cycle of planned and perceived obsolescence and the amount of waste and increased space needed to sustain such a lifestyle, see a popular blog post on the “40 bags in 40 days Challenge.” Participants should ‘declutter’ their homes by throwing out or donating 40 bags of unwanted clothes, toys, products, etc., in 40 days (Heasley 2014).

Definitions of lifestyles and culture can assist in clarifying the vague term of sustainable lifestyles. To Giddens, lifestyles can be understood as “the assemblage of social practices that represent a particular way of life and give substance to an individual’s ongoing narrative, self-identity and self-actualisation”, which are “made up of relatively consistent and coherent bundles of social practices” (as quoted in Evans and Abrahamse 2009, 489, 491). Gilbert (2008) argues for a cultural perspective to address detrimental environmental changes, asking “what kind of culture would make a sustainable society possible?” (564) He critically addresses environmental changes and consumer culture, and to do this asserts that “at its most basic, the term ‘consumption’ has to designate any activity which involves or depends (however indirectly) on the destructive exploitation of natural resources” (553). Thus lifestyles are viewed primarily from an individual’s perspective; and high material consumption, instead of being tied to well-being through economic growth, can be seen as problematic for sustainability via detrimental environmental changes.

Sustainable consumption is gaining popularity as a solution to detrimental environmental changes, and while an overlap between sustainable consumption and lifestyles can be argued, separating these terms is important for my research to highlight the difference between “greening” products and broader changes in lifestyles that may seek to challenge the neoliberal economic system. The International Institute for Environment and Development (1998) conservatively defines sustainable consumption as “the economic activity of choosing, using, and disposing of goods and services and how this can be changed to bring social and environmental benefit” (as quoted in Jackson 2006, 5). This definition maintains an economic viewpoint with an objective to alter or green what we consume, not how or why, rendering this method ineffective on its own. Sustainable consumption still relies on energy efficiency, which has already been shown as problematic. Zizek (2010) critiques this approach by

claiming that “in the very consumerist act you buy your redemption for being only a consumerist.” For example, green cars are promoted as sustainable (consumption), yet the entire materials economy is neglected as well as public health and social problems connected to private vehicle use. This is not to claim that sustainable consumption efforts are not beneficial or necessary; this point is to emphasize efforts (connected with sustainable lifestyles) that are often left out of hegemonic energy efficiency ‘solutions’; as the sustainable lifestyles approach emphasizes changing the way people live.

An emerging weakness for the neoliberal growth argument according to Soper (2008) is “the dependency of globalized capitalism on the continued preparedness of its consumers to remain forever unsated, and forever nonchalant about the consequences of consumerism both socially and ecologically” (570). The opportunity to challenge consumer culture to her is an *alternative hedonist* approach: an appealing image of the ‘good life’ that is not centered on consumerism, where consumerism is rather viewed as a hindrance towards the ‘good life.’ Thus not only should a sustainable lifestyle have a moral element of justice, but also a self-interested motivation (i.e. ethics *and* aesthetics). Soper criticizes the idea that the concept of sustainable lifestyles is a persuasion to return to a ‘caveman’ life. However, some radical views of sustainable lifestyles do include ‘downshifting’, ‘simple living,’ and ‘voluntary simplicity,’ where individuals and communities purposefully and drastically reduce their consumption to lessen their ecological footprint and view this as a way to simultaneously improve their well-being (Jackson 2009). For example, they may seek to engage in the following: limit fossil fuel use, especially through travel methods; live in smaller spaces/‘tiny houses’, eco-villages or commune style housing; limit their non-essential consumption; and/or grow their own food.

Hobson (2006) developed a definition of sustainable living¹² where the environment is one element of sustainability as a context (rather than a goal) and concentrates on relationships (rather than individuals or emissions), stating it is “no longer just about consuming products but about how social and environmental resources of common good(s), spaces, networks, future and relationships need to foster respect for each other and in turn, for the environment”; the environment being both the common view of ‘nature’ and the “environment of lived spaces and daily experiences” (312-313). I find this concept, along with Soper’s, to be the most fruitful in that they attempt to create a scenario less concerned with energy efficiency and consumption, and more with relationships and social issues. This is important in my effort to analyze the conflation between green and sustainable. Using their ideas of sustainable lifestyles¹³ as working references, the following section narrows the concept further by focusing on what is called the external driver.

1.2.2 Internal and External Drivers

Two categories of interrelated influences for sustainable lifestyles exist: internal (social-psychological) and external (societal and institutional contexts) (Scott 2009; Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002). Scott explains, “the internalist perspective assumes that the goods and services we consume play a symbolic role in our lives,” with consumption as a communication tool; the externalist perspective concentrates on “fiscal and regulatory incentives, institutional constraints, social perspectives and infrastructures” (17). This distinction is one way to think about different sets of overlapping and interrelated drivers for

¹² I use ‘sustainable living’ here only to reflect Hobson’s specific use of the term. Elsewhere, I will continue to use the term ‘sustainable lifestyles.’

¹³ My research concentrates on the concept of sustainable lifestyles and not lifestyles movements found in social movement studies.

sustainable lifestyles. Often missing from current research is how sustainable lifestyles is defined in practice, especially from an ‘external’ driver perspective, which I connect with the analysis of green city policies.

Several scholars who have conducted research on sustainable lifestyles from the internal perspective had findings that point to the need for and research on the external driver. Evans and Abrahamse (2009) found that almost all of the participants in their case study spoke about their experience as making a change, as a progression (one change led to more), and had a global perspective.¹⁴ The participants had a desire for societal change, asserting that their efforts needed to be “complemented by ‘top down’ initiatives” (499). Barr *et al.* (2011)¹⁵, Evans and Abrahamse (2009) and Hobson’s (2006)¹⁶ case studies show that the citizen-consumer notion, where the sole responsibility for consumption is placed on the individual, is limited. There are several lingering limitations with the results of studies using the internal approach, such as the value-action gap (Kollmus and Agyeman 2002).

Isenhour’s (2011) case study is related to the approach that I take, in that she emphasized the Swedish political context and focused on conceptions of sustainable lifestyles of those living in cities. She found that urbanites often connect sustainability with technology and efficiency, where sustainability is seen as a top-down issue. Although I do not find it necessary to subscribe to ‘urban alienation’ (that cities and thus their inhabitants are alienated from ‘nature’) as she does, I found her most important point to be the implications from such a technocratic conceptualization. Isenhour writes that this may “risk an exclusion of alternative perspectives and the loss of democratic control over sustainability discourse and policy” especially in the way that citizens can participate (118). This is similar to Vanolo’s

¹⁴ A purposive sample using in-depth interviews with 25 respondents in South East England.

¹⁵ The authors used a mixed methods approach (quantitative, focus group and in-depth interviews) in South West England using data from two studies.

¹⁶ Her data was collected through at home interviews with 44 participants involved with the Action at Home program, as well as focus group interviews, in England.

(2013) ‘smartmentality’ argument that this technification may act to discipline and delude citizens rather than provide possibilities for alternative solutions: “there is little room for the technologically illiterate, the poor and, in general, those who are marginalised from the smart city discourse; moreover, citizens are considered responsible for their own ability to adapt to these on-going changes” (11).

Given these issues and the illuminated research gaps and practical limitations¹⁷, I investigate the external driver, and in the following section I detail how this relates to green city policy. As most sustainable lifestyles research concentrates on individuals and the internal drivers, my research provides a perspective on the manner in which green city policies envision and promote sustainable lifestyles, and the contestations that arise in relation to green city policy.

1.3 Key Concepts to Analyze Contestations to Green City Policy

In this section I identify concepts to approach the green city policy context outlined in section 1.1 and the external driver of sustainable lifestyles outlined in section 1.2. One fruitful manner to orient the critique of the top-down creation of green cities is the intersection of critical urban theory and political ecology with their primary concern for social justice goals and critiquing dominant ideology. This intersection is important in addressing the theoretical urban blindness of some environmental research in cities and works to build a critique of urban neoliberalism. Upon briefly explaining the roots of these theories, I bring together three concepts within this intersection and how I use them to analyze contestations to green city policies. The *right to the city* corresponds with the exclusionary processes of green city

¹⁷ I do not have a background in psychology or consumer behavior, which would be necessary to carry out research on the internal drivers; and further, this would create a study too vast to undertake.

policies; the *politics of scale* corresponds with the displacement and re-conceptualization of borders via green city policies; and *urban neoliberal contestations* corresponds with City-community tensions that result from implementing green city policies. To focus urban neoliberal contestations on the ‘shades of green’ in practice, I nuance this concept through an emphasis on prefiguration and hybrid autonomy.

Critical urban theory has roots in critical social theory, the Frankfurt school and Marxism, and maintains an underlying assertion that a more democratic and socially just urbanization is achievable. Contemporary critical urban theorists such as David Harvey, Peter Marcuse and Neil Brenner derive their critique of power and ideology in cities from the work of 20th century French Marxist Henri Lefebvre. Asserting the promise of critical urban theory to address sustainability concerns, Whitehead (2013) observes that “the city came to be understood within climate change research in the relative absence of urban theory” (1351).

Critical urban theory is set apart from ‘mainstream’ approaches in the urban social sciences, notably by its four mutually constitutive fundamentals: (1) it is “unapologetically” theoretical and remains on an abstract level (thus not expected to provide ‘how-to’ solutions); (2) it is reflexive and accepts contextual conditions; (3) it critiques instrumental reason; and (4) it emphasizes the gap between reality and the possible, for example, it often attempts to highlight the radical alternatives that are currently suppressed by the system (Brenner 2014).

Critical urban theory also has an important connection to political ecology, and the subfield of urban political ecology with similar Lefebvrian roots (Angelo and Wachsmuth 2015; Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003). Political ecology examines the complex relationship between the “forms of access and control over resources and their implications for environmental health and sustainable livelihoods” (Watts 2000, 257). As political ecology has been used typically to examine natural resource use, cities have been neglected in this

field (Watts 2000), until recent developments in urban political ecology. Power and injustice are important themes to both critical urban theory and urban political ecology, as those in power control the material environment of the city and the discourse on what is ‘urban’ and ‘sustainable.’

Right to the City

Lefebvre’s (2003) *le droit à la ville* (right to the city) is often utilized as a key concept in critical urban theory. The right to the city is concerned with those who do not have the right to the city currently; this is a collective right, containing basic needs and a political right to construct the city. Lefebvre saw the need for “reappropriating urban space for collective social uses rather than for private profit” (Brenner 2000, 374).

For critical urban scholars such as Harvey (2012), Healey (2002) and Mitchell (2013), the right to the city includes an anti-capitalist struggle, reclaiming public space, and participatory processes involving those who do not have the right to the city currently. In this regard, Healey (2002) argues for increased citizen participation that forms “meanings for the ‘city’ which make a contribution to creating and sustaining an imaginative, shared collective resource, which is richer and more inclusive,” essentially giving citizens the political right to imagine their city (1778). Healey (2002) asks “who does the city belong to and who has the power to shape its trajectory?” (1779). To her, approaches should account for the cultural and socio-economic complexity of a city beyond its built environment. The right to the city is an important concept to grasp exclusion associated with green city policies, such as eco-gentrification. This further makes it important to analyze the conflation between green and sustainable.

Politics of Scale

A theoretical issue to address as part of green city policy research and one that has gained increasing attention is the *politics of scale*. Scale has played a role in environmental policy approaches, for example, with sustainable development – to ‘think globally and act locally,’ projects a certain understanding of how scales interact and the types of borders that lie between them. Political and economic geographers assert that scales are interdependent and constructed (Swyngedouw and Heynen 2003), where “scale is both fluid and fixed, and scale is a fundamentally relational concept” (Born and Purcell 2006, 197; see also Neumann 2009; Brenner 2000). To qualify the fluid and fixed aspect, scale is fluid as it evolves and is not permanent; and fixed as scale can be a part of hegemonic structures. Brenner (2000) views scale as a site that is both produced and interpreted: “thus conceived, the urban scale is not a pre-given or fixed platform for social relations, but a socially constituted, politically contested and historically variable dimension of those relations” (367). Scale clearly plays a role in typical measurements of the green city as Rees and Wackernagel’s ecological footprint demonstrates, where scale is a variable to quantify the city’s bio-physical use of the hinterlands (see section 1.1.2).

In the context of green cities, scale can also be prescribed qualities that are assumed inherent. The local scale can be portrayed as pure, just or sustainable, Born and Purcell (2006) deem this *a priori* preference as the “local trap.” They provide examples that counter common arguments for local food: environmental welfare, social and economic justice, and health. A lesson from this argument is that a particular scale, such as the city, should not be treated as a goal, but a method to achieve a goal, accepting that other scale options (aside from the local) may also be more appropriate to achieve a goal. Born and Purcell argue that this changes the perspective for policies; planners can ask who will be empowered by such a

scalar strategy. For my research, the local trap raises an important point concerning how sustainability in cities is understood and measured.

Urban Neoliberal Contestations

Urban neoliberal contestations provides insight to the many discourses of sustainability in cities. Leitner *et al.* (2007) describe the notion of neoliberal contestations as a “vast variety of imaginaries and practices of all political hues that not only practice resistance but also are resilient to and rework neoliberalism” (5). My research will give attention to green city policies, and their socio-spatial ideas and practices, which are conceptualized as locally and historically rooted, thus overall varied in their form, networks, and outcomes. Rather than centering on how neoliberalism is performed in cities, the urban neoliberal contestations concept allows for a deeper understanding of these contestations and places them at the fore.

Contestations may arise in any or a combination of four types of trajectories. These initiatives may be *engaged*, by cooperating (sometimes leading to cooptation) with “neoliberal corporate and institutional power”; display *opposition* (“local collective action”); *produce alternative knowledge* by “disseminating alternative interpretations, facts, and arguments”; and/or create “spaces within which alternative practices can be pursued in their own right and on their own terms” using “nonmarket forms of organization” through *disengagement* (Leitner *et al.* 2007, 320-322). I use this concept then to concentrate on alternative, local and situated iterations of sustainability.

Important to the application of the three concepts outlined in this section, I find Coppola and Vanolo’s (2015) carefully defined ‘hybrid’ or ‘fractured’ characterization of contestations to be important. The authors explain their assumption where “autonomy is always fractured, partial, open and ongoing and thus always in relation to the prevailing

social and economic structures in the society at large” (1153). In other words, it is difficult to entirely escape the context in which the contestations occur – thus contestations and government policies should not be taken as binaries, rather as entangled and often involving compromises.

To further grasp these hybrid contestations, I find prefigurative politics, or prefiguration useful in applying this framework. The concept of prefigurative politics focuses on a group’s practices and alternative visions, rather than prioritizing a particular scale. First coined by Carl Boggs, prefigurative politics is a term from social movement and anarchist theories, to describe a group’s method of “acting as if” or living accordingly to their future envisioned society, where the means become the end (Foden 2012). In Mason’s (2014) article on ‘Becoming Citizen Green’ he pulls together ideas of sustainable lifestyles with a primary concern for participation in justice movements as a way of prefiguration. Detailing this prefiguration requires close attention to group norms, meanings and ideas; it provides a lens to understand how citizens are contesting urban neoliberalism in Copenhagen and Vancouver. What is most revealing for the varying ideas of sustainability is not only the prefiguration itself, but the limitations to “acting as if” – given the hybrid nature of contestations. This is the point where decisions are made about what to prioritize in sustainability efforts. Those involved with prefigurative politics seek to simultaneously delegitimize the current status quo while providing a group with autonomy to resolve a particular concern (Foden 2012). These acts are marked by experimentation with new structural forms and ideas, as well as with decisions by deliberation. In this way prefiguration bypasses techno-fixes like green consumption and provides a conceptual link with the right to the city, as both concepts are concerned with the ‘here and now’.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I put forth an approach to engage with green city policy, where I use concepts in critical urban theory and political ecology. The right to the city, the politics of scale and urban neoliberal contestations are important concepts to unmask the politics of green city making. I use the four trajectories of contestations to understand community priorities in relation to sustainability, while the right to the city helps to focus on social justice and systemic problems such as eco-gentrification. The politics of scale is also important as ‘local’ has been increasingly conflated with sustainable and appearing in green city contexts. As the focus on green city policies has been on environmental materialities, this is often conflated with sustainability. Through this conflation, negative social and economic consequences of environmental improvements are ignored, especially considering that environmental policies are often viewed as politically neutral. On one hand there is a policy representation of a futuristic, techno-oriented cleansed green city under a globalized and totalizing ecological modernization approach, and on the other a political struggle where citizens reclaim city spaces that adjust to micro-local socio-spatial changes. The examples in this dissertation are somewhere in between this dichotomy, with varying shades of contradictions, displacements, hybridity – in critical urban terms – an uneven geography of green city policies.

The following Table 1 reviews the research gaps analyzed in this chapter, and responds with my research approach, the methods corresponding to this will be explained in the following chapter. This approach and methods are most suitable to explore the main research question: *how do community groups contest green city policies; and, what are the implications of these contestations for sustainable lifestyles in particular, and sustainability in general?*

Table 1. Responding to the Research Gaps

Research Gaps	My Approach
(1) Sustainable lifestyles requires empirical work to understand what this means in practice from an ‘external driver’ perspective	Empirically investigate the conceptualization of sustainable lifestyles to provide new insight
(2) Approaches to and research on green city policies often reify the city and narrowly focus on environmental materialities, thus overlooking or excluding social and economic concerns	Conduct qualitative analysis of green city policies through the right to the city, the politics of scale, and urban neoliberal contestations
(3) Green city policy outcomes are often conflated with sustainability	Empirically document contestations to green city policies to shed light on the different approaches to sustainability

The following chapter explains the chosen methods to collect and analyze data, and how they relate to the research gaps and will help to answer the research questions, using this framework as a theoretical lens.

Chapter 2

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter explains the research design and argues for its appropriateness – how and why qualitative methods are most suitable to answer the research questions. A thematic and frame analysis of the data allows for an in-depth understanding of urban neoliberal contestations and the external driver of sustainable lifestyles. My approach utilizes critical and interpretive analysis, accepting socially constructed meanings and realities. Through a mix of qualitative methods and a strong use of ethnography, I explored in-depth perspectives, nuances and particularities that are sometimes foreclosed by positivistic approaches to the study of cities. The ethnography employed is best described as multi-sited and urban. By multi-sited I refer to the use of several sites, several methods, and theoretical interdisciplinarity (Falzon 2009). By urban, I refer to giving preference to “the importance of the city, its political economy, inequalities, cultures, and conditions of size, density, and diversity in the lives of their participants” (Ocejo 2013, 4).

I begin with the case selection criteria and purposeful selection of two green cities: Copenhagen (DK) and Vancouver (CA). Then I discuss how I collected data through field research methods including participant observation and semi-structured interviewing, where I also detail the sampling procedure within the cases. From data collection, I explain how the data was examined through thematic and frame analysis. I then address the limits and scope

conditions of my theoretical and methodological framework. In the final section, I present my field research experience to give the reader insight to my situated perspective.

2.1 Case Study

The intent of this case study research is to gain an in-depth understanding of the various constructions of sustainability, and in particular, sustainable lifestyles. According to Johansson (2003) a case should be “a complex functioning unit, be investigated in its natural context with a multitude of methods, and be contemporary” (2). Before explaining the multiple methods I enlist to derive data from a “natural context”, I explain the case selection process and the theoretical and practical selection criteria.

The sample size is two cases given the in-depth research design. I purposefully chose two cases, not to explicitly compare them to find ‘best’ practices, but to demonstrate the plurality and situatedness of sustainability approaches. While at times in this dissertation there will be references between cases, this is done with the goal to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic at hand. The cases are tools to understand how current global trends play out locally; Candeia (2009) describes his case study as “not an object to be explained, but a contingent window into complexity” (37). This shows in the analytical design of this dissertation, with a focus on themes and frames, rather than presenting the Copenhagen and Vancouver findings separately as case based chapters.

2.1.1 Case Selection

I derived three selection criteria from the theoretical framework and research question: the city must (1) indicate signs of the political will to be a green city and receive international

recognition for such; (2) be located in the ‘developed’ world; and (3) have ‘bottom up’ community groups that contest neoliberalism (I discuss each point below). The key practical constraint for selection was language - information needed to be available in English. Based on these criteria and on the practical constraints, I narrowed down a short list of cities. I found the competitive angle that both Copenhagen and Vancouver were taking (‘greenest in the world’ rather than simply green like other top cities in Germany for instance) made them intriguing cases.¹⁸ Further, my experience researching on sustainable cities in 2011 with the European Cyclists’ Federation gave me an NGO perspective of popular cities often cited as ‘best practice.’ Mayor Gregor Robertson was excited to host our Velocity Conference in Vancouver, and I was quickly familiarized with the Copenhagen rhetoric linked to urban designers Jan Gehl (Gehl Architects) and Mikael Colville-Andersen (Copenhagenize and Cycle Chic). These two cities are internationally popular for their urban planning practices, coined as Copenhagenize and Vancouverism (see sections 3.1.2 and 3.2.2 for elaboration). Danes are typically very proficient in English, which was another practical reason to choose Copenhagen from other European cities. As “extreme” cases (Flyvbjerg 2006), I chose Copenhagen and Vancouver as they strive to become green.¹⁹

Criterion 1: Political Will and International Recognition

Local political will and international recognition for such was needed to find cities that are conventionally accepted as ‘green.’ Both cities have action plans with goals to be the “world’s first carbon neutral capital by 2025” (Copenhagen) and “greenest city in the world by 2020” (Vancouver). They both have received international attention for these plans and for previous sustainability efforts. For example, the German technology company Siemens, in

¹⁸ This is not an explicit race or one that directly incites a rivalry between the two cities. In chapter 4 I will further explain how this is framed as a ‘friendly and cooperative’ race.

¹⁹ Holden and Larsen (2015) also describe Vancouver as a “mature” case given the City’s history of involvement with urban sustainability.

cooperation with the Economist Intelligence Unit, produces “Green City Index” (GCI) Reports. They used 31 qualitative and quantitative indicators in nine categories such as CO₂ emissions, land use, air, and environmental governance. Copenhagen and Vancouver have topped the most recent rankings as Table 2 shows.

Table 2. Copenhagen and Vancouver International Rankings

Report Title	Author	Year	Copenhagen (Rank)	Vancouver (Rank)
Healthiest Cities	CNN	2014	1	4
US/Canada GCI	Siemens	2012	X	2
EU Green GCI	Siemens	2012	1	X
Best City to Live In	Economist Intelligence Unit	2012	X	3
Quality of Living	Mercer	2010	9	5
Best Infrastructure	Mercer	2010	4	9

This criterion is important as it indicates that these cities have been engaged with sustainability efforts over time. These cities have not only been recognized for their green city policies, but also have a general reputation for quality of life and infrastructure. Both cities are members of ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) and have hosted international forums related to sustainability. Copenhagen is famous for hosting COP 15, the UNFCCC climate change conference in 2009, a meeting known for its dramatic effects on sustainable development discourse and display of environmental justice activism (Mason 2013). Vancouver held the first UN Habitat conference in 1976 and the World Urban Forum 3 in 2006. The City of Vancouver has also been at the forefront of developing social sustainability policy (see Holden 2012b).

Criterion 2: Developed World

I chose cities in the traditional category of ‘developed’ for two reasons. The first was to ensure an ease in understanding their ways of life and gaining in-depth cultural insight given

that I have lived in cities in Europe and the US, thus I did not choose a ‘developing’ city given the possibility of being treated as more of an outsider.²⁰ The second reason is that most cities revered for their sustainability are typically in ‘developed’ countries (Robinson 2006). Copenhagen and Vancouver easily fit into this criterion.

Criterion 3: Neoliberal Contestations

Finally, I needed to find cities where urban neoliberal contestations could be explored from the ‘bottom-up.’ Upon a preliminary analysis, I found that both Copenhagen and Vancouver had initiatives and groups devoted to reducing consumption, alternative ownerships, and overall changing the way people live their everyday life. Both cities have recognized alternative initiatives, such as Christiania (Thorn *et al.* 2011; Hellstrom 2006) and the Ungdomshuset (Jakobsen 2009) in Copenhagen; and NGOs such as Greenpeace and the David Suzuki Foundation (Alper 1997) and alternative schools like Groundswell in Vancouver. These efforts show diversity in approaches to sustainability, which was the intentional point of departure.

2.1.2 Within-case Sampling

The within-case sampling procedure followed several interrelated steps to determine who to talk to and what to participate in while in the field. There were two key categories of groups that I was involved with to understand green city policy contestations: municipal staff, councilors, planners, and consultants working on the green action plans, and community groups that focused on sustainability that had a range of engagement with the City. To locate these groups, I first conducted desktop research to gain an understanding of what policies and

²⁰ The use of this term ‘developing’ is based on conventional definitions, I follow Kristin Koptiuch (2009), amongst others, in understanding ‘developing’ or ‘third world’ as concepts rather than cartographic divisions.

initiatives were active and focused on sustainable lifestyles in the case cities. During this preliminary review, I examined web sites, policy documents, Facebook pages, and news articles. I looked for already established community groups relevant to the sustainable lifestyles concept outlined in section 1.3; I did not include those focusing on technology and energy efficiency. I involved a range of actors from researchers, activists and those working with the city (particularly with their sustainability efforts), as well as a range of projects from food to transport to sharing spaces. Along with the empirical review for sampling prior to the field research, I conducted an extensive literature review of relevant studies in each city – some of which will be presented in the following case background chapter, and some will be presented with specific issues in subsequent chapters. I familiarized myself with news and documentaries on Copenhagen and Vancouver.

Concerning policy document sampling, I focused on the green action plans: Copenhagen's "CPH 2025 Climate Plan" and "Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan", which will be discussed at length in chapter 4 along with the accompanying climate change adaptation strategies (see Table 3). I also incorporated "The Greener and Better Everyday Life Plan", as it represents the citizen engagement and sustainable lifestyles part of Copenhagen's green action plan; and in Vancouver, I concentrated on two specific goal areas in their green action plan: zero waste and the lighter footprint. Related policy documents were also utilized, such as neighborhood plans, implementation updates, and cycling and food related policies, as well as City websites. These plans provide both general background on the policies and data to analyze and answer the research questions.

Table 3. Key Policy Document List

Title	Date	Author
Greener and Better Everyday Life Plan: Local Agenda 21 Plan for Copenhagen 2012-2015	2013	Technical & Environmental Administration
Copenhagen 2025 Climate Plan	2012	Technical & Environmental Administration
Vancouver Climate Adaptation Strategy	2012	City of Vancouver Adaptation Team
Copenhagen Climate Adaptation Plan	2011	Technical & Environmental Administration
Vancouver 2020: A Bright Green Future. An action plan for becoming the world's greenest city	2010	Greenest City Action Team

I conducted three months of field research in each city due to time and budget constraints. I lived in Copenhagen from March through May 2014, and then in Vancouver from the end of August through November 2014. I scheduled a three-month break in between visits, where I reviewed the Copenhagen data and prepared for the Vancouver case. In Copenhagen some City and community meetings were held in Danish, thus I relied more so on semi-structured interviewing (22 semi-structured recorded interviews, with 25 participants); and in Vancouver, I attended more meetings and conducted fewer semi-structured recorded interviews (14). In Copenhagen, I attended 40 separate events, meetings, site visits, demonstrations, and exhibitions – and informally interviewed many participants at these gatherings; in Vancouver, I attended 56. Annex 1 contains a complete list of the interviews and events with corresponding groups, and for explanations on each group's stance and website see Annex 2 (Copenhagen) and Annex 3 (Vancouver).

I preselected some community groups for their stance and for their different involvement with the City, for example: cycling organizations (the Danish Cycling

Federation, Vancouver's HUB); consultancies (Gehl Architects, Copenhagenize) and public space organizations (Vancouver Public Spaces Network); food and gardening oriented projects (DYRK rooftop gardening, the Environmental Youth Alliance, City Farmer); sharing oriented projects (the Sharing Project, Sharing Backyards); 'radical' environmental groups given their system change stance/abstinence from City politics (Flydendeby, Mythological Quarter, Vancouver Ecosocialist Group). For both cases, I spent a disproportionate amount of time with one particular activist group in each city: Christiania²¹ in Copenhagen and Burnaby Residents Against Kinder Morgan Expansion (BROKE) in Vancouver. I chose Christiania in particular because of its history as a site of climate justice activism (Mason 2013), its 'fit' with a right to the city approach (Hansen 2011), and I saw that it represented city space developed from the 'bottom'. The following Table 4 is a list of the most prominent groups I refer to in this dissertation.

Table 4. List of Community Groups

Name, City	Chapter Mentioned	Focus
BROKE (Burnaby Residents Against Kinder Morgan), Vancouver	4	Grassroots group that resisted an oil pipeline proposal
Christiania, Copenhagen	5, 6	Squatted 'eco-village', anti-land privatization
Miljopunkt Norrebro, Copenhagen	5, 6	Environmental NGO (neighborhood scale), focused on 3 areas: recycling and waste management; green infrastructure; and traffic.
Our Community Our Plan (OCOP), Vancouver	6	Against community plan to increase density
Streets for Everyone, Vancouver	6	Developed an alternative community plan for better street design
Byhaven 2200, Copenhagen	7	Community garden
KBHFF, Copenhagen	7	Community supported agriculture scheme
Sole Food Farms, Vancouver	7	Social enterprise, urban farming
City Beet, Vancouver	7	Lawn to garden conversion community supported agriculture scheme

²¹ Not all residents would identify as 'activists', and thus I met with individuals who were associated with the Cultural Committee (who organized the Climate Bottom meeting during COP 15), the Gardner Gruppe, Morgensteden, and the Christiania branch of the KBHFF.

I learned of some community groups only during my field research, where many participants pointed me in their direction, like the Københavns Fødevarefællesskab (KBHFF) a large Copenhagen based CSA, and Sole Food Farms, a DTES social enterprise. Thus I attempted to follow not only what was interesting and preselected for my research, but also what locals found to be sustainable and what was the center of sustainability contestations (for example the question of housing density in Vancouver). My field research was exploratory in that I devised the schedule mostly as I went, following different leads and current events.

It was not possible to be involved with all sustainability groups due to time and budget restraints, nor was it preferable given my research approach. Those that concentrated on techno-fixes or efficiency, like developing space for electric cars, were most easily excluded. I did not primarily concentrate on businesses and the media, although I did manage to speak to a select few in each case and visited local cultural museums including the Museum of Copenhagen, the Danish Architecture Center and the Museum of Vancouver.²²

2.2 Data Collection Methods

My involvement varied slightly between the City and community groups that I have outlined above, and this variance reflects the (formal/informal) nature of each group. For example, my data from the City relied more on semi-structured interviews and document analysis because there are many policy documents and fewer opportunities for participant observation given my specific research interest. For groups like Christiania and BROKE I did not conduct any semi-structured recorded interviews rather I participated autoethnographically (Mason 2014)

²² At the time of my visit these museums had exhibitions on the history of these cities as well as sustainability topics.

and relied on my field notes and informal interviews. In this section, I detail my data collection approach with stances on ethnography, participant observation, and interviewing.

The main components of ethnography consist of: a naturalistic setting, as opposed to experimental; holistic by examining dynamic relationships and context; and reflexive by a constant engagement between findings and theories, rather than theory testing (Bray 2008). Ethnography is often carried out through field research where participant observation has been the essential data gathering method (while not generally accepted as a stand-alone method). Participant observation provides “direct experiential and observational access to the insiders’ world of meaning” (Jorgensen 1989, 15).

There were many possibilities regarding my role as a researcher, from observer to participant and from outsider to insider, the most fitting was observer-as-participant, although I adapted depending on the particular situation at hand. With three months in Copenhagen and Vancouver and given that I was in neither case a local, acting as/acquiring the status of an insider was not a realistic option. As an observer-as-participant I was able to evaluate my personal experience, which according to Jorgensen (1989) is an “extremely valuable source of information” (93). While in the field I read local news and joined Facebook groups of some of the selected initiatives. I also used photographic documentation to aid memory, I took hundreds of pictures, uploading and commenting on them on my laptop, a small selection of which will provide illustrations for readers in further chapters.

The outcome of participant observation is descriptive field notes that contain ‘objective’ details such as “dates, times, places, statuses, roles and activities of key people; and major activities and events”, notes of the mundane and ordinary, as well as my “feelings, hunches, and impressions” (Jorgensen 1989, 96, 100). Participant observation entails informal interviewing, where during these meetings and events I had short, unstructured

interviews with other participants. These were conducted sometimes, for example, while riding bicycles or cooking or making seed bombs. Thus with such events I was only able to write field notes afterwards. Each night I transcribed all of my hand-written field notes into a single document on my laptop.

Participant observation is a personal means of data collection that serves to test assumptions. Fernandez (2009) explains the value of his research experience at a World Trade Organization protest in Mexico:

I read the major theorists, the critiques of global capitalism, and understood the importance of direct action and autonomy. Yet, I understood these things as facts, as intellectual arguments, in the way that academics understand ideas much of the time. Now I was confronted with this reality face-to-face and it penetrated me in ways I had not expected... [these experiences] teach us many things, including our own subjectivity and mortality, and the limits of our understanding. And these experiences only come from *being there*... (94)

Participant observation can be closely linked to interviewing, as Tjora (2006) points out: “the interview provides leads for the researcher’s observations, while observations suggest probes for interviews. More generally, observation is valuable as an alternate source of data for enhancing cross-checking or triangulation against information gathered through other means” (430). This method then involves a back and forth, interrelated relationship with the different methods and with the overall framework and research questions. One tactic I used was to maintain an inventory of commonly used concepts as well as relevant current events, such as the Vancouver municipal elections, to probe respondents when interviewing. Thus while I followed stories that at first did not seem closely related to my research question, Jorgensen (1989) explains how the field methods require continuous analysis: begin with introductory observations (demographics, organizational structure, behaviors), then analyze any particularly interesting occurrences based on my research question, then refocus and continue the cycle.

Aside from participant observation and informal interviewing, I relied on purposive semi-structured interviewing with key actors during my field research. I found it to be a fruitful method for deriving in-depth information about the many approaches to sustainability in Copenhagen and Vancouver. This type of interview provides “an intimate understanding of people and their social worlds” (Hermanowicz 2002, 480). I emailed most participants for the initial contact and explained my affiliation, research project, and how and why they were selected. Upon confirming a meeting, I asked permission to use an audio recorder and offered a choice for their identity to remain confidential in my subsequent writings. During the dissertation writing process I decided to keep almost all participants anonymous by using a pseudonym, with the exception of a few popular participants (for example Vancouver City Councilor Andrea Reimer). When a participant is directly quoted in the following chapters, the pseudonym will appear with their affiliation; in order to distinguish between real names and pseudonyms, I use the full name for the real names, and only a first name for those who have been assigned pseudonyms.

The semi-structured interviews were usually 50-90 minutes and followed my department’s ethical guidelines. I typically met with participants in person, at their office or a café, and a few participants invited me to their homes. I designed an interview guide (see Annex 4) with open-ended questions, influenced by many sources: “the problem, a sense of breadth and density of the material we want to collect, a repertoire of understandings based on previous work, study, awareness of the literature, and experience in living, pilot research, a sense of what will give substance to eventual report” (Weiss 1994, 41). The questions were broken into sections by topic: beginning with introductory questions, then asking more difficult questions, and ending with neutral topics such as snowball questions and future plans for the group (Hermanowicz 2002). I began by asking about the initiative that they were

involved with, then perceptions of (1) Copenhagen or Vancouver as a green city and (2) sustainable lifestyles. To close with the snowball method, I asked “are there other sustainability initiatives or projects in Copenhagen/Vancouver that you would recommend I check out?” This gave insight to the participant’s perspective regarding who they are affiliated with or other projects and policies they found to be sustainable. I asked the same questions to all participants in both cases, unless I knew the participant had a time limit of less than 50 minutes, in which case I asked only a few key questions. While I concentrated on interviewing key actors with these local groups (often times the founder), I also talked to and informally interviewed newer members to obtain diverse perspectives.

Most semi-structured interviews were audio recorded and I transcribed the interviews as soon as possible. I transcribed my interviews during my field research to stay ‘close’ to the data and reflect upon it, this served as guidance and as a way to develop follow-up questions. I also took notes while interviewing and wrote a summary to accompany the transcript, especially noting the moments before and after the recording began. I conducted several follow-up interviews in each case with participants who I felt could provide insight to my initial findings. As the community groups were rather small and many participants were involved with several groups, I often met with participants at other events, which gave me the chance to have informal follow-ups. It also gave me credibility when I introduced myself and claimed that someone they knew recommended that I check out their project.

The final point regarding data collection is document analysis. Along with the policy documents outlined above, I actively collected relevant documents, text, and media produced by each community group. I relied on their websites, material they produced (such as fact sheets or blog posts), and their Facebook pages. For example, Christiania has produced relevant documents, such as their 1991 “Green Plan”, “The Christiania Guide”, and press

releases. In these documents, I was most interested in finding their goals, values, and how the initiative started and evolved, and specifically if there is involvement with the City or a stance on the City's green action plan.

2.3 Data Analysis: Themes and Frames

I analyzed my data using thematic and frame analysis after the field research. The theoretical framework outlined in chapter 1 guided the case selection and within-case sampling for my field research. The framework also guides the data analysis with thematic coding and frame analysis. I transcribed all field notes from participant observations and informal interviews, as well as audio-recorded semi-structured interviews. I coded this data with Atlas software and kept separate files for each case. Atlas helped to ensure that my coding process was systematic; I could view a list of all codes while reading transcripts. I wrote a description for each code with qualifications, exclusions and examples, with clear, "close to the data" labels (Boyatzis 1998, 31). Atlas also has an export function of collecting all quotations for a specific code, enabling me to see various aspects of each code.

Boyatzis (1998) describes three stages in thematic analysis: recognition ("seeing"), encoding ("seeing as"), and interpretation. My codes were developed in two main ways: theory driven (deductively) and data driven (inductively) (Boyatzis 1998). For example I focused on the concept of sustainable lifestyles, therefore I coded for this concept to analyze the themes within conversations about the theoretical topic. The data driven codes were developed or 'sensed' from persistent themes, such as the high frequency of issues like affordability and inequality – these issues were not within my original scope, but arose from the data organically. I drew up code 'families' to think through the relationships between codes and themes. A thematic analysis is not a close textual analysis of language; rather it

seeks to derive meaning and find patterns. For example, my goal was not to understand where the word ‘sustainability’ appears in talk and documents, but to understand the themes attached in its context.

One way to understand these themes is through a frame analysis. Verloo (2005) defines a frame as “an interpretation scheme that structures the meaning of reality,” and a policy frame as “an organizing principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful policy problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly enclosed” (19, 20). Verloo had influence from Bacchi (2000), who places problematization as the starting point of analysis, not problems themselves: “‘problems’ are ‘created’ or ‘given shape’ in the very policy proposals that are offered as ‘responses’” (48). Examining the top down perspective, Verloo (2005) reminds us that frames are difficult to contest, “technocratic framing often involves a depoliticizing of issues, presenting the problems involved as <<facts>>,” and that “there is a tendency to downplay the goal, to act <<as if we all know>> what the goal is, to act <<as if we all agree>>, what the goal is” (24, 16). This type of analysis is especially helpful in analyzing the framing of the green action plans to understand the City’s ‘shade of green.’

Frames display the values of particular groups and by prioritizing certain issues and from this we can also determine the issues that have been devalued (Yanow 2000). To Entman (1993), framing is about selection and salience, where frames have several locations: “the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture” (52). He highlights that the intended frame may differ from the interpreted frame, based on the experience and knowledge of the receiver, and if they are aware of alternatives. Coding and themes identify dimensions of such frames. With a framing analysis, we can see what is included and excluded, what limits are set, and question commonsensical claims. Frames help us to

identify voice (who is speaking and given responsibility or expert status), the problem and solution, priorities, temporal aspects, and underlying value assumptions (Verloo 2005).

“There is no way of perceiving and making sense of social reality except through a frame,” making frames a significant aspect of discourse to Schon and Rein (1994, 30).

Thematic and frame analysis gives in-depth insight to the overall discourse, in particular to the body of data that I collected through these qualitative methods. My aim is not to discover a particular truth or claim objectivity, rather “to offer an interpretation or version which is inevitably partial”; this interpretation is also “situated (i.e. specific to particular situations and periods rather than universally applicable) and relative (i.e. related to the researcher’s world view and value system)” (Taylor 2001, 11-12). The limits to this approach are discussed in the following section.

2.4 Limits and Scope Conditions

While this qualitative approach is most suitable to answer the research questions and to result in novel findings, there are several limitations. I first briefly address how my identity created limitations as a researcher, then move to issues of scale and depth, and conclude with a stance on triangulation as reliability.

As an American studying at a university in Hungary, my identity was often under question/confusing for a first impression during my field research in Denmark and Canada. I am certain this particularity, coupled with initial emails sent from my university email explaining my student role, caused many to see me as foremost a student, and as an outsider certainly in Copenhagen more so than in Vancouver. Denmark remains a rather homogenous society and my appearance is rather opposite of a typical tall, blonde Dane. My lack of

Danish language skills was limiting mostly in not being able to overhear conversations and fully and quickly grasp a small number of policy documents that were not translated into English. The benefit was that some participants took extra time to explain relevant cultural nuances and histories that would perhaps be taken for granted with insiders. Finally, one limitation that caused schedule changes was the weather, as some outdoor events were cancelled due to rain.

One critique and limitation of concentrating on the City and community groups concerns multiple levels of government. I could have justified site visits to Malmo or Surrey or even the Alberta tar sands as critical research on a green city – to show the neoliberal effects outside of political borders. To be clear, I do not disagree with multi-scalar work on urban or environmental topics. This decision was part practical, due to budgets and time constraints, and part methodological, due to my exploratory attempt to cast a wide sampling net in both cities. As sustainability research often looks at one sector (like transport, or even more specifically, public transport), or at one government level (like the municipality), my priority became to capture what is happening in these cities at different levels and sectors, at the expense of what is happening outside the political borders, while admitting that what is happening outside such borders influences the city. “Which is it: urbanization or the city?” Angelo and Wachsmuth (2015) ask; they offer an urban political ecology critique of “methodological cityism”, defined as “an analytical privileging, isolation and perhaps naturalization of the city in studies of urban processes where the non-city may also be significant” (20). However, the authors do note that “sometimes a city lens is methodologically appropriate. For example, research on urban social movements and community activism – an important focus of the environmental-justice wing of urban political ecology - is often rightly contained within a single city” (20).

A second limitation regards ethnographic depth. With two case studies and practical (time and budget) constraints, I did not develop a ‘classic’ ethnography. Rather, I used the ethnographic methods in accordance with the theoretical framework in order to achieve the depth of many perspectives of a multi-sited ethnography. I could have spent one year with one group in one city, but again the goal was to examine the broader discourse and gain inside access to the different ways that sustainability is being defined in these cities that are conventionally considered to be the ‘greenest.’

The concern for ethnographic depth brings me to the final issue of validity and reliability, where positivists typically ask ‘but how do you *know*?’ This question relates to the epistemological assumptions within an interpretivist approach and the social sciences more generally. My aim is not to search for one ‘truth,’ to create or test a model for ‘greenness’, but to provide an in-depth exploration of its politics in Copenhagen and Vancouver. Given my selected participants of those already engaged in sustainability efforts in these cities, my findings should not be taken as representative of a general sample of the population. The strength of my research lies in understanding how the green city is contested through a qualitative approach that is attentive to local nuances and accepting of the complexity associated with sustainability. .

The most important aspect of validity with this project is the triangulation of sources and the diverse methods by which I gathered data. As outlined in this chapter, by using participant observation, informal interviewing, semi-structured interviewing, photographic documentation, and texts of policy documents, news articles, books, social media such as Facebook pages, websites, and in-depth literature reviews, I varied my sources, consistently asked the same questions and follow-up questions. My open-ended questions and exploratory

field research allowed me to stay open and flexible, two key qualities in collecting reliable data.

2.5 Field Research Perspectives

The following provides explanations of my perspectives during my field research in both cities; this, along with the backgrounds outlined in the following chapter, will allow the reader to gain an understanding of how I experienced these cities.

Copenhagen

I first lived in Christiania for one month as part of their Christiania Researcher in Residence project (CRIR; crir.net). Emmerik Warburg, a member of the CRIR committee and resident of Christiania since 1974, picked me up from the Christianshavn metro station in his cargo bike and we arrived at the CRIR house, located in the Mælkebøtten neighborhood. As Emmerik later explained, and what seemed to be the general norm, improvements to this house were incremental – i.e.: when enough money is saved, a shower or toilet or stove is added.²³ The house, originally a military storage area for grenades, is now a collection of second hand items with added character from the traces of past researchers and a small library of documents, books and movies about Christiania. I often introduced myself as a researcher with the CRIR program to Christianites, and my daily experience revolved around the micro-local happenings of Mælkebøtten, an area away from the busy Pusher Street, but not quite in the sparsely populated outskirts of Christiania.

From Christiania, I moved to Vesterbro for two months where my flat mate Henrik was a reflective sounding board for my understanding of Danish culture and Copenhagen

²³ Or as Mason (2013) writes: “for longer term residents the choice was theirs of whether to put their energies into draft-proofing or indoor sanitation (or to make music and revel in a little primitivism instead)” (22-23).

politics. I was told that Vesterbro had been so quickly gentrified that 10-15 years prior I could not have safely ventured into the “red light district” (see Larsen and Lund Hansen 2008). Today, the old meat packing industry has transformed into trendy cafes and bars. The local Greenlander bar and men’s shelter juxtapose with the dedicated walls for regulated graffiti that protect young families from viewing metro construction. Aside from Christiania and Vesterbro, I spent a significant amount of time in Nørrebro, an area known for its past and present activism (Jakobsen 2009). I traveled by bicycle for the majority of the time in Copenhagen.

I stayed connected to academia during my field research in several ways. Anders Lund Hansen, a member of the CRIR project and professor at Lund University, invited me to attend a ENTITLE conference for political ecology PhD students. For part of this conference, I helped to arrange a one day site visit to Christiania, where I gave a presentation in the *Byens Lys* (City Lights) cinema. I later took a several day PhD course on “Environmental History and Identity” at the University of Copenhagen, where I also gave a presentation on my research.

Vancouver

Like in Copenhagen, I spent a majority of my time in Vancouver in certain neighborhoods. I lived in two places in Vancouver: Strathcona for two weeks, and East Hastings for two and half months. My Craigslist apartment search gave me an idea of the housing situation: advertisements for basement dwellings (“subterranean living” - see Peck *et al.* 2014) and requirements for proof of eco-consciousness and drug abstinence. The house in Strathcona was close to MacLean Park, where during early mornings Asians practice Tai Chi, replaced by homeless men chatting on benches during the day. I lived with Brandon, a conservation

biologist who hosted a karaoke block party funded by the City to improve community bonding.

I then moved to the Urban Bike Geeks house, more of a name and underlying value than an actual functioning organization, where we composted, gardened, and shared all food, commune-style. My housemates here proved to be sounding boards as well: Jill from the UK had an outsider perspective, who spent time ‘wwoofing’ (with the organization World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) and learning how to bee keep in Western Canada. And Mark, a Haligonian studying philosophy at Simon Fraser University (SFU), who also has dreams of living in a shared rural house, experienced working at a tea tree farm, and during my stay helped to start an alternative venue for aspiring musicians. After living in apartments in Europe for many years, it felt strange to live in a city *and* in a house, with a yard, garden, fence, and laundry in the basement - attributes that felt more adapted to the suburbs.

I was a visiting researcher at SFU’s Urban Studies program, and had the opportunity to attend events and meet with professors and several master’s students who were also interested in sustainability in Vancouver. I had many meetings and research memo discussions with my external advisor Meg Holden, a professor in this department, who has insider and scholarly experience with sustainability in Vancouver, for example as an external advisor for the Lighter Footprint working group for the Greenest City Action Plan. On my final day in Vancouver, I was a panelist at the Critical Geography conference, a final moment to recap my experience and receive feedback from others.

Because of my location, my bus route, and many trips to SFU (downtown), I went through the Downtown Eastside (DTES) quite often (everyday/every other day). I saw and smelled bidders carrying giant bags of recyclables to the depot and I watched the informal economy of Pigeon Park. This routine experience surely influenced my view of sustainability

in Vancouver. With a student public transportation pass, I took the bus the majority of the time and only used a bicycle for nearby travel. Aside from these areas, I spent time in Grandview-Woodlands and Burnaby, a city directly east to Vancouver.

I was a member of BROKE (Burnaby Residents Opposed to Kinder Morgan Expansion), a group dedicated to stopping land survey work to build an oil pipeline that would require the physical expansion of the Burrard Inlet and triple the number of daily barrels of (dilbit) oil shipped on tankers. I witnessed and participated in several months of escalating resistance activities. From rallies, community meetings, Civil Liberties Association presentations about our rights to protest, the building of a camp on top of a borehole, to court trials, injunctions and arrests, I saw firsthand an opposing narrative of Vancouver's green city title.

These field research experiences and their chronological order made an impact on my daily life in these cities, exposing me to some issues more than others – this position reflects in my findings in the forthcoming chapters. Following my theoretical framework that focuses on community contestations to green city policies, I spent more time in certain neighborhoods that reflected this. In Copenhagen, I spent most of my time in Christiania and Nørrebro, while witnessing the “urban renewal” effects on Vesterbro where I lived. In Vancouver, my travel through the DTES, and time spent in Grandview-Woodland and Burnaby influenced what I did and did not “see”. I made decisions about where to allocate my time based on what was happening during the specific three months in each city. There are several examples in this dissertation from Christiania and the Downtown Eastside, perhaps because they are commonly viewed by non-residents as ‘abnormal’ (Hellstrom 2009; Masuda and Crabtree 2010), and thus one may expect discursive contestations to arise from such contexts. One of

the biggest differences regarding my identity during the field research was that in Vancouver I was connected to SFU, and in Copenhagen I had no such academic affiliations.

This chapter provided the reader with how I selected and researched the two case cities. In 2014, I spent three months in both Copenhagen and Vancouver where my participant observations and semi-structured interviews with actors from local groups already engaged in sustainability efforts gave insight to green city politics. My field notes and interview transcripts, along with documents and media, provided a large body of data that I systematically coded and analyzed. It is important to note that the findings in this dissertation are derived from small, purposive sampling; however, my findings do provide an important insight to general trends in sustainability and environmental policies. Further, given the mixed qualitative methods and variety of groups involved from two different cities, the backgrounds and analysis in this dissertation may appear ‘uneven’ at times, that is, some examples will be more ethnographic in nature or I may provide an example from only one city. Before I demonstrate my findings in the set of analytical chapters, I continue by providing a general background for both cases in the following chapter.

Chapter 3

Contextualizing the Cases

Introduction

This chapter presents recent histories of Copenhagen and Vancouver with a focus on past policies that have shaped their broad political culture, where I highlight specific occasions related to green city policies and sustainability efforts. In creating this context to introduce the cases, I draw from both academic literature and relevant policies. This chapter will not be exhaustive of Danish or Canadian history; rather it will synthesize relevant influences providing the necessary background while addressing city, regional and national levels of government and historical changes.

The first section covers Copenhagen's history of urban planning and the historical and still in use today 'five finger plan', cycling history and culture, and Christiania. I then detail the 'creative city' tactics and the international *Copenhagenize* tradition. In the second section I provide a similar assessment of Vancouver's history as a "young" colonial city with a simultaneous progressive environmental leadership. The city's recent creative tactics revolve around "mega projects and events" and a *Vancouverism* tradition. I give the creative city examples here to later show how this merges with their green action plans. In the final section I bring the two cases together by presenting their 'green public memories' – a synthesis of how Copenhagen and Vancouver became green as described to me in interviews.

3.1 Copenhagen

In this first section I describe Copenhagen's growth throughout the 1900s and the accompanying urban planning mechanisms, then specifically discuss transportation infrastructure planning and cycling. I then present Christiania's 1971 founding as a squat and the government's approach to their legitimacy.²⁴ In the second section, I give examples of Copenhagen's recent creative city policies and the popularity of "Copenhagenize."

3.1.1 Situating Denmark's Harbor City

At an international scale, Copenhagen can be seen in the Scandinavian welfare state context, an egalitarian model described by Jørgensen and Aarø (2008) as one "which strives to secure good living conditions for all citizens via re-distribution of wealth through social benefits and extensive housing schemes... [which] emphasizes the right of single individuals to obtain social security benefits, and the state has a strong role as provider of social services" (23). At the national level, like many developed economies, Denmark experienced a 'rollercoaster' in the last century. With the country's economic growth following World War II, citizens migrated from the rural areas to towns, and industry located in urban areas grew as well, according to Bruel (2012).

The government created urban planning and regulation acts through the 1930-40s to accommodate these changes. At the same time the Danish Town Planning Institute (a group of planners, including famous architect Steen Eiler Rasmussen) drafted a 'green plan', which

²⁴ I find it necessary to provide a specific background on Christiania in this chapter due to Christiania's unique relationship with the government (as compared to other neighborhoods in Copenhagen and Vancouver that I will discuss).

the government accepted in 1938 to be included with the “Act of Natural Preservation” (Bruel 2012). This evolved into the “1947 Finger Plan”, connecting the city of Copenhagen to the regions via five ‘fingers’, which still has influence today (see Figure 2). The goals of this plan included discouraging private vehicle use, providing more mobility opportunities, and “to create an integrated, high-density mix of existing urban areas in an environmentally correct manner” (Bruel 2012, 86).

Figure 2. The 1947 Finger Plan (Bruel 2012; Danish Town Planning Institute)



The middle class moved from the city to the suburbs (along the ‘fingers’) throughout the 1950s-1970s, while a tax reduction in private home ownership influenced housing

demographics in the following decades (Andersen and Ploger 2007). The region saw many changes during this time, as the government experimented with reforming administration, planning, and social security systems (Andersen *et al.* 2002). In 1970 a two-tier administrative system replaced a large number of municipalities, and a grant based system replaced that of reimbursement between state and municipality (Andersen and Ploger 2007). Economic growth contributed to middle class growth, suburbanization and the geographical expansion of the city, leading to higher car ownership and the desire for more roads. Copenhagen transformed from a compact city to a sprawling and diverse area that swelled the city borders (Andersen 1991). As the city grew, a need for more governance was answered in 1974 by establishing a metropolitan governing body - the Greater Copenhagen Council (GCC; Andersen *et al.* 2002).

Political and economic change in the 1980s influenced the role of Copenhagen. An integrated and ‘bottom-up’ urban policy that was “spatially and socially targeted and based on the active participation of residents and local actors” created cleavages with the state driven Scandinavian welfare model (Jørgensen and Aerø 2008, 25). Decentralization measures resulted in less national public funding for the city, leading to increased debt. The attitude towards cities shifted from negative (problem centered) to positive (redevelopment and opportunity centered). “Copenhagen was now to act as an engine for regional and national economic revitalization” as state-led entrepreneurial policies to engage with the welfarist context (Andersen 2001, 138). An often cited example is the plan to develop the Ørestad region to finance the construction of the metro system (the Ørestad Development Co-operation), which caused political controversy as the Ørestad region was to be an “internationally ‘exclusive’ district” (Andersen 2001, 141). In the context of a globalizing economy the conversation shifted to competition, as “modernization, learning, and adaptation

become focal issues at all levels, resulting in experimentation everywhere” (Kristensen *et al.* 2011, 94).

Urbanization and economic growth slowed and the GCC was closed in 1989. In the 1990s neoliberal housing policies increased privatization and the jobs began to grow in the creative sectors (Andersen and Winther 2010). Andersen and Winther (2010) claim that Copenhagen at this time was “characterized by job losses, loss of high-income families, high unemployment rates, an aging population, a rise in the number of students and low-income singles, high welfare costs and dated housing, as well as increasing segregation, polarization and poverty as a result of a long-term crisis” (695).

In the late 1990s, Copenhagen experienced economic ‘resurgence’, as the national government dealt with the debt through development projects and refinancing (Andersen and Winther 2010). Andersen and Winther (2010) refer to the period of 1995 to 2010 as Copenhagen’s “golden age” as the city became the growth and creative engine for Denmark; Kristensen *et al.* (2011) also hold that “Denmark seemed to undergo a globalization revolution within a decade” (99). The GCC was reestablished in 1999 as the Greater Copenhagen Authority (HUR). Referring to the neoliberal conservatives that took office from 2001, Andersen and Ploger (2007) claim that “the new government has favoured/upgraded the entrepreneurial side of UP [urban planning] and downsized the holistic and social dimensions... and even closed down the newly established Ministry of Urban Affairs” (1361).

Public transportation in Copenhagen reflects this history. As the economy grew in the 1960-70s, more Copenhageners owned cars, which prompted planners to devise ‘park and ride’ stations along the ‘fingers’ (Vuk 2005). Strict parking rules for private vehicles and electronic public transport tickets were implemented to further encourage the use of public

CEU eTD Collection

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Copenhageners cycling for transport in the 1930s. In the 1920s the first cycle lanes were built and in 1936 a plan to devise a cycling network began (Cycling Embassy of Denmark 2013).

Figure 4. Cycling in Copenhagen in the 1930s (City of Copenhagen 2011a)



During World War II “a shortage of supply and fuel rationings meant that the bicycle became the dominant means of transport. It continued to be so until the mid-1950s when car traffic began to grow rapidly. The growth of car traffic coincided with significant decrease in bicycling traffic until the mid-1970s” (Cycling Embassy of Denmark 2013). Grescoe (2012) describes a particular instance where, later in the 1970s “protests killed a plan to cover the beautiful artificial lakes west of downtown with a four-lane highway, and tens of thousands of cyclists converged on the square in front of city hall in a grassroots demonstration against the growing dominance of the car” (146).

Copenhagen is one of the most coveted ‘cycling cities’ in the world today. Grescoe (2012) even refers to Copenhagen as the “world’s first post-automobile city” (157). Traffic lights turn green for cyclists before the cars (their ‘green wave’ system ensures cyclists do not

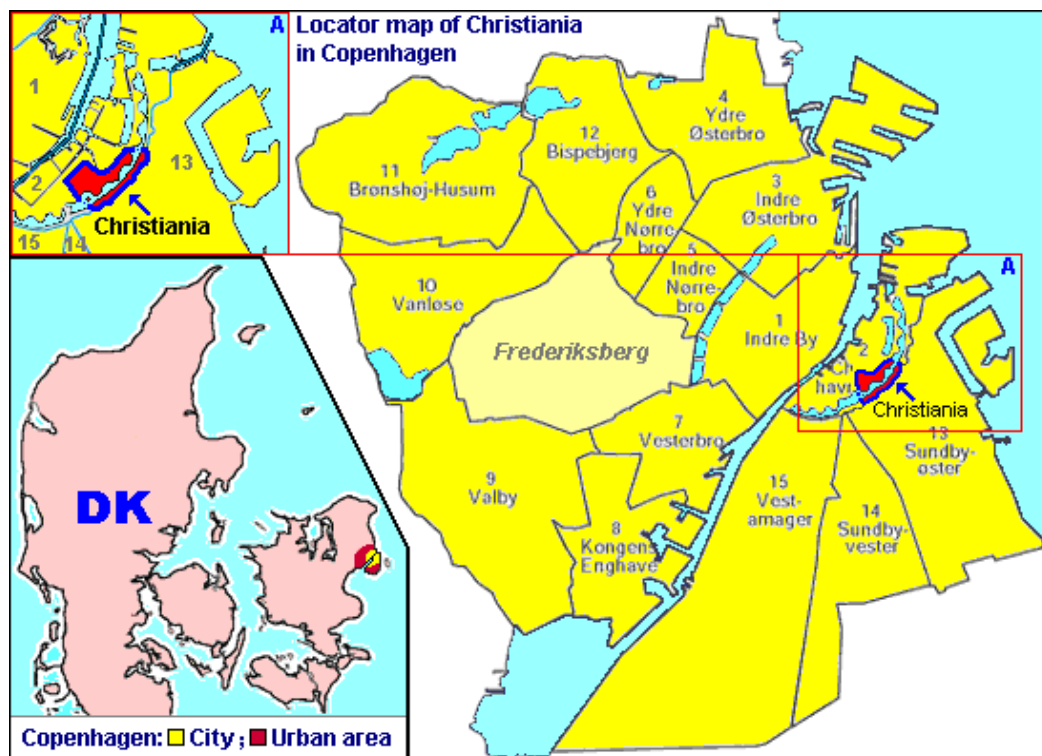
have to stop at many red lights), and many cycling lanes are separate from automobile lanes. In the winter, snow is removed from the bike lanes before the car lanes and taxis must have bicycle carrying racks (Grescoe 2012). Copenhagen has more bicycles than people and is home to Europe's busiest cycle route, Nørrebrogade (Grescoe 2012).

Cycling often fits in to the City of Copenhagen's broader environmental agendas. The government has a history of "taking environmental issues and sustainable energy seriously since the oil shock of the 1970s" (Siemens 2009, 14). Danish law requires each municipality to develop a Local Agenda 21 plan, and the 1997 plan included an objective to "perceive the environment in the context of our lifestyles. The environmental should be considered in an overall framework of social conditions, education, unemployment, and so forth" (Bruehl 2012, 101). In an interview regarding Copenhagen's top ranking for the Siemens Green City Index (2009), Lord Mayor Ritt Bjerregaard touched on the topic of lifestyles: "if we want to reach our goal, then Copenhageners must change their daily habits. Campaigns to motivate lifestyle change are an important tool. We are also working hard to involve the citizens in developing solutions to the problems" (33). Copenhagen has also actively sought to assess and monitor environmental indicators, producing "Green Accounts" since 1996. The City, in partnership with businesses and architects, also has plans to build two carbon-neutral communities, one in Amager Faelled and the other in Nordhavn (Siemens 2009).

Geographically Copenhagen is part landlocked, part bordered by the Øresund strait, and today has a population of over .5 million, with over 1.5 million in the metro region (Bruehl 2012). The map below (Figure 5) shows Copenhagen's location on Denmark's largest islands, Zealand, with the southern part of Copenhagen on a smaller island, Amager. The 15 districts span both islands, where Frederiksberg is a separate enclave, Indre By is the inner

city/downtown, and Christiania is a somewhat autonomous squatted area – I now turn to their background.

Figure 5. Copenhagen Districts – Christiania Locator Map (Christiania Wikipedia 2015)



From Social Experiment to Eco-Village

Part of Copenhagen's history is the evolution of Christiania. The squatted town's over 40 year history is as fluid, dramatic and diverse as its population. Located on abandoned military barracks in the Christianshavn district, close to the center of Copenhagen's downtown, it is open and integrated with the Danish green capital. The quarrels with the government over the years have gained attention, many centered on (1) the town's tolerated hash market, located on only one of their streets (Pusher Street); and (2) the legitimacy and 'normalisation' of the

squat. Famous for their artist and musician scene and unique architecture, this history is well documented.²⁵

In 1969, before the founding of Christiania, police demolished Sophiegaarden (a nearby squatted building), and a large cultural event in the northwest of Denmark (Thy; similar to Woodstock) drew Danish attention to radical counter culture movements. Thus, Christiania did not arise in 1971 as a random occurrence; the opportunity was taken to start an autonomous society ‘from scratch.’ Their ideology rests on consensus democracy practices and social activism. They have communicated through oral laws, a local radio station and a weekly newspaper *Ugespejlet*, which still today publishes “practically anything submitted.” Christiania’s four “unbreakable rules” include “no to hard drugs, rocker badges, weapons and violence” (Christiania Guide 2005, 1). At first the Danish government offered temporary legalization by creating the Christiania Act which deemed the town a “social experiment.” However this acceptance did not last.

Over the years police raids became regular to ‘manage’ the autonomous area, and by 2004 a new conservative government abolished the Christiania Act, devised a Christiania Future Plan and a Normalization Plan. Thornburgh (2012) writes “the process has been given the bland bureaucratic name of *normalisering* (normalization), a word that seems market-tested to stick in the throats of the proudly abnormal Christianites.” This plan used different tactics - coercive, rhetorical and spatial, to privatize Christiania in accordance with the goals of creative city development, however, in the process removed “a social space where one can ‘live another way’” according to Amouroux (2009, 122). Relatedly Vanolo (2012) sees Christiania as a “wider experiment for the practice of an ‘alternative economy’, a space in which to limit the general neoliberal logics of waged work, corporate control and

²⁵ See Thorn *et al.* (2011), Hellstrom (2006) or from a local perspective “The Christiania Guide” (2005).

privatization” (12). In relation to their anti-privatization stance, Hansen (2011) claims that Christiania represents a struggle for the right to the city.

Today with about 1,000 residents, Christiania is a car-free tourist attraction; the town is divided into 14 neighborhoods and contains a variety of physical landscapes, from a lively town with Pusher street, shops and bars to a rural scenery with horses, canoeing and overgrown flora. An outsider’s first impression may be reminiscent of a village in a ‘developing’ country, with dirt paths and wood burning stoves; their efforts to reduce, reuse and recycle derived mostly from poverty rather than ecological dedication. Even the physical landscape has been decided upon through consensus with neighborhood meetings. While some describe Christiania as an “eco-village” and the town is often cited for examples of resistance and counter culture, Christiania’s contestations and autonomy is best understood as “hybrid” or “fractured” thus it is not a place void of neoliberal influence (Coppola and Vanolo 2015).

In this final section on Copenhagen’s urban history, I introduce examples of the creative city strategies employed by the City to attract investments, tourists, and the creative class, all with a goal to economically development. This gives a background of city branding efforts, which in specific regards to cycling, and sustainability in general, has internationally become known as “Copenhagenize” (or “Copenhagenization”).

3.1.2 Copenhagenize

The Municipality of Copenhagen governs housing, social issues, urban planning and cultural activities, while the Greater Copenhagen Authority (HUR) oversees the greater Metropolitan area; both have been involved with cultivating Copenhagen as a global creative city (Bayliss

2007). Maintaining the creative class and their industries often results in legal ‘openness’ or flexibility: Bayliss (2007) explains that “whilst such deregulation might entail a more raucous environment, the [Municipality’s] report argues that this should be accepted as one of the costs of living in a creative city” (899). In addition, Hansen *et al.* (2001) assert that rising unemployment and gentrification are overlooked social costs in Copenhagen. This gentrification happens by “the deportation of marginalized inner city residents who do not fit in the disneyesque ‘creative city’” as the policies legitimize “the need to cater to the ‘economically sustainable population’ in order to better compete on a global scale” (Hansen *et al.* 2001, 853, 865). The authors claim evidence of such creative city attempts includes new architecture projects, waterfront development, and luxury shopping and hotels.

Unique architecture, as it signifies innovation and growth, is one specific tool to attract the creative class. Through examples of proposed architecture projects Ploger (2010) shows how local residents react to policies that are perceived to neglect their concerns, as citizens who already live in Copenhagen, rather than those that are to be attracted in the future. Kroyers Plads, an open and flat area in Christianshavn with a harbor view was to become dense with high rise buildings. A second architecture project in the inner city area with many historical buildings, the ‘metropol-zone’, was to be developed to appeal to tourists and businesses. Both proposals were met with citizen protest where they argued to conserve the skyline and cultural heritage. After these confrontations Ploger (2010) reports that the local government is communicating earlier in the planning stages with citizens.

The 2009 *cOPENhagen* “Open For You” city branding campaign presented the city as “open” for tourists and businesses to investment and experience according to their needs where the City expects to gain from the cycle of recognition and economic boosts (Brand Copenhagen). However the more internationally well-known brand - Copenhagenize - was

coined by local urban mobility planner Mikael Colville-Andersen²⁶ and further popularized by Jan Gehl²⁷. With this status, Danish planners and architects are exporting their knowledge and molding other cities to replicate their livability ideals (Freudendal-Pedersen 2015). For example, Gehl Architects and Copenhagenize Consulting have now (separately) left their mark with projects in Mumbai, Moscow, Sao Paulo and Mexico City.²⁸ During his time as mayor of New York City Michael Bloomberg directly contacted Gehl Architects for their consulting services; and in Istanbul, it was an NGO who sought their services to convince politicians of the correct path to creating ‘human scale’ urban environments (Soholt interview, Gehl Architects Co-Founder). Copenhagenize Consulting, with a goal to turn other cities from “zeroes to heroes” (Colville-Andersen interview) now makes their own international rankings of best cycling cities (*The Copenhagen Index*) and refers to their exporting knowledge practice as “copy-paste Copenhagenization.” Both firms are consultants for the Copenhagen municipality and have roles in upholding Copenhagen’s status for exceptional urban design.

3.2 Vancouver

In this section, I first explain Vancouver’s socio-political position as an ethnically diverse North American city, its urban planning development and accompanying government mechanisms. In the second section, I highlight some of the creative city involvements in Vancouver such as the “Green” Winter Olympics and “Vancouverism” as an internationally recognized urban planning culture.

²⁶ Founder of Copenhagenize Consulting, whose award winning blog *Cycle Chic*, has been replicated in over 50 cities.

²⁷ Founder of Gehl Architects, Jan Gehl is famous for resisting modern architecture since the 1960s where he advocated for the ‘human scale’ to be the center of urban design.

²⁸ Amongst many others, see <http://gehlarchitects.com/work/cases/> and <http://copenhagenize.eu/projects.html#all>

3.2.1 Situating a Village on the Edge of the Rainforest

A major city (notably not the capital) of Canada's British Columbia (BC) province, and close to the United States' northwest border (see Figure 6), Vancouver has a population of about 600,000 with 2.4 million in the greater region (Statistics Canada 2011). Scerri and Holden (2013) succinctly describe the conventionally accepted viewpoint that contrasts the environmental stances of government levels: Vancouver as a dark green city, in a light green province (BC), in a brown country (Canada). Within Canada, Vancouver is regarded as the 'hippie' Pacific Northwest city, where US divisions are blurred and Vancouver is a part of the "Left" (West) Coast, likened with active lifestyles of Seattle, Portland and San Francisco (Alper 1997). This sets up a scene where municipal goals clash with regional and federal policies and certain economic and environmental policies. Ongoing debates and struggles over natural resource development have and still are occurring across levels of government. The Federal level controls Vancouver's port and airport, meaning Federal agencies have ultimate decisions regarding for example coal and LNG exports.

Figure 6. Vancouver Locator Map (Whereig.com 2012)



Barnes and Hutton (2009) identify four historical elements to Vancouver's economy: the "post-staples" status, due to a decline in mining, forestry and fishing; "post-corporate" as head offices vanished from the city with the fall of the staples economy; the city's location in the Pacific Rim and the attraction for and influence of Asian immigrants; and more recently the investments from multiple scales for "mega-project redevelopment schemes" such as the 1986 World Fair Expo and the Skytrain, a rapid transit system (1257).

Vancouver had zoning laws in the 1920s to manage urban sprawl, often managed at the regional level and gained a public acceptance of "smart growth" (Herrschel 2013). This planning tool in general "emerged as a concern about the environmental, social and economic costs of continuous suburban sprawl" (Herrschel 2013, 2336). In 1967 the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) began as a body that provides regional policy guidance and is now known as Metro Vancouver. Herrschel claims that even this name change to "Metro" is an appeal to a "smart city" strategy. Suburbanization continued in the 1960s and the political party TEAM (The Electors' Action Movement) rose to power and appealed to the middle class with their "livable city" ideas (Peck *et al.* 2014). All levels of Canadian government from Vancouver's perspective (city, province, federal) were liberal in the 1960s and 70s. This changed in the 1980s, when conservatives led the country and BC level, however contrasted with a Social Democratic mayor in the city (VanWynsberghe *et al.* 2013). The 1991 Living First Plan, a display of this unique Vancouver planning promoted towers and density, particularly in the downtown.

In 1990 the City of Vancouver released a report "Clouds of Change" to address atmospheric change via several target areas: transportation planning and traffic management; land use planning; energy conservation and efficiency; and leading by example through City initiatives. Using air quality as an example, the rather technical plan accepted that

environmental issues are difficult to address as they do not adhere to political boundaries and addressing them was a social imperative: “the City should start planning now for a significant shift in the way people live, rather than risk having to impose rigid regulations in times of crisis... If this scenario seems hard to envision, remember that only a few decades ago our present automobile-oriented land development patterns would have seemed equally difficult to imagine” (24). The team had provincial and federal recommendations, based on measurements and ‘polluter pays’ schemes, and urged for increased cycling. “Clouds of Change” was an uncommon type of policy document for North American cities during this time, showing a history of sustainability efforts in Vancouver. “Vancouver was built on the assumption that energy and materials would always be cheap and plentiful. This is reflected in the poor insulating quality of our buildings, our addiction to the automobile, the increasing separation of our workplaces from homes, and the sprawling form of our city” (21).

As a relatively “young” city in terms of age, Vancouver was, in settler terms, founded as a mining village in 1886, where xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) indigenous peoples lived for thousands of years. Natural resource extraction motivated genocidal practices, as Canada’s economic history shows its dependence on forests and mining; and with it the settler removal, displacement and dispossession of indigenous peoples. Many activists today, through a gesture of symbolic solidarity, will provide their address not as BC, but as CST: Vancouver, Coast Salish Territories.

This history is elusive today in Vancouver. For example, Stanley Park, a popular and large 1,000 acre urban park was once home to indigenous peoples. The disproportionate number of indigenous peoples living in the Downtown Eastside (DTES; see Figure 7), and its close proximity to the downtown, is another example of the indigenous-colonial

juxtaposition. Contentions seem to amass here, or as a *Vancouver Observer* journalist describes it: “welcome to the Downtown Eastside, the locus of arguments over gentrification, aboriginal rights, addiction, poverty, and who really runs City Hall” (Yerman 2014). Masuda and Crabtree (2010) describe the perception of this area: “an appalling social and aesthetic blight on an otherwise much-envied global metropolis” (656); with a high level of homeless persons, AIDS and drug use, this “skid row” area is characterized as a slum. The authors are critical of the “revitalization” expert plans as they stigmatize and disperse residents and lack attempts to change the urban landscape to aid the residents.

Figure 7. Vancouver Neighborhood Map (Grandview Heritage Group 2013)



Aside from relations with indigenous peoples, Vancouver has experienced significant Asian influence given the city’s Pacific Rim location. Beginning in the 1980s, Canada lessened its banking and immigration regulations, especially by way of tying visa permits to Asian investments and businesses (Mitchell 1997). Mitchell’s (1997) study of a wealthy downtown neighborhood, Shaughnessy Heights, where affluent Asians (mostly from Hong

Kong) built “monster homes” to replace “heritage British homes”, shows how the “authentic” Canadian locals felt their way of life and exclusive neighborhood were threatened.

The economic flows of the Pacific Rim are often discussed today in relation to Vancouver’s status as one of the most expensive cities in the world, with a high cost of living primarily linked to a rent-wage gap. The global-local characterization of Vancouver’s political economic situation is told through stories such as the following: Asian real estate investment (from individuals who are presumed to either resist Canadian assimilation or do not live in Vancouver) causes a housing affordability crisis. This coalesces with the colonial genocide of indigenous tribes that had lived there prior to European settlement, now displaced to reservations which are increasingly damaged from surrounding natural resource extraction. Aside from ethnic tensions, a large proportion of the wealthy are aging, while the young poorer population cycle in and out of Vancouver (the ones who leave could not afford it - similar to the brain drain effect; the ones who come to Vancouver have heard it is the best city in the world).

3.2.2 Vancouverism

Vancouver’s efforts to become a creative city can be seen through mega-events and projects²⁹ such as the 2010 “Green” Winter Olympics and associated initiatives including the Canada [rapid transit] Line and the South East False Creek (SEFC) sustainable community. Interestingly, both SEFC and the Canada Line receive praise in Siemens’ US and Canada Green City Index Report (2011). Vancouver’s bid to host the Olympics began in the late 1990s and involved all levels of government.

²⁹ Mega-events and projects usually involve an increase in tourism, entertainment, construction, and investment prospects (VanWynsberghe *et al.* 2013).

There were protests against the bid and during the Olympics, with concern for already marginalized groups, especially the DTES. Instead of protesting, one group, the Impact on Communities Coalition (IoCC), attempted to capitalize on this event where they called for “strong commitments in the Olympic Bid to environmental and social sustainability, community representation on relevant decision-making bodies, funding for independent research and evaluation of the impacts of the Games, and a referendum on whether Vancouver should bid to hold the 2010 Winter Games” (Edelson 2011, 810). Upon receiving the bid, the Inner City Inclusive Olympics Working Group was formed and developed a policy document which became a “prime example of social inclusion because it was an unprecedented bid-level effort to include community concerns in Games planning” (VanWynsberghe *et al* 2076). Where some like a former Vancouver urban planner Nathan Edelson (2011) claim the Olympics was ultimately an opportunity to receive investments for neglected problems like housing and infrastructure, others such as VanWynsberghe *et al.* (2013) claim that leveraging social inclusion through the Olympics “exemplifies local urban social policymaking in the influential context of sport megaevents and neoliberal versions of entrepreneurialism” (2075). Kennelly’s (2015) ethnographic study of DTES youth (before, during and after the Olympics) found that “residents are expected to align themselves with the larger goal of promoting their city on the global stage” (15). The enforcement of such expectations included poverty “cleansing” tactics of temporarily sheltering, jailing and displacing Vancouver’s already marginalized population – despite claims that the Olympics would improve life equally for residents (Kennelly 2015).

As part of the 2010 “Green” Winter Olympics plans, SEFC was first to be used as housing for athletes during the Olympics (thus the area is also referred to as the Olympic Village), although the idea to develop the brownfield around False Creek emerged earlier

from the Clouds of Change and CityPlan reports. Kear (2007) shows that within the planning and production of SEFC, sustainability was used as a guise to cover the “more contentious storyline of reshaping the built environment to a form more attractive to desirable classes and amenable to accumulation” (328).

Another mega-project developed in coordination with the Olympics was the Canada Line, as part of the Skytrain network of rapid transit lines, which was finished before the Olympics in 2009.³⁰ Siemiatycki (2005) claims that the private-public partnership involved in this construction had significant influence over the infrastructure type, technologies, and the route and riders; and further questions were raised about the job quality and salaries with the private company. He also noted that the bus system, with a high level of ridership and need of expansion was ignored during this public transport planning process. While some groups protested this project, others did not, and that was also telling to Siemiatycki (2005) as the automobile, taxi and limousine industries were apparently quiet during this process.

Aside from the local mega projects and events, and similar to Copenhagenize, Vancouver has received praise for their particular urban planning strategy. Vancouverism prioritizes a livability idea, with roots from early 1990s planning of high rise buildings (also referred to as towers) in the downtown, but also with prior influence from the 1960s freeway protests where a key concern was one of aesthetics (to preserve the mountain views). Underlying Vancouverism is the proposition for the City to engage with housing developers by leveraging tower height and in return requesting that developers provide public amenities. Peck *et al.* (2014) explain that through the global popularity of this planning approach, Vancouver is “in the business of exporting optimistic urban visions,” describing Vancouverism as “city boosterism” and “green-tinged and market-friendly” (387, 388).

³⁰ The Expo Line was stimulated by planning for a previous mega event, the World Expo 1986 in Vancouver.

3.3 Public Memories of Becoming Green

This final section refocuses the context to the green city by illustrating the prevailing public memory of how Copenhagen and Vancouver came to be understood as green. This public memory is attached to a variety of moments and connected to the built environment, as Hayden (1997) writes: “urban landscapes are storehouses for these social memories, because natural features such as hills or harbors, as well as streets, buildings, and patterns of settlement, frame the lives of many people and often outlast many lifetimes” (9).

A striking similarity between these cities was the recollection of: how did the city become green? Overwhelmingly the answers from my participants converged not at one specific point or action plan, but through a mix of social, environmental and politically defining aspects such as political leadership, ecologies, as well as civil groups and their protests. These moments reflect ongoing post-industrial changes in urban form that most Western cities have faced in recent decades. This conglomeration was not planned, with many coincidental factors and locally based decisions. A positive spin is placed on events such as the freeway protests. When locals demonstrated against a proposed freeway in Copenhagen and Vancouver in the 1960s, it was not solely for a green future, but for their social ties to the present and past urban landscape. Vancouver’s “Greenest City Action Plan” cites this event: “Vancouver’s Strathcona neighbourhood residents stopped the construction of a massive freeway into downtown that would have levelled their community and altered the shape of the city forever” (City of Vancouver 2010, 5). Regional and federal funding limitations and even lack of a military base were also reasons the freeways were not built (Bereelowitz 2005); however, successful citizen environmental protest is often celebrated as the main reason.

The significant point is that this selective reminiscence is ingrained into the public memory and spaces of the city, and that this memory plays an identity making role by creating a vision of the ‘good city life.’ Bauman (1982) asserts that “remembered history is the logic which the actors inject into their strivings and which they employ to invest credibility into their hopes” (68, in Beilharz 2001), even if important aspects may be left out of these histories, such as Vancouver’s colonial past and present (see Peck *et al.* 2014). The attitude upheld by the creative city policies, one of ‘best city in the world,’ translates into a pride of positively framed history in this public memory: “I am a Vancouverite - environmentalism is in my blood.”³¹ The following synthesizes how these cities became green³², according to my interviews, and further corroborated by news articles, policies, reports and city museums.

Copenhagen’s citizens fought to clean up the harbor and later against developers from densifying and privatizing nearby Islands Brygge and Nyhavn. Cyclists demonstrated downtown against the freeway proposal. From Grundtvig³³ to New Nordic food, there is a nationalistic tradition of concern for the environment through a wealthy welfarist and small-sized country lens.

Vancouver’s mountains and beaches and the recreational enjoyment of them, the location and temperate ecology as a ‘village on the edge of a rainforest’ play a role in imagining the green city. The City aligns with left leaning West Coast politics, NIMBY protests fought against a freeway proposal, and Greenpeace and the David Suzuki Foundation were founded in Kitsilano.

³¹ As quoted from Vanessa Timmer, executive director of an environmental think tank, at an SFU Woodward event: “What new ideas on urban life may lead Vancouver into its second century?” 24 September 2014.

³² This is not to claim that they accept Copenhagen or Vancouver as a ‘truly sustainable’ city, rather some answered in terms of ‘it is most commonly associated with these aspects.’

³³ Dyce (2010) claims that one must study the 19th century philosopher/theologian N. F. S. Grundtvig to understand Denmark, he writes that Grundtvig and his followers’ influence is seen in many facets of Danish society, for example “the folk high school movement... with a primary focus on ‘education for life’... freedom of religious thought and practice... the creation of a host of agricultural cooperative, and land development organisations... the Liberal party (Venstre)... [and] physical education, leisure hobbies, and public speaking” (462).

Chapter Summary

To summarize and bring the two cities together, both are viewed as environmentally progressive within their countries. The associated colonial processes for Copenhagen are Denmark's control over Greenland, thus not directly in the city; while Vancouver, a "younger" city, has direct colonial roots. Both cities developed sustainability policies and engaged with urban planning to accommodate changes such as sprawl and growing suburbs. While both cities remain car centric, Copenhagen's flat topography lends to its title of "city of cyclists" with about ten times the modal share in Vancouver (36%:3.5%), as the hilly city has only more recently had policy interest in cycling infrastructure. Both direct their local economies towards creativity, entrepreneurialism and experimentation; and have undergone "redevelopment" efforts and experienced increasing gentrification. While Vancouver has drawn Asian immigrants, Denmark's strict immigration policies have kept Copenhagen relatively homogenous.

This chapter gave a contextualizing background and literature review relevant to sustainability in Copenhagen and Vancouver. There will be further background provided in subsequent chapters that relate specifically to the topic at hand – for example Nørrebro and Grandview-Woodland demographics, and food policy and cultures. The following chapter concentrates on Copenhagen and Vancouver's green action plans and begins the set of analytical chapters.

Chapter 4

Framing Green City Futures

Introduction

Approximately two thousand cities around the world have contacted Vancouver in hopes to replicate (at least parts of) their green action plan (Reimer interview, Vancouver City Councilor). The point here is that these plans not only have an important local influence, but also play a marketing role in the global image and status of Copenhagen and Vancouver as sites of “best practices” and centers of expert sustainability knowledge production - policies are made and dispersed to other cities via local policy makers, networks, and consultancies. McCann (2013) describes this as “policy mobilities” (essentially how policies, their models and knowledge circulate) where he asserts that green city policies serve introspective (local) and extrospective (global) purposes. Although the dominant conception of a city has been as a “container of economically exploitable assets” (Healey 2002, 1781), a global city is now not only an economically developed city, but also one that pioneers in environmental policy making (Joss *et al.* 2013; McCann 2013).

The analysis in this chapter concentrates on Copenhagen and Vancouver’s green action plans-as-discourses. The plans were decisive factors in my case selection because they shed light on the dominant frames utilized in green city making; the plans are also key reasons for Copenhagen and Vancouver’s international recognition as green cities. The

analysis then focuses on the *framers* who set the green city agenda, and thus the findings in this chapter are important to delineate the dominant approach that sets the context for the community contestations. The plans do not fully represent the entire policy process and this chapter should be read with that limitation in mind. The plans are the primary data for this chapter, and I also draw from related policies and my interviews, to answer a key research question: how is sustainability framed in green action plans? The first two sections of this chapter speak directly to McCann's (2013) extrospective and introspective distinction regarding urban eco-boosterism, and the key findings of Joss *et al.* (2013). The authors found eco-city initiatives to involve: "increased international knowledge transfer activities involving both public and private actors; the centrality of 'carbon discourse' guiding concepts, policy and practice; the marrying of green with 'smart' technological systems; and a focus on achieving environmental innovation through economic growth" (54).

In the first section I provide an overview of both plans. Copenhagen's plan is based on carbon neutrality, and I also incorporate their most recent Local Agenda 21 plan given its intention to represent the 'people' element of their carbon reduction. I end this section with an example of green city international recognition with the City's year-long program called Sharing Copenhagen that was developed to coincide with their EU Green Capital Award (2014). I then present Vancouver's green action plan, focusing on its Lighter Footprint chapter, and the use of this plan as a municipal election platform.

In the second section I present the economic-environmental 'win-win' frame used in both plans through four components of the frame that I have identified. The frame is (1) reassuring in a temporal manner; (2) competitive-yet-cooperative; (3) assumes universal trickle-down benefits; and (4) displays a green discourse that is infused with past smart and creative city discourses. Asserting a compatibility with a green economy and environmental

protection, this frame directly contests a previous frame of ‘jobs versus environment’. Dryzek (1997) describes how a ‘win-win’ frame is part of a sustainable development discourse:

“sustainable development also involves a rhetoric of reassurance. We can have it all: economic growth, environmental conservation, social justice; and not just for the moment, but in perpetuity” (132). To show how the ‘win-win’ frame is not confined to the green action plans, I then present and analyze Copenhagen and Vancouver’s climate change adaptation plans and the distinctions made in practice between climate change adaptation and mitigation.

In the third section I expand this discussion by examining the social production of spatial scale in the visions of a green city found in these plans. I specifically concentrate on how this relates to the measurement of sustainability and how the city is reified and represented primarily in a material manner. From her case study of Seattle’s carbon reduction plan, Rice (2010) refers to this as the “territorialization of carbon” described as “the active creation and quantification of bounded and ordered spaces of carbon-producing activities and simultaneous reproduction of local government jurisdictional capacities” (930). I end the chapter by expanding the discussion with an example of what is *not* counted in Vancouver’s bounded green space, which illustrates the limitations of the City’s view of the green city. Through this example of resistance to a tar sands oil pipeline proposal (one of the many fossil fuel projects in the region), questions are raised as to whether this use of the hinterlands is masked by the promises and hype of the green city. This example is especially relevant given Brenner’s (2014) assertion that the tar sands represent urbanization, which calls for rethinking the urban given the interconnected and global nature of the current capitalist economic system.

4.1 Introducing the Green Action Plans

In this section I introduce several key policy documents: Copenhagen's green action plan, the Copenhagen "CPH 2025 Climate Plan" (City of Copenhagen 2012; herein referred to as CPH 2025), as well as their latest "Local Agenda 21 Plan: The Greener and Better Everyday Life Plan" (City of Copenhagen 2013c; herein referred to as the LA21 Plan); and Vancouver's "Greenest City Action Plan" (City of Vancouver 2010; herein referred to as GCAP). I show their main goals and targets through which decision makers create particular pathways to achieve the title of a green city.

4.1.1 The Copenhagen 2025 Climate Plan and the Local Agenda 21 Plan

CPH 2025 maps out a strategy for Copenhagen to achieve its goal of becoming the world's first carbon neutral capital by 2025. Published in 2012 by the Technical and Environmental administration, the policy has four main components: energy consumption, energy production, mobility, and administration (City leadership). Each section has targets and goals that center on energy and lowering CO₂ emissions. The energy consumption goals focus on retrofitting buildings and strict codes for new buildings. Carbon neutral goals concerning energy production are based on the increase of wind, waste, biomass and geothermal as energy sources. Green mobility will be achieved through bolstering the cycling and public transport infrastructure, as well as supporting related technology initiatives. Finally, the City will look to reduce its energy consumption and focus on developing new public-private partnerships.

This technocratic, green-growth oriented, top-down plan was written by experts without participation from citizens (Martin interview, City Staff). The goal and measurement

of carbon is in line with Joss *et al.* (2013), Swyngedouw (2013), and Jonas *et al.* (2011)'s assertion that carbon has become a central concern for urban sustainability. Conversely, the LA21 Plan centers on the 'people' aspect and contributes to the overall goal of lowering CO₂ from citizen participation (Martin interview, City Staff).³⁴

Danish law requires municipalities to create a Local Agenda 21 plan every four years, though without specific guidelines the plans vary according to local politics and ecologies (Erik interview, Danish Nature Agency). The outcomes of the plans are not followed up; they are simply collected by the Nature Agency within the Danish Ministry of the Environment (Erik interview, Danish Nature Agency; Martin interview, City Staff). Copenhagen's most recent LA21 Plan stresses that everyday barriers make "it difficult for the citizens to be green on an everyday basis and 80% of the citizens believe that it is important for the City of Copenhagen to help create the scope for them to do something for the environment themselves" (City of Copenhagen 2013c).³⁵ The process and background to this plan involved citizen participation to understand their challenges for 'going green.' It involved several workshops with different target groups: citizens, neighborhood committees, and youth/students. There was also a collaboration project with Lea, a PhD student, who conducted 12 interviews in Copenhageners' homes.³⁶ Lea (interview) claimed that the municipal workers

had a meeting where they sort of said 'what do we know about citizens?' And everyone said: 'nothing... we don't know anything, and we don't know what they

³⁴ The LA21 Plan states that "roughly one third of the potential CO₂ reductions by 2025 will come from initiatives where citizens have direct or indirect influence on whether the goal of a carbon neutral Copenhagen will be met. This includes green mobility, energy-saving measures and more recycling" (City of Copenhagen 2013c).

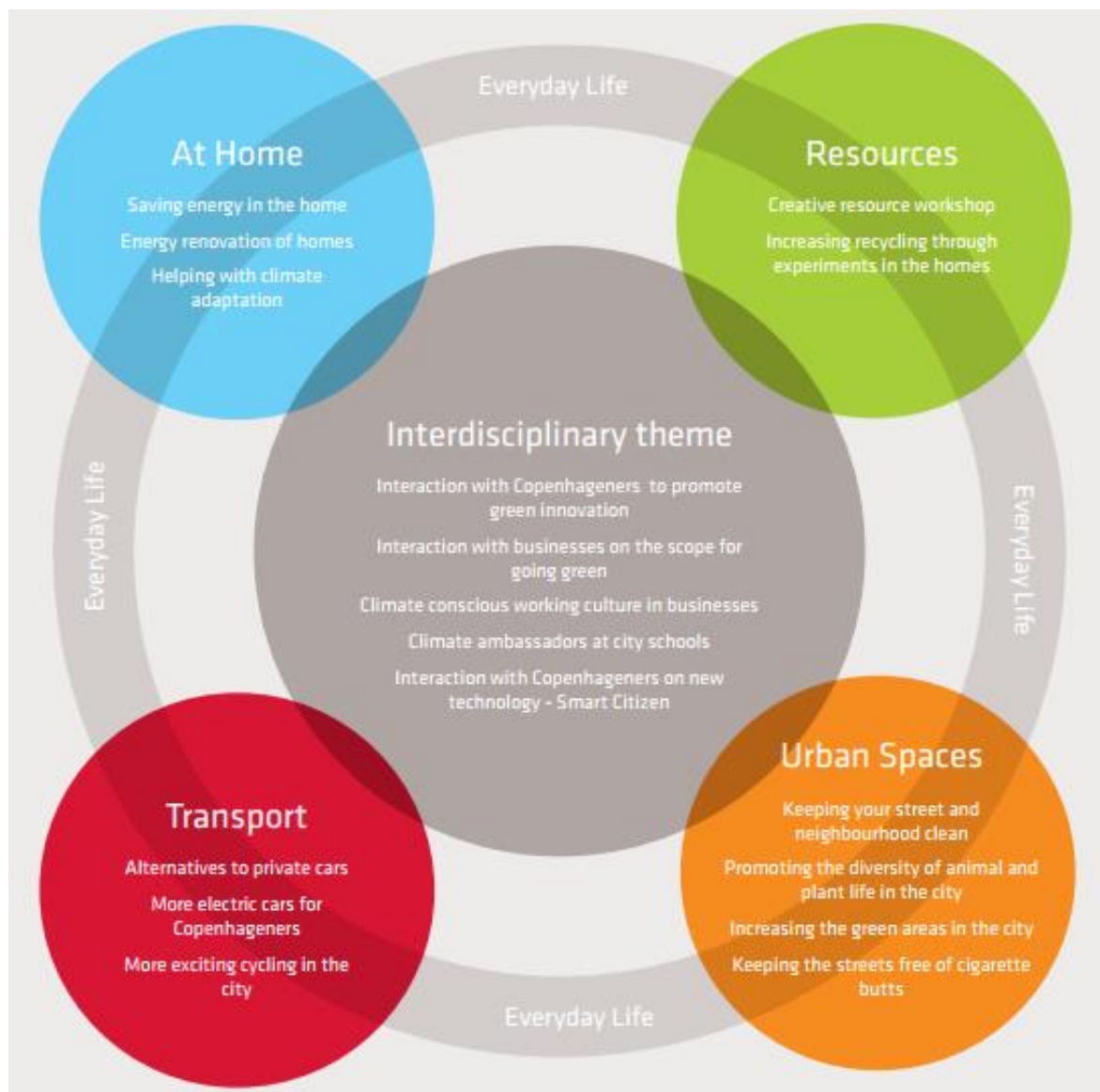
³⁵ The survey was conducted with a "concerned citizen panel", made of locals already concerned with sustainability issues who volunteered to be a part of a group that the City could engage with on a regular basis (not only for the current LA21 Plan). Barriers in this plan are referred to as challenges that citizens have when attempting to take environmentally friendly action on their own.

³⁶ This was part of a CIDEA (Citizen Driven Environmental Action Program) research project with the University of Copenhagen.

know, and we just assume that, you know, getting people to be more environmentally friendly is a matter of giving them some information,’ - classic. And so I suggested why not talk to the citizens - radical!

After collecting over 500 ideas from the workshops and interviews, City staff decided on 17 activities to include in the plan, placed into five categories with an overall theme of “everyday life” (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. LA 21 Plan: 17 Activities (City of Copenhagen 2013c, 7)



Lea continued by explaining that while the municipal workers were competent and determined, the main drawback of the entire LA21 Plan was an economic issue:

there's nothing that will create fundamental change, and so what happens in between really high ambitions, ideals, [and] wishes for creating fundamental change and then in the end nothing like that happened. The reason is economy and the way you have to carry out planning in the municipality... it's sort of saying that it only has value if it can be measured into you know, strict CO₂ emission reductions or how much money can we make off of it.

City staff confirmed that the biggest challenge was indeed the budget, as they had limited funds and could ultimately only afford to do pilot projects for some of the activities (Martin interview, City Staff). Considering that Copenhagen's goal is to be the 'world's first carbon neutral capital', the activities listed in Figure 8 such as "alternatives to a private car" and "keeping streets clean of cigarette butts" reveal a gap in the process between goal setting and the possibilities for action to reach such a goal given a variety of restrictions, in line with the 'urban sustainability fix' (While *et al.* 2004).

At this point in time, what was new for the City was not the LA21 Plan or having a 'people' element, but the 'everyday' approach itself which marked an effort to include citizens in the planning process – citizens are even referred to as "experts" (City of Copenhagen 2013c). This action demonstrates the City's stated acceptance that the responsibility of 'going green' is not simply an individual choice but one that is influenced by urban institutions and structures. Notably, this plan does not receive international attention or awards, in comparison to the technocratic CPH 2025; the LA21 Plan required citizen participation and local, situated perspectives that may not be applicable for creating expert knowledge about best practices that can be copy-pasted to other cities. Given the lack of funding and attention to the LA21 Plan, especially compared to CPH 2025, the citizen participation here does not seem to represent a radical reconfiguration of City-citizen roles.

Copenhagen's carbon neutral goal and CPH 2025 plan were key factors in winning the EU Green Capital award (European Commission 2014). What follows is an example of how the City of Copenhagen articulated its sustainability expert status through the Sharing Copenhagen 2014 program.

EU Green Capital Award: Sharing Copenhagen

Building upon their cOPENhagen brand, the Sharing Copenhagen program exemplifies how the City reinforces its green title. Resonating with branding and interurban competition goals, this reveals a competitive-yet-cooperative eagerness to share their green solutions with the world. Upon receiving the European Commission's 2014 EU Green Capital award, the City of Copenhagen decided to create a yearlong program that would promote the city and gain involvement from different actors. The Sharing Copenhagen program expanded unexpectedly: what started as five members from the Technical and Environmental Administration grew to 20, and what started as 30 contacted businesses to be partners eventually totaled over 100 business, NGOs, and community groups. These partners varied, from H&M clothing, the University of Copenhagen, The City of Malmö (Sweden)³⁷, and museums to community groups including Tagtomat, Byhost, and Omstilling Nu. Community groups were involved as a way to receive funding and media promotion from the City.

The 'win-win' frame of this discourse can be seen in the City's document "Sharing Copenhagen 2014", which split the year into five thematic groups, dedicating several months to initiatives in each category. The first was the *good city life of the future* – "Copenhagen must be the locomotive for growth in the rest of Denmark, while simultaneously moving

³⁷ Relatedly, there is an ongoing political struggle to claim Malmö as "Greater Copenhagen", as the City of Copenhagen claims it would economically benefit the region (Bliss, 2015).

towards an ambitious goal of becoming CO₂ neutral by 2025... focus will be on how the green transition and life in the cities of the future can go hand in hand” (City of Copenhagen 2013d, 9). The second was devoted to projects on *resources and sustainable lifestyles*, with attention on efficiently using resources and recycling. The third takes advantage of the summer weather by promoting *the blue and green city*, highlighting the physical environment like parks and the harbor. *Green mobility* was the fourth group, which concentrated on green transport options such as cycling, walking, public transport and alternative fuels. Energy was discussed in the last group, the *climate and green transformation*, as “biomass, more wind turbines and energy efficient street lighting are some of the initiatives leading to the carbon reduction” (City of Copenhagen 2013d, 69). Public events were held throughout the year to attract involvement from citizens and develop new relationships among different sustainability-oriented groups.

Karla (interview), who worked on the Sharing Copenhagen team, explained that “it has proved that it is a really, really strong brand” as the City expected 200 more international delegations than usual due to this award, all flying to Copenhagen to gain expert sustainability knowledge. During an interview, urban planner Mikael Colville-Andersen (Copenhagenize Consulting) brought up the subject and reacted critically:

Now we are the green capital of Europe, I don't even know what that means, I don't give a shit, it's fake, we are not, we don't deserve it... It's a little bit too overhyped... because it really affects the politics here. Oh the whole world thinks we are cool so therefore we can just rest on our laurels, and so we don't have to push it to the next level you know, and then the politicians start getting sucked into the fake bubble thinking we are fantastic. If someone keeps telling you that you are gorgeous, you are gorgeous, you are gorgeous - you are going to go 'I am gorgeous! You know wow, I don't need to get a haircut or wash my hair!'

Mikael shows concern for how this global brand and associated awards may influence policy maker's attitudes and how this brand requires extrospective confirmation. He questions who

gets to define a green capital and how, and from his perspective this ‘fake bubble’ is a space without necessary and ongoing critique.

The green capital award was one of many for Copenhagen: “we [the City] are being drowned with prizes”, Karla (interview) proclaimed to me. The London School of Economics’ 2014 *Copenhagen: Green Economy Leader Report* claims Copenhagen’s green growth strategy is now the model to strive for, citing their low carbon policies and carbon neutral plan. This attention occurs at the national level as well, where Denmark received ‘special mention’ in the World Wildlife Fund’s international climate competition (2013) and was named the “happiest country in the world” (World Happiness Report 2013). These plans and awards have helped Copenhagen to attain its status as one of the most livable cities.

4.1.2 Vancouver’s Greenest City Action Plan

Vancouver’s GCAP was an election platform by Mayor Gregor Robertson (2008-current) and City Councilor Andrea Reimer, both representing the Vision Vancouver party. Vision, a center-left party formed in 2005, has had the majority among the 10 City Councilors during this time. The GCAP informally began with a host of ‘quick start’ projects from 2009 until it was officially passed by city council in 2011.

To devise the plan Robertson selected an expert group, the Greenest City Action Team (GCAT) who set targets within 10 goal areas, and researched other green cities and their plans. More expert groups were formed to operate as external advisory committees on each goal area; staff teams were created to work on these goals with the committees.³⁸ The GCAP makes the public nature of its formation clear by claiming that “more than 35,000

³⁸ See Scerri and Holden (2013) for a description of this policy formation.

people from around the world participated in the process online, through social media, and in face-to-face workshops or events,” in hopes to showcase this effort as “best practice in citizen collaboration” (City of Vancouver 2010, 6). The public consultations came after the initial planning stages which were led by outside experts, notably David Boyd, an environmental lawyer (Alexandra interview, City Staff). Councilor Reimer (interview) claimed that the issues were too technical to engage with the public and that they hoped to move quickly on the early planning stages and involving the public is too lengthy a process for that initial stage.

According to the GCAP, vision, leadership, action and partnerships are key tactics to achieving their goals. These tactics are intertwined with the 10 goals (see Table 5), and each goal has targets, priority actions and strategies.

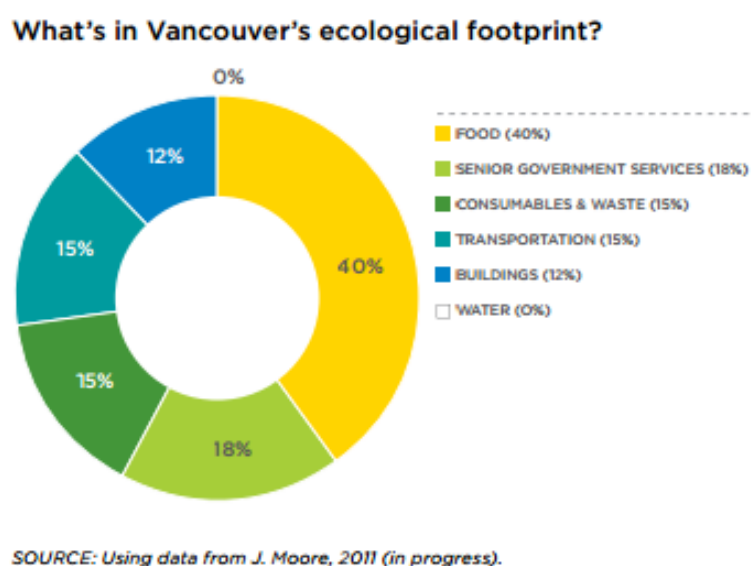
Table 5. GCAP's 10 goals (City of Vancouver 2010)

1. Green Economy	6. Access to Nature
2. Climate Leadership	7. Lighter Footprint
3. Green Buildings	8. Clean Water
4. Green Transportation	9. Clean Air
5. Zero Waste	10. Local Food

Each goal area has its own model and assessment criteria, some more concerned with carbon and energy than others. The Lighter Footprint chapter is most closely related to citizens living sustainably and uses the ecological footprint as a modeling tool. It is a biophysical land based model that emphasizes the use of the hinterlands and the emission limits needed to achieve the Lighter Footprint goals of lowering Vancouver's footprint (see also chapter 1 for a description of the ecological footprint). This model connects to broader livable city goals: “it is about striving for a one-planet footprint *and* a city that is vibrant, healthy, safe, and just”

(City of Vancouver 2010, 47). Figure 9 displays the main contributors to Vancouver's current footprint, with food as the largest. The key strategies to reduce the footprint by 33% include: “engage, encourage, and enable” others, and exemplifying through City leadership (City of Vancouver 2010, 49).

Figure 9. *Lighter Footprint* (City of Vancouver 2010, 48)



A detailed internal document on the Lighter Footprint chapter shows that some of the priority short term actions, in hopes to achieve a one-planet footprint (measured per capita), were to develop a pilot green neighborhood and provide funding for local groups that can contribute to lowering the ecological footprint (City of Vancouver 2012c). The document also references a public engagement forum, where almost one-third of the over 3,000 votes for different ideas for this goal went to supporting vegan diets; in the second phase of the forum citizens suggested that the City be inclusive, utilize technology and social media, and “use language that is meaningful... as green and ‘sustainable’ lack meaning” and that they should “focus on action, not a big branding campaign” (City of Vancouver 2012c, 114-115).

The other nine GCAP goals include the following. The *green economy* chapter has two main targets: increase green jobs and increase involvement by local companies to green their operations. The *climate leadership* goal specifically targets lowering greenhouse gas emissions, especially carbon, which links to the next goal. *Green buildings* centers on carbon neutral standards for new buildings, and retrofitting existing buildings. The *green mobility* target rests on modal share: increasing public and active transport means, and decreasing the distance that Vancouverites drive their cars. Reducing solid waste is the key target for the *zero waste* goal. All Vancouverites should live within five minutes of city green space, and the City will plant more trees, for the *access to nature* goal. Reducing water consumption and meeting water quality standards are the targets for the *clean water* goal. Similarly, the *clean air* goal has a target of meeting air quality standards. Finally, the City plans to increase the number of ‘local food assets’ for their *local food* goal.

The established targets were used to assess the progress of the GCAP initiatives, as explained in the City’s 2013-2014 Implementation Update. A list of ten awards that the City of Vancouver received during 2013-2014 is first listed. All ten categories reported success in approaching the target goal. Challenges were listed for each indicator, many showing the limited jurisdictional reach of the City, such as natural gas prices and marine shipping’s contribution to SO₂ emissions. Gathering the appropriate data to measure the ecological footprint proved difficult, and thus they used a proxy indicator for the number of residents enabled to take action, described as those that “help collectively reduce our community’s environmental impact” (City of Vancouver 2014, 32).

While the GCAP was an election platform in 2008, the election issues in the 2014 campaigns were also broadly connected to Vancouver as an *expensive* city – affordable housing and the wage gap, homelessness, and transport (for example proposed changes to the

Broadway Corridor). Another issue was low voter turnout, as was the stance on energy projects such as the Trans Mountain pipeline that I discuss in the final section. The Green Party challenged Vision on their environmental stances, claiming the metrics do not represent net changes. However, the Green Party's "genuine green city" agenda does not appear drastically different from the GCAP and they seem to accept the ecological footprint model. The Green Party's green city plan concentrates on similar issues like local food, solar energy, and zero waste (Green Party of Vancouver 2014).

Thus far there are clearly differences between Copenhagen and Vancouver's plans, regarding their goals, levels of citizen participation and models. Where Copenhagen sticks to carbon neutrality, Vancouver uses a variety of indicators, including carbon neutrality, but also the ecological footprint. The citizen participation in Copenhagen was part of the LA21 Plan only, a plan meant to complement the technocratic CPH 2025 Plan, whereas Vancouver's plan is relatively more comprehensive and they engaged with citizens after the development of the ten goals. Despite these differences, I found the underlying framing to be overwhelmingly similar, as I show in the following section.

4.2 The Win-Win Frame

Both plans clearly claim a 'win-win' solution, where the economy can grow in a green manner and the environment can be protected. In their reading of the GCAP, Scerri and Holden (2013) argue that the plan "conceptualizes the ecological problematic as both sustainably manageable and advantageously exploitable through market relations" (11).

I first demonstrate with examples from both plans what I have identified as four key components of this 'win-win' frame: (1) the rhetoric is reassuring in a temporal manner: we

can have both economic development and environmental protection at the same time; (2) the competitive-yet-cooperative interurban agenda; (3) the assumed even trickle-down of benefits; (4) the merging of previous creative and smart city discourses with green city discourses. These components all intersect and show extrospective and introspective motives as I demonstrate. The second subsection will present and analyze both cities' climate change adaptation plans according to this frame.

4.2.1 The Constitutive Components

Simultaneous Reassurance

Both plans actively seek to remove doubt about their proposed scenarios and connect the environmental-economic agenda temporally: “Copenhagen sees an opportunity to become carbon neutral while at the same time generating green growth” (City of Copenhagen 2012, 11). The GCAP repeatedly uses this as well: “we can transform our cities and enjoy cleaner air, more green space, healthier people, and create new job opportunities at the same time” (City of Vancouver 2010, 17, 20). As Vancouver's goal is subtitled “A Bright Green Future” even the *shade* of green is referred to as “bright” – encouraging, hopeful and smart.

The reassurance of the win-win could be seen as related to the narcissistic attitude of “best practice” cities (see Peck *et al.* 2014 on Vancouver's narcissism); however, the reassurance could also be seen as necessary to contend with the previous ‘trade-off’ frame of ‘jobs versus environment’ where environmental regulation was portrayed as harmful to the economy. Thus, the temporality of this rhetoric may stem from this contestation – the ‘win-win’ scenario claims that not only can we achieve both, but we can do it *at the same time*. It is a reassurance that the economy will not suffer because of the environmental endeavors. As

development and progress have been measured in economic terms (GDP) one could imagine how any effort that may be perceived to threaten the economy must then be carefully navigated. Aside from this confrontation, it could be conceived that the ‘win-win’ frame must also resist the “apocalyptic” (Swyngedouw 2011) presentation of current environmental changes, by turning the ‘crisis’ into an ‘opportunity’.

Competitive-yet-cooperative

In the spirit of urban eco-boosterism (McCann 2013), the ‘win-win’ frame exudes a competitive-yet-cooperative tone with a similarly optimistic competitiveness as seen in creative city policies. The green city is a site of policy testing and exporting; McCann (2013) claims that “in the context of policy boosterism, the city, the mayor, and the policy are all commodified, branded, extrospective, and competitive” (12). I see two different iterations of competitiveness – the first is how it relates internationally to the green city race, and the second stems from the association of competitiveness with the economy, and thus competition for businesses is reinforced locally, as part of the reassuring component discussed above. Local businesses may remain economically competitive (introspective); the City may continue to competitively assert environmental policy expert status while cooperating with other cities to share this knowledge (extrospective); and the City may competitively strive to be a green economic growth leader (extrospective).

Vancouver’s first priority seeks to “secure Vancouver’s international reputation as a mecca of green enterprise” (City of Vancouver 2010, 10). This competitive logic extends to the environment as well, where “Vancouver residents enjoy incomparable access to green spaces, including the world’s most spectacular urban forest” and “breathe the cleanest air of any major city in the world” (City of Vancouver 2010, 40, 58). “The race... is both a friendly and fierce competition” (City of Vancouver 2010, 6) - friendly enough so that they may

export their expert knowledge. In reviewing the GCAP as part of Vancouver's urban eco-boosterism, McCann (2013) reflects on this competitive title: "greenest: those three letters speak volumes" (10).

Regarding cooperation and the international transfer of green city policies, often mentioned is that other cities will benefit from the production of expert knowledge. In this way the city is open for experimentation: "Copenhagen is ready to make the city available as a green laboratory" (City of Copenhagen 2012, 5); the GCAP expresses that green city success is to be shared: "when one city succeeds, we all benefit from the shared knowledge" (City of Vancouver 2010, 6). In order to be "smart" and "secure green growth" Copenhagen plans to "collaborate with knowledge institutions and public/private players about the creation and dissemination of new knowledge" (City of Copenhagen 2012, 51).

Concerning competition for local business, the plans are reassuring: "by embracing green economic development, Vancouver businesses can be more competitive, gain market share, and prepare for carbon regulation, all by improving environmental performance" (City of Vancouver 2010, 11). Both plans have a concentration on the economic impacts of a green city. Changing the environment in the city is an economic tool: "the transition [to a carbon neutral city] is one of the key elements to creating increased economic growth in Copenhagen. The city must attract more foreign businesses within the green sector and must establish an innovation and entrepreneurial environment" (City of Copenhagen 2012, 26).

Trickle-Down

Trickle-down also originates from economic thinking, in that accumulated wealth will naturally flow, and this component of the 'win-win' frame is related to local residents (introspective). Not only will other cities benefit from knowledge sharing, but importantly the

local residents should be reassured that they will benefit. This aspect relates to how the subjects are envisioned, a topic explored in the following chapter. All residents are understood to benefit from the material environmental improvements to their city. It also puts them into a general category that they *all* need to reduce their footprint.

Copenhageners are not considered partners, more so economic-environmental beneficiaries who are urged to bike and adopt an “energy efficient lifestyle” (City of Copenhagen 2012, 9); and Vancouverites should seek a one-planet footprint lifestyle. For example, a home weatherization green business is marketed to “residents who want to lighten their ecological footprint and save money” (City of Vancouver 2010, 14; with a similar example in CPH 2025). While ‘saving money’ might not immediately seem to reflect economic development, the assumption is that the money will be spent elsewhere. Take the following example: I participated in Vancouver’s Greenest City food waste challenge, an online event in cooperation with City Farmer, to help residents find ways to cut down on wasting food (see Figure 10). What I found interesting was that every step of the process was in relation to money – they ask “how much money did you save from not wasting food?” In this way the frame attends to all residents by explaining that they will save money and benefit from environmental improvements.

Figure 10. Vancouver Foodprint Worksheet

REDUCE YOUR FOODPRINT

Week of _____ to _____

Use our handy tracking sheet to keep track of all the food you save this week and all the food that ends up being thrown out. At the end of the week we'll email you and to report what your totals were. You'll be entered to win a \$100 gift card from one of our retail partners!

Food near the brink, but I was able to save it!

	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

How much \$\$\$ did you save this week by throwing out less \$ _____

Food that didn't make it...

	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

Total: \$ _____

Talk to us and tell us how much you saved using #FoodprintBC



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Finally, what underlies these plans is the remains of situated historical policy paradigms (see chapter 3), showing that the previous smart and creative policies linger and merge in the green action plans with the concentration on the economy. In order to be “ubiquitous” (Joss *et al.* 2013), the green action plans center on technology, energy, and specifically carbon emissions; this frame presents the environment in a material manner, and gives technology the role of savior: it will green the economy and protect the environment in an apolitical manner. This frame component shows the biggest differences between the two cases given its roots in the historical context. Vancouver has veered away from explicit terminology such as ‘smart’, while they implicitly do so by referring to their Green Olympic Games “legacy” (City of Vancouver 2010, 32). The CPH 2025 Plan explicitly refers to smart and creative strategies.

The descriptions and measurement models of the plans thus far show the continuation of previous discourses: they still hope to attract tourists, investments and new businesses (creative city) and they overtly rely on technology (smart city). Given that these cities are entrusted with economic development, and that smart and creative city policies concentrate on economic growth, it would be difficult to envision a switch to a purely environmental plan for the green city; this further follows environmental policy integration, where environmental policies are not stand alone or newly devised municipal departments, but rather integrated into already existing departments (see Holden 2012a). This reflects Joss *et al.* (2013) and McCann’s (2013) findings that the green and ‘smart’ are combined through eco-city initiatives; and Ross’s (2011) similar assertion that green and ‘creative’ have easily merged.

The interlocking components of this ‘win-win’ scenario are that the environment is placed within economic terms, and environmental actions are expected to simultaneously

bolster the economy, provide green jobs, and have even, trickle-down benefits for residents. The audience is both extrospective – internationally in a race that is cooperative enough to share “best practices”, and introspective – residents and businesses will surely benefit from this endeavor and are also expected to participate. These components all work together to form an approach to the green city that is both economic and environmental, and both extrospective and introspective. This forms an optimistic situation where everyone ‘wins’ all of the time and at the same time, without sacrifice. The questions that arise after analyzing these documents (especially given the reassuring rhetoric that we can ‘have it all’) are – who is now the other, or the enemy (what or who is the problem)? Climate change is shown as a key culprit, a problem to be both mitigated against and adapted to.

4.2.2 Frame Resonance in the Climate Change Adaptation Plans

To show how this ‘win-win’ frame resonates and connects to other environmental policies in these cities, I link this to Copenhagen and Vancouver’s climate change adaptation plans according to the four frame components sketched out above. Before doing so, I first briefly point out how mitigation and adaptation are differentiated in these plans, given that to date green city policies are most often part of climate change mitigation policies.³⁹

To become the ‘greenest city in the world’, the action plans are most often understood in practice as climate change mitigation efforts in that they attempt to lessen the global and local impact.⁴⁰ I accept that there are many conceptual and practical overlaps

³⁹ Holden and Larsen (2015) raise an important point that climate change discourse is a separate discourse altogether from the ‘sustainable development’ discourse in the GCAP, the authors notice a shift that has given preference to the former.

⁴⁰ See Vancouver’s “Climate Change Adaptation Strategy” (2012a), specifically “Section 1.1 Mitigation and Adaptation”, where the GCAP is explicitly referred to as a mitigation strategy.

between mitigation and adaptation; here I am concerned with how they are expressed in these particular plans. The Vancouver “Climate Change Adaptation Strategy” (2012a) refers to adaptation as *preparedness* and responding to impacts, especially health and emergency management; similar to Copenhagen’s “Climate Adaptation Plan” (2011a), which uses the word *protect* 115 times in the 100 page document, where they also use “climate-proof(ing)” as both an adjective and verb. Mitigation conversely is seen as *prevention*. Indeed, when I asked Ryan, a Vancouver City staffer who works on the “Climate Change Adaptation Strategy”, he spoke of the difference: “mitigation for some people they associate with doing with less, with cutting back, changing their lifestyles, and people have challenges with that. Whereas adaptation again is if we build this, if we do this, then we are going to be prepared, we are going to be protected, that’s a very different mindset.” He also explained that while the GCAP receives most of the international attention, he has seen a rise in other cities inquiring about the adaptation strategy. This difference influences how the green city is perceived and acted upon. The global discursive prioritization of mitigation is a political choice, in other words it is within the realm of possibilities for cities to only have a climate change adaptation plan.

Copenhagen and Vancouver both engaged in data gathering to understand the risks and levels of vulnerability posed by changing climates, and developed these adaptation strategies to complement their green action plans. Rises in rainfall and sea levels, as well as heat waves in the summer, with associated public health risks and high costs of infrastructure repair, are major concerns to these coastal cities. Storm water, urban forests and building code management are their top priority actions. Copenhagen’s plan shows concern for increased rain in the winter season, rising temperatures in the summer, changes in groundwater, rising sea levels, with brief mentions of “indirect consequences” like public

health and declining biodiversity. There is an obvious technological approach to climate change adaptation, where the smart city discourse strongly merges with the green.

Compared to the green action plans' reassuring rhetoric, there are no reassurances that the City can implement climate change adaptation measures and grow the economy *at the same time*. These plans frame mitigation and adaptation differently where the temporal and spatial scales interact. For mitigation the preventative actions involved have a present temporality with positive present and future benefits/consequences; spatially there will be supposed local and global benefits. For adaptation the present local preparation is in case of future global environmental change – thus with the difference between preventing and preparing comes a change in the simultaneous temporality found in the 'win-win' frame's reassurance.

The adaptation measures are presented in the plans specifically as cost-effective in a future tense that will have net savings. Vancouver's strategy confirms the economic-environmental optimistic fusion: "it is important to consider the economic advantages climate change may provide as well. Warmer summers may attract more tourists and longer growing seasons allow for new agriculture crops in the region" (City of Vancouver 2012a, 17). As does Copenhagen's: "in developing new methods to climate-proof a modern metropolis, we can create growth throughout the Capital Region, which will also help secure the economic foundation for the future of Copenhagen" (City of Copenhagen 2011a, 57).

Regarding the competitive-yet-cooperative frame component, the adaptation plans are cooperative yet less internationally competitive compared to the green action plans – there does not seem to be a race to be the world's most climate change adapted city. Where the green action plans employ extrospective and introspective perspectives, the climate change adaptation plans concentrate on the local populations, while subtly asserting the role of the

adaptation plans in securing the title as experts and international leaders. Talk of leadership and adaptation knowledge remains: “the City of Vancouver is a recognized leader in climate change mitigation, and adding adaptation to our business will ensure that we can continue to meet City goals cost effectively over time” (City of Vancouver 2012a, 2). Copenhagen’s plan is a part of the green growth strategy and acts to make the city more “attractive” (City of Copenhagen 2011a, 6) and won the Danish *INDEX: Design to Improve Life* (2013) award. Through this competition, other cities should follow suit: “as Copenhagen launches its ambitious Climate Adaptation Plan to design a vibrant and healthy place to live, work, play and create, we can only hope that other cities will follow [its] lead in order to secure a bright future for their inhabitants” (INDEX 2013).

While both Copenhagen and Vancouver’s adaptation plans assume trickle down benefits, the evenness across the population is more characteristic of Copenhagen’s plan. In Vancouver’s strategy, they explicitly show concern for the most vulnerable, identified as low income and homeless populations, as well as the sick, elderly and young. Copenhagen’s plan only refers to infrastructure, such as the Metro, streets and buildings, as “vulnerable”.⁴¹ Copenhageners are mostly mentioned in reassuring that they will economically benefit from the City’s climate change adaptation investment, thus saving them money in the future; otherwise residents are mentioned as recipients of an information campaign.

The four components of the ‘win-win’ frame are found in the adaptation plans, though less competitive and without the temporally reassuring attitude. Overall, climate change adaptation is seen as a cost-effective investment in physically preparing the city, an approach that allows for the continued merging of smart and green discourse through the reliance on technology.

⁴¹ This difference could also be seen in light of the Vancouver’s comparatively higher economic inequality and homeless population.

4.3 The Green City as Place

The following sections move away from the ‘win-win’ framing analysis and explore how the city is imagined according to these plans in regards to spatial scale. As the politics of scale has been deeply discussed in current urban theory circles and measuring ecological impacts have been the center of environmental debates, section 4.3.1 will connect these concepts with empirical insight from the green action plans. Section 4.3.2 then concentrates on current environmental concerns that are not counted in green city discourse and measurements given its constructed scale.

4.3.1 (B)ordering

The green action plans imagine the green city as a physical place, reducing the city to its materiality, which influences the way that sustainability is conceptualized and acted upon. Measurement models provide specific insight to how the city scale is produced: carbon counting relies on emissions within Copenhagen; and the ecological footprint quantifies the treatment of Vancouver’s hinterlands through biophysical consumption. This subtly re-conceptualizes city borders according to such models. In advancing Lefebvre’s critical urban theory, Schmid (2014) writes about such politics: “borders are cuts in the continual flow of interaction... they are instruments of structuring, of control, of order” (78).

The green action plans and their models have a primary goal to reduce certain emissions within these borders, a technical goal that often seems difficult to contest. Green energy production and consumption are not portrayed as strategies to attain a social justice goal; the ‘win-win’ frame shows that developing the economy is a clear priority. Born and Purcell’s (2006) work on the politics of scale is particularly useful here. They warn of the

‘local trap’, where they critique the notion that local food is a goal rather than a *strategy* to achieve a particular goal like social justice. This helps to identify how qualifiers such as ‘local’ or green are conflated with sustainable or just. Similarly, in the cases of Copenhagen and Vancouver, it is easy to conflate carbon neutral and a one-planet ecological footprint with ‘sustainable’ or ‘just’.

These subjective borders and definitions are drawn within the possibilities of the models, of what can be measured, assessed and counted. The plans may be viewed as isomorphic to correspond with the models, as indicated in the examples above. In Copenhagen and Vancouver the subjective nature of this measurement was another concept with a Janus-face – on one hand the targets give City staff an objective to work towards and track their progress, creating a contract with citizens. For some of the community groups that I spoke with who wish to be involved with the City’s efforts, the green city goals created a common program that the groups could ‘latch on’ to. On the other hand is the concern for the ‘rubber-stamp’ and self-policing process, in that the municipality is deriving the models, tracking the implementation, and developing its own definitions and assessments – without an external review. Adam (interview, Mythological Quarter) saw this as a major impediment to change:

The city is coming up with solutions themselves, and getting this rubber stamp they have... manufacturing the appearance of democratic participation. It really plagues this place and demobilizes people, it doesn’t create situations for issues of sustainability, resilience and infrastructure, something that citizens are charged with and citizens can help increase the knowledge. There is an immense amount of control over city appearance, infrastructure, there are multiple layers to this: like history, but also nationalism, [and] identity as it’s written in the spaces of the city.

The measurements themselves face criticism regarding their ability to adequately assess sustainability. Even Rees and Wackernagel (1996), who developed the ecological

footprint, accept that it is a static model and cannot incorporate the “sociopolitical dimensions of the global change crisis” (232). There has been a range of critiques against this method, as McManus and Haughton (2006) point out: “there are ways that appear to reduce the size of an Ecological Footprint that do nothing at all to reduce the total environmental impacts of consumption” (199). Local activists in both cities critiqued the lack of engagement with systemic problems: “the poorest city in the world is probably the greenest city, without hyper consumption, international flights and high energy use” (Hern conversation); and “in contrast working for a *negative GDP* - that would tell me something serious about carbon neutrality” (Adam interview, Mythological Quarter). Roy (interview, Urban Farming Society) questioned this race entirely: “I think it’s frightening if Vancouver is considered one of the greenest cities in the world... a world full of absolutely disgustingly unsustainable cities that are consuming resources at a mind-blowingly wasteful rate.”

Carbon neutrality as a model is also open for critique. For example, Copenhagen plans to produce more green energy (biomass, geothermal, waste, wind and solar) than it consumes, while considering waste used for energy consumption to be carbon neutral. In effect this simply displaces the energy, rather than lowering consumption, the materials economy or GDP. Concerning mobility, pollution caused by creating electric vehicles (and their parking spaces) is not mentioned, rather “85% of the Administration’s own passenger cars must be powered by electricity or hydrogen by 2015. This means that the City of Copenhagen must purchase more than 500 electric cars”, with a proposal for at least 700 parking spaces for such vehicles (City of Copenhagen 2012, 42). The production, transport and disposal of these vehicles will not happen in Copenhagen, thus it does not factor into the carbon equation. The ultimate fetishization of CO₂ (Swyngedouw 2013) is through equating this bounded carbon neutrality with sustainability.

Discussing the carbon neutrality goal with Martin (interview, City Staff), he admitted to the limited nature of this, “so the rest, how much you fly, what you eat and drink, what you consume and so on, how much you throw out, that’s not part of it.” This however, led to questions concerning the extent to which the City can directly intervene in citizens’ lives, thus questioning responsibility. Scerri and Holden (2013) explain the role that the City assumes as a “facilitator for citizen participation, communication, education and cooperative public advocacy in designing policy for SD [sustainable development]” yet the expectation of Vancouverites’ involvement “remains well beyond the domain and jurisdiction of the City” (13-14). In the CPH 2025 and GCAP, City leadership is a key component, taking responsibility for making change in municipal activities - this could be seen as one of the few areas that they actually do have control over. The caveat to my critique here regarding the green city as place is that the models and actions must correspond to the government bodies elected to represent particular physical places.

Another limitation to their plans and goals is other governmental levels; this was often discussed in reference to who is in control. My analysis indicates that in Vancouver scale and responsibility were discussed in relation to three main concerns: funding, regulations and democratic representation. Many conversations excused a lack of progressive change because “we don’t have *control* over this”, meaning that budgets directly limit the sustainability initiatives that a City may consider and provincial or federal laws can place barriers on how much jurisdictional authority the City has. For example, welfare rates, mass transit funding, Port authority, even bicycle helmet laws, are all decisions made at the BC or federal level. In this way the City transforms into an advocate, or “cheerleader” as Councilor Reimer (interview) referred to it, taking stances on certain regulations that could have a significant influence on the social and political shape of the city. This led to a concern from some

participants that they were not able to be “democratically represented” due to these scalar politics.

This returns us to Schmid’s (2014) assessment of drawing city borders. He writes that “they also mark transitions and differences: two worlds, two different orders, collide at a border” (78). Both Copenhagen and Vancouver are portrayed as the environmentally conscious city within their own countries, reflecting the changing mindsets via levels of government: “people are pretty conscious of it [sustainability] here I would say. You go out and that changes as you leave the borders of the city unfortunately” (Allen interview, Environmental Youth Alliance). Both green action plans and staff interviewed indicate that there is awareness that achieving the green city goals requires multiple levels of governance. In Vancouver there was an awareness of a scalar mismatch and how this may suppress local efforts: “it has to start at the national, the international, it can’t be a little pocket happening here and there... we have got to do this together” (Barb interview, HUB).⁴²

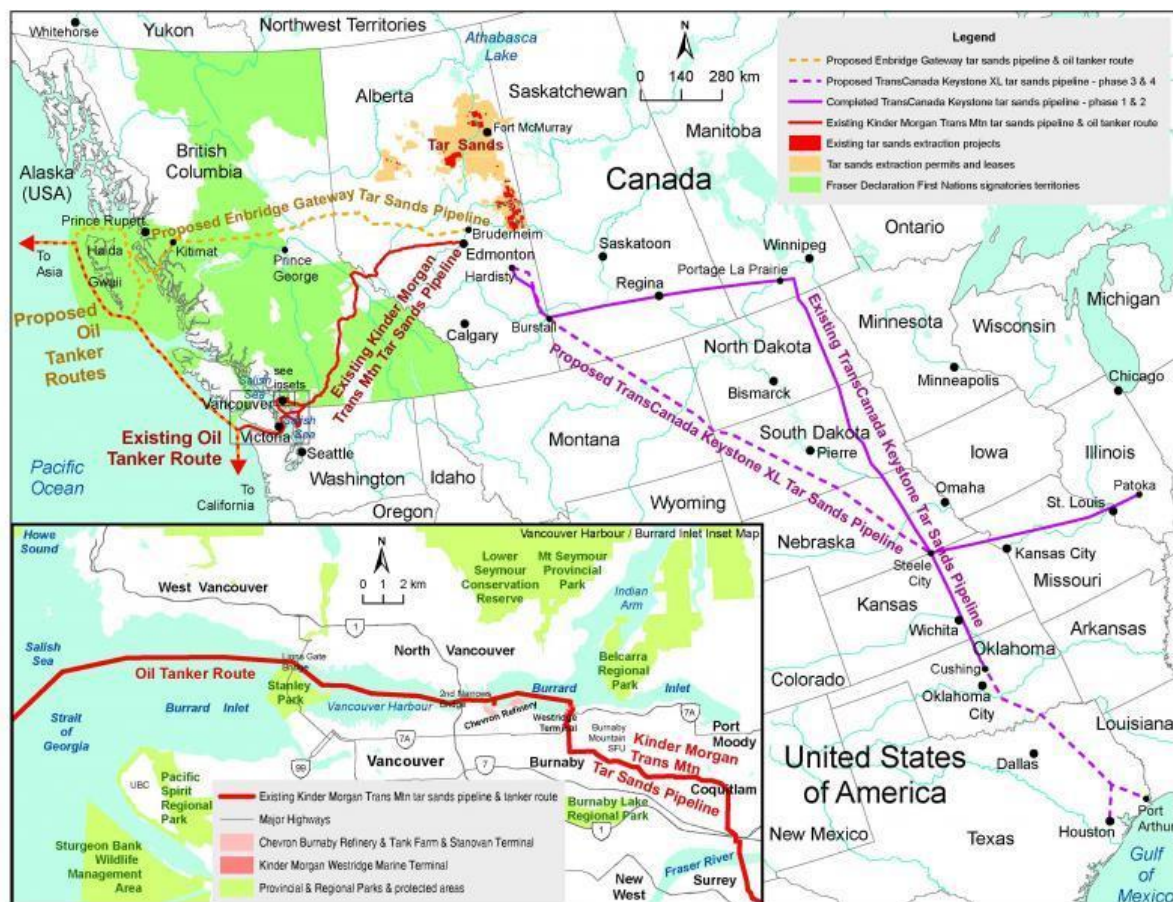
In sum, the models to measure the green city reinforce an idea of the city as a place and limit the policies and actions that could be considered green. Moreover, they are not scalar strategies directly attached to social justice goals, rather ultimate goals that reflect the ‘win-win’ frame component of competitive-yet-cooperative and the technical green discourse. Portraying the city as place in practice in these cases has bordering and ordering implications, and confronts recent advancements in critical urban theory as I explain in the following section.

⁴² See also McCann’s (2013) example from COP15 when Vancouver and Toronto mayors spoke out against Canada’s climate policies.

4.3.2 Green City Hinterlands

This section leaves the typical political bounds of Vancouver as a green city, and sheds light on the environmental politics of the hinterlands and demonstrates the problem of conflating green city policies with sustainability. During my research visit in Vancouver, I participated in activist efforts to resist a tar sands oil pipeline that was proposed to be twinned with the existing Trans Mountain pipeline, managed by the US energy company Kinder Morgan (see map in Figure 11).

Figure 11. North America Map with Trans Mountain Pipelines (Wilderness Committee 2014)



This example comes at a crucial time as Brenner (2014) claims that while most often not associated with urbanization, the Alberta tar sands do indeed represent urbanization – challenging conventional conflations of the urban and the city. Brenner (2014) writes that the

aerial image of the tar sands “takes us far away from the large, dense, vertical landscapes of cityness, into a zone in which the earth’s surface has been layered with a viscous sludge, traversed by muddy roads twisting around ponds filled with huge accumulations of toxic waste” (27). The recent transformation and commodification of the tar sands supports capitalist expansion. “The dominant model of capitalist urbanization continues to be based upon the extraction, production and consumption of fossil fuels”, Brenner writes that we do not have the tools yet to “adequately capture the processes of extended urbanization through which formerly marginalized or remote spaces are being enclosed, operationalized, designed and planned to support the continued agglomeration of capital, labor, and infrastructure within the world’s large cities and megacity regions” (21).

Many Burnaby residents who experienced an oil spill in 2011 were against this pipeline proposal, along with the City of Burnaby and the City of Vancouver.⁴³ However, when the City of Burnaby attempted to enforce its bylaws to halt Kinder Morgan, the National Energy Board (NEB) declared that Burnaby did not have jurisdiction in this case. Newly established grassroots groups like BROKE (Burnaby Residents Against Kinder Morgan Expansion) and the Caretakers were assisted by existing groups such as the Vancouver Ecosocialist Group (VESG) and Rising Tide Vancouver Coast Salish Territories. An umbrella group called Climate Convergence emerged to bring these groups together to develop direct actions against Kinder Morgan – often occurring at the sites the company planned to conduct survey work.

While there are many research angles to take from my participation in this resistance, I use this example here to highlight the implications of the (un)sustainability of the hinterlands for the city, as it connects to the measurements and politics of scale related to

⁴³ A referendum vote in Burnaby showed 70% of residents were against this pipeline.

imagining the green city. This illustrates points made in the previous section that (1) some citizens feel that they are no longer able to be democratically represented when it comes to socio-spatial changes in their cities; and (2) City governments face jurisdictional limitations in devising environmental policies. The pipeline project was clearly recognized in the 2013-2014 Implementation update for Vancouver's GCAP. This statement shows how politics outside of the city directly influence their green goals (specifically GCAP's Chapter 2: Climate Leadership):

Pipeline expansions, such as the proposed Trans Mountain project, run counter to the Climate Leadership goal to eliminate dependence on fossil fuels. The increase in oil sands production facilitated by these projects will impact greenhouse gas emissions on a global scale. The National Energy Board has said that they do not intend to consider issues of climate change and the long-term impacts of bitumen shipped by the new pipeline. This will make it increasingly challenging to meet national emission reduction commitments and will exacerbate climate-related damage to our community due to rising sea levels and coastal flooding. (City of Vancouver 2014, 12)

I have already noted difficulties that the City of Vancouver faces in taking responsibility for its sustainability as many choices are not within their jurisdiction. Thus, given the trend of global urbanization, is the reification of the city the most appropriate method to approach sustainability? That is, if sustainability is a goal and we accept this logic of a reified city, perhaps the biggest sources of environmental problems and social inequality are epistemologically “outside” of these borders.

During my time spent opposing this pipeline, I found two different viewpoints on the intersection of the green city and the environmental politics of the hinterlands. The first critically questions the green city's legitimacy as some VESG members expressed to me that bike lanes and gardens⁴⁴ are not the answer; rather they are a window dressing, a mask to cover systemic problems. In private meetings to plan resistance tactics to the pipeline, they

⁴⁴ Bike lanes and gardens are taken to represent the typical/mainstream actions or ideas associated with Vancouver as a 'green' city.

quietly asked “how much green city *veneer* does Vancouver need to cover up the growing number of dirty energy projects happening just outside of the city?”

On the other hand, the green city title was evoked publicly as an argument against the pipeline. The pipeline was portrayed as a threat to the green city title, for example by indigenous leader Grand Chief Stewart Phillip where he said “Vancouver is internationally regarded as a green city and we need to keep it that way” (field notes, multiple speeches at multiple rallies in fall 2014); and local activists similarly used a positive frame in their slogan: “We Love This Coast” claiming that “we need to keep the region beautiful.” During the Vancouver 2014 municipal election, Niki Sharma, a Vision Vancouver City Council candidate (at the time) was quoted in a *Vancouver Observer* (Dharmarajah 2014) interview stating that “our economy and our tourism, it all depends on our (city’s) natural beauty” – thus the pipeline was portrayed as detrimental to the economic-environmental ‘win-win’ scenario. In Green Party City Councilor Adriane Carr’s *Vancouver Observer* (2015) article (a published letter of comment to the NEB) titled “We will not earn Greenest City title if we are West Coast’s major tar sands-oil port”, she echoed the sentiment: “I am deeply concerned about the potential impacts - both short and long-term - of an oil spill on the health of Vancouver citizens and on our city’s reputation and economic well-being.” There is an introspective concern for local residents’ health, the economy (not growth but preservation), and protecting the local environment (especially aesthetically). There is an extrospective concern for how this pipeline would threaten the global image of Vancouver as a green city; and a further extrospective concern from activists who seemed to carry the burden of global climate change in their opposition to the pipeline.

Vancouver in this light was not a site of climate change mitigation and adaptation, but an exchange point, which re-conceptualizes borders where oil goes from pipeline to tanker,

where indigenous peoples go from reservation to the DTES. While the GCAP attempts to place neatly constructed borders around the green city, the political ecological position of Vancouver negates this effort. This should make us consider the reverse of the ecological footprint method – how the exploitation and commodification of the hinterland and its natural resource bounty then conceives of the city as a service station. Wallstam and Crompton (2014), writing for *The Mainlander*, explore the sustainability dissonance and deem Vancouver as the “city of perpetual displacement.” They claim the same party responsible for the GCAP has also been complacent:

Ignore the fact that tanker traffic has doubled in the Burrard Inlet under Vision’s watch, up by over 100%. Set aside the fact that Vancouver has among the lowest business property taxes in the world, making it a haven for the majority of the world’s mining corporations. Overlook the fact that Vision Vancouver’s big answer to the global climate crisis is green business and tax breaks for venture capitalists. Focus instead on the fact that Vision Vancouver has created the ‘greenest city in the world.’ Vancouverites are now living under a progressive, green government – or at least you would think if you followed the recent rhetoric of leaders in Vancouver’s liberal NGO environmentalist movement.

This quote resembles the VESG members’ concerns about the green city veneer. What is interesting about this example is that a techno-fix and ‘win-win’ frame is not asserted, and the pipeline acts to obscure the green city borders. Specifically, the pipeline demonstrates the *permeability* of these borders, an important condition for Schmid (2014) and a characteristic easily overlooked under the “terroritorialization of carbon.” This example then brought together concerns about the conventional approach to green city policies, as I showed how the City did not have jurisdictional control over this energy project, where the pipeline is not part of the GCAP assessment, and further, where the GCAP may act to obscure discussion and action towards sustainability.

Chapter Summary

This chapter concentrated on the discourse produced, and often reproduced, as part of the green city making process that has galvanized around Copenhagen and Vancouver's green action plans. The findings in this chapter are important to understand the hegemonic discourse, as varying contestations to this discourse will follow in subsequent chapters. The 'win-win' framing and discourse connect and manifest through green city planning in not only Copenhagen and Vancouver, but also the cities that copy it. This chapter focused on a key research question: how is sustainability framed in green action plans? My answer directly addressed the politics of spatial scale, the technification of sustainability, and brought in relevant empirical insight by discussing the proposed Trans Mountain pipeline at Burnaby Mountain, the Sharing Copenhagen program, and the frame resonance in the climate change adaptation plans.

While these cities employ different approaches to develop their plans and to measure their greenness, I found that the main economic-environmental 'win-win' frame was used in a similar introspective-extrospective manner. This frame combats the previous 'jobs versus environment' frame by temporally reassuring that the green economy and environmental protection is possible at the same time. The frame also portrays a trickle-down beneficial effect that is evenly spread with the expectation that citizens will participate; and it extends the competition typically associated with economic development to envisioning the environment, while cooperating globally as the city is a site of expert knowledge production and thus shares best practices. Finally, this frame is made possible by the dominance of a "ubiquitous" technological apparatus that can be "copy-pasted."

The merging of creative and smart discourses with green is concerning because, as Kear (2007) claims, “to learn how to build sustainable cities without turning sustainability into a slogan or brand with which to sell the city to tourists, mobile classes, and capital” (333) is a key challenge. The worrisome sentiment is not only a priority on the economy where the branding detracts from realizing and developing a locally charged, citizen-driven sustainability, but also the international spread of these policies. Such policies seem to take the environment as hostage – for example the CPH 2025 is described as “a plan for exploiting the ambitions about carbon neutrality as leverage for innovation, new jobs and investments” (City of Copenhagen 2012, 8).

In this way, propagating the city as greenest to attract investments and produce expert knowledge continues to commodify and reify the city and thereby draws neoliberal barriers through which citizens may engage with everyday urban spaces. Or as Caprotti (2014) claims: “in the case of eco-urbanism, sustainability most often means economic sustainability of a particular, neoliberal and deregulated kind” (1295). The following chapter will focus on how this dominant view of sustainability holds within it a specific notion and subjectivities of what it means to live sustainably. I show the uneven ways in which this discourse is manifested and continue to question who the green city is for.

Chapter 5

Framing Green City Subjects

Introduction

[The municipality] makes these ‘one-fits-all’ plans. You have some white middle class people sitting in some kind of government department deciding a campaign on how to get people not to smoke. They get very surprised when the campaign is finished and the poor people don’t stop smoking.⁴⁵ They don’t consider that it might be that the project was wrong from the beginning, because the analysis is wrong that you can make a campaign that fits all people who live in different socio-economic structures. And I am fighting bureaucrats with that all the time because they think they are some kind of super human race where they try to plan everybody else and they don’t understand everybody else. (Edvard interview, Miljopunkt Nørrebro)

In the fall of 2014, well over halfway into my field research, I realized that I had only interviewed white people (I did not ask about income, although I would wager/generalize that they were also mostly middle class). I perhaps did not realize this as an issue in Copenhagen given its societal homogeneity. I was experiencing how important diversity and inclusivity are to sustainability, but this was not reflected in my data. The majority of interviews were set up via email thus I did not know their demographics prior to this so it was not a personal bias. Rather than a research design or theoretical assumption bias, I found that the reason for this was connected to the way that sustainability is conventionally defined within these cities, which has ramifications for who is able to participate in the green city. My interview with Edvard (excerpt above), who works directly with locals at an environmental NGO (Miljopunkt Nørrebro) revealed demographic inequalities that constitute this urban socio-political context, and to uncover and connect them to sustainability, one must go beyond

⁴⁵ There is a campaign for Copenhagen to be a smoke free city by 2025.

green city window dressing and environmental materialities. This chapter is dedicated to making these connections, to provoke the politics of green city subject making, and to provide empirical evidence to the concept of sustainable lifestyles in the context of vanguard green cities. Data that influences the findings specifically in this chapter mainly consists of my semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with those already involved in sustainability efforts (either working with the City or a community group).

Has sustainable lifestyles been coopted to describe a trendy, middle class way of life? And what kind of social, cultural and economic barriers does this draw? My emphasis here is not to analyze consumer behavior at the individual level or calculate how much emissions are produced. I am most interested in the discursive conceptualizations of sustainable lifestyles in relation to green city policy. Duncan and Duncan (2004) explain the importance of this socio-spatial relation: “discourses contain morally charged tales and loosely linked pieties that connect landscapes to place and places to lifestyles... shaping them all into a dominant aesthetic” (38).

The green action plans outlined in the previous chapter have implications for the lives of everyday citizens. Focusing on these policies is important, as Lakoff (2010) explains that “to an enormous degree, governmental action outweighs and shapes individual actions. When we think of the environment, we should be thinking of political involvement,” (77) which justifies my close engagement with the green action plans to understand sustainable lifestyles, as these policies propagate particular identities and rules.

In this chapter I first demonstrate the sustainable lifestyle narrative associated with the green action plans discussed in chapter 4. Secondly I bring in empirical insight from my interviews to show how sustainable lifestyles is conceptualized in Copenhagen and Vancouver and the demographic particularities closely linked to this concept in practice, such

as class and geographic location. I found strong similarities between both cases, thus the data is combined here to analyze major themes. The final section provides several Copenhagen examples to illustrate points of contestations as the dominant understanding of a green (city) citizen is inserted in related green policies. My findings have implications for utilizing sustainable lifestyles as a conceptual tool, and reveal the politics of who has access to the green city.

5.1 Governing the Green Citizen

In section 3.3 I described the public memories that are praised as the winding pathway that led Copenhagen and Vancouver to become green cities. These memories create a discourse around the particular narrative that is upheld and (re)established through environmental policies, especially the green action plans. Understanding this narrative gives insight to how the ‘urban sustainability fix’ plays out in an associated imaginary of how citizens should live in a green way, as within these plans are expectations for citizens to take responsibility. Rice (2010) calls this “carbon governmentality, where individuals are expected take on the responsibilities themselves of reducing their carbon footprint in accordance with the goals of the state. Get on a bus, turn down your thermostat, ride your bike to work: *Be a good carbon citizen*” (935).

The ‘win-win’ frame in these green action plans establishes a positive pathway of economic growth and environmental protection, at all times and for everyone, using models that track emissions and energy use. Green city citizens may participate by having a green job, living in a green building and recycling. Through interviews with City staff and consultants, environmentally concerned Copenhageners were referred to as “smart citizens,” “creative, innovative and green oriented people” and “citizen cyclists.” The CPH 2025 Plan

states that Copenhageners should adopt an “energy efficient lifestyle,” and the GCAP projects a “one-planet footprint” lifestyle.⁴⁶ This frame draws borders around who can participate in such practices: for example in the GCAP or CPH 2025 plans, indigenous peoples, bidders and the homeless, or billionaires and destructive corporations are not mentioned.

During my field research I tried to envision how a conversation about the GCAP would transpire with some of the homeless people that I had met. To me this was not something they could relate to in a positive way as I idly watched the City tear down a homeless squat ‘tent city’ in Oppenheimer Park (in the DTES; see Figures 12 and 13 below).⁴⁷ I asked another bystander what they will do with all of the belongings, and he pointed to the row of garbage trucks – “they will throw it away, it’s all trash anyway.” They do not have carbon emissions to lower - which raises equality related questions of who gets to have a footprint from a right to the city perspective. Footprinting is a Western concept that targets those who are able lower their consumption and emissions. I am not arguing against this goal, my point is to note that Copenhagen and Vancouver contain diverse populations with different socio-economic backgrounds (as Edvard’s interview quote in the introduction refers to), and thus contain diverse footprints and interests regarding the ability to participate in the green city.

⁴⁶ While the ecological footprint is a more comprehensive measurement compared to carbon tracking, the ecological footprint still heavily relies on carbon data as the ecological footprint measures the “biologically productive land and water ecosystems required to produce the goods, and services, consumed by the region’s residents and to assimilate the carbon dioxide emissions associated with the manufacture, transport, distribution and disposal of those goods” (Moore *et al.* 2013, 54).

⁴⁷ Tent cities are a common protest feature in the DTES (Barnes and Hutton 2009).

Figure 12. Oppenheimer Park Tent City Squat (August 2014)



Figure 13. Oppenheimer Park Tent City (October 2014 – ‘Eviction Day’)



Those living on the streets, for whom ‘sustainable’ simply means surviving day to day, have their life in public spaces increasingly regulated so that the city may maintain its attractive appearance, as demonstrated in the ‘tent city’ evictions (see also Kennelly 2015). The just privileged enough are primary targets for lowering their emissions; they are urged to trade in their old cars for e-cars or to grow their own food. Ross (2011) explains that creative and green urban policies easily merged together and especially targeted the middle class as they “fit neatly into the low-carbon model of downtown habitation; friendly to pedestrians, transit pathways, 100-mile foodsheds, and locally owned business, and dense enough to deliver efficient forms of land use and public space” (77). Isenhour (2011) also had a similar finding, where many respondents to her call for participants attempting to live sustainably were from “Sweden’s privileged well-educated middle-class environmental movement” (124). Thus as Edvard’s interview quote in the introduction implies, Copenhagen’s planning involves perceived practices of exclusion; or as Jensen (2013) found in her Copenhagen cycling research: “the multiplicity of the city is not reflected in the policy representations” (224).

Edvard (interview, Miljopunkt Nørrebro) explained his conception of generational differences and why the middle class is a target, where they need motivational factors aside from ‘saving the environment’:

We have two segments: the *dark green*, I call them the old hippies, and then we have the *light green*, which is younger people in mid-career with children, who wants to do the right thing but don’t have time, how do we help them? Many of them use bikes when they are in here, but they have a car because they have to go outside the city. We have a small portion we call *blue and black* which is a waste of time to try and convince them, they have their own lifestyles and they don’t want to change anything. So we try to focus on the dark green and the light green. There was a quote from someone about the light green, they said ‘what is in it for me?’ And I think that is very educating, to think that is how they see things: ‘I am a busy person, I have my career, what is in it for me?’

With these separations, he employs the ‘win-win’ frame with such “light green” family oriented individuals. Because of their fast paced and busy lives, their hedonistic engagement with sustainability is limited through time and convenience. The goal with them is not to change the overall system or relationships, but choose a ‘sustainability fix’ at this individual level. The “dark green old hippies” are viewed as environmentalists that do not require such convincing to participate in Nørrebro’s sustainability activities. Edvard later explained that the “blue and black” are typically low-income, without the proper resources to be concerned with sustainability, a theme that I return to in the following section.

Aside from how the green action plans and models focus on certain groups and practices, I found paradoxical reactions to the identity of green cities, one that warrants caution in that this may act as a disincentivizing factor for citizen involvement. While this psychological factor may be out of the scope of my research (more closely related to the internal or individual drivers), worthy of note is that individuals may feel that if the city is indeed the greenest, then they do not need to participate, that their lifestyle does not have a significant influence. In my interview with Johan (Information) he explained that the level of content with Copenhagen as a green city influenced individuals: “there’s definitely complacency here, in the sense that *we are already good*, do we need to do that much more?” The reasoning behind this is similar to Colville-Andersen’s worry (see section 4.1.1) whereby if the City is deemed as green, politicians might lose motivation for sincere progress.

The other side to this complacency is that individuals may not engage with diversity or critically question systemic issues, as Johan later claimed “it’s so easy to have the opinion ‘I am so green because I don’t have a car’... some people kind of greenwash themselves in saying that ‘I ride my bike’.” Thus the green city identity may have unintended influences with its technocratic framing, where individuals ‘greenwash themselves’ by ‘checking off the

boxes' of riding a bike and buying local food. Further, environmental problems may not be a pressing issue or internalized by individuals in cities that are surrounded by windmills and swimmable harbor baths (Copenhagen) or beautiful mountains and beaches (Vancouver), because they are already 'good' (green).

To recap, the efficiency models and frames in the green action plans target certain classes who should live in an energy efficient way, while the manner in which Copenhagen and Vancouver became green cities is seen through a variety of events and factors that have been post facto rationalized as green public memories. The following shows how this narrative influences the way in which sustainable lifestyles is understood in these cities.

5.2 Sustainable Lifestyles in Practice

In this section I first outline the different responses to my interview question of 'what are some of the key elements of living sustainably?', where I found two discernable themes. The first theme from the majority of the responses reflects the City discourse with an overall emissions counting/footprint approach where transport, food and space were often given as examples. A minority of responses did not fit within this dominant technical approach, they conversely centered on an acceptance for cultural diversity – seeing sustainability as situated. Upon exploring these two main themes, I then show two underlying demographic issues that were often discussed in relation to living sustainably, especially through the dominant theme. The first is based on the idea that living sustainably is an exclusive class privilege, and the second is based on geographical area: how suburban identities and practices influence ideas of living sustainably in Copenhagen and Vancouver.

5.2.1 Energy Efficient and Situated Sustainable Lifestyles

Analyzing how sustainable lifestyles is conceptualized in Copenhagen and Vancouver helps to understand the pervasive influence and acceptance of the dominant discourse. I address how these answers follow the green action plan models and their concern with factors that lower carbon emissions. I asked participants to identify key elements to living sustainably (refer to Annex 1 for the full list of participants).

In both cities the majority of answers fell into a technical theme where participants discussed footprints, counting emissions and actions particularly related to food and transport. For food, they suggested less meat consumption, purchasing more local and/or organic food, and involvement in community gardens. Concerning transport, they suggested less private car use, and more public transport or cycling. Air travel, a practice not bound to the city, was one transport factor that seemed unresolved, without a clever techno-fix – “we know that we should stop flying but we just enjoy traveling so much.” Aside from food and transport there were other suggestions related to concrete actions. Some participants brought in issues of space, by living in smaller spaces, creatively using and sharing space.⁴⁸ Some mentioned waste: touting Copenhagen’s waste to energy incinerator, or recycling and composting in Vancouver. Few discussed politics like voting for green candidates and green investments.

These answers are in line with an emissions counting lifestyle and in accordance with a “one-fits-all” plan (Edvard’s introduction quote). The replies were very quick: “food and cycling – that’s easy.” They worried about how the efficiency paradox plays out at the individual level: “I don’t know if you know the term greenwashing... you get a check from

⁴⁸ These categories are slightly superficial as they interrelate, for example community gardens could be considered a way to rethink urban space and also require less transport of food or trips to the grocery store.

the company saying congratulations you didn't use much heat here's 200 Euros. What are you using the money for, to go to Paris or something? So I think it's actually very difficult to say when something is sustainable" (Erik interview, Danish Nature Agency). While the company scheme Erik referenced is premised on motivating behavior through capitalistic incentives, he worries about the negation of energy saved from heating with air travel made economically possible by the refund scheme. Even though skeptical of the efficiency paradox, it did not change their stance that sustainable lifestyles is one where citizens have the opportunity to lower their resource use and be more efficient.

Moving from individual to collective concerns, some participants in the dominant emissions theme seemed stuck in between worrying about how others' larger footprints would negate their attempt to lower their own (to be further shown in section 5.2.3). They compared their footprint to the one or two 'voluntary simplicity' people they knew who have very low emissions. "I think it could be a really great life, I just think that we all have to be doing it," Barb (interview, HUB) explained to me as she then described her sustainable signpost as her sister who grows all of her own food, buys only second hand clothing, and refuses to fly. In this comparative frame and dominant theme participants talked of sustainable lifestyles as a progression and future goal; they did not confidently claim 'I am living sustainably', rather 'I *try* to live more sustainably.'

I found a distinct division between those providing technical answers and others who denied a general understanding and rather attempted to embrace diversity – with an "it is different for everyone" attitude. For example: "somebody's sustainable lifestyle might not fit with someone else's, who's right and wrong?" (Dennis interview, City Farmer) and "I know we have to get the CO₂ down, but I don't think we do that by telling people that they are bad people... you can live on the same street and have different priorities" (Edvard interview,

Miljopunkt Nørrebro). Georg (interview, Omstilling Nu) also seemed hesitant about instructing others on how to live, and showed concern with consumerism: “I am not saying that they shouldn’t be allowed to have this stuff, but the speed that we do it, it’s not ok for me, the speed at which we change stuff, buy new clothes and stuff like that.”

Similarly Frida (interview, biologist, activist) said that a social shift is needed where people should be more concerned with “being” rather than the consumerist “to have”, complaining that the work-spend cycle associated with the latter has made Danes too busy to live sustainably - reflected in Edvard’s “light green” diagnosis. Frida explained that her idea of sustainable lifestyles starts with oneself as a hyper-local scale – and from there slowly expanding, like getting to know your neighbors. The important point here is that those who say that sustainability is diverse and situated do not adhere as strictly to the discourse built around the models of efficiency and lowering consumption. These answers were less prescriptive, less concerned with emissions and more in line with socially situated issues, which shows one alternative narrative to the dominantly framed energy efficient identity found in the green action plans.

A final topic concerning these distinctions and outside of the scope of my framework, was the use of the term ‘resilience’ by several community groups. Resilience seemed to be expressed as a way to reject, question, or compliment sustainability. For example, at a seed-bombing event, Nicole (conversation, Byhaven 2200, Omstilling Nu) said that “sustainability is no longer an option, now it is about resilience.” Adam (interview, Mythological Quarter) problematized neoliberalism, claiming that if a substantial system change is not made, sustainability efforts are “not going to produce lasting resilience, change, and healthy city spaces.” Byhaven 2200 also includes resilience (and does not mention sustainability) in their manifesto as it relates to a system change: “we notice the importance of forming community

to create resilience.” During the direct action against the oil pipeline in Vancouver, the activists’ “resilience and determination” was portrayed as cause for celebration (BROKE email correspondence). Resilience in these particular instances was applied to communities, environmental initiatives, and activism. This term does not distinctly fit within the two themes discussed above; and, further given the term’s natural science use (see Rees 2010), especially in reference to climate change adaptation (see section 4.2.2), it is difficult to position this outside of the confines of urban neoliberalism.

5.2.2 Class Exclusion

In the literature in general, there seems to be a certain apprehension and wariness to the idea of sustainable lifestyles, in that it sometimes is conventionally understood as ‘returning to a caveman lifestyle.’⁴⁹ My findings contradict this, as many explained to me that it signifies the opposite - a lifestyle of privilege. This connection to class privilege reveals how sustainable lifestyles and the idea of a green city are perceived. From his eco-gentrification case study, Quastel (2009) notes that “green consumption may be emerging as a new form of class distinction” and further, “the idea of the poor rendered homeless so that urban professionals can feel altruistic about riding their bicycles to work is obscene, but not far from the ‘sustainable’ class conflicts of Vancouver” (705, 719; to be further discussed in chapter 6). Quastel portrays this as a trade-off (not a win-win), where a trickle-down effect from sustainable projects does not exist, instead one class’s sustainability negatively affects another’s.

⁴⁹ To the point that when Soper (2008) wrote in support of sustainable lifestyles, she clearly felt the need to refute the idea that it would resemble a “caveman lifestyle.”

I found that because sustainable lifestyles is viewed as “an exclusive privilege, it’s not accessible for everyone so it’s a false brand” – the green city came to mean an “inequitable city” (Dora interview, Vancouver Urban Farming Society, Food Policy Council). Matt Hern⁵⁰ (interview) explained the negligence of Vancouverism as missing the affordability piece, and now: “it’s a lifestyle that is not affordable for a lot of people, so you end up with green Vancouver being a lifestyle privilege, as opposed to an actual way of life for people.” When Johan (interview, Information) explained to me that he supported the idea of a car-free Copenhagen, he acknowledged this as a “super elitist arrogant” perspective because he can afford to live in the city center. Sustainability here is associated with class and status, something unequal in its trajectories and not attainable for the urban poor, and seemingly undesirable for the urban elite.

A difference between what is green, ‘sustainable’, and ‘just’ is shown in the excerpt below, as if green (environmental) in addition to just (social) results in ‘truly sustainable’:

The thing that we don’t want to have happen is that we become an incredibly green city but also one that has a real challenge around social exclusion or falls short of questions of equity and social justice, those are really critical factors, there’s a lot of work to do be done there... If we can’t with all of our wealth in this city create an environment that is socially just then we are not going to be truly sustainable. (Patrick interview, Vancouver Public Spaces Network, City Staff)

The statement implies a questioning of ‘win-win’ scenarios and makes an ethical argument regarding wealth and the need for social justice, and importantly, does not conflate green with sustainable.⁵¹ Thus living in accordance with the green citizen image may require class privilege that requires multiple resources/capitals:

It’s reserved for privileged upper-middle class. You have to be quite privileged in order to choose that... that takes sort of a certain amount of resources, mental

⁵⁰ An East Vancouver activist, professor, author of *Common Ground in a Liquid City*, and founder of several alternative schools.

⁵¹ This is an issue Matt Hern frequently returned to – where does the City attain its wealth to pursue these ‘green’ projects?

capacity, to have time to even think about that. If you have four kids and a low paying job, what are you going to worry about? I think it has to be more naturally, structurally, implemented, not a matter of something you do if you are sort of, a good citizen, you know, cause it's not a choice for everyone to make. (Lea interview, researcher, consultant for the Technical and Environmental Administration)

Some participants talked about the motivations for this type of behavior, which indicate a selective, post facto reasoning. For example some sustainable behaviors, like not owning a car, are not made because of concern for the environment but lack of income. Thus the poor could be seen as very sustainable concerning their low footprint. However, the sustainable lifestyles image portrayed in these cities has a class requirement. Conversely, some practices require ideological choices where you would need a steady income to make the sustainable choice, like buying more expensive food from “small scale sustainable farmers in the region” (Dora interview, Vancouver Urban Farming Society, Food Policy Council). These examples contradict the ‘win-win’ frame’s economic-environmental fusion; rather it seems that the individual actions are taken with either the environment or the economy as a priority.

5.2.3 A New Suburbophobia: Suburbanites and Their Ecological Footprints

Another common point discussed in sustainable lifestyles conversations was the perceived difference between suburbanites and urbanites, particularly differences in culture and associated footprints. People’s chosen geographic location has implications for *how* they live (Duncan and Duncan 2014). Suburbanites moving to the city may wish to drive their cars (along with ample parking), enjoy private space, especially spaces to consume (Zukin 1998).

Aside from those moving to the city, there are sustainability concerns for accommodating suburbanites who regularly commute by car to the city: “we are also talking about a harbor tunnel for 29 billion [DKK], so people from the suburbs can come to Copenhagen by car more easily, that is not especially green” (Georg interview, Omstilling

Nu). Suburbanites are perceived to increase emissions given their lifestyles and associated footprint, Tim (interview, KBHFF) explained how this lifestyle is a detriment to urbanites: “they come here for work and go back, it’s traffic that I would just prefer to have organized in a way that those of us that actually live in the city have air that’s worth breathing.” The visual from these quotes is one of mobility segregation: local Copenhageners riding their bikes while commuters drive by in their private vehicles. Adam (interview, Mythological Quarter) took this further by saying the City caters to suburbanites because of their economic power, and their unsustainable lifestyles negate any sustainability effort by locals, making it a “huge part of this fantasy about carbon neutral 2025.”

Suburbanites are also viewed as cultural consumers of city life that do not contribute in a meaningful way to producing it. Edvard informed me that in Nørrebro, the most ethnically diverse area of Copenhagen, they jokingly say that the suburbanites are the “biggest integration problem” because of their egocentrism.⁵² Although cities are viewed as more culturally diverse than the suburbs, I found that within the green city discourse there is an expectation to conform to certain green citizen norms. Martha (interview, Copenhagen City Planner) expressed her frustration about suburbanites not culturally conforming to a certain urban life:

They want to have their fence; they are used to having their own space. They move in with a kind of idea of life that is not city life, that is they want to be near the theatre but they don’t want to join the city life in that way. So we have a cultural difference there so it can be hard to integrate those new comers from the suburbs... [in Christianshavn] when the metro came... people moved in and they kept the car and bought an apartment so the price raised and we got more cars, and they didn’t take the metro.

In one way, urban life is portrayed as more sustainable because of the density, the closeness of its spaces, and the ability to take public transport. I found this to resonate with

⁵² In 2012 the immigrant population in Nørrebro was 18% with a substantial Muslim segment (Denmark does not collect data on religion thus a specific percentage has not been recorded; Schmidt 2016).

the dominant theme outlined above and Isenhour's (2011) findings where some Swedish participants made urban/rural comparisons regarding which is more sustainable: "many base their claims for the superiority of urban lifestyles based on definitions of sustainability focused on energy efficiencies" (121). There is concern for suburbanites bringing their large footprints into the bounded green city and their lack of integration in urban life. There is further concern for how the City makes changes to urban spaces to cater to suburban identities and lifestyles, decisions ultimately driven by developing an economic base. The policy effects of attracting suburban families, sustainable lifestyles as a class privilege and the emphasis of efficiency, are addressed in the following examples.

5.3 Regulating the Green City

The model of an energy efficient, low carbon lifestyle frames expectations of green city citizens. This has consequences for place-making and the control of space, as Mitchell (2003) asserts that the "'disneyfication' of space consequently implies the increasing alienation of people from the possibilities of unmediated social interaction and increasing control by powerful economic and social actors over the production and use of space" (140-141).⁵³ In the following I provide several Copenhagen examples to demonstrate the politics and exclusionary processes related to this imaginary. I first show how cycling policies target certain classes, and give an example of resistance to a cycle path proposal.⁵⁴ The second subsection focuses on the regulation of green space; all examples reflect the political borders drawn around the green citizen and the contestations that arise via different articulations of sustainability.

⁵³ Zukin (1998) explains the aesthetics of the 'Disney regime' as: "a safe, clean, public space in which strangers apparently trust each other" (832).

⁵⁴ Some of this material has also appeared in my blog post and article (see Winter 2015, 2016).

5.3.1 Space for Cycling Politics?

Linked to their carbon neutral goal, Copenhagen aims to be the world's most bicycle friendly city – but friendly for whom? Jensen (2013) claims that current cycling policy is directed to certain groups more than others, that cycling is seen to be “authentic and Danish,” where poor and less formally educated folks did not participate in cycling as much (222). Offering a more “natural” setting, the “green cycle system” was found to target “active urbanites”; and the “cycle super highway”, connecting to suburban areas, targeted commuters; a third category of middle class families is targeted for both initiatives. I would add to this that tourists are an ever-growing target group within the creative city tactics, as the City is building a “high profile” cycling path designed for tourists to sightsee (Ben interview, Danish Cycling Federation). Jensen (2013) claims that these subjects are galvanized “in building an urban Copenhagen identity intended to place the spotlight on the city on the ‘global catwalk’ while a range of subjectivities of the diverse city is not present” (224).

In striving to become the “world's best cycling city”, the City of Copenhagen continues to expand upon their “cycling super highways” (their term). Christianshavnruuten, a cycle path proposed in 2008, has met ongoing community resistance from locals living nearby the proposed path. Why are residents of Christianshavn, and in particular, Christiania, a self-declared car-free zone, opposed to this cycle path? What does this opposition and resistance tell us about the contestations to green city policies?

The uneven dirt paths in Christiania are an everyday reminder that life is deliberately slow-paced here. The natural setting has been preferred over a frictionless and ultra-convenient mobility. During my research stay, a local mentioned that the City wanted to put a cycle path through the town; however the notion seemed so preposterous to me that I did not

take it seriously, until I saw banners hanging around Dyssebroen (see Figures 14, 15, and 16).

This bridge connects the two segments of Christiania on either side of the canal and is a popular hangout area when the sun is shining.

Figure 14. Dyssebroen and the Christiania Flag



Figure 15. 'There is just no space for municipal cycling politics'

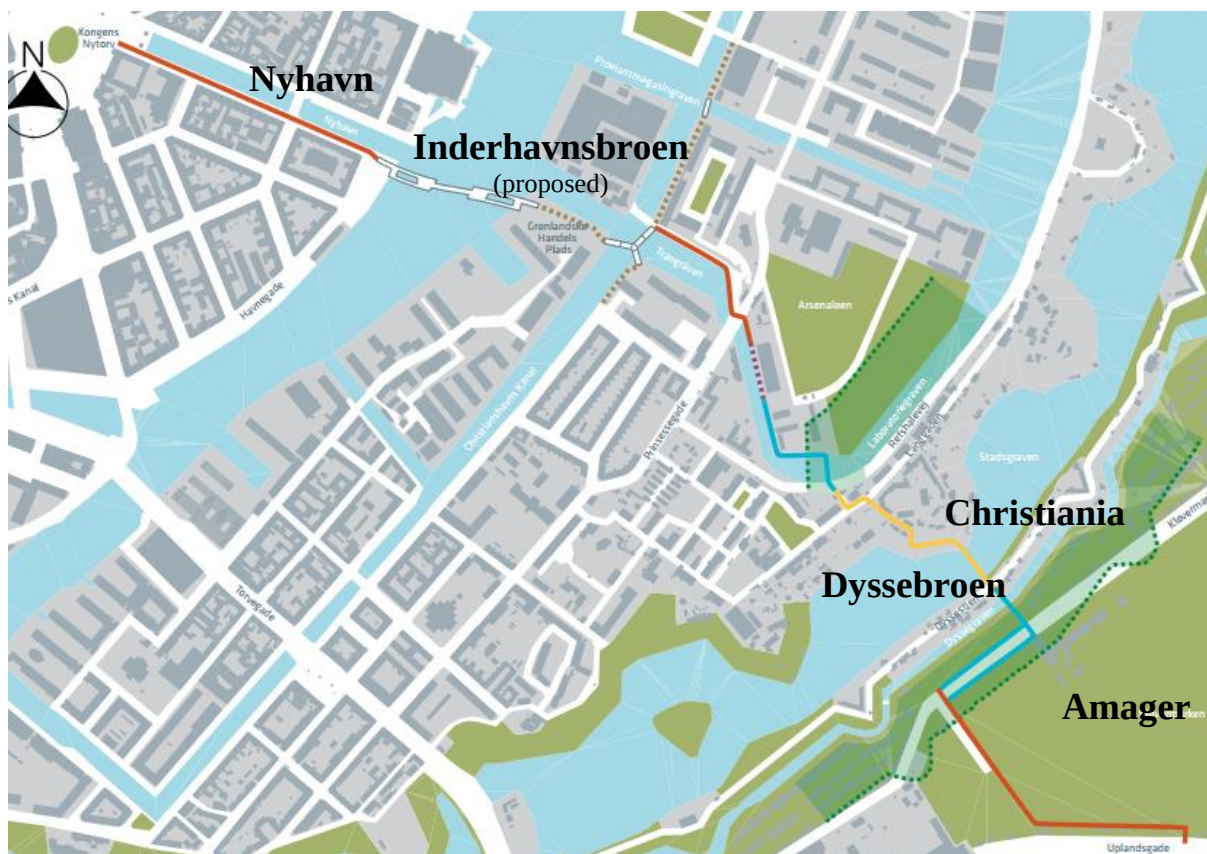


Figure 16. 'Thanks but no thanks for the cycle route. Look out: quiet, slow, children, horses.'



The City's proposal below (Figure 17) shows how the path, open to Amager's 150,000 residents, would cut through Christiania (the yellow segments) and connect Christianshavn to the popular downtown Nyhavn harbor area. The proposed bridge needed for this path, Inderhavnsbroen, would connect the red segments. Aside from the local resistance, Christianshavn-ruten and several proposed bridges in Copenhagen's harbor have been delayed for years due to the bankruptcy of the construction company (Wenande 2013).

Figure 17. Proposal for Christianshavnsruten (City of Copenhagen 2014)



The City has argued that the path will provide a connection for Amager (the island south of Christianshavn) residents to downtown Copenhagen, increase the cycling modal share and help reach their goal of becoming the world's first carbon neutral capital by 2025. Christiania has responded that it does not need a cycle path. The town has maintained a car-

free atmosphere and most people get around by foot or bike (including the locally made Christiania cargo bike). Expressing concern for the safety of local residents, animals and tourists (often on group tours), they claim the path is unsuitable as a cycle superhighway with heavy traffic. The local Christianshavn council has aligned with Christiania residents on these safety issues and also the preservation of the landscape. While local residents argued that the project should invoke a formal environmental impact review, the City determined this would not be necessary. The response to the residents' safety concerns is that the City worries more for the safety of the cycle path construction workers, as they fear protests (Wenande 2013). Christiania and the local council have hosted walk-throughs of the congested area of the proposed path (most recently in October 2014), and devised and presented alternative routes to the City. Nevertheless, the original plan remains.

Copenhagen is often ranked as one of the world's best cycling cities, with 36% modal share cycling to work or school, and over 50% in the downtown area. In their 2011 cycling strategy, the City boasts about the quality and safety of their cycling lanes: "you can ride around most of the city with a cup of coffee on the handlebars" (City of Copenhagen 2011b, 19). However this does not seem to be the top concern for Christiania residents and the local council. What is most important to local residents is the preservation of their space as calm and peaceful, a place where children and adults can play.

A member of the local council had a similar reply when I asked about Christianshavn-ruten: "I have been very much occupied with the bicycle 'road' through Christianshavn and Christiania, especially because it is a totally 'non-functional' route, but forced through our part of Copenhagen by the politicians without listening to the experiences of the inhabitants. It is a pity, because most people here want to promote bicycling, but not in this way!" As Jonas *et al.* (2011) explain, "carbon control" results in a focus on the

“relationship between urban infrastructure and carbon flows” (2543); here it further excludes Christianites as ‘others’ that are not ‘normal’ (Coppola and Vanolo 2015; Amouroux 2009). Christianshavnruen, as a carbon control infrastructure mechanism put forth via the state, poses an additional threat to Christiania’s autonomy, which at this time is already in a “fractured” condition. The bicycle path represents a physical connection that would place a smooth and planned path through Christiania’s bumpy and ‘natural’ dirt trails, which they take pride in. The esteemed trails are part of the reason Christiania deems itself as “the green lungs of Copenhagen” (Christiania Guide 2005, 2); the bicycle path would then sever this lung.

The City’s shade of green is perceived as detrimental to those living in and around Christiania. This resistance demonstrates the force at which carbon control is applied and what segments of the population are able to participate in and benefit from a ‘carbon neutral Copenhagen.’ This example further shows how seemingly naïve topics such as a cycle path remain contentious and involve struggles over space, just as the following section demonstrates with courtyards.

5.3.2 Private Green Space

This section follows the theme of exclusivity in Copenhagen’s green city policies by focusing on the politics of access to green space. Creating a city for families may seem inherently positive; however, I found the class exclusion trend to continue here. Poul (interview, Parks Board), who has worked for the City for 20 years, explained that the reason the City has family oriented policies is an *economic* one as families often provide a substantial tax-base and thus are *ressource stærke* (resource strong). An American activist living in Denmark

explained this institutional term to me, from her vantage point of an outsider-as-insider – “Danes have a hard time seeing this [“intense institutional racism”] about themselves” (Ruth interview, Mythological Quarter). She continued to explain that the term separates “people of color that are newly immigrated to Denmark that don’t necessarily have a network, or a specific education and they are not *ressource stærke*. People with resources are then of course more affluent people and higher paid salary position, usually white people, ethnic Danes.” The City of Copenhagen’s position on attracting an economically sustainable population is also explained in the work of Larsen and Lund Hansen (2008), where they provide examples where the *unsustainable* population is directly referred to as ‘trash’ “in the official language cloaked by more seductive terms like ‘sustainability’” (2434). The City then often devises policies that cater to such a *ressource stærke* population and as stated earlier they attempt to create environments that attract suburbanites such as private space.

The ongoing effort to green the private inner courtyards of Copenhagen’s predominantly low to mid-rise buildings (see Figure 18 below), as a method of urban redevelopment since the 1990s, follows this pattern of exclusive access and caters towards middle class families. Even before this began, Nørrebro activists in the 1960s attempted to de-privatize the locked courtyards for public use, and this continues today with the Åben By (Open City) project. Members remain concerned about the gentrification effects on low-income residents since Nørrebro has attracted the creative class with its edgy identity (Jakobsen 2009). Tim (interview, KBHFF) explained his reasons and vision for opening the courtyards:

people get their private garden space, but in my experience, they are just not used very much anyway... so there’s these beautiful green empty spaces on the inside of the building, and on the other side of the building we have this cramped situation with cars, bikes and pedestrians all together in one big mess. I think it would be awesome if we could change it around, to open the courtyards and have the pedestrians move

inside, maybe even sometimes the bicycles, but at least to have some of the walking traffic... it's just weird that we lock away the green stuff.

The City rebuts these calls for de-privatizing this space, claiming that courtyards are private for safety reasons. After Poul (interview, Parks Board) complained about homeless people sleeping in parks, he responded to my question of opening the courtyards: “it would mean people would have access to them... we don’t want private spaces open for everybody” – bolstering the argument with quotes from Jan Gehl who theorizes that semi-private spaces are essential amenities for the ‘good city life.’ However this privilege of safety and access to the green space is only for those who can afford an apartment there.⁵⁵ Jacobs (1961) wrote that planning for inner courtyards “requires that buildings be oriented towards the interior enclave... the safety of the unspecialized sidewalks is thus exchanged for a specialized form of safety for a specialized part of the population” (91).

Figure 18. An Inner Courtyard in Vesterbro



⁵⁵ The courtyards are described by an American ‘sustainable blogger’ who lived in Copenhagen: “like much urban housing in the City of Cyclists, our apartment overlooked a green and spacious courtyard. Gated where it met the sidewalk and shared only with others in our building and adjacent buildings on our block, it had play equipment, benches, chairs, and barbeques set amid gardens, lawns, and full-grown trees” (Nelson 2008).

To further this point, I recall several stories that convey this exclusivity theme and conclude this section by briefly recounting them here as ethnographic insights. First, Matilda informed me that the benches on the famous Dronning Louises Bro – a scenic bridge with a newly built cycling route where those who follow the energy efficient lifestyles often gather to enjoy a Carlsberg – tell a story of exclusivity, gentrification and green city cleansing. Matilda, a researcher at Roskilde University, explained the neighborhood is not typically counted in Copenhagen’s sustainability discussions and is sometimes referred to as a ‘garbage bin’. The benches were taken from public space in Nordvest where homeless people would rest or also enjoy a Carlsberg; as the users of this public space did not fit the image of a clean and prosperous city they were deprived of these benches. The City’s evaluation report for the cycling route Nørrebrogade, found that “three times more people spend time on Dronning Louises Bro” where 25 more benches meant “more time hanging out” on Nørrebrogade, and that this area received “media spotlight” where the bridge is “used as an example of the good use of urban space” (City of Copenhagen 2013, 11-13; see map in Figure 28). The Nordvest ‘garbage bin’ benches were moved to a space where Copenhagen receives a global spotlight – Europe’s busiest cycling route.

Second, Edvard (interview, Miljopunkt Nørrebro) believes that the City uses divergence from the green citizen image as a punitive tool: “the consequence [of air pollution from heavy traffic] has been a very bad situation in Nørrebro where people’s life expectancy is much lower than in the rest of the city. We say that it is because of pollution from cars; the municipality tries to say that it is because people have bad lifestyles” (see the Danish Center for Environment and Energy’s 2013 report on air pollution in Copenhagen). The City in this example absolves itself from influence over citizens’ everyday lives because they have put forth ‘one-fits-all’ plans; the individual is at fault if he/she does not subscribe to the energy

efficient lifestyle recommended. Several Danish health agencies' advised citizens to defend against Copenhagen's air pollution by, for example, keeping their street-facing apartment windows closed during rush hour. Colville-Andersen (2013) sarcastically replied on his Copenhagenize blog that this does not adequately address the problem: politicians "are helpless at reducing traffic, despite a whole catalogue of ideas as to how to do so. If you open your windows toward the street, it's like driving without a seatbelt. It's your own damn fault if something happens. Not your politicians."

Finally, Frida (interview, biologist, activist) told me of her reaction to the City's instructions for residents *not* to grow food in urban soil in order to take safety precautions against possibly polluted soil and limit the risk of citizens suing the City. Frida explained that her soil tests were negative, and later wrote: "I was quite upset about the letter from the municipality because I felt it was the way they could withdraw their responsibility. Like a manual of a kitchen tool, mentioning all possible accidents that would definitely never happen. It spreads fear, which I am against" (email correspondence). Local food is not a part of the CPH 2025 Plan (see section 7.2), thus in Copenhagen citizens growing food is not measured nor a priority and was easily regulated against; the problem was presented as growing food (see also Halloran and Majid 2013).

All of these stories point to the ways in which citizens are expected to uphold and participate in certain processes of green city making. Copenhagen continually tries to maintain this urban imaginary of "climate friendly, green, cosmopolitan, knowledge intensive, tolerant life styles in post-industrial, liveable and amiable, designed and authentic, diverse and green urban spaces" (Jensen 2013, 224). According to Adam (interview, Mythological Quarter) this is problematic as it does not create space for citizen participation: "there's a sort of self-righteousness in the way the city planning happens, like 'we are greener

than everyone else, we have the answers, this is the right way to do things.’ There’s just a lack of empowerment.” To be clear, I am not against cycling or courtyards per se, my point is to demonstrate how sustainability for a certain population may not be viewed as sustainable by another, and with possible detrimental effects. And while the local citizens’ lifestyle is prescribed based on what would reduce carbon in an energy efficiency model, those living outside of the city, but surely influencing its socio-spatial environments, are not targeted.

Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed many elements of the concept of sustainable lifestyles, from empirical examples that will, along with material from the other empirical chapters, provide a basis for a theoretical discussion in chapter 8. By tying Copenhagen and Vancouver’s dominant public green memory (see section 3.3) with the models used in the green action plans (see section 4.1), I showed the narrative and particular practices around how one is expected to live as a green city citizen. The themes around what it means to live sustainably show the narrative’s dominance, while I found a division where some were more concerned with diversity, seeing sustainability as culturally situated. Within these discussions, sustainable lifestyles was strongly connected to two issues: exclusivity and privilege, this way of life was seen as accessible only to certain classes; and to suburban identities and practices perceived to negate sustainability efforts in the reified city.

Even in a comparatively homogenous city within the Scandinavian welfare system, sustainable lifestyles was seen as a luxury. My examples from Copenhagen showed how this narrative is used politically to control urban spaces in an attempt to attract those with resources and become the world’s first carbon neutral city. Returning to Edvard’s quote in the

introduction - will Copenhagen and Vancouver be surprised in 5-10 years when citizens of varying socio-economic standings do not adopt the energy efficient or one-planet lifestyle?

Chapter 6

Translating Land and Waste Sustainabilities

Introduction

Land use and waste management policies are two familiar issues for sustainability in cities in general. Often seen as technical infrastructure, the links to how these policies shape urban lifestyles and sustainability discourses are easily overlooked. This chapter makes connections between the built and social forms of these policies within the context of contested notions of sustainability. While land does not appear explicitly in Copenhagen and Vancouver's green action plans, waste is given significant attention. The GCAP has a chapter dedicated to 'zero waste'; and in the CPH 2025 Plan, waste efficiency is one of the key priorities, as it ties to their energy production and consumption goals, as well as their district heating system, often labelled as 'world class sustainable.' With land and waste as major themes, this chapter provides four examples, two from each case, about the political ecology of (1) the commodification of urban land such as the privatization of housing, and in particular, the notion that density is sustainable; and (2) the discursive framing and policies around waste as an economic resource. The land examples will detail contestations between citizens and the City; for the waste examples, I provide a critique based on my theoretical framework.

My purpose here is not to analyze the emissions from the waste system or the ecological benefits of housing density, but to understand the discourse via the translation of situated meanings for different groups. The back and forth negotiating process between these groups importantly shows how they work towards a goal which is sustainable for them,

where building height, carbon, compost and recyclables become currencies and forms of expression and contention. Further, these currencies are sometimes conflated with ‘sustainable’ or ‘just’. These examples continue to illustrate the dominant notions of sustainability in Copenhagen and Vancouver, show their differences and similarities, giving insight to how sustainability is defined and contested, and place the sustainable lifestyles narrative (from chapter 5) into a broader context in these cities. The examples of land connect to the right to the city; the examples of waste shed light on the issue of sustainable lifestyles by problematizing consumerism. All of the examples show the City’s shade of green and how certain groups respond to this.

The chapter begins with two examples of land commodification contestations. The first is over neighborhood planning and housing density in Vancouver, specifically high rise residential buildings which I refer to as towers. The second is an ultimatum Christiania faced in which the town had to compromise their founding value that is against formal and private land ownership. This case reminds us of the alternatives to the current privatized systems of housing governance. I then turn to green waste policies with an example from Copenhagen, where I critique their waste-to-energy incineration system given its normalizing effects of waste production. Waste is also viewed as an economic resource in Vancouver as the City strives to create a ‘zero waste culture’, however I find that the informal economy of binning, a marginalized practice often left out of sustainability talk in general, acts to subsidize the city’s consumerism. In the conclusion I draw connections between these examples and eco-gentrification, a concept that will continue to the following chapter.

6.1 Affording Density and Fetishizing Towers in Grandview-Woodland

This section gives an example of community contestations over density and public space planning in Vancouver's Grandview-Woodland neighborhood. Density, as part of green city vocabulary, with principles like creating walkable and compact neighborhoods, is often conflated with environmental sustainability and is also seen as a way to provide more affordable housing in many cities (see Kenworthy 2006). However, the practice of densifying is profitable for private developers, especially in this case due to the Vancouverism tradition where environmental amenities are provided by developers in exchange for the permission to build towers⁵⁶ (detailed in chapter 3). This subject is not new for Vancouver and is important because density is a concern for most cities around the world. Density has been a defining planning practice in Vancouver since the 1970s (Quastel *et al.* 2012) and shows an underlying efficiency logic given its focus on changing the *built* urban form. Quastel's (2009, 2012) urban political ecology work on gentrification and density in Vancouver provides a grounding to expand upon the subject from my particular framework. Quastel *et al.* (2012), amongst others, found that dense neighborhoods are often "marketed to urban elites and lead to the subsequent takeover of former working-class districts" (1060). This may result in "exclusive enclaves" and "spatial injustice" rather than diverse and affordable areas; gentrification here displaces lower-income residents to lower-density areas (Quastel *et al.* 2012, 1077).

During my field research, density was a central, if not the most, concerning hot topic in regards to Vancouver's sustainability and planning⁵⁷, as it intersects with controlling urban

⁵⁶ I use the term towers to reflect the 'on the ground' discourse.

⁵⁷ See Rosol's (2013) analysis of the protests over Vancouver's EcoDensity plan in the late 2000's, a plan which attempted to create a win-win sustainability scenario through increased density.

sprawl (growing ‘up’ not ‘out’) and the housing affordability crisis that links to a common perception of “wealthy Asian immigrants” (see section 3.2.1). This intersection is interesting because it provides an example where the notion of a positive correlation between economic, environmental, and social sustainability does not hold. In other words, if density is sustainable, there should be associated social and economic benefits. Density thus influences the dominant and contested ideas of sustainability in Vancouver, as towers now physically embody wealth and inequality, or as Chad (interview, Village Vancouver) claims, towers “represent the ‘one percent’ in their form.”

I show how these issues play out in Grandview-Woodland (GW), a dense, diverse, and low income area, with a relatively high number of renters, immigrants and Indigenous folk, as well as 140 protected heritage buildings (City of Vancouver 2012b; see Figure 19). Often referred to as part of “East Van”, here you can wander up and down “The [Commercial] Drive,” a popular shopping street with mixed use, low rises – locally owned cafes, shops, grocers and restaurants on the ground level. The area has already experienced gentrification, which Ley and Dobson (2008) describe as “impeded” - slower than expected, given three features: the industrial projects that surround GW, the “seedy” atmosphere that deterred some yuppies (gentrifiers), and social housing projects already in place. GW is characterized by an open and progressive/activist attitude⁵⁸, where residents often form groups to publicly vocalize their political stance. To demonstrate this, I present two community initiatives, Our Community Our Plan (OCOP) and Streets for Everyone, as both have sustainability concerns and seek to influence the City’s plans.

⁵⁸ Ley and Dobson (2008) describe it as a “counter-cultural, lesbian and leftist presence” (2487).

Figure 19. Grandview-Woodland Map (City of Vancouver 2013, 3)



The City of Vancouver released a draft neighborhood plan for this area in 2013, indicating changes such as increased density where existing buildings would be replaced with ten towers. With a goal to create a “sustainable, energy and carbon-efficient community” specifically by retrofitting existing buildings and requiring new buildings to be built with the green standard (City of Vancouver 2013, 22), the plan implicitly connects to the ‘greenest

city' agenda. Locals voiced their opposition to this plan and in response the City initiated a "Citizen's Assembly" (CA) consisting of 48 GW residents to devise a new plan. Susanna, an independent consultant hired by the City to manage this CA explained that they mailed 19,000 invitations and received 504 replies, choosing 48 participants based on an effort to create a representative assembly - a mixture of gender, age and housing type. The CA's goal was to make value-based ("greater good") recommendations for action in 2015; however, the City has the ultimate authority.⁵⁹ Susanna explained that in general CAs are used to display a sense of legitimacy and finds that plans are easier to implement when the community is involved in this way.⁶⁰

Some locals did not accept the CA⁶¹, leading to the formation of Our Community Our Plan (OCOP). The group felt left out of the planning process and disagreed with the proposal for towers, especially a 36 storey high rise at a central transit stop. While meeting at Astorino's, a community center of sorts in GW's northern section, and notably a target spot for increased density in the City's plan, OCOP group members discussed their fears based on perceived future market driven effects. In a clarifying statement on their website, they explain their stance: "we reject the imposition of increased density from above [the City]. We also oppose the displacement of existing residents, who won't be able to afford the neighbourhood that would result from the GW Plan" (OCOP November 2014). This quote reveals the two key concerns that I found: how the citizens felt betrayed due to their perceived lack of participation/empowerment in the planning process (and that developers were given more power) and socio-economic concerns of gentrification from 'wealthy density.' This

⁵⁹ The final CA report from June 2015 can be found here: <http://www.grandview-woodland.ca>. Recommendations related to density call for "gentle", "transitional", "neighborly" and "fairly distributed" density, in ways that do not threaten the neighborhood's character. In that regard they also support more non-market housing.

⁶⁰ From her presentation at SFU's Democracy and the City Forum, October 2014.

⁶¹ For a variety of reasons, for example the CA was not seen as transparent because some of the meetings were closed, locals not chosen for the CA felt like they could not participate, and there were worries that developers might have a powerful influence over the CA.

discussion was not primarily focused on the lower environmental footprint; instead, towers were viewed as a display of wealth and power. Ley and Dobson (2008) write that “part of the challenge of community response to gentrification is a discursive one, to demonstrate to a broader constituency that the neighbourhood is not a slum that needs renewal but has qualities worth protecting” (2477). This is illustrated in OCOP’s flyer (Figure 20) where people, the East Van community specifically, are urged to fight developers (portrayed by a wrecking ball) and challenge the CA established by the City.

Figure 20. Our Community Our Plan Flyer



Locals contest the results of neoliberal land commodification such as high living costs and real estate speculation by fighting its new representation: towers. University of British Columbia Professor Jamie Peck explained to me that the bottom are hanging on and any

increase in rents is not manageable (economically sustainable), and the rich fight to maintain their powerful position. This makes community resistance and identity a factor for building towers in Vancouver; and GW is not typically a neighborhood that lacks this type of voice.

To further complicate planning matters another GW group arose, called Streets for Everyone. They wish to have their plan (see Figure 21; see Figure 22 to compare with the current state of Commercial Drive) adopted by the CA, with a main goal of:

widened sidewalks, better transit and transit shelters, separated bike lanes, better pedestrian crossings and more marked or signalized crosswalks, more street furniture, and more landscaping. These changes will set a precedent for the rest of Vancouver by providing a local demonstration of how progressive street design bolsters the local business environment and makes a street more equitable, vibrant and attractive. (Streets For Everyone 2015)

Figure 21. Streets for Everyone's Vision for Commercial Drive



Figure 22. Commercial Drive (Google Maps: Commercial Drive and Graveley Street Intersection; Image Capture May 2015)



Although one may find it difficult to contest such an egalitarian plan, two main issues within the community developed. While the group claims that these changes will benefit businesses, some were quite petrified by the prospect of losing parking spaces in front of their shops, which translates to perceived lost profits in the future, placing an economic frame around the proposed socio-spatial changes. At a public meeting convened by OCOP, local businessmen made hostile remarks to the Streets for Everyone founder, such as “I’m all about equity but businesses have more at stake here”, claiming that when she pays 30,000 CAD/year (what they pay for business taxes) then she would be allowed to have “a say in the matter”; finally stating that the real problem was “hobos begging in the street” – indicating that the seedy atmosphere described by Ley and Dobson still remains in GW despite its “impeded” gentrification. On the other side of the debate about the Streets for Everyone plan, local activists were actually worried that with too much positive change at one time, this is indirectly a plan for eco-gentrification and that market effects needed to be accounted for.

What seems rather striking from my outsider perspective is that the ‘progressive’ Streets for Everyone plan reveals a lack of sustainability progress, as (1) it elicited such debate in a leftist neighborhood; and (2) the plan does not look like one taken from the sustainable future of the ‘greenest city in the world’ for many reasons. It is not a radically transformed version of Commercial Drive’s current form, the major difference that I see is the separated bike lanes. Further, there are calls for redesigning streets to either remove cars altogether or deprioritize them, and Figure 21 does not depict such a change.

Neither OCOP nor Streets for Everyone focus primarily on the ecological footprint or environmental sustainability, nor is their goal to create an energy efficient community. Regarding the ways in which they contest urban neoliberalism, while both are in opposition to the City’s original plan, OCOP is purposefully disengaged, while Streets for Everyone hopes to engage with the City by collaborating with the CA. Through their resistance to the City’s stance, these groups created alternative views to be incorporated in GW plans.

I found the notion that density is sustainable was rejected in several ways during OCOP and Streets for Everyone meetings. Environmental sustainability was questioned: the “greenest building is one that is already built” – meaning that building towers requires tearing down existing homes which creates waste and emissions. The towers require particular building materials, of which the materials themselves are compared for their greenness. The concern over materials and building height met with a fear of earthquakes in the area.⁶² The environmental meets social sustainability through questions like: “do LEED buildings create LEED residents?” – meaning that even if the building is energy efficient, it does not

⁶² Vancouver lies on the Juan de Fuca fault line, making earthquakes a concern for residents. They also question how to conduct a ‘green’ ranking of different building materials such as wood (used for building low rises) and concrete (needed to build high rises).

automatically result in residents living sustainably.⁶³ One member asked if the mental health effects from living in high rises had been considered.

Finally, economic sustainability was questioned: “will the apartments in the towers be affordable, will it raise the cost of living in the area?” – meaning that not only those living in the towers but the entire neighborhood could be affected economically. This points to a concern for affordability and gentrification, more so than environmental sustainability and green buildings. The connection is the development paradox in Vancouver – in order to reach many GCAP goals, such funds and assistance are required from other organizations, including private developers. The deals with developers to build towers then rest on the condition that public amenities are included, such as parks and recreation centers.

I witnessed this sincere citizen concern against towers and density in Grandview-Woodland as shown, and I also heard of, but did not have time to fully investigate, other instances of such resistance. For example, according to the founder of the Coalition of Vancouver Neighborhoods, the group had 15 active lawsuits regarding towers (in fall 2014) against the City for illegal negotiations with developers. The choice for towers and the provided density is often framed as an ecological one, as Vancouver’s geographical position on a peninsula means that expansion or sprawl is not an option. However density, in this situated sense, now means high prices, empty condos that are viewed as “safety deposit boxes in the sky” (Crowhurst Lennard 2015), the tearing down of heritage homes, developer power, and a strain on public services due to population increase. While the City portrayed the GW plan as a pathway to create a “sustainable, energy and carbon-efficient community”, one interviewee complained that: “we fetishize these towers, with these green powers that they don’t really have.” Thus while density is presented as sustainable in theory; in practice, in a

⁶³ If the LEED buildings are more expensive, this also predetermines who can and cannot live there. Those who can may fit into the green city citizen category.

neoliberal world where urban land is hypercommodified and housing is not a ‘right to the city’ strategy, in this case then density is profit making for developers and budget balancing for the City.

6.2 Christiania’s *Folkeaktie*: “You Can’t Own This Place”

To continue to illuminate sustainability contentions presented by the commodification of land, I turn to Christiania’s recent decision to sell their land, a story of neoliberal hybridity through clashes with the Danish government. Different from GW in that Christiania does not build new housing, essentially capping their population, constructing towers is not an option. In contrast, the squatted settlement’s *identity* is based on a firm anti-market view against the privatization of land, clear through the many practices I detail later in this section. The government did not approve of this view and eventually gave the town two choices: purchase the land and keep it, or forfeit the land and the government will sell it to developers (Christiania is located in the downtown of Copenhagen with potentially high market values).

Using their consensus democracy structure, Christiania’s decision took several years, as purchasing land contradicts the community’s belief that no one should own land, yet they did not want to see it “dipped in concrete” with the latter option. During the decision making process, locals closed the gates to Christiania for one week to demonstrate what the area would look like if it were privatized with “fences and fees” (Manghezi 2012), signifying a tension with their insistency on remaining open to the world. Coppola and Vanolo (2015) analyzed this agreement, finding that it represents a turning point in the town’s autonomy as it creates new and notably long term institutional linkages with the state. As the multiple year negotiating process may indicate, the residents’ perspectives on this agreement vary. One in particular described the situation to me as “it’s like the government puts a pistol to our head,”

with little room for negotiation, especially considering that Christiania took this case to the Danish courts and lost several times.

Christiania's final decision in 2012 was to set up a fund where anyone can donate to their efforts to purchase the land and in return the donor receives a purely symbolic *folkeaktie* (peoples share) of the land. The community did not have such savings to buy the land (85 million DKK), so a share office has been established at the town's entrance, displaying a world map as colorful pushpins span the globe of 'shareholders.' In his Tedx talk about the matter, resident Risenga Manghezi (2012) asserted that "you can't own this place, it belongs to everybody." He also discussed certain freedoms that arise in Christiania because of their values: the freedom to express yourself (consensus democracy), freedom to be (artistic expression, lack of material values), and the freedom to take your time (instead of a fast paced lifestyle) – all of these allow for "creative and unexpected solutions," such as this decision – to purchase the land but in a way that no one would own it.

Each *folkeaktie* proudly states "buy the Freetown free" and "worth more than money."

On their website they write that

the agreement and the construction of the new fund ensures that housing in Christiania remains free of speculation in the future, the way it should be... [the shares] promote community, sharing and autonomy in contrast to the financial speculation currently causing great harm to communities all over the world. In this, it is our modest hope to inspire the development of social models of investment, that value common wealth rather than profits. (Christiania Shares 2014)

This decision represents an alternative structure to housing policies and land privatization, while portraying it as a local solution to an injustice felt globally. The statement contrasts community and autonomy with speculation and profits. The shares add to the complexity of Christiania's "fractured autonomy" in a way that seeks to diffuse the state control that this agreement represents. Perhaps Christiania's most deliberate contestation of neoliberal logic is

their anti-private property stance. This is also demonstrated in how they manage the landscape and homes.

Residents in Christiania do not own their homes, they do not buy or sell them either. They do not have land plots to decide who owns the space around the homes. The well-maintained nature trails have been preserved over the decades, in part due to this value, as the trails run close to the residents' homes. Billboards and advertisements are not allowed in the town and are viewed as "mental pollution." Today the rent prices are split in half – everyone pays the same flat fee plus a certain amount per square meter of their home. This goes to the common purse, supporting the many Christiania institutions, the landscaping (maintained by the Gardner Gruppe) and pays for VAT and utilities to the Danish government. Most of the businesses are collectively run and also pay a fee. The homes range from single homes that were self-built⁶⁴, to collective housing in former military buildings; amenities also vary, some live in simple conditions without toilets or showers (there is a community bath house), while others have created rather modern living arrangements (hence the recent change in their rents so that it is proportional to the housing size).

One may assume that residents would not maintain their homes properly without the incentive to buy or sell them, and without strict regulations on housing standards. This is countered through an underlying, anarchist value of self-sufficiency where one is held responsible to the community and expected to care for their home. If you interview to live in Christiania, the neighborhood residents will ask if you are capable of maintaining your home and whether you will participate in the neighborhood decision making. Lacking government

⁶⁴ Some were built from collected materials from demolitions in Copenhagen; residents collect these materials and store them in *Den Grønne Hal*.

run public works, one learns to fix things in Christiania.⁶⁵ I experienced an entire gamut of “do-it-yourself” projects, from fixing a bike tire to removing an impeding outdoor cement wall at the CRIR house to make space for enlarging a *Mælkebøtten* heating system. The values of ownership play out differently in Christiania, and examples of sharing resources and collective businesses can be found here. Physical tools are shared with their accompanying knowledge. The competitive logic of neoliberalism is thus sometimes overcome through cooperation and sharing practices.

For urban neoliberalism, creativity is most important when it can spur innovation, draw in investment and function in the market. Vanolo (2012) has explored this creativity – comparing the typical neoliberal creative city ideas expressed in Copenhagen (see section 3.1.2), with a different form and purpose of creativity expressed in Christiania.

Given this hybridity we can expect criticisms regarding Christiania as a radical project. I met young activists who were “pissed off” about Christiania’s lack of progressiveness today – with fast food catering to tourists and constant compromises with the government. Others countered with asking “how radical can one place be?” While I certainly agree with Hellstrom’s (2006) view of Christiania as a *spatial/cultural jam*, I experienced Christiania as a socially exhausted space. The founders have aged and settled with children, without the possibility for a growing population (no extra housing/towers), the existing population was fatigued from government confrontations and practicing consensus democracy. Anton, who works for the Gardner Gruppe, told me that this practice is “exhausting and time consuming.” He meets with the 14 neighborhoods to discuss proposed landscape changes – thus most trees in Christiania have had their existence thoroughly debated.

⁶⁵ Christiania does not have any sort of rules regarding nationality; one need not be a Danish citizen to live in Christiania.

Although outsiders often deem Christiania as an urban eco-village and locals have referred to the space as the “green lungs of Copenhagen” (Christiania Guide 2005, 2), Christiania’s identity does not hinge on attaining the title of ‘greenest squat in the world,’ and environmental sustainability is not a part of their discourse. I claim this because when I went in search of anyone who could talk to me about environmental sustainability, I was met with “what is that?” My explanation was often followed by “we don’t have that here” and “most people here are too poor to care about the environment” and “our dirt is toxic because of the military weapons.” In one way the land is a refuge, as the locals salvaged the area that was discarded yet locked up by the military and toxified through weapons testing (Hellstrom 2006). This history and current political ecology, for example the surrounding urban development and industrial agriculture, which pollute their air and water, prevent locals from deeming Christiania as sustainable.

As I conclude the two examples of the commodification of land, the ways that the dominant idea of sustainability is contested in these cases should be clear. While density is seen as sustainable in Vancouver and part of creating energy efficient communities, the consequences are perceived as detrimental to certain classes and this gentrification was preemptively resisted. The case of Christiania’s identity, as squatters who reject the underlying neoliberal idea of individual land ownership, shows how a hybrid decision was made when the government gave them an ultimatum. The following sections turn to examples of waste policies that are also portrayed as sustainable, where waste is commodified and specifically framed as a resource as part of the plans to become the greenest cities in the world. Where land is perhaps too much of a contested topic to incorporate into the green action plans, waste is conversely discussed in both plans regarding infrastructure and disposal processes. The following two sections do not uncover contestations between different groups

and the City as the above examples did, rather with a different style and method I translate the situated, dominant meanings around waste, offering my own theoretical critique given a lack of formal contestations and ethnographic insight as compared to the above examples. The following waste examples also show how notions such as ‘carbon neutral’ and ‘zero waste’ have definitions reflective of local politics and contexts, as I show the difference between the Copenhagen and Vancouver approaches to waste as part of their green action plans.

6.3 The Political Ecology of Incineration: Copenhagen’s “Burn-it-all Mafia”

This section demonstrates how Copenhagen’s carbon neutral efforts concerning waste crystallize around disposal infrastructure such as incinerators and apartment building waste chutes. I demonstrate the particular way that the City of Copenhagen suggests its waste efficiency policy is carbon neutral, which leads to questions regarding the overall reliance on waste to energy (WTE) incinerators as sustainable waste management. In Copenhagen, WTE is accepted as ‘renewable’, especially framed in opposition to landfilling (Kleis and Dalager 2007). My aim is not compare these final disposal methods but to question the sustainability of such a system, which relies on consumerism and treats waste as an economic resource, thus normalizing rather than problematizing excessive wasting.⁶⁶

The CPH 2025 Plan integrates energy production and energy consumption in a “holistic” way, and portrays carbon neutral energy to be the point where they produce more energy than they use, and switching to particular energy sources including biomass, waste, wind, solar and geothermal energy (City of Copenhagen 2012, 26). For energy production via

⁶⁶ Similar to Gandy’s (1994) conclusions in his book *Recycling and the Politics of Urban Waste*.

waste, a WTE system requires a certain amount of per capita waste. The plan also explains that they still need to devise ways to encourage the separation of plastics from the waste stream (some of which are otherwise carcinogenic when incinerated). In a *New York Times* article, Rosenthal (2010) writes of Copenhagen's WTE plant with praise, even though it "burns thousands of tons of household garbage and industrial waste, round the clock." In fact, Danes produce the highest amount of waste per person (more than the US and all other EU countries; Eurostat 2013); yet the City of Copenhagen has not specifically attempted to introduce policies to *reduce* waste (Chu 2009).

A report written by energy industry representatives on Denmark's 100 year history of waste incineration claims that "incineration is conceived as a sensible, indispensable part of the waste hierarchy" and that Denmark will remain an "exporter of incineration knowledge and technology" (Kleis and Dalager 2007, 46-48). I found this policy to be supported by the majority of Copenhageners that I spoke to, where they perceive/rationalize the WTE system as sustainable and a reason why Copenhagen is considered to be green, especially as the generated energy is used in the energy efficient district heating system. Thus, waste is viewed as beneficial as it will eventually heat their apartments, a necessity in a Nordic climate.

The waste flows from their apartments, is collected and transported to the incinerator plants, and through this biophysical manipulation process of incineration, the waste is returned as energy via the district heating system. The disposal infrastructure in most Copenhagen apartments is waste chutes on every floor (see Figure 23), making this type of disposal the most convenient.

Figure 23. Waste Chute in an Apartment Hallway



Other methods of discarding that involve sorting waste like recycling and composting are less convenient; and further, efforts to reduce waste are drastically absent from City discourse and waste policy. Recycling bins were introduced to residential buildings (other than in Nørrebro and Christiania) in recent years; some are located on the street and some inside inner courtyards. Composting is regulated and requires a special permit, thus is not a common practice for Copenhageners. The WTE system normalizes excessive waste, as explained by two American activists living in Copenhagen (outsiders-as-insiders):

Ruth: a lot of people you talk to here will say that garbage in Copenhagen is not a problem because it's burned and the majority of the city's waste is used in the power plant, incinerator style for electrical generation.

To which Adam interjected: it comes with multiple caveats. There's burning plastic and there's not a lot of recycling of plastic, we just got bins for recycling our plastic just 3-4 months ago - ridiculous.

I met several groups attempting to change this without contesting the infrastructure: Giv'n Get seeks to implement composting schemes, Byttedmarked reframes both waste and the economy by swapping used goods without a monetary exchange, and Flydende By is creating an entire floating station from recycled materials that they hope to use for environmental educational purposes.

In Nørrebro, the local environmental committee (Miljopunkt Nørrebro) has tried to change the waste chute infrastructure in order to increase recycling and decrease the total amount of waste. This has been difficult because of the housing association structure where consensus decisions are made and some residents are resistant to removing the waste chutes. Edvard (interview, Miljopunkt Nørrebro) explained the policies and infrastructure as a major hurdle in addressing the waste issue, referring to it as Copenhagen's "burn-it-all-mafia":

we do it that way [WTE] but it has been driven by bureaucrats and the companies who deliver these huge centralized systems... right now we have to work with trying to shut these [waste chutes] down so people have to carry it and sort it, because as long as you have this easy solution people do that. You put all your waste together in one and go out of your door and open it and put it down there, because that's the policy that has been going on for so long. You actually build your houses around that policy, and we have to reverse that.

In response Miljopunkt Nørrebro has recently implemented 'smart environmental stations' (see Figure 24) that take up one parking spot and allows for larger receptacles – which means less transport (reducing emissions and noise) and further leaves more space in the courtyards. However Copenhagen has a law that parking spaces cannot be removed (they can be replaced but the total number needs to be maintained), which poses a barrier for introducing more stations around Nørrebro and the city. Like the Streets for Everyone plan above, this 'smart environmental station' still does not quite resemble a sustainable city of the future, as recycling does not address the amount of waste and consumerism that is tied to its production.

Figure 24. *Miljopunkt Nørrebro's 'Smart Environmental Station'*



The challenge is how to change behavior and perceptions of waste as WTE does not confront Danes' excessive waste and does not incentivize reduction or recycling in any way. This system demonstrates how consumerism is not contested, given that the current waste chutes are convenient for fast paced lifestyles as many place all waste including recyclables into the waste chute located directly outside of the apartment door, which they rationalize as sustainable because the recovered energy will be converted to heat. This is, of course, only one element of Copenhagen's waste policy, and the waste policy is only one element of the carbon neutral goal. My argument is that it is often overlooked and this practice has been engrained in the everyday lives of many Copenhageners through infrastructure, policy, a 100 year incineration history, and a cooler climate that requires heating. With a WTE incinerator system in place, while lacking a strong recycling and composting infrastructure and strategy, this acts to disincentivize Copenhageners to question and change their daily consumption and disposal habits.

Waste is promoted, commodified and normalized through the idea that it is most efficient to burn for heating – and while there is much room for criticism on the quantitative assessment of a ‘carbon neutral’ WTE system specifically, and the ‘carbon neutral’ plan in general, the socio-cultural aspects of the waste discussion and alternatives that focus on reduction are missing. The dominant City discourse around waste and the technical incentives that encourage wasting via the district heating system and the “burn-it-all mafia” are generally accepted.

6.4 Zero Waste and the Informal Economy of Binning

Where Copenhagen seeks to achieve carbon neutral status partly through WTE with strong focus on infrastructure and energy production, Vancouver has set a different goal of promoting a ‘zero waste culture.’ In this section I first demonstrate how the City frames waste as a resource with a ‘zero waste’ discourse centered on the commodification of material categories such as compost and recyclables. The compost initiative is based on a new Green Bin program, and recycling becomes an economic-environmental ‘win-win’ through engagement with DTES binners⁶⁷ and their informal economy. Described specifically in this case by Dale and Newman (2009) a binner is “a street person who takes recyclable material from the big blue garbage bins hidden in the back alleys of downtown Vancouver and returns them to retailers for money... recovering over 20 million cans and bottles a year that would otherwise have been landfilled” (677).

Creating a ‘zero waste culture’ and reducing waste by 50% is one of Vancouver’s GCAP goals. They call for a change: “toward a zero waste future is going to require changing

⁶⁷ Also referred to as street waste pickers or informal recyclers.

behaviors and changing the system”; and part of this change is the view of waste itself: “what we call ‘waste’ is often a valuable resource when used in another context,” explained literally as “a gold mine in our garbage” (City of Vancouver 2010, 36, 39). One of the methods for reducing waste is extensive composting of organic waste - this “Green Bin” policy makes it illegal to place food scraps in garbage bins. The policy, first met with some confusion amongst citizens and resistance from apartment building managements⁶⁸, results in the collection and sale of the composted food and garden waste. While composting will surely have environmental benefits, the important point for my argument is that waste is commodified and framed as an economic resource.

Uncovering what a zero waste culture entails is important to understand this particular piece of the ‘greenest city’ pathway. If zero waste simply means that instead of landfilling, more waste is recycled, composted or used as heating under the logic of energy efficiency, then this is a dangerous conflation. This idea neglects opportunities for reducing and reusing waste, and targets disposal which may pose challenges to a long term solution. I found that waste in Vancouver is a resource and privilege for some and subsistence for others. My focus here turns to an informal economy of binning that has a role in the discursive construction of the City’s zero waste culture. While binners may be incorporated into City plans and their jobs counted as ‘green’, what is overlooked is how binners represent a symptom of, rather than a solution to, the waste problem. I am not focusing on the regulation of binning or whether it has the power to temporarily aid those without a right to the city. Rather, my point is that if we wish to envision the ‘greenest city in the world’, especially a ‘zero waste culture’ – the very presence and practice of binning, where Vancouver’s poorest are left to dig

⁶⁸ From multiple conversations with workers and volunteers at City Farmer, who have assisted with this policy; and from an informal discussion with a City staffer working on this policy at the “Doors Open Vancouver” event on 3 October 2014.

through trash for subsistence, indicates a failure to engage with and acknowledge systemic problems.

Normally, binners have specific routes, spending their days collecting as many recyclables as they can carry (often in extra-large trash bags carried on carts), transporting and exchanging for cash at recycling depots. Bidders spent one morning in the fall of 2014 collecting 55,000 coffee cups from streets and trash bins, and artists constructed sculptures out of these cups. The event, called the ‘coffee cup revolution’ was meant to bring awareness to Vancouver’s throw away culture as well as Canada’s high deforestation rate – a glimpse at the product’s lifecycle. “We’re chopping down half a million trees a year in Canada to provide ourselves with these disposable cups, which we ship out to the dump, and we can’t afford to build decent, affordable housing for our very poorest citizens – there’s something very off-kilter here,” Ken Lyotier⁶⁹ told CBC news (2014). These disposable coffee cups represent scalar and class injustices found in the political ecology of binning for DTES residents.

There has been much support for providing opportunities for binners and reframing their jobs. From a case study on DTES binners, specifically the social enterprise United We Can, researchers from the University of Victoria call for “identifying waste as a resource... [and] improving the public perception of binners as environmental stewards” (427), rather than the typical perception of “dirty, less worthy, or marginal” (Tremblay *et al.* 2010, 422). The City of Vancouver specifically hires binners during mega-events such as the “Green” Winter Olympics – boasting about the temporary job opportunities as if this occurs separate from the effects on binners of mega-event public space securitization and “clean-up”

⁶⁹ The founder of United We Can, a bottle depot and social enterprise in the DTES that assists and employs binners.

(Kennelly 2015; see section 3.2.2). The City of Vancouver (2010) and Vancouver Economic Council (2014) count ‘waste collectors’ as ‘green jobs’; and to facilitate their collection, the City “installed binner-friendly public recycling receptacles” (City of Vancouver 2014, 24). In a news article on the topic of Vancouver as the greenest city in 2020, a city staffer mentioned that binners would still be a part of the informal system (Daniels 2011). Thus binning is portrayed as a way to empower those without resources as Tremblay *et al.* (2010) do.

What does that say about a zero waste society if binners are expected to remain? In other words, this portrays binning as a solution to environmental problems, disincentivizing cultural change as the wealthy view wasting, and in particular *not* recycling, as economically beneficial to the poor.⁷⁰ My argument differs here in that when one particular class attempts to survive from collecting recyclables from waste bins, they subsidize the consumerist lifestyles of the upper classes and the wealth of the City, in a socio-ecologically disconnected manner – as Lyotier’s quote above suggests. I argue that deeming binners as *environmental stewards* not only demonstrates the limits to the City’s ability to engage with systemic issues but continues to invisibilize the source of the waste problem and normalizes binning – giving binners the role of a savior. This also demonstrates a possible discrepancy between green and ‘sustainable’ jobs: although a job may seem environmentally friendly, this does not necessarily translate to a quality, safe, and meaningful position.

Bidders represent socio-economic inequality through this system of waste: what is counted in the GCAP is total solid waste amounts and the ecological footprint of those who can afford to have one. Do binners then have a negative ecological footprint, as they

⁷⁰ Similar to the WTE example in the previous section, and in Copenhagen binning is also such an established practice where not recycling is seen as helpful to the binners – for example on Fridays many middle class Copenhageners have drinks outside at the Nyhavn canal, with binners walking through collecting the empty beer cans. The other side to this is that some residents are against binners’ access to the bins (Dale and Newman 2009).

rummage through waste and recycling bins? The containers are in the trash for different reasons, such as: (1) a lack of recycling facilities (infrastructure); (2) a lack of knowledge or action of individuals (education/culture); or (3) as mentioned earlier, a purposeful effort to assist binners that eschews formal recycling infrastructure (class). Regardless, the poorest class of citizens, and in this case a disproportionately high number of indigenous peoples, are on one hand excluded from participating in sustainable lifestyles (explained in chapter 5), and on the other, responsible (with little credit) for partly ‘greening’ the waste system in Vancouver.

I participated as a small group facilitator at a conference, *Zero Waste: Innovations to Drive the Circular Economy*, with representatives of different regional Vancouver institutions related to waste management. We spent the day brainstorming what a circular economy would look like, see-sawing from infrastructural to cultural change as drivers for this transition, mapping out sticks and carrots. Twelve major themes were found: (1) citizen engagement; (2) education; (3) regulation; (4) employ best practices from around the world; (5) reduce packaging; (6) governance; (7) collaboration; (8) incentives; (9) process and product redesign; (10) business; (11) communications; and (12) behavior change (“SFU Public Square: Dialogue Outcome Report” 2014). Although the ‘coffee cup revolution’ day was mentioned, the role of binners was not discussed. George, who has worked in the waste industry for 20 years, told me that “waste and recycling should not be tied with money and profits”; which returns us to the commodification of waste.

In short, Vancouver’s zero waste culture is a rather misleading term, as the goal is to limit solid waste to 240,000 tons yearly (half of the 2012 total), with a key strategy that profits off of a composting plan. Again, this is not against composting or binning, but it is

clear that waste is a resource for some in a privileged manner, and for binners, navigating waste is a day to day survival strategy.

Chapter Summary

This chapter gave several examples of translating situated sustainabilities that shed light on green city policy debates in Copenhagen and Vancouver. These negotiating acts, affixed to the commodification of land and waste, demonstrate the dominant shade of green and how this is contested or accepted in various ways. The Grandview-Woodland example shows that density is not accepted as sustainable, and even the environmental benefits were questioned. The fact that the Streets for Everyone plan is seen as too progressive for a neighborhood already deemed as progressive displays neighborhood level struggles over sustainability that are sometimes ignited by the City's plans. The case of Christiania's decision to sell their land using *folkeaktie* demonstrates not only the hybrid nature that emerges when faced with a neoliberal government, but also the government's insistence that land should be privatized. Christiania has resisted the privatization of land, and with several years of decision-making and financial support from international (symbolic) 'shareholders', they displayed their sustainability priority: maintaining their 'fractured autonomy.'

These examples were used to show a general trend in both cities, while situating them within their local contexts, thus they have similarities and differences. For example, in Copenhagen there are considerably fewer towers, as locals have also fought against developers in order to preserve the skyline (like Islands Brygge, see Ploger 2010). Interestingly, Vancouver has a ban on compostable waste and has recently seen protests over

waste incineration proposals; conversely, in Copenhagen incineration is accepted as sustainable – showing how sustainability is constructed differently in these two cities.⁷¹

In both Copenhagen and Vancouver, waste is discursively portrayed as resource, specifically in their green action plans and this is part of their efforts to achieve greenest city status and reflected in their efficiency based models. In a time of fetishizing CO₂, Swyngedouw (2011) remarks that problems are portrayed not as “the result of the ‘system’, of unevenly distributed power relations”, rather the “‘enemy’ remains socially empty or vacuous, and homogenised; it is a mere thing” (269). Waste here is not viewed as a symptom of systemic injustices, rather compartmentalized as it goes from private hands to semi-public bins or incinerators, thus reduced to its materiality. In Copenhagen, this policy and its infrastructure creates incentives that maintain Denmark’s high level of waste production. By using carbon control models, the City portrays this as sustainable (carbon neutral) because they plan to produce more energy than they consume. In Vancouver, a ‘zero waste culture’ is also not one with literally zero waste, but with goals to separate and sell compost through their Green Bin policy. Without an emphasis to reduce waste at its source, bidders remain marginalized, yet depicted and formalized as “environmental stewards” who subsidize Vancouver’s consumerism. These examples further show the City’s role as expert knowledge producers as they define sustainability terms such as ‘carbon neutral’ and ‘zero waste’.

My examples in this chapter show how the dominant technical version of sustainability is contested, and demonstrate the need for caution when buzzwords like ‘density’ and ‘zero waste’ are conflated with ‘sustainable’. Checker (2011) writes that “reactions to gentrification crystallized in battles over parks, further underscoring both the

⁷¹ A factor worth mentioning in relation to this difference is that 85% of the Metro Vancouver region’s electricity source is carbon-free hydropower (Moore *et al.* 2013).

real and symbolic role of green space in gentrification and displacement” (216) – these places became “battlefields where struggles over class position and privilege were hard-fought” (223). If we simply replace parks with towers and green space with density, this most clearly connects to the Grandview-Woodland example. Eco-gentrification is important because in the context of green action plans, it shows why simply looking at emissions lacks critical engagement with social issues, especially rising inequality, and how in these cases the sustainable development idea that economic, social and environmental aspects will positively correlate does not hold, and are in fact understood and contested as trade-offs. In the following chapter, I continue to engage with the concept of eco-gentrification by examining how alternative food initiatives in Copenhagen and Vancouver are caught within the paradox presented by the neoliberal cooptation of positive environmental change.

Chapter 7

“Right Now, Right Here”: Prefiguring Urban Space

Introduction

This final empirical chapter focuses on community efforts to access and grow ‘local’ food in Copenhagen and Vancouver. Articulations of sustainability are shown here via how community groups are prefiguratively organizing (see section 1.3), creating new visions and collectivizing urban public space. However, as already noted frequently in this dissertation, these efforts need to be critically viewed within a process of pro-economic growth urbanization, and subjected to questions of equality and justice regarding who benefits from green efforts.

Given that food was denoted a major component of living sustainably (see section 5.2), this chapter offers important insight to how food initiatives intersect with green city politics. Local food studies could, and increasingly do, occupy entire dissertations, so to be clear, I concentrate specifically on alternative food initiatives (AFI, Allen *et al.* 2003), their relation with the City, the variety of ways in which these groups prefiguratively organize and the limits to such attempts. During my interviews and participant observations with the groups discussed here, I focused on questions relating to their challenges (practical and ideological), foundations (initial start-up), and successes, while uncovering their local networks and connections with the City and/or other community groups. This was done in order to show how AFIs contest urban neoliberalism, most often through the creation of alternative spaces and networks.

In Copenhagen and Vancouver, I explored a number of projects, such as community gardens (in parks, on rooftops, and on vacant plots – some using varying degrees of permaculture), an urban agriculture social enterprise (Sole Food Farms), a long established demonstration and composting garden (Vancouver's City Farmer which started in 1978), cooperatives/community supported agriculture (CSA) schemes including the Københavns Fødevarefællesskab (KBHFF) and City Beet, as well as Bybi, a beekeeping social enterprise (see list of initiatives for further descriptions in Annex 1). I certainly did not engage with all alternative food efforts in these cities, but attempted to capture a variety of perspectives and projects, and a variety of engagement levels with the City. Some of the efforts that I discuss have been heralded by the City as *the* solution, one that captures enough elements of sustainability that it can be presented in a way that it is beneficial for everyone involved, with the added bonus that the initiative was started from the 'bottom.' Given my research perspective, I did not engage with individuals or private family households that grow food on their property or on allotments.

My AFI participation in Copenhagen differed slightly from that in Vancouver, a factor that may have influenced my findings. In Copenhagen I participated more directly, whereas in Vancouver I relied mainly on semi-structured interviews, toured farms and attended a yearly Food Policy Council meeting. This difference may be due to (1) the openness of Copenhagen's AFIs, compared to a more formal, individualist structure of those in Vancouver (to be discussed in section 7.2); and (2) I was in Copenhagen in the spring, which meant the beginning of the planting season and enthusiasm to (re)start garden projects.

This chapter will continue with the commodification and eco-gentrification themes from chapter 6, themes that now meet prefigurative politics. This perspective is helpful in order to avoid (1) romanticizing 'bottom-up' initiatives and (2) the 'local trap'. . The first

section explains how prefiguration connects to AFIs. The second section provides a brief background on related food policy and cultural aspects in Copenhagen and Vancouver. The third section presents several AFIs which raise an important question that echoes in many cities and many sustainability initiatives (not only pertaining to food), what I see specifically as the ‘gateway-gentrification paradox.’ On the one hand an individual’s involvement with an AFI may lead to engagement and activism with ‘stronger’ social and environmental justice issues - often portrayed as a ‘gateway’ (Connelly *et al.* 2011)⁷². This highlights the socio-political, more so than the ecological aspects of food initiatives. On the other hand, these individuals often represent the targeted middle class and their projects may indirectly contribute to the process of eco-gentrification. The two outcomes of gateways and eco-gentrification are not reconciled, thus my examples illustrate how gateway-gentrification is a specific form of the ‘urban green space paradox’ (Wolch *et al.* 2009). This perspective offers crucial insight to AFIs that are increasing in cities around the world and often deemed sustainable. This is not necessarily about different versions of sustainability between the City and citizen groups, but about how food, as a main element designated for living sustainably, functions as part of the green city imaginary.

7.1 Prefigurative Politics and Urban Food

Graeber (2002) notes that prefiguration is the difference between speech and action: “it’s one thing to say, ‘another world is possible’. It’s another to experience it, however momentarily.” This rather adequately describes a statement made by Tim (interview, KBHFF) regarding the motivations for the KBHFF: “we don’t really want to wait for the big solution. We just want

⁷² Similar to what is found by researchers who have looked at the ‘internal drivers’ for sustainable lifestyles – those who are attempting to live sustainably report view it as a ‘progress’ involving ‘baby steps (see section 1.3). The progressive benefits apply not only to individuals, but can also be seen in this context in what Mendes (2008) has described as ‘multiplier effects’.

to do something right now, right here.” This sentiment displays a certain frustration with traditional politics, and a sincere interest in active participation that may not result in an immediate ‘big solution’ but ‘baby steps’, while a ‘big [future] solution’ could for instance mean ‘Copenhagen carbon neutral.’ I found prefiguration especially suitable for analyzing AFI, for as I show many participants expressed their apathy towards formal political engagement which they overcame by engaging practically, and often times literally ‘with their hands.’

While explaining that involvement in such grassroots initiatives requires personal change, learning, and resources, Gary (interview, KBHFF) also articulated the limitations of prefiguring sustainability:

I have realized it is difficult to sort of challenge people in every possible sense all at once. You can't have something that is radically horizontal and consensus based decision making, and everybody has to take responsibility, and everybody has to come in and learn all of these things, all at once, and grow enormously at the same time.⁷³

Thus the conception of a radical sustainability is too difficult and too different from the current social world for “all at once” to be possible. Temporally, the future goals become the means for their everyday activities, and their success is not necessarily attaining carbon neutrality in ten years, but small changes that make “all at once” slightly more of a reality.

I found that prefiguration conceptually links well with AFI, perhaps because initiatives such as urban gardens “profoundly” represent the grassroots and are largely “self-determined” (Rosol 2010, 552). Guitart *et al.* (2012) assessed the current academic literature on urban community gardening, finding most research thus far has used qualitative or mixed methods, been based in the US, and the majority of gardens were run by non-profit organizations on public land. The authors also claim that all research conducted on the

⁷³ By ‘grow enormously’ Gary was referring to the question for community groups as to whether they prefer to expand their numbers or strengthen the existing efforts, as it is often difficult to simultaneously do both .

property values surrounding the gardens found that the values rose in correlation with the gardens; one benefit was indeed “reduced crime and increased safety” (Guitart *et al.* 2012, 367), displaying a link between AFIs and eco-gentrification. This gentrification can also be seen in light of urban neoliberal restructuring, where community participation compensates for the lack of public assistance due to budget restraints, thus as Rosol (2010) claims, the prefiguration may have contradictory outcomes as: “it may serve a neoliberal agenda, but at the same time still foster an emancipatory agenda” (550). From interviews with Berlin City staff as to why they supported urban gardening projects, she found that some of their answers resonated with the idea that the neighborhood “should look clean, pretty and secure, and voluntary work by neighbours, their [the gardens] presence in the lots and the associated social control are seen as an effective tool to ensure this” (557).

As for the motivations of those involved with AFIs, many fall within complex debates regarding the present industrial agriculture system. They seek to question GMOs, meat consumption, mono-cropping and land grabbing – these sites of production are typically outside of traditional city boundaries.⁷⁴ On the consumption side, local and/or organic food has become an element of a privileged sustainable lifestyle. Growing economic inequalities have resulted in unequal access to food, as discussed in food justice, food sovereignty, and just food movements. For example, Slocum’s (2007) Minnesota case study focused on race and alternative food practices, where she documents how whiteness intersects with class privilege and leads to class and racial exclusion in alternative food efforts. Similarly, Alkon (2008) found that a farmers market in an affluent white area of San Francisco used a discourse of conservation environmentalism, whereas in a nearby food insecure and low-

⁷⁴ This is from purpose statements of AFIs – I found that the reasons for individuals to participate were more varied than a purely environmentalist stance, for example social incentives include: they were initially brought by friends, or wanted to meet neighbors, or missed the countryside lifestyle.

income African-American area, a discourse of social justice was employed at their farmers market.

On the production side, localization strategies are often seen as the environmentally sustainable choice; however, there are criticisms of how environmentally sustainable *urban* agriculture could be (Born and Purcell 2006). For example, only a small percentage of food can be grown in urban areas given their large populations, along with food quality concerns given some pollution concentrations especially in older cities. I do not enter into the natural science debates about whether or not plants can filter these toxins, nor will I try to count the amount of food produced and consumed in cities. What I want to point out is that there are unquantifiable benefits that AFIs provide, sometimes overlooked in debates, especially carbon control debates about the value of growing food in the city. Many participants assured me that their participation was not “just about food,” as Gary (interview, KBHFF) explained: “food is such a big identity project these days.” AFIs do not only relate to the supply and demand of food, but also play a role in social and cultural change. This is an issue I return to in the third section regarding the ‘gateway-gentrification paradox.’ Before doing so, I first provide a background on food policy and culture that creates part of the context in which the AFIs operate in Copenhagen and Vancouver.

7.2 Food Policy and Cultures in Copenhagen and Vancouver

This section shows the policy stances regarding food and the green action plans in Copenhagen and Vancouver and provides a context in which the AFIs are located. Local food is not part of Copenhagen’s green action plan, whereas Vancouver is engaged with local food, as they designate one chapter for this goal in the GCAP. I also discuss cultural issues like New Nordic Cuisine, farmers markets and food growing possibilities in these cities.

The rising interest in local and/or organic food production and consumption in Copenhagen is intriguing for two main reasons: one is the cultural shift to New Nordic Cuisine; the second relates to the actors involved, as the City does not have a food policy (neither on its own, nor as a part of the CPH 2025 Plan). As I briefly demonstrate, this points towards a driving effort from citizens, community groups and even businesses and restaurants. New Nordic Cuisine is a movement that concentrates on “gastronomic qualities from local, seasonal foods and from wild foods indigenous to the Nordic region, while adopting an ethical stance towards animal welfare and environmental sustainability” (Micheelsen *et al.* 2013, 14). In Denmark, this movement began with a rising concern for keeping food produced within the country (not exporting) and with a consumer demand for safe and quality food. The New Nordic Cuisine effort could be understood within the ‘local trap’ because it associates food quality with scalar boundaries and rather than solely emphasizing future sustainability goals, the movement creates a ‘reviving’ connection to past farming practices. For example, Kristian (interview, KBHFF) told me that the KBHFF farmers he met with were now growing a variety of silver oatmeal that has not been grown in Denmark in the last 50-100 years.

Researchers at the University of Copenhagen conducted a small sample case study with participants from different areas of Denmark and found varied perceptions. For example, some participants understood New Nordic Cuisine as a way to combat climate change, while some found it overly nationalistic. Others found it to be an “attempt to dictate changes in dietary habits,” while rural participants claimed the diet is suited for “up-market consumers living in the ‘big cities’” (Micheelsen *et al.* 2013, 17). The rural perception starts to display the certain duality that New Nordic Cuisine entails in Copenhagen, because prestigious downtown restaurants such as NOMA, which was ranked as the number one restaurant in the

world in 2010, 2011, and 2012 (Visit Copenhagen 2014), promote their expensive restaurants through New Nordic Cuisine.

Although concern for more sustainable food practices exists in Denmark, this is not included in Copenhagen's green action plan. As established, Copenhagen uses carbon control as an approach for their CPH 2025 Plan, and given that (1) food is not produced in the city at an industrial level, thus carbon emissions in this sector are not present (thus not able to be lowered); and (2) Danes are among the highest organic consumers in Europe (amount per capita; FIBL and IFOAM 2015), it is perhaps not too surprising that the City does not have a dedicated food policy. In the early 2000s, a popular supermarket chain decided to sell affordable organic goods (comparable in price to non-organic). This, along with Denmark's comparatively large amount of organic agriculture land (FIBL and IFOAM 2015), may be some of the reasons for the high level of organic food consumption, possibly upheld by the recent cultural trend of New Nordic Cuisine. This is not to claim that organic is the most sustainable farming technique. It is to show how food consumption in Copenhagen may already be deemed as sustainable and food production is not carbon intensive within the city boundaries, thus less of a municipal concern.

Conversely, the City of Vancouver has been involved in local food policy after citizen demands (Mendes 2008). Given their ecological footprint approach and recalling that Vancouver's footprint is mainly derived from food consumption (see section 4.1.2), a chapter in the GCAP is dedicated to local food, and the Vancouver Food Policy Council has written their own version of a food strategy. The Parks Board has also made efforts to promote food production in Vancouver's public parks, teaming up with local NGOs, for example the Environmental Youth Alliance. Figure 25 below lists Vancouver's 'local food assets,' with 2010 levels and goal levels for 2020, as per the GCAP Local Food committee. In the Local

Food chapter, the framing connects to the ecological footprint model and the win-win environment and economy argument: “a stronger local food system reduces the size of our ecological footprint by cutting down on the use of fossil fuels as well as protecting food-producing lands and related biodiversity. Local food contributes to human health and is considered by the Vancouver Economic Commission as a growing sector of a strong green economy” (City of Vancouver 2010, 65).

Figure 25. GCAP's Food Asset Growth Goals (City of Vancouver 2010, 66)

Food asset growth			
FOOD ASSET	CURRENT	2020 GOAL	PER CENT INCREASE
Community Kitchen	69	100	45%
Farmers Market	4	22	450%
Community Produce Stand	3	15	400%
Community Food Composting Facilities	0	5	500%
Community Garden Plots	3,260	5,000	53%
Urban Orchards	3	10	330%
Urban Farms	1	5	400%
Food Hub	0	1	100%
Total	3,340	5,158	54.4%

While the policy approaches clearly differ for Copenhagen and Vancouver, the cultural and political ecological factors also have a role in how AFIs play out in these cities. A difference in the built environment and legal issues about growing food (see section 5.3.2 for Copenhagen's regulation against growing food) can be seen through food growing at the household level. Aside from the downtown core, most of Vancouver's single family homes have areas for gardens and growing food. Vancouver, as a 'young' city, does not have soil pollution concerns (Dennis interview, City Farmer), thus growing food in backyards does not incite (municipal) fear as it does in Copenhagen.

At the community level, I found similarities in visions and the variety of initiatives, however many nuanced differences with the AFIs practices. The community gardens in Vancouver take a different shape: most remain as individual beds rather than cooperative, meaning that each person is given a raised bed to take care of, and there are signs at gardens in public spaces advising to not take any produce. Figures 26 and 27 below show the private nature of urban gardening in public spaces. The first one allows visitors to freely take produce from plants on the outside of the garden; the second clearly states that no produce can be taken from the beds which are individually kept and paid for.

Figure 26. “The Outside Boxes You Can Eat. But the Inside Boxes Please Keep.” Sign posted at the Woodlands Community Garden



Figure 27. Evergreen Garden Sign Outside of Vancouver City Hall



In Copenhagen, many community gardens are purposefully cooperative, without ownership (see 7.3.1). For example, at an Omstilling Nu event where a group was constructing raised beds and planting seeds, I asked: “what will you do with the produce?” To which the volunteer replied “it is not for anyone in particular... [pointing to the raised bed] we planted carrots, but no one *owns* the carrots.”

Surprisingly, in Vancouver, a CSA similar to Copenhagen’s KBHFF did not exist; instead there are small CSAs associated with urban agriculture farms (such as City Beet and Sole Food) and a shop on Commercial Drive (The East End Food Coop). Social enterprises were similar: both Vancouver’s Sole Food and Copenhagen’s Bybi sought to improve the lives of homeless and low-income residents by employing and training them in urban farming and beekeeping (respectively). Finally, the farmers markets differed in these cities. Only Vancouver has traditional farmers’ markets which are scattered across the city and open on a

single day of the week, from May to October. Both cities have higher-end markets that are open daily and year round offering a variety of food, often marketed to tourists.

Copenhagen's *Torvehallerne* has over 50 stands, selling French delicacies, gourmet chocolate, Paleo diet food, and Spanish tapas, to name a few options, along with a few typical meats, fish and produce stands – similar to Vancouver's Granville Island market.

The main points of Copenhagen's background include the lack of local food policies, a cultural movement for New Nordic Cuisine and an activists' dedication to creating communal food spaces in the cities. Vancouver's background is marked by a strong policy involvement with local food initiatives, formal structures for encouraging food initiatives, with more possibilities for individuals to grow food given household gardening space and a lack of soil pollution (compared to Copenhagen's regulations against households growing food given their soil pollution concerns).

It is through this background and the concepts presented in the first section that the following examples may be understood. Along the trajectories of urban neoliberal contestations (see section 1.2.3) – rather than opposing the view of the City directly or protesting industrial agriculture (like the March Against Monsanto demonstration I attended in Copenhagen), the frustration with a lack of outcomes from oppositional techniques led to community members growing their own food together, as a form of prefigurative politics. As I show, these contestations employ a variety of trajectories, alternative knowledge production, engagement and disengagement, which may be a part of their paradox. Rather than contesting the City outright, they (partly) contest the commodification of food, the industrial agriculture system and corporate power.

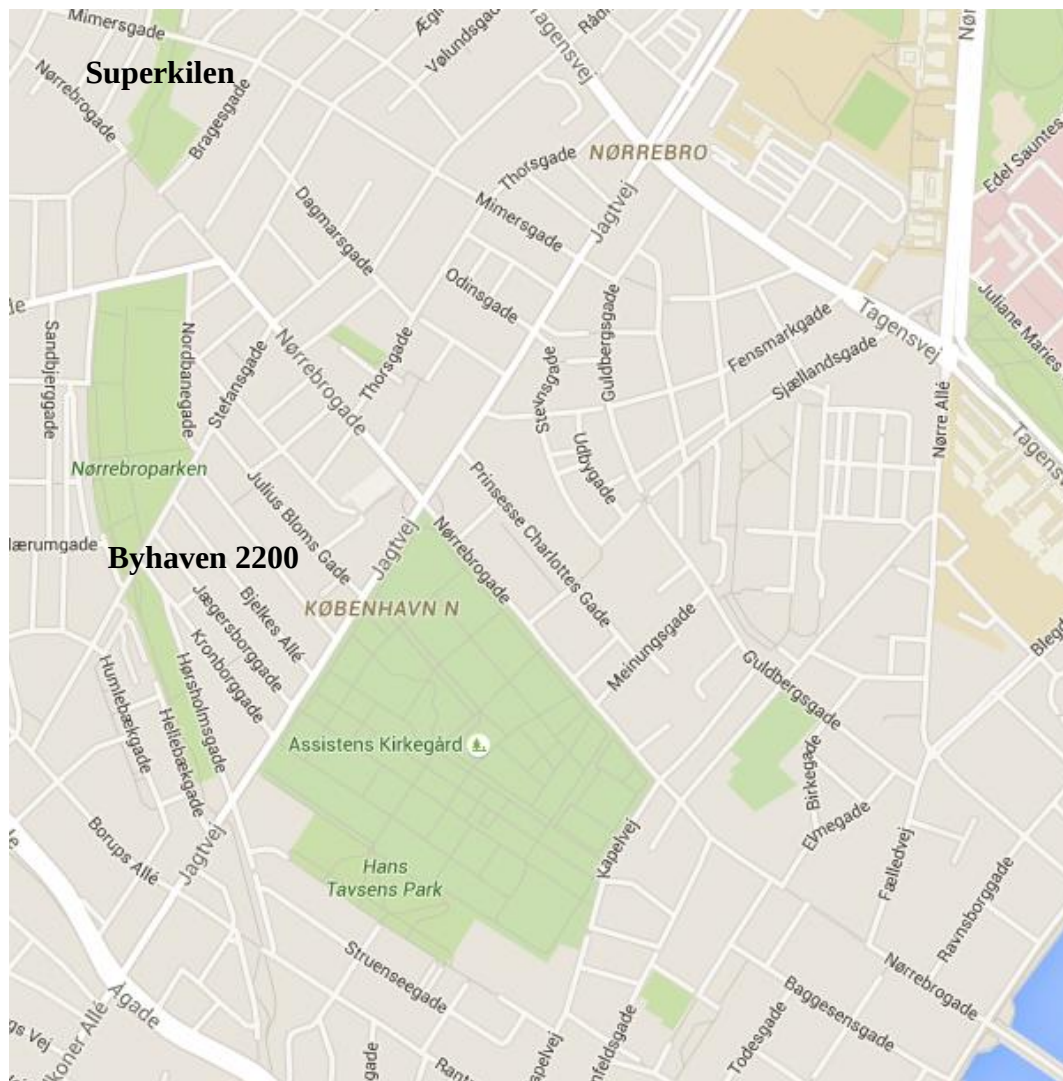
7.3 Alternative Food Initiatives: The Gateway-Gentrification Paradox

This section provides examples from Copenhagen and Vancouver's AFIs to demonstrate their prefigurative politics and to place this within the conflict between gateways and gentrification. First I discuss Byhaven 2200, an urban community garden, their goals, how it got started, their relationship with the City, and how this fits into the trend of a gentrifying Nørrebro. In the second subsection I show this paradox through the KBHFF and the New Nordic commodification of slow grown tomatoes, and contrast this with a neighborhood scale CSA in Vancouver, City Beet. Finally in the third subsection, I move to a Vancouver urban agriculture social enterprise, Sole Food Farms, where the debate continues as to the limits of prefiguration, and I use two AFI projects to discuss the politics of farming on vacant lots.

7.3.1 Displacing Crime with Permaculture in Nørrebro

Byhaven 2200 ("city garden" in Danish and Nørrebro's postcode), built in 2012, is the first urban community garden to be held in a public park (Nørrebrøparken; see map in Figure 28) in Denmark. The 1,000 square meters permaculturally principled garden sits along the Nørrebrøruten, a busy cycling path. In this section, I first provide Byhaven 2200's history, their relationship with the City and gentrifying effects, and finally tie this with the general gentrification in Nørrebro (for more background on Nørrebro, see section 5.3.2)

Figure 28. Nørrebro Map (Google Maps 2016)



In my interview with Louise, a co-founder, she explained how the garden started and why in this specific area: as the KBHFF began, a few members discussed how they needed to complement the CSA with a place in Copenhagen where they could physically show and teach people how to grow their own food in the city. In the initial process of negotiating for the public space with the City, the founders also talked with existing community gardens (DYRK and Prags Have) to ask about their challenges. A main challenge for these initiatives is to retain volunteers, especially due to the inaccessibility of their gardens (DYRK is on a locked rooftop and Prags Have is on an old industrial site in Amager). The location of

Nørrebroparken and accessibility were then two factors that drove the decision to be situated in a well frequented area for the group.

I found that Byhaven 2200, along with the KBHFF, were the most popular replies to my snowball question about sustainability projects in Copenhagen. The Museum of Copenhagen even featured the garden in their exhibition “Urban Nature” (May 2014). Byhaven 2200 is interesting because the City touts it as a ‘star’ project, in that they boast about the garden’s success and their role in that success, even though according to Louise the City flatly said ‘no’ at first and was hesitant to fulfill their request. Byhaven 2200 is a completely new endeavor for the City; it involves cooperation between many City departments and developing new contracts. Their contract with the City details how they can interact with the land and the rental cost. After establishing this and gaining start-up funding, the volunteers built raised beds, a decorative fence and a large picnic table from recycled materials (see Figure 29). Byhaven 2200 receives funding from various sources, including the City and the local council in Nørrebro, as well as grants from organic gardening foundations, and even a donation from a nearby bar who paid for the garden’s 2013 rent. The garden structure has several working groups for volunteers (gardening, building, communication, events, and bee keeping) and a board of directors. I discovered the hierarchical arrangement to be a requirement by the City in order to have a contract. This displays a moment of ideological negotiation, and a compromise in their prefiguration, as the group wished to follow KBHFF’s flat structure. I was assured that the hierarchy was simply on paper to please the municipality, and not practiced.

Figure 29. Byhaven 2200



Another key rule from the City is that the garden beds must be temporary, following (1) their hesitation to allow food production in City soil and (2) ease of removal “in case the volunteers lose interest” (Louise interview). Thus the group needed to bring in soil, which is against permaculture standards (permaculture dictates that you should have a connection with the original land). In this case, the City did not allow Byhaven 2200 to make permanent changes to the ground – the beds and soil must be movable. The City then has less responsibility, and with a 3 year contract they are able to renegotiate based on this experience. Byhaven 2200’s choice of raised beds with new soil was then a result of the challenge of engaging with the City as new project (Permakultur 2014).

Their manifesto below demonstrates their stance on the food system and their goals and ideas on what the problem is and how they want to change it:

In Byhaven 2200, we don't believe that exponential growth can work in a finite planet. We see the planet facing a cliff... humanity is polluting the soil and seas, destroying all forests and extracting all petrol while fresh water sources are shrinking, plants and animals facing massive extinction and greenhouse effect rising. We can't understand how multi-national corporations, like Monsanto can privatize water, plants and seeds – threatening life itself. Neither can we understand how 50% of the world's food products are being thrown out while 1000 million people starve every day. We are aware that our choices affect the market so we want to take advantage of the products that nature offers us, and understand them as gifts, and not as a for-profit business. We want to eat healthy organic vegetables, locally produced food and that way minimize our carbon footprint. We notice the importance of forming community to create resilience. We want to break with individualism and separatism that consumption culture imposes on us, and remind us that together we can make a difference. We think that if we don't change direction we may end up where we are heading so we are trying to aim towards a brighter future. If you agree with these ideas or want to know more about them, get in contact with Byhaven 2200. We want to meet you! (From a sign posted at Byhaven 2200 in March 2014)

This manifesto displays the problem as global and economic, with negative environmental consequences, and brings in social action ('forming community') to confront individualism.

It focuses on how food is a factor in this and how it can be a mechanism for social change, against the status quo/business-as-usual. Despite the level of alarm shown in their manifesto, the group is decidedly not involved in formal politics (local or national for example).

Byhaven 2200's discourse plays out in practice in many "acting as if" social norms, as they prefer to "do environmentalism" with their hands.

Along with this manifesto, my interview with Louise, and participant observation and informal interviews on volunteer days at the garden, I found a host of themes and practices that relate to prefigurative politics. The group emphasizes experimentation - for example a volunteer built a greenhouse to see the different kinds of plants he could grow; sharing the produce - everyone works on the entire garden, there are no assigned beds, and they eat meals together on the table they built; consensus decision making - for example we debated minor details like whether or not to cut the trellises; educating each other internally - they hold educational meetings during the off season; and external education - attending permaculture

workshops in Denmark. All of these norms and practices relate to the “right now, right here” aspect of prefiguration, combining politics and ecology.

Byhaven 2200 aims for transparency and sharing of their permaculture knowledge, they take action to educate the community and build networks. This garden challenges the conventional idea of a public park. Insisting on an open atmosphere that can build trust with neighbors and strangers, Louise (interview) explained the significance and ripple effects of creating an alternative imaginary:

we were so strict on wanting to have it right here, publicly, we wanted people to know that this exists and it can exist and that people respect it... we never really could have imagined how great of effect it would have, we get 2-3 requests every week from people who want to start either a garden or a backyard garden or roof garden.

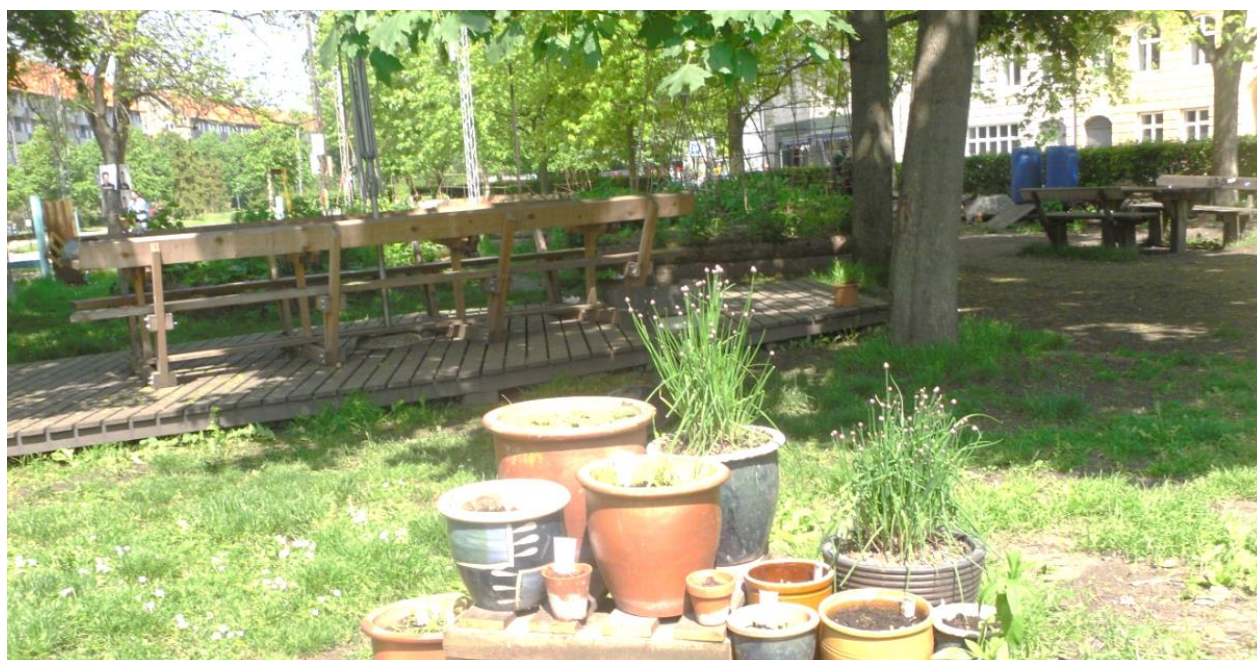
Thus their sustainability priority, in which they had to eventually compromise with the City, was that the garden should be accessible. They hoped to inspire through socio-spatial change. Beekeeping, rainwater collection, an urban fruit tree forest (planned adjacent to the current garden) and a ‘free library’ bookstand are all future plans for the garden.

This is where some environmentalist accounts would stop, advocating for the benefits of community gardens, and how Byhaven 2200 had the ability to transform the environment and build community. From here, I expand on the processes of gentrification in Nørrebro to demonstrate the gateway-gentrification paradox.

Before it was a cycling path, the Nørrebro-ruten was a railroad which ran along Nørrebroparken. And before this area of the park was a community garden, it was “dirty and dead” and well known for drug dealing, specifically on a remaining bench (see Figure 30). Louise (interview) explained the social position of Byhaven 2200 as “a crazy environment, because you have a major hipster environment in here, combined with Pusher Street,

combined with cafes, combined with a children's playground over there, and you have a lot of like outdoor sport activity, and then you have like [apartment] building blocks." By major hipster environment, she was mostly referring to Jægersborggade, a small and popular street with trendy attractions such as local bakeries, coffee and jewelry collectives, and cafes run by former NOMA chefs. An article in the Copenhagen Post (2012) claims that the gentrification of this particular street moved the gangs to this part of the park.

Figure 30. Byhaven 2200's Tables: Table on the Left was built by the Garden's Volunteers; Table on the Right is the Former Location of Drug Deals



However, the drug deals in this area were not *solved* by the garden. They were merely *displaced*. The City benefited from displacing the drug dealers with a community garden (Copenhagen Post 2012) and collects rent. As Munthe-Kaas (2015) writes of the project: "a main driver for many of them to participate in the garden project was more to get rid of the pushers than to work with urban gardening," as the pushers reappeared "around 300 meters further down the road in a shed built for the local boozers, whom they had thrown out" (230). This was not a well-hidden story, during my time spent at Byhaven 2200 I met other

researchers who were excited to study how safety became an “added bonus” from an environmental project. While this may be a subtle example of gentrification, the point is that the garden as a sustainability project is heralded by the City, the neighborhood clean-up efforts subsidized by garden volunteers, simply displacing the unsafe elements. The dual process involved with gentrification is not only the clean-up of an area, but the displacement of the “unclean.” As I have shown previously, in sustainability terms, these efforts have unequal outcomes, in particularly scalar ways, and have been coopted to attract the middle class who seek a trendy green life.

More broadly, Jakobsen’s (2009) work on gentrification in Nørrebro paints the picture of a typical displacement process of rising housing costs and attraction of the creative class – disturbed with particular moments of violent protest, such as the 2007 clearance and demolition of the Ungdomshuset (the Youth House - a squatted house and activist institution since 1982). The lot remains vacant today, and sits directly across from Assistens Kirkegård – a cemetery turned public park due to lack of green space - not far from Byhaven 2200. The activists who occupied the Ungdomshuset were forcibly moved to Nordvest (recall from chapter 5, the ‘garbage bin’ neighborhood). This upheaval had a “degentrifying effect” by lowering housing prices (Jakobsen 2009). Given this, the developer that now owns the lot is waiting out the effect, and will build when prices rise again (Lapina interview). Activists grew tired of the neglected lot, and during my stay they started a garden in this lot - anarchist ‘A’ symbols were sketched out in flower beds.

Also featured on the Nørrebroleden is Superkilen, a ‘star architecture firm’ (Bjarke Ingels Group) public park (see map in Figure 28), where neoliberal environmental tactics are more than subtly evident. One only needs to view the imported Chinese palm trees wrapped in plastic (see Figure 31 - Bloom says they look like Guantanamo Bay prisoners) to begin to

question the City's lack of budget for a proper park in a poorer neighborhood, and its ostensible 'public input process.' I do detail much here because Bloom's⁷⁵ piece (2013) on this greenwashing and lack of environmental and social responsibility is superbly telling. Superkilen is an example of de-greening, where a poor neighborhood stays poor, because Superkilen is not an environmental amenity, it is now a hazard, as the materials used (that originally were intended only for indoor use) on the now paved space put cyclists and park users at risk when wet, and further increase noise and rainwater hazards (Bloom 2013).

Figure 31. Chinese Palm Trees at Superkilen (former green space)



The gentrification battles in Nørrebro, like that of the Grandview-Woodland example in chapter 6, are on-going, embedded in a cultural history (see also the Mimersparken and Joe & the Juice coffee chain examples from Bloom 2013). Thus Byhaven 2200 should be seen

⁷⁵ A local who watched this unfold, who regularly takes his daughter to Superkilen, due to a lack of other parks nearby.

not only for its prefigurative actions and alternative visions, but also its conflicting role in gentrifying the neighborhood. The garden can be understood as a gentrifier, showing specifically how it is not only City policies but local activists who can inadvertently contribute to gentrification. The garden can also be understood as a space of prefiguration and a ‘gateway.’ The following continues with this paradox, showing part of Byhaven 2200’s network and foundation – the KBHFF.

7.3.2 Community Supported Agriculture: Coopting the Culture of Slow Grown Tomatoes

It should not be a surprise to say that the KBHFF found its beginnings in Nørrebro. I do not detail the broader function of community supported agriculture (CSA) initiatives, as that has been widely researched already. What I focus on is how the City’s perception of the KBHFF forced debate within the group, and secondly, how their cooperation with local farmers is easily coopted within the duality of New Nordic Cuisine. After this I turn to City Beet, a lawn to garden conversion CSA in Vancouver, to illuminate a rethinking of private lawns.

The KBHFF has 11 branches, separate groups that form as one, totaling about 8,000 members. They have contracts with about 30 organic farmers in Denmark (some do not have their certificates yet), through which the members organize pick-ups for weekly produce boxes. Each branch is unique, however they must follow the group’s main principles (see Table 6 below) – the idea is to create a project that is generally replicable yet flexible enough to make local adaptations based on members’ needs. To join the KBHFF, there is a one-time membership fee and a requirement of three hours of volunteering per month (members can volunteer by helping to sort vegetables into bags on pick-up days, for example). The group does not receive funding from the government, nor is it part of Copenhagen’s carbon neutral

efforts. The KBHFF attempts to create a commoning of the food system – as part of their name, *fælles* (the commons) indicates, in their attempt to bypass supermarkets, excessive plastic use and non-organic industrial agricultural practices. From their own 2014 survey, the demographic composition of the group (from all branches) is ¾ female, the majority age is between mid-20s to mid-40s, and have a higher education (“Hvem er vi i KBHFF?”).

Table 6. Ten Ground Principles (KBHFF)

Grown and produced organically	Cultivated locally
Season based	Supports fair and direct trade
Environmentally friendly	Ecological knowledge sharing
Financially viable and autonomous	Transparency in production and distribution
Accessible and Affordable for members	Create a positive community platform

At present, because the group has become so large, the government has taken notice and pushed them to declare the KBHFF as a business, rather than the ‘informative association’ they presently are registered as. Some members of the group support the idea of becoming a business because it would require them to pay close attention to their finances, one of the main challenges they have faced. Others are against the idea, claiming it does not follow with their non-profit values.

Aside from this identity crisis and “all at once” sustainability debate, I found the produce sold by the KBHFF incited cooptation. Tim (interview, KBHFF) explained how farmers are able to negate risk by selling their produce to the KBHFF, for example one of the farmers constructed

a tomato tunnel where he is growing more slow growing tomatoes. He knew from the beginning when he started this experiment, we [KBHFF] will buy all of the tomatoes, almost no matter how they turn out. They turned out great - the best tomatoes anybody has ever seen. As soon as he sold the first batch to us, the NOMA’s, the top notch restaurants in Copenhagen sort of found them and started buying them as well.

It is often like that, our suppliers also go onto these restaurants that sort of have the same focus with the New Nordic kitchen, so in that way we are part of a combination of efforts.

On the one hand, the coop has enabled farmers to engage in New Nordic practices and provides the typical security for farmers that CSA's are meant to ensure. Further, it takes three years to obtain an organic certificate in Denmark, and the KBHFF sees that it helps farmers by purchasing their organic produce, which the farmers during this waiting period cannot sell formally as organic (say to a supermarket). However, as true to the duality I mentioned regarding New Nordic Cuisine in Copenhagen, these slow growing tomatoes were coopted and their cultural value hyper-commodified to the benefit of the gentrifiers, the high end restaurants. What is interesting in relation to the concept of eco-gentrification and these two examples of AFIs in Copenhagen is their difference as place-based projects. Byhaven 2200 is firmly rooted and displayed as an urban community garden in a public park; the gentrifying effects of displacement can physically be traced where new neighborhood lines of clean and safe are drawn – the pushers have been pushed along. However, the KBHFF, its 11 branches across Copenhagen and its connection to farmers in the region turns New Nordic *culture* into a gentrifying agent in a less visible manner. In this way, it is important for future eco-gentrification studies to give attention to these unconventional processes and influences specific to *eco-gentrification*.

7.3.3 Rethinking Private Lawns

The following four Vancouver AFI examples concentrate on demonstrating the rethinking of land ownership and the creative use of urban space, and the final two examples further probe the question: who benefits from urban farming on vacant lots? These examples also show

how each group's prefiguration is situated to meet their specific sustainability goals. The first two examples, City Beet and Sharing Backyards are comparatively smaller initiatives, in size of membership and also not as popular with the City as the latter two examples, Shifting Growth and Sole Food Farms.

In 2013 Ruth and Katie started a lawn to organic garden conversion CSA called City Beet in the Cambie area. Home owners with land (front and back yards, see Figure 32 below) 'donate' this area to be farmed, and in return the owner receives a 50% discount from the CSA membership. Currently they have 17 yards which totals less than $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land. They describe this relationship: "this isn't just a simple trade; we'd rather think of it as a project where people come together to take back control of our food resources" (City Beet 'Donate Yard').

Figure 32. Back Yard Garden (City Beet)



City Beet's operations are purposefully at the neighborhood scale. Cargo bicycles are their only method of transport which limits their reach of lawns that can participate. They also prioritize keeping the expenses low so that the food can be as affordable as possible. Land is typically a big expense for an urban farming project, a factor they avoided with their creative scheme; however, Amy and Aubrey still sacrificed their own economic stability, earning only 2 CAD/hour for their first year. They do not have any grants from the City, nor do they wish to be involved with them; however, they are grateful that this practice is not regulated. City Beet questions the ownership of land and what is possible on a lawn - confronting the status symbolism of a perfectly manicured grass lawn. During a tour of their gardens, Aubrey explained that they hope people can learn about growing food and how it changes throughout the season (as a more permanent fixture), and that they as farmers are held accountable for their practices, as they often garden in lawns easily visible to local residents. On their website they write about how City Beet represents "*actual change*":

Our shareholders eat good food in all senses of the word. Together we are part of a community of people who are working towards actual change in our local and global food system. We want to reconnect people with their food, their farmers and their community. We do this because we have a passion for environmental sustainability and community development, but mostly because we just love growing food and sharing it with people.

Thus their idea of "good food" is political as much as it is ecological. City Beet has creatively designed an alternative vision within this area to physically demonstrate how these once private lawns could be used to benefit a community, albeit a community who can afford to pay upfront for a 5 month CSA order.

Sharing Backyards, another urban gardening group in Vancouver drew its prefigurative lines by concentrating on developments in online communication. Sharing Backyards is an online scheme set up to connect two groups: (1) those with land who can

host a garden – who can ‘share their backyard’ with (2) those who do not have land but would like to grow food in Vancouver. The project attempts to connect neighbors through gardening and draws on Vancouver’s context of plentiful yards and food growing opportunities. James, the founder, told me about how during his search for funding to upgrade the software, Target (a department store chain) offered to fund the project. He replied: “if you take your Monsanto products off the shelves then we can talk”, to which the Target representative asked if he was joking. James told me he was against this sort of greenwashing, that Target should “walk their talk” and should not use donations to Sharing Backyards to make the company appear responsible. Sharing Backyards continues to struggle to find funding from what they deem as appropriate sources. Funding, and the economy of these grassroots efforts becomes an issue for sustainability and a place where lines are drawn. The following example demonstrates a different ideology regarding funding sources.

7.3.4 Who Benefits from Urban Farming on Vacant Lots?

Shifting Growth manages community gardens on vacant lots in Vancouver – they approach developers and offer to manage the site. I interviewed the founder to find out the details of how this program works and who is benefitting. I found it to be a project that exemplifies the difficult balance presented when attempting to change urban spaces. The incentive for developers who have vacant lots to host community gardens is primarily for tax breaks, and secondly for positive public relations; contracts are made between the developers and Shifting Growth, who announces to the local community that individual raised beds will be available for one year for 10 CAD. For example, Figure 33 below is from the initial phase (2013) of a temporary garden in Hasting’s North, next to and sponsored by the company London Drugs. At first glance, this might seem like an exciting project and excellent use of

“idle space.” However, its ability to radically inspire change must be questioned in order to contend with these increasingly complex issues such as eco-gentrification.

Figure 33. Shifting Growth’s Hastings North Temporary Garden (Shifting Growth)



I was told that the purpose is to give affordable and convenient access to residents in high-density areas to grow food (although I would note that in the area of this particular garden most houses have space for gardens). Compared to Sharing Backyards, Shifting Growth is gaining in popularity and has been heralded by the City; the co-founder was nominated for a “City of Vancouver Awards of Excellence for the Greenest City Leadership category” (according to Shifting Growth’s website). Shifting Growth has a variety of funders, ranging from the City and local groups, to Royal Dutch Shell, one of the world’s largest oil companies.

Finally I turn to Sole (Save Our Living Environment) Food Farms, an AFI that hires low-income citizens living in the DTES (see sections 3.2.1 and 6.4) and “transforms vacant urban land into street farms that grow artisan quality fruits and vegetables, available at

farmers markets, local restaurants and retail outlets” (Sole Food website). Different groups are involved, and employed, than the previous examples in this chapter – this social enterprise is not completely white and middle class, but led by white and middle class members to help low income, homeless, and mentally ill people (mostly indigenous peoples) produce food in alternative ways to sell to the predominantly white and middle class and gentrifying restaurants. Interestingly, unlike the New Nordic Cuisine movement, the urban farming scene overall in Vancouver is not connected to the indigenous past, rather it is connected to the indigenous present. By that I mean their traditional farming practices and growing medicinal herbs are not emphasized – that history has been erased from the spaces of Vancouver; rather social enterprises like Sole Food are attempting to help DTES indigenous peoples cope with their colonial present. The City and institutions like Vancity⁷⁶ give tours around Sole Food to show off their innovative urban agriculture project; Sole Food’s website even claims that one of the sites, in the photograph below, is now a tourist site. Through the snowball method, I found that Sole Food was one of the most talked about projects that many people saw as clearly sustainable in Vancouver.

One of their several farms is on two acres of a downtown vacant lot donated by Concord Pacific (see Figure 34), where chefs from nearby high-end restaurants walk to pick up their specially ordered produce. During a tour of this farm, I was told that Sole Food Farms no longer seeks out vacant land – developers seek out Sole Food Farms and the benefits that accompany the support of temporary urban farms.

⁷⁶ A Canadian carbon neutral credit union, headquartered in Vancouver.

Figure 34. Sole Food Farms in False Creek



After interviewing two interns at the farm (along with two activists involved with urban farming), I heard of a similar tension that exemplifies the privilege of living in the dominantly defined sustainable way: the Sole Food Farms workers, often indigenous folk, did not feel comfortable selling their produce at the “posh” farmers markets. In other words, while it is food security and employment for the Sole Food Farms workers, they would not be able to purchase the food they grow. This notion further shows how one group’s sustainability does not necessarily mean sustainability for another (Quastel 2009). Farmers markets in Copenhagen and Vancouver can be seen as sites of a privileged sustainable lifestyle.

In speaking with Roy (interview, Urban Farming Society) about the current situation in Vancouver around urban farming, he said: “[farmers markets] have been criticized locally for being expensive by middle class standards, and a lot of the people that are farming, they are university educated privileged kids”, later saying that it was not for the purpose of

survival, tying the practice to a “yuppie child syndrome.” Dora made a similar statement about the current urban farming situation in Vancouver: “it’s very much a young white educated person’s movement in this iteration of it.” Roy (interview) explained to me how an “all at once” prefiguration was not yet possible with Sole Food Farms:

it’s not really contributing to food justice or food access, even Sole Food doesn’t grow first and foremost with food security reasons. They sell high end, like really well grown vegetables, at the highest price they can because they are essentially paying for employment, they want to hire as many people from the DTES with barriers as they can. So they don’t start by going ‘how can we grow food that is affordable and accessible to low income residents’, they start by asking ‘how do we incorporate the time honored French techniques’, like you know artisanal farming to grow a product that can sell as much as possible at the farmers market because that pays for their employment... there’s a certain amount of privilege and a certain amount of disconnect of urban farming here... then the business practices of many of them by the nature of Vancouver being an incredibly expensive city to live in, it dictates that they are going to have to grow these higher end things.

Roy went on to describe how he takes issue with the institutional isomorphic qualities of the green city agenda, with the example of Sole Food. He told me that it originally began as a completely different project, primarily a closed loop electronics recycling scheme. However, because the City wanted to increase the numbers of urban farming projects (see section 6.2) and this is where the grants and support were, the founders changed their idea to fit the goals of the City. Thus rather than viewing this as a ‘bottom’ initiative, it is more difficult to interpret the community aspect, rather it was inspired by start-up funding.

Sole Food Farms, similar to the KBHFF’s coopted slow grown tomato story above, displays this reoccurring theme where it is not possible to prefiguratively ‘check off the boxes’ for all of the popular and many times important principles relating to sustainability projects, such as local, fair trade, socially just, and organic. This was especially apparent regarding the autonomy and affordability for many AFIs. On the dominant ecological side, the positive political and social outcomes are overlooked. Dora (interview, Vancouver Food

Policy Council, Urban Farming Society) claimed that ‘gateways’ and benefits like community development, education, and intercultural connections are not reflected in Vancouver’s local food goals.

The problem with Sole Food Farms is not just the institutional isomorphism or the gentrifying restaurants or the privileged farmers markets, it is also the developers who benefit from tax breaks for their involvement: as Quastel (2009) found in his Vancouver case study, the developers use this as a tactic to keep the homeless away – the very people that Sole Food Farms attempts to help.

Chapter Summary

Reasserting and reclaiming urban space entails a negotiation with the current neoliberal world, and this reflects Copenhagen and Vancouver’s dominant ideas of what sustainability looks like. These examples show the importance of a nuanced understanding of sustainability projects, as they provide critical insight to the politics of urban food. The case of Byhaven 2200 shows how cooperation with the City is used to contest the agriculture system, whereas with the KBHFF, the government perception and need to place the group into the ‘business box’ caused internal complications. The case of Sole Food Farms also demonstrates how cooperation with the City and developers is done to ensure the sustainable livelihood of DTES residents. Rather than participating in formal politics or demonstrating in opposition, these groups sought to prefigure urban space through initiatives that facilitated alternative agricultural practices and visions. They experimented with different tactics, tried to make organic food more affordable, and collaborated with other groups and shared knowledge.

The criticism of AFIs in general is that such efforts are not contributing to justice goals, rather fulfilling a liberal environmentalist feel-good ‘safe’ activity that does not push boundaries; and further, according to the eco-gentrification concept, may lead to displacing low-income residents as the activists’ efforts are sometimes coopted for profit (Checker 2011). Socially, these efforts build community often for a particular class of green city citizens, as those without resources/capital may not find time to educate themselves on permaculture principles, or how to design a contract with the municipality, or involvement with an AFI may not fit with their version of sustainability. Ecologically, growing food in cities does not contribute substantially to the supply and while it may be local, Born and Purcell (2006) warn of scalar conflations between ‘local’ and ‘sustainable’.

In regards to the ‘gateway’ portion of the paradox, I found that the prefigurative qualities that these groups aim for is to create scalable and transparent projects that can multiply yet adapt to local contexts, which is perceived as a more democratic method than a top-down general enforcement. There is a growing observation from AFIs that those involved become more engaged with justice oriented causes – that there is a ripple effect or that AFIs provide a ‘gateway.’ That is to say, the urban garden or CSA may not on its own be the most sustainable endeavor, however as a site of socio-spatial change it has a substantial potential influence, because as observed by those who have studied sustainable lifestyles through the internal drivers (see section 1.3.2), the change involved is likened to ‘baby steps’ where one change leads to more. These community efforts can be seen as part of gateways and not necessarily in isolation. For example, Byhaven 2200 was a ripple effect from KBHFF, and the City Beet farmers were inspired from an internship they did in Ontario. In regards to measuring the effects of local food in cities, the gateway-gentrification perspective challenges the idea that the best method to judge sustainability is to measure CO₂ or count the number of

local food assets. This paradox raises important questions for those involved with AFIs and municipalities that may support such urban agricultural efforts.

Chapter 8

Discussion: Too Much Green?

Introduction

I met Alice during a volunteering day at Byhaven 2200; she too was researching several sustainability-oriented initiatives in Copenhagen. We later met to compare notes and she shared a sentiment that I found to echo in many of my conversations: “in Copenhagen, sustainability is all around us yet nowhere to be found.” It was easy to find something *labeled* as sustainable, from buildings to beer.⁷⁷ This and many of the examples in this dissertation incite questions regarding the politics of green city making, specifically the tension and expanse between green and sustainable, at a time when the two are conventionally conflated. This pronounced theme is evident in my answers to my main research question: *how do community groups contest green city policies; and, what are the implications of these contestations for sustainable lifestyles in particular, and sustainability in general?*

My answer to the research question is based on the empirical findings outlined in chapters 4-7, which were bound to the theoretical framework in chapter 1, methodology in chapter 2, and case backgrounds in chapter 3. The goal for this discussion chapter is to bring together insights from the empirics and relevant scholarly literature in order to detail my original contribution to knowledge. This will identify areas of agreement with current research and theory as well as points of divergence.

⁷⁷ The Nørrebro Bryghus (Brewhouse) sells Denmark’s first ‘carbon neutral beer’; I also found that the water bottles in the University of Copenhagen cafeteria had ‘carbon neutral’ labels.

From the empirical evidence set forth in the previous chapters, the contestations occurred through the emphasis on a narrowly defined green and its separation from sustainable. These findings point in the direction of reexamining the assumption that environmental policies will be beneficial overall, as the green priority (material environmental improvements) may distort or mask social and economic outcomes. This technified sustainability may portray the city and the associated neoliberal system as neutral, apolitical agents. Further, it may limit the expression of diverse and situated sustainabilities. In the words of Massey (2005), when we project one set pathway “that cosmology of ‘only one narrative’ obliterates the multiplicities, the contemporaneous heterogeneities of space” (5).

The first section details key concerns regarding how sustainable lifestyles is defined by the City and community groups in Copenhagen and Vancouver. The goal was to ‘test’ the concept of sustainable lifestyles and determine how it is defined in practice, not by individuals in their homes (the internal driver), but how it is employed by the City and sustainability-oriented community groups (the external driver). I reflect on the various definitions of sustainable lifestyles as they relate to the gap between theory and practice, and demonstrate a conceptual divergence between lifestyles and sustainable lifestyles. In the second section, I focus on lessons from my findings that relate to politics of scale and eco-gentrification, where I highlight the temporal scale as an often underrepresented aspect of these concepts. In the third section, I present key themes that emerged from the contestations. In the final section, I present several topics for future research that arose from my case studies. This discussion chapter then demonstrates the importance of grappling with this complex scenario and answers the research questions that have implications for the way we

understand and approach sustainability in general and green city policies and sustainable lifestyles in particular.

8.1 Sustainable Lifestyles: Reexamining Theory and Practice

This section reflects on the differences between how sustainable lifestyles is defined in Copenhagen and Vancouver and in theory, and the implications for ‘too much green’ context. This is in relation to my research sub-question: *how are sustainable lifestyles and sustainability conceptualized and contested in relation to green city policies?* My findings require us to determine if ‘sustainable lifestyles’ is a worthwhile concept for sustainability, especially considering that for some ‘sustainable lifestyles’ has been coopted to denote a privileged way of life.

I found Soper’s (2008) alternative hedonistic approach, which calls for remaking the image of a ‘good life’, to be present in the discourse overall. For example, Erik (interview, Danish Nature Agency) claimed that “you have to use less but you have to make it more attractive to use less”; and Edvard (interview, Miljopunkt Nørrebro) explained that the ‘light green’ folks required a selfish motivation for participating in sustainable practices. However, the problematic is that inequality is wrapped up in the image of a ‘good sustainable life’ in Copenhagen and Vancouver; in other words, we must consider the politics of who gets to define and participate in the ‘good sustainable life.’ Soper’s alternative hedonistic concept is then more applicable for privileged classes, and they certainly have higher energy intensive lifestyles, but in these cases, the class targeting reinforces their privilege, rather than uprooting it.

This is similar to part of Scott’s (2009) definition of sustainable lifestyles where she claims that one of the purposes is social grouping – distinguishing oneself from others. My

empirical evidence shows that the manner and politics behind how people “affiliate and differentiate themselves” was clearly through unequal power relationships where only certain classes have access to the green city, and green city policies reinforced this, similar to Quastel’s (2009) findings. Sustainable lifestyles was associated with exclusive practices that require resources, ultimately contributing to inequality rather than sustainability in Copenhagen and Vancouver.

Hobson’s (2006) approach is preferable here as she repositions the environment as the context, rather than a goal. She writes that sustainable lifestyles is “no longer just about consuming products but about how social and environmental resources of common good(s), spaces, networks, future and relationships need to foster respect for each other and in turn, for the environment”; the environment being both the common view of nature and the “environment of lived spaces and daily experiences” (312-313). There is a slight connection with this definition and my findings, specifically from the concern for the use of space and sharing. However, I demonstrated how the green action plans presented environmental indicators as a goal, rather than a strategy, and this is inconsistent with placing the environment as the context. The examples in previous chapters do not demonstrate that sustainable lifestyles is understood in Hobson’s way, highlighting a gap between what is practiced and what could be potentially realizable. It seems that most efforts are indeed still focused on consuming products and thus the privilege of consuming. In the first chapter I separated sustainable consumption from sustainable lifestyles in order to focus on cultural rather than efficiency approaches. Perhaps living sustainably is predominantly seen within the realm of consuming because efforts to drastically change the neoliberal economic system are lacking.

While not within the scope of my framework, the use of the term ‘resilience’ as a replacement for or complement to sustainability may indicate a loss of confidence in what sustainability has come to mean, at least in Copenhagen and Vancouver. One reason for sustainable lifestyles’ lack of radical connotation may also be that ‘lifestyles’ has a general tendency to be associated with the middle class. It is also possible that ‘sustainable *living*’ could avoid this association; however, it is doubtful that this term or resilience (or even ‘resilient living’), as changes in terminology, would alone incite or demonstrate a systemic change. At this moment and with this particular issue, I contend that both sustainable lifestyles and resilience, and their relationship, will need to be considered and that this is an opportunity for practice to influence theory.

What I found most intriguing was not only to look at the current ideas about sustainable lifestyles to test them empirically, but to return to Giddens’ definition of lifestyles and the particular notion that it is made up of “coherent bundles” (see section 1.3.1). Through my field research experience and later analysis, I found overwhelming tensions, not coherency. Jackson (2009) writes that “even those in the vanguard of social change turn out to be haunted by conflict - internal and external. These conflicts arise because people find themselves at odds with their own social world... people are trying to live, quite literally, in opposition to the structures and values that dominate society” (151). While his statement could imply such a finding, I have not seen this divergence discussed in sustainable lifestyles research. Some of the participants used a competitive and comparative frame to place their sustainable lifestyle, as they worried about the high footprints of others (for example suburbanites) and how this would negate their own attempts, or they felt that they were not sustainable enough because they did not live like their ‘voluntary simplicity’ acquaintances. The technification of sustainability allows for such a compartmentalization in terms of

sustainable lifestyles, where individuals can “greenwash themselves” (see section 5.1) by choosing a few activities that are often viewed as the energy efficient choice. These frames are not representative of coherent bundles. Attempting to live sustainably ruptures from Giddens’ concept of lifestyles, with choices, privileges, barriers, trade-offs and efficiency paradoxes. Navigating sustainability in this conventional iteration involves internal deliberation that requires education, resources and capital. This resonates with Isenhour’s (2011) finding where in this context even “simple things like shopping for apples can be stressful” (122). A prioritization of measuring sustainability and reaching emissions targets may disincentivize or delude citizens, thwarting engagement in diverse and radical practices, ideas and relationships (Isenhour 2011).

This conceptual difference may provide an opportunity to rethink the *subject* in sustainable lifestyles. Matt Hern explained that “to think of sustainable lifestyles on an individual basis is ecologically wrong.” This also reflects slightly in Hobson’s concept, and could align with a political ecology or critical urban (specifically right to the city) perspective of sustainable lifestyles with a collective subject. The theoretical imperative from these findings is to develop a perspective of sustainable lifestyles that is ecologically responsible and accepts cultural diversity, an approach that could still utilize Hobson’s concept.

8.2 Space, Time and Eco-Gentrification

The politics of scale, as it related to spatial scale and the measurements of green city policies, was an important concept to understand the conflation between green and sustainable. I found Born and Purcell’s (2006) local trap to be an important concept given its relevancy to a variety of sustainability policies and initiatives in cities that often refer to the local scale as

the most sustainable. Born and Purcell are mainly concerned with the prescription of qualities to a particular scale, and this concern extends to the conflation between ‘green’ or ‘carbon neutral’ and ‘sustainable’ or ‘just.’ Hobson’s concept takes a similar position to avoid conflating means and ends as well: she claims that lowering consumption should not be the end goal; rather we need an everyday sustainability context. Whether it is ‘green’ or ‘carbon neutral’ or ‘local’, the trap of conflating means and ends is an important point that is missing from such discussions, and is very relevant for activists and policy-makers alike.

The explicit goals in Copenhagen and Vancouver were to improve the green economy while lowering carbon emissions or the ecological footprint. ‘Carbon neutral’ is easily accepted as a goal, and if it were one part of an overall strategy, perhaps the plans and discourse might read much differently. There are of course social justice oriented policies and plans in both cities, however the international popularity and replication of the green policies place importance on green as a goal, rather than one part of a coherent, integrative strategy. “If urban sustainability is *in practice* associated so strongly with the bio-physical environment, important social and economic considerations are effectively eliminated;” even if these considerations are addressed elsewhere, Vallance *et al.* (2012) write, “the problem, quite precisely, is that they are addressed *elsewhere* rather than in tandem, and often in less important or influential fora” (1706).

The spatial scale and multi-level governance approaches receive significant attention in critical urban research, and I would agree with McCann (2003) that *both* spatial and temporal scales play a role in urban politics. Throughout this dissertation, I gave examples of how spatial and temporal scales are major themes in detailing different versions of sustainability. They play a role in framing the problem and solution in the green action plans, showing how the present-future balance common to sustainability discourse is prevalent. The

prefiguration examples detailed in chapter 7 and the Christiania examples show that some sustainability approaches conversely fixate on the “here and now.”

Appadurai recently asserted that one problematic with the logic of sustainability is its long-term temporal aspect (often times represented with an ethical intergenerational qualification). The long-term green city goals that make an assurance for 2020 or 2025 may clash with the underlying assumption of the right to the city, with its concern for those who do not have the collective right to the city *now*, because of past injustices. Appadurai (2013) writes that “to most ordinary people - and certainly to those who lead lives in conditions of poverty, exclusion, displacement, violence, and repression - the future often presents itself as a luxury, a nightmare, a doubt, or a shrinking possibility” (299). Thus in terms of discussing temporal scales, what may seem to be a technical planning issue can also be seen as a sensitive topic and a socially produced scale. This point should also remind sustainability researchers that time and the temporal scale are situated, and that to prioritize the future and talk about long-term sustainability comes from a position of privilege. Similar to the negative correlations between environmental, social and economic outcomes of green policies and initiatives, it is possible to have a negative correlation between what is best for current and future populations.

Closely linked to the politics of scale and measurement is eco-gentrification, and the associated paradoxical effects urge a system change perspective for sustainability as the process demonstrates the neoliberal cooptation of environmental improvements. With a static measuring system of environmentally related attributes, the socio-economic outcomes of these plans and initiatives are lost under the praise of green branding. Checker (2011) writes that eco-gentrification “operates through a discourse of sustainability which simultaneously describes a vision of ecologically and socially responsible urban planning, a green lifestyle

which appeals to affluent, eco-conscious residents, and a technocratic, politically neutral approach to solving environmental problems” (212). If we accept that eco-gentrification is a process related to the improvement of the environment, and the green action plans are largely that, then it is a cautionary note to claim that these plans may relate to or result in eco-gentrification.

Curran and Hamilton’s (2012) have devised a ‘just green enough’ strategy to practically deal with eco-gentrification, where efforts to combat this include “small scale and scattered sites” as well as involving the local community, anti-gentrification and affordable housing policies (241). I would add that theoretical discussions to devise solutions should not ignore the commodification of resources and new forms of gentrification that are unique to the ‘eco’ in eco-gentrification. For example I noted the difference between Byhaven 2200 as a place-specific project where gentrification follows typical displacement patterns, and the regional scale KBHFF, where slow grown tomatoes are a contributing cultural factor that travel through time (in their association to a historically connected New Nordic culture) and space (from farm to AFI to the world’s top ranked restaurant). Of further interest is ‘de-greening’, as I noted in the Nørrebro case with the Superkilen park. Thus, given that ‘green’ can be both a cultural trend (Checker 2011) and a material environmental improvement, it is important to accept that eco-gentrification may not follow the conventional processes of gentrification, and may result in new forms of contestations.

My exploration of the ‘gateway-gentrification’ paradox from Sole Food Farms begs the question of tracing the green city sources of wealth – if deals have to be made with developers who engage in anti-right to the city tactics, attracting tourists with architecture buildings that were once an important community space or deregulating for a good business climate (see section 3.1.2) – is it worth the supposed environmental benefit? In any strategy,

it will be important to conceptualize “the city as a socially just space; that is, a city which is not homogenised according to the logic of neoliberal space economies, but embraces the marginalised’s right to the city” (Larsen and Lund Hansen 2008, 2446).

8.3 Lessons from contestations: seeking prefiguration in hybridized shades of green

The contestations discussed in this dissertation feature trade-offs and paradoxes as shades of green that vary in their reflection of and blending with the City’s particular shade of green. The community contestations are, in a way, attempts to emphasize the neglected social and economic concerns that arise from or are exacerbated by the City’s pursuit of becoming green. In this regard, there are several important lessons: cooperation with the City and playing off of or latching onto their green goals, temporality, and developing alternative economies.

In the two Christiania examples, given the special laws that govern their relationship with the Danish government, a certain amount of engagement was required. Christiania engaged with the local Christianshavn council to develop an alternative cycling route proposal for the area, in order to protest Copenhagen’s route connected to their carbon neutral goal. In the second example, tourism (often associated with economic growth and ‘creative cities’) was beneficial for Christiania’s *folkeaktie* fundraising, and their international popularity and support is a force that requires the Danish government to compromise – to maintain a positive ‘cOPENhagen’ image; whereas the cycle route protest threatens the realization of the carbon neutral image.

This image and identity associated with the green city policies becomes a tool for community groups. I also gave the example of BROKE and the protest of the oil pipeline at

Burnaby Mountain. This played off of the identity of Vancouver as a green city – both by accepting the greenness and demanding concern, or by using the pipeline to question the title altogether. In a similar fashion, groups may latch onto or avoid policies to reach their goals. Sole Food Farms cooperates with the City to access affordable agriculture space and engages with gentrifiers in order to employ DTES residents, and Byhaven 2200 cooperated with City to build a garden. Conversely, the regional scale KBHFF and the neighborhood scale City Beet skirt around engagement with the City.

The level of engagement influenced the community groups' actions by way of temporal and spatial boundaries. Christiania's experimental squat (day-to-day existence) transformed through negotiations and institutionalized agreements with the Danish government; BROKE reacts to government and corporate timelines where direct actions follow pipeline infrastructure and decision-making sites. AFIs in public space (like Byhaven 2200 and Shifting Growth) abide by temporary contracts, reflected in their lack of attachment to existing soil – contrasted sharply by City Beet's more permanent conversion of private lawns to CSA gardens. A further point regarding temporal boundaries of contestations is social exhaustion, in viewing these projects as they have transformed one-after-another (rather than separately), there is a concern for longevity and burn-out, as I noted in Christiania.

The contestations rework the economic growth imperative in different ways. One lesson is the variety of local practices that challenge economic growth and emphasize sharing, networking, and informal exchanges - hybrid economies. For example, Sharing Backyards does not use typical monetary exchange when connecting Vancouverites searching for garden space with those who are willing to share theirs – although the initiative must pay for software upkeep and developments in a typical fashion. They also refused funding from

Shell Oil out of principle. City Beet and the KBHFF charge for their weekly produce boxes, but have found ways around paying for store space by connecting with local businesses, schools, and churches who are willing to share. Many of the groups were dedicated to decommodifying knowledge and simultaneously attempted to multiply their projects through open source.

8.4 Future Research Ideas

This section details several ideas for further research of which I have not seen specific research on. This includes a neighborhood comparison, ‘idle assets’ and ‘urban eco-tourism’ from my Copenhagen and Vancouver case studies.

A study that I would find beneficial to understand neighborhood level activism and identities would be a historical comparative case between the ‘activist’ neighborhoods of Nørrebro and Grandview-Woodland. It could begin at street level, given Blågårdsgade and Commercial Drive’s similarity, with a focus on their edgy attraction, subtle gentrification, and community efforts for a place-based identity. These neighborhoods have fought to keep out major chains like Starbucks. A point within this that I found interesting is how individuals from these neighborhoods counter their identity with that of the City, for example, many people that I spoke with from other neighborhoods in Copenhagen and Vancouver would simply say, “yes I am from Copenhagen/Vancouver.” Individuals from Nørrebro and Grandview-Woodland often would counter my question by firmly asserting “I am from Nørrebro/East Van’, sometimes qualifying “I cannot speak to the rest of the city.” The neighborhood views on sustainability were often intertwined with the culturally diverse and low income aspects of the neighborhoods, as they build their own community centers, playgrounds, and advocate for locally owned businesses.

‘Idle assets’ is an emerging concept that I noticed during my field research. While I saw many examples of this, it was directly referred to in an interview with the founder of Vancouver’s Tool Library. Essentially, it concerns rethinking urban space: rather than growth or sprawl, ‘idle assets’ attempts to maximize the possible offerings of a space and fosters new connections. In Copenhagen for example, the KBHFF Vesterbro branch meets every Wednesday in the cafeteria of an elementary school – the school does not use the cafeteria in the evenings, thus one could say the space is ‘idle’ at that time. The initial concern I have with the concept is that it may be promoted simply for its energy efficiency. Thus a tension would exist between whether this is a ‘band-aid’, and not actually a restructuring of the system in which space has been unequally allocated. Research on how ‘idle assets’ are developed, utilized, promoted and possibly coopted would give insight to the sharing/alternative economy and its materialization in urban spaces.

Another concept that I noticed during my field research is ‘urban eco-tourism’ that could be centered within the realm of ‘policy mobilities’ (McCann 2013). This form of eco-tourism revolves around ‘best practice examples’ of green policies and initiatives. Take the following instances: Lonely Planet, a popular travel guide book, featured a story on Vancouver’s City Farmer; Sole Food Farms claims that one of its urban farms is a tourist site; the City of Copenhagen is building a downtown bicycle route for tourists, and catered to tourists when devising their new bike-share; a small group supported by the City has been producing ‘Go Green Copenhagen’ maps that indicate eco-friendly shops and restaurants; and Christiania is already one of the biggest tourist attractions in Denmark. All of these examples point towards a growing trend of a specific, emerging branch of eco-tourism in the city. A study on this would contribute to understanding the attraction, branding and aesthetics of the

green city, as well as how this disseminates expert knowledge and best practices, and whether or not this reinforces the narrow conception of green.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed theoretical considerations that arose from my empirical findings in this dissertation. To my knowledge, this is the first research that details the discourse of sustainable lifestyles from a green city policy perspective in Copenhagen and Vancouver. I showed the temporal and spatial boundaries, which also illuminated the class, ethnic, and geographic divides in these case studies. My findings show the dominant, technical sustainability discourse of energy efficiency, often associated with class privilege, causing hesitation towards using ‘sustainable lifestyles’ in sustainability vocabulary. There is a noticeable difference between ‘lifestyles’ (Giddens) and ‘sustainable lifestyles’ given the tensions and lack of coherency that arise when one attempts to live sustainably. One possibility for this concept is to rethink the subject, moving away from individually based definitions. It will also be important to pay attention to how resilience and other non-technical frames are used to contest, reform or abandon the concept of sustainable lifestyles, if sustainable lifestyles is indeed deemed too middle class, exclusive or individualistic.

My research attended to the theoretical blindness between urban and environmental social sciences. Merging critical urban theory with current environmental concepts and thought through contemporary cases, I showed that the right to the city does not apply well to practices of green urban policies – if we accept that in many cases the green city is related to and reinforces present inequalities. It appears that there has been a class line drawn between ‘sustainable’ and ‘survival.’ In this chapter I also offered several research ideas from these

two case studies based on emerging trends that could contribute to existing debates in this field.

Conclusions

This final section reviews the key findings, summarizes the discussion points and the general differences and similarities between the two cases.

The first two chapters of this dissertation set out to build a theoretical and methodological framework to answer the main research question: *how do community groups contest green city policies; and, what are the implications of these contestations for sustainable lifestyles in particular, and sustainability in general?* The literature review revealed two gaps in understanding sustainable lifestyles as defined in practice from an external perspective; as well as the need to critically approach the conflation between green and sustainable. I chose two green city case studies, Copenhagen and Vancouver, given their international recognition and green action plans. To understand the sustainability discourse, I used a qualitative approach involving document analysis and ethnographic field research methods including participant observation, semi-structured and informal interviews. I relied on purposive sampling to select different sustainability-oriented community groups. Chapter 3 provided a contextual background for the two cases that detailed their urban policy, cultural and green city history and recent creative city endeavors.

Chapter 4 answered the first sub-question: *how is sustainability framed in green action plans?* I found that the green action plans employ a ‘win-win’ discourse where the environment and economy can be saved, with a green growth imperative, expressed through an optimistic and reassuring rhetoric. The models place particular spatial and temporal boundaries on what gets counted and measured as sustainable. The dedication to these technical goals may exclude important discussions and mask sustainability priorities; and further creates expectations for how citizens should live sustainably.

From this, the findings merged with the second sub-question: *how are sustainable lifestyles and sustainability conceptualized and contested in relation to green city policies?* In chapter 5 I discussed the dominance of this City discourse among different sustainability oriented groups and provided evidence for two key themes within the conceptualizations of sustainable lifestyles. The dominant theme follows the energy efficient and low footprint models; the second conversely asserted that living sustainably is culturally situated and avoided particular prescriptions. In Copenhagen and Vancouver sustainable lifestyles was discussed in a context of (1) an exclusive class privilege; and (2) categorical distinctions between urban and suburban lifestyles based on differences in culture and ecological footprints.

In chapter 6 I presented contestations over land and the discursive acceptance of sustainable waste policies, with examples of interaction between the City and citizens. These specific examples show how sustainability requires translation, as it is defined and contested with different and often competing goals in mind. I grounded chapter 7 in the perspective of alternative food initiatives, showing how they must navigate the neoliberal barriers to their sustainable goals, and how achieving their goals may cause unintended unsustainable consequences for others, making it difficult to prefigure a radical sustainability. Within this, I developed an idea of the ‘gateway-gentrification paradox’ as part of growing work on eco-gentrification.

I did not focus on a specific sector (e.g. transport), thus this open, exploratory, cross-sectorial methodology allowed me to derive themes from current policies and initiatives. With a constructivist approach, I gained viewpoints on sustainability that were situated in plural cultures and local histories and avoided attempts to quantitatively measure sustainability. I did not engage with a comparative approach for these two case studies;

however, a short statement on the key differences and similarities is warranted. These differences show how general urban trends are contingent on and mitigated through local contexts (Barnes and Hutton 2009).

The inequality and privilege associated with sustainable lifestyles, and the wealth associated with sustainability, was striking considering that both cities are located in welfare states. While this aspect was similar in both cities, I would posit that the reality of Vancouver's social inequality, poverty and settler colonialism is visible on city streets, with a mix of Asian and indigenous peoples, and a wider range of socio-economic standings, whereas Copenhagen's homogeneity, upheld by Denmark's strict immigration laws and imperialism (Greenland), hides traces of inequality. In fact Scerri and Holden (2013) state that in Vancouver "few dare even speak of equity as a goal for public policy" (452). This complex multi-scale issue seemed to be the biggest socio-political difference between the institutional contexts of these two cities.

The specific multi-scalar difference regarding environmental politics is that Vancouver's green city policy efforts face more pushbacks from other more conservative levels of government, as opposed to the all-green Danish and Scandinavian context. There seemed to be greater interest in Vancouver for citizen participation in local politics (especially as a municipal goal), whereas Copenhagen's involvement with citizens was just beginning and relegated to the LA21 efforts and NGOs. This also relates to the cultural difference in citizens' expectations of their government, as Danes typically trust their government to act in their best interest, and their political participation is through associations (for example sport clubs, housing committees, or gardening groups).

In Copenhagen, Danes with economic resources were targeted as users of the green city who are expected to pursue an energy efficient lifestyle. Many perceived sustainable lifestyles in Copenhagen to be related to privilege and required resources. Copenhagen's

green action plan is narrowly centered on energy and carbon neutrality, and is coupled with a severely underfunded LA21 plan co-developed with citizens. This led to questions of responsibility, municipal jurisdiction, and city borders in the context of this particular policy effort to achieve a green city. The examples from Christiania posed a counter, albeit sometimes ‘hybrid’, narrative where their version of sustainability is grounded in the present and community building as a way to maintain their autonomy to design and define their town.

Vancouver’s comprehensive green action plan has a variety of measurements that staff and experts developed, as well as the ecological footprint for their ‘lighter footprint’ chapter which asks citizens to live a ‘one-planet’ lifestyle. The compromises that the City must make with developers, in the spirit of the Vancouverism planning tradition, has ultimately resulted in compromises in sustainability, as seen in my examples of citizens fighting towers and the cooptation of alternative food initiatives.

Important for those researching and working in green city policies and sustainability-oriented community groups is paying close attention to existing local socio-economic inequalities and gentrification, and the role the environmental amenity will play in alleviating or exacerbating these: will this change the existing winners and losers? Decisions need to be made in terms of trade-offs and priorities within the realm of temporal and spatial scales, forming alliances and networks, and engagement with the City. The challenge for those working on environmental policies in general is understanding, tracking and attaching goals to non-quantifiable costs and benefits, and how community groups are often delegated the responsibility for that which cannot be translated into the measurement model of choice. The cases in this dissertation beg the question of how the City may develop sustainability agendas within this and other restrictions. While municipal governments benefit from proximity to their constituents, they increasingly face restrictions in pro-environmental action even when attempts are made to integrate environmental efforts within the existing municipal structure.

While sustainability is generally understood as a balance and a transition, an improvement in areas of human life where we interact with our environment, I also recommend, especially for research and policy-making on green cities, that space is made for accepting plural, situated sustainabilities. It is clear that some topics are more sensitive than others, as the difference between the land and waste examples in chapter 6 show how some topics remain especially sensitive to particular situated identities, not only for individuals but for entire communities. It is important to move forward with careful attention to the different articulations of sustainability in the context of an unequal world.

Green city policies represent new constraints and possibilities for citizen action and new expectations for their everyday lives. My findings have general implications beyond the two cases, in light of the green trend not only as it applies to cities, but the overall attempt for greening - countries and regions, cars, and housing complexes. The contestations documented in this dissertation speak to this general trend and help to illuminate how sustainability as a discourse becomes situated and sedimented, while impacted through global urban policy trends. In seeking to examine the green city, this dissertation shed light on the politics of green city making given the problematic conflation between green and sustainable, and the narrow definition and techno-efficiency approach to green. It is likely that Copenhagen will become the world's first carbon neutral capital by 2025 and that Vancouver will become the greenest city in the world by 2020, *as they define, border and measure green*; however, this does not necessarily mean that these cities will achieve sustainability.

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Annex 1: Field Research List

Key: PO = Participant Observation; PO/V = Participant Observation as a Volunteer

SI = Semi-structured interview; II = Informal Interview(s)

COPENHAGEN Field Research			
Institution	Method	Date	Name
Karen's Hus Bispebjerg	PO, II	7/3/2014	
CRIR Construction (Christiania)	PO, II	8/3/2014	
Green Campus Initiative (University of Copenhagen)	SI	10/3/2014	Tom
Mythological Quarter	SI	12/3/2014	Ruth, Adam
KBHFF (Christiania)	PO, II	12/3/2014	
Technical & Environmental Center	SI	13/3/2014	Bonny, Aleta, Martin
Cultural Committee (Christiania)	II	14/3/2014	Nils Vest
Flydende By	PO, II	15/3/2014	Tobias
Technical & Environmental Center and University of Copenhagen	SI	17/3/2014	Lea
Cultural Committee (Christiania)	II	18/3/2014	Rita
Gehl Presentation at the University of Copenhagen	PO	18/3/2014	Lars Gernzoe
Byhaven2200	SI	19/3/2014	Louise
DYRK	PO/V, II	21/3/2014	Teo
Morgenstedet (Christiania)	PO, II	24/3/2014	Irvin
Gardner Gruppe (Christiania)	II	25/3/2014	Anton
Gehl Architects	SI	26/3/2014	Helle Soholt
Danish Architecture Center: "Will it sustain?"	PO	26/3/2014	
Biologist, Activist	SI	27/3/2014	Frida
Cultural Committee (Christiania)	II	27/3/2014	Britta Lillesøe
KBHFF (Nørrebro)	SI	28/3/2014	Tim
KBHFF (Vesterbro)	PO, II	2/4/2014	
Lund Conference Site Visit (Christiania)	PO	3/4/2014	Emmerik Warburg
Karen's Hus and Green Everyday	SI	7/4/2014	Otto
Copenhagenize	SI	8/4/2014	Mikeal Colville-Andersen
Prags Have and Miljopunkt Amager	SI	10/4/2014	Valerie
Miljopunkt Nørrebro	SI	15/4/2014	Edvard
Creative Roots	PO	15/4/2014	
KBHFF (Nørrebro)	PO, II	16/4/2014	
Omstilling Nu	SI	17/4/2014	Georg
EcoEgo	PO/V, II	22/4/2014	
KBHFF (Vesterbro)	PO, II	23/4/2014	
Political activist	II	25/4/2014	Vivi
Byttemarked	PO	26/4/2014	
KBHFF (AGM at Vesterbro)	PO/V, II	26/4/2014	
Byhaven2200	PO/V, II	27/4/2014	
Byttemarked	SI	29/4/2014	Thea
Technical & Environmental Center, Sharing CPH	SI	30/4/2014	Karla

Alternativet (International Worker's Day)	PO	1/5/2014	
Omstilling Nu Vision Tree Festival	PO/V, II	2/5/2014 – 4/5/2014	Local Valby Committee, Tag Tomat, Giv'n Get
University of Copenhagen course (researchers)	PO	6/5/2014 – 7/5/2014	
Museum of Copenhagen: "Urban Nature"	PO	9/5/2014	
Byhaven2200	PO/V, II	10/5/2014	
KBHFF (Nørrebro); PhD Researcher	II	12/5/2014	Colin
KBHFF (Nørrebro), Borgerlyst, Omstilling Nu	SI	13/5/2014	Gary
Technical & Environmental Center and Parks	SI	14/5/2014	Poul
Flydende By and Creative Roots	II	14/5/2014	Tobias
KBHFF (Vesterbro)	PO, II	14/5/2014	
CRIR (Christiania)	II	15/5/2014	Emmerik Warburg
KBHFF (Vesterbro)	II	16/5/2014	Kristian
Information	SI	20/5/2014	Johan
Danish Nature Agency	SI	20/5/2014	Erik
KBHFF and Byhaven2200 and University of Copenhagen researcher	II	20/5/2014	Alice
Bybi	PO, II	21/5/2014	Lawrence
Technical & Environmental Center	SI	21/5/2014	Martha, Mads
KBFHH (Vesterbro)	PO, II	21/5/2014	
Mythological Quarter	SI	22/5/2014	Ruth, Adam
March Against Monsanto	PO, II	24/5/2014	
Omstilling Nu and Alternativet and CONCITO	II	24/5/2014	Karina
DYRK	PO/V, II	25/5/2014	
Danish Cycling Federation	SI	26/5/2014	Ben
KBHFF (Vesterbro)	PO/V, II	28/5/2014	
KBHFF (Vesterbro)	II	28/5/2014	Kristian
VANCOUVER Field Research			
Institution	Method	Date	Name
BC Teacher's Demonstration	PO	5/9/2014	
DTES Tent City	PO	5/9/2014	
CoLab	II	7/9/2014	Dean
Sharing Project and Vancouver Tool Library	SI	10/9/2014	Lou
Our Community Our Plan Meeting	PO	10/9/2014	Gordon Price, Jak King
Earth Save Canada	SI	11/9/2014	Trevor
HUB	SI	12/9/2014	Barb
Sharing Backyards	SI	12/9/2014	James
BROKE Rally	PO, II	13/9/3014	
Vancouver Public Spaces Network, GCAP	SI	15/9/2014	Patrick
GCAP	SI	17/9/2014	Sylvia
SFU Event: Future of Vancouver	PO	17/9/2014	Gil Penalosa, Gordon Price
City Studio	II	18/9/2014	Keith
Groundswell	II	18/9/2014	Kim
Climate March Demonstration	PO, II	21/9/2014	

City Farmer	SI	22/9/2014	Dennis
City Farmer	II	22/9/2014	Tammy
VPL Event: Vancouver's History	PO	22/9/2014	
SFU Event: "What new ideas on urban life may lead Vancouver into its second century?"	PO	24/9/2014	Andy Yan, Matt Hern, Vanessa Timer
Environmental Youth Alliance	SI	25/9/2014	Allen
Groundswell and Car Free Day	SI	25/9/2014	Matt Hern
Vancouver Museum	PO	25/9/2014	
Kickstand	PO, II	28/9/2014	
CoLab	PO	30/9/2014	
City Hall: Planning, Transport & Environment Meeting	PO	1/10/2014	City Councilors
Climate Convergence Meeting	PO	1/10/2014	
GCAP	SI	2/10/2014	Andrea Reimer
SFU Event: "City Leaders: Youth in Government"	PO	2/10/2014	
Vancouver Ecosocialist Group Meeting	PO	2/10/2014	
City Event: Open Doors Vancouver	PO, II	4/10/2014	City Studio, Green Bin, Archives
SFU Event: Democracy & the City Forum	PO	5/10/2014	Susanna Haas Lyons, Andrea Reimer, Derek Corrigan
BROKE	PO	9/10/2014	
Vancouver Food Policy Council Meeting	PO	15/10/2014	11 municipal candidates
DTES Tent City (Eviction Day)	PO	16/10/2014	
Vancouver Food Policy Council, Urban Farming Society	SI	16/10/2014	Dora
BROKE, Vancouver Ecosocialist Group	II	17/10/2014	Max
Urban Farming Society and City Beet Farm Tour	PO, II	18/10/2014	Dora, Amy, Aubrey
Young Innovators Crawl at The Hive	PO	19/10/2014	Vancouver Design Nerds
SFU Event: Zero Waste Conference	PO, II	20/10/2014	
Urban Farming Society and Hastings Business Improvement Association	SI	21/10/2014	Roy
SFU Philosophers Café: "From NIMBY..."	PO	21/10/2014	Meg Holden
SFU Event: "Red Skin White Masks – Rejecting The Colonial Politics of Recognition"	PO	22/10/2014	Glen Coulthard, Matt Hern
DTES Urban Farm & Social Enterprise Tour	PO, II	23/10/2014	Sole Food, Pot Luck, East Van Roasters, Quest
Vancouver Climate Adaptation Strategy	SI	24/10/2014	Ryan
Sole Food Farms	II	24/10/2014	Stacey
GCAP, Park Board	SI	27/10/2014	Alexandra
City Farmer	PO/V, II	28/10/2014	April, DTES Women & Foodscapes

			researchers
SFU researcher	II	28/10/2014	Aron
BROKE (Burnaby Mountain Demonstration)	PO, II	29/10/2014	
Climate Convergence Meeting	PO	29/10/2014	
Sole Food Farms	II	30/10/2014	Lily
The Hive	PO	31/10/2014	
BROKE (Supreme Court Trial)	PO	31/10/2014	
VPSN & ALN Event: “Finding Nature in Public Spaces”	PO	1/11/2014	
SFU Event: “Last Candidate Standing”	PO	2/11/2014	
University of British Columbia	II	3/11/2014	Jamie Peck
Shifting Growth	SI	3/11/2014	Ronald
Our Community Our Plan and Streets for Everyone (GW Community Meeting)	PO	3/11/2014	Sara FioRito, Kay Teschke (UBC)
Coalition of Vancouver Neighborhoods, Village Vancouver	II	4/11/2014	Chad
BROKE, Supreme Court Trial	PO, II	5/11/2014 – 7/11/2014	
SFU Event: Indigenous Urbanism	PO	5/11/2014	
Vancouver Ecosocialists Group Meeting	PO	6/11/2014	
BROKE (Burnaby Mountain Demonstration)	PO, II	8/11/2014	
UBC sustainability researcher	II	13/11/2014	Maria
Groundswell and Car Free Day	II	14/11/2014	Matt Hern
Climate Convergence Meeting	PO	16/11/2014	
Homesteaders Emporium – DIY class	PO	19/11/2014	
Vancouver Foundation – Greenest City Fund	II	20/11/2014	Nancy
Vancouver Maker’s Foundation	II	20/11/2014	June
BROKE (Burnaby Mountain Demonstration)	PO	21/11/2014	
SFU Conference: Critical Geography	PO	22/11/2014	Audrey Siegl, Jane Bouey

Annex 2: Copenhagen Initiatives

The following is a list of initiatives that I engaged with during my field research in Copenhagen, included is their website and a short description of their organization and/or values. This list is in order from most involved with the City to least.

Technical and Environmental Administration

Web: <http://subsite.kk.dk/sitecore/content/Subsites/CityOfCopenhagen/SubsiteFrontpage/LivingInCopenhagen/ClimateAndEnvironment.aspx>

Stance/Notes: A center within the City of Copenhagen, responsible for the CPH 2025 Climate Plan and producing “Green Accounts”.

A Greener and Better Everyday Life: Local Agenda 21 for Copenhagen

Web: <http://subsite.kk.dk/sitecore/content/Subsites/CityOfCopenhagen/SubsiteFrontpage/LivingInCopenhagen/ClimateAndEnvironment/GreenEverydayLife.aspx>

Stance/Notes: Suggests 17 activities based on creative resource workshop, saving energy, and climate adaptation. “Many Copenhageners would like their everyday lives to be more green and they would like to take positive steps favouring the environment. It is important that the City of Copenhagen actively supports the commitment of the citizens and provides them with tools to facilitate their actions in ‘going green’ on an everyday basis.”

Sharing Copenhagen

Web: <http://www.sharingcopenhagen.dk/>

Stance/Notes: “Copenhagen has won the prestigious European Green Capital Award presented by the European Commission because the city excels in combining sustainable solutions with growth and quality of life, and because we happily share our knowledge with the rest of the world.”

Miljopunkt – Local Agenda 21 Centers

Web: <http://miljoe-noerrebro.dk/>

Stance/Notes: “Miljøpunkt Nørrebro is a foundation working for a better environment in Nørrebro. We do this through the implementation of tangible environmental and climate projects by challenging citizens and decision-makers perception of what is possible.”

These centers were previously funded by the City, however recently they were defunded, and now they are funded by both corporate sponsorship and the local neighborhood committees.

Danish Cycling Federation/ Cycling Embassy of Denmark

Web: <https://www.cyklistforbundet.dk/english>; <http://www.cycling-embassy.dk/about/>

Stance/Notes: collaborated to publish Bicycle Accounts, Bicycle strategy, consultants for City. “The Danish Cyclists’ Federation is a member-based lobby organization fighting for the rights of Denmark’s 4.5 million cyclists. Through a wide array of activities and targeted political lobbying, we create better conditions, better safety and experiences for cyclists.”

Copenhagenize

Web: <http://copenhagenize.eu/index.html>

Stance/Notes: Andersen is an urban mobility expert; he founded Cycle Chic and Copenhagenize consulting. He has documented this cultural dimension of Copenhagen since 2007 - via a now famous blog (top 100 blogs in the world according to The Times), which became a template for those interested in cycling culture around the world (over 250 cities now have activists involved in their own documentation of “cycle chic”). “Modern urban planning is often singular in its focus on technical models and solutions, statistics, impact assessment and cost. Copenhagenize prefers to place the primary focus on human nature in our work.”

Gehl Architects

Web: <http://www.gehlarchitects.com/?#/159108/>

Stance/Notes: “We focus on the relationship between the built environment and people’s quality of life. Gehl Architects is an urban research and design consultancy. We address global trends with a people-focused approach, utilizing empirical analysis to understand how the built environment can promote human flourishing. We apply this analysis to strategic planning and human-centred design to empower citizens, decision makers, company leaders, and organizations.” Gehl is a famous architect, author of several books (*Cities for People; Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*), and has been working with urban issues, especially in Copenhagen, for over fifty years.

Green Campus Initiative (University of Copenhagen)

Web: http://climate.ku.dk/green_campus/

Stance/Notes: “To provide University of Copenhagen with a sustainable, physical setting in the form of buildings, facilities, technology and infrastructure... a living laboratory for researchers and students, developing and demonstrating new sustainability concepts... to ensure a culture of sustainability at University of Copenhagen whereby all staff and students act sustainably and encounter sustainable solutions.”

Byhaven 2200 (City Garden; public space urban farming)

Web: <http://byhaven2200.dk/>

Stance/Notes: In collaboration with the City, Byhaven is Copenhagen's first community garden in a public park. The group coordinates with local initiatives such as DYRK and KBHFF.

DYRK (Grow Nørrebro; rooftop urban farming)

Web: <http://ecosistemaurbano.org/english/dyrk-n%C3%B8rrebro-an-urban-agricultural-initiative-in-copenhagen-denmark/>

Stance/Notes: "DYRK Nørrebro is a good example for the growing communities of urban agriculture worldwide and in the future, we will hopefully all enjoy a more desirable, cheaper and healthier lifestyle within sustainable associations with a high priority of socializing and solidarity within people."

Bybi (City Bee)

Web: <http://bybi.dk/>

Stance: Bybi is a social enterprise located in one of Copenhagen's social housing areas, Sundholm. Those with barriers to employment are hired and trained to beekeep and produce honey. "We believe that our production should enrich our society and environment. That's why we work with social organisations to create new opportunities in beekeeping and honey production for homeless and long term unemployed. We believe that our city will be even lovelier when all businesses are rooted in the local community."

Dagbladet Information

Web: <https://www.information.dk/>

Stance: Information is an independent Danish newspaper headquartered in Copenhagen. In 2014 they held a campaign and competition to promote community groups who work on a range of sustainability issues.

Omstilling Nu (Transition Now)

Web: <http://www.omstilling.nu/>

Stance: "Transition Now is a network and a project platform working to create a transition to a sustainable future society. This requires action, innovation and not least a common effort from both political and citizens' side. Therefore we call for a broad dialogue about new sustainable solutions – to involve as many as possible in the creation of a transition now."

Byttemarked (Swap Market)

Web: <http://www.byttemarked.nu/>

Stance: “We can save money and resources. It's good for you, your neighbors and the environment. We want to make a difference for people and the environment by ensuring that useful things are able to be exchanged, rather than ending up as waste.”

KBHFF(Copenhagen Food Community)

Web: <http://kbhff.dk/>

Stance/Notes: With over 5,000 members, KBHFF is the only food coop in Copenhagen. “Københavns Fødevarefællesskab (KBHFF) is a member-based and member-driven food co-operative in Copenhagen, Denmark. KBHFF is an alternative to the ordinary profit-driven supermarket chains. As a member-owned Co-Op, we only have to take care of the interest of our members. Any profit is used to reduce the price of the vegetables, develop the Co-Op or socially responsible projects in the city around us.”

Mythological Quarter Project

Web: <http://mythologicalquarter.net/about/>

Stance/Notes: “We are deeply invested in exploring the intersection of culture and ecology. We believe artists have a valuable role in shifting from lives based on consuming to more resilient, healthy ways of being...we document people, places, and projects that are taking a culturally based response to present day environmental issues... The Mythological Quarter is a project in thinking ecologically about the world in which we live.”

Flydende By

Web: <http://flydendeby.org/about>

Stance/Notes: “The goal of Flydende By is to build up a sustainable society from below. We develop methods to create decentralised sustainable solutions out of reused and organic resources... We want to find ways of organizing work, economy and decision processes in a fair and socially sustainable way.”

Christiania

Web: <http://www.christiania.org/info-type/english-2/>

Stance/Notes: Autonomous anti-capitalist and anti-consumerist “freetown” that began as an area of squatters, with several groups focused on the landscape (Gardner Gruppe), activism (Cultural Committee) and local, organic food (Morgenstedet)

Annex 3: Vancouver Initiatives

The following is a list of initiatives that I engaged with during my field research in Vancouver, included is their website and a short description of their organization and/or values. This list is in order from most involved with the City to least.

Zero Waste Working Group (Greenest City Action Plan)

Web: <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/Greenest-city-action-plan.pdf>

Stance/Notes: “Moving Vancouver toward a zero waste future is going to require changing behaviours and changing the system so that the least wasteful options are the most convenient... reducing and reusing—are even more important for a zero waste society than recycling.”

Lighter Footprint Working Group (Greenest City Action Plan)

Web: <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/Greenest-city-action-plan.pdf>

Stance/Notes: “Reducing our ecological footprint is about living within ecological limits, and it is also about using a “fair Earth share” of resources. It is about striving for a one-planet footprint and a city that is vibrant, healthy, safe, and just.”

City Studio

Web: <http://citystudiovancouver.com/>

Stance/Notes: “the City of Vancouver established a unique inter-institutional campus-city collaboration (C3) to develop projects and research related to urban sustainability.” Moore “facilitated intensive, interdisciplinary courses that focus on community engagement, resilience, lifestyle activism, food systems, group process and urban sustainability.”

Vancouver Public Spaces Network

Web: <http://vancouverpublicspace.ca/index.php?page=about>

Stance/Notes: “Challenging the increase of advertising ‘creep’ in public places, promoting creative, community-friendly urban design, monitoring private security activities in the downtown core, fostering public dialogue and democratic debate, and devising creative ways to re-green the neglected corners, alleys and forgotten spaces of the city.”

City Farmer

Web: <http://www.cityfarmer.info/>

Stance/Notes: “City Farmer teaches people how to grow food in the city, compost their waste and take care of their home landscape in an environmentally responsible way.”

The Sharing Project

Web: <http://thesharingproject.ca/>

Stance/Notes: “The Sharing Project understands that when a community shares more, it consumes less, saves money, and creates meaningful social connections. The multi-staged research process is focused on engaging citizens, institutions, businesses, and cooperative organizations to ensure comprehensive results.”

HUB (Vancouver Cycling Coalition)

Web: <https://bikehub.ca/>

Stance/Notes: “A member-based organization, we strive to remove barriers to cycling and improve the quality of our communities, our health, the environment, and local economies.”

Environmental Youth Alliance

Web: <http://www.eya.ca/who.html>

Stance/Notes: “Our vision is to build community and environmental health through an understanding of our connection with our social and physical environment. We promote this vision through skill building projects that motivate youth to respond creatively in reconciling social and economic needs with the environmental imperative.”

Sole Food Farms

Web: <http://solefoodfarms.com/>

Stance/Notes: “Sole Food transforms vacant urban land into street farms that grow artisan quality fruits and vegetables, available at farmers markets, local restaurants and retail outlets. Sole Food’s mission is to empower individuals with limited resources by providing jobs, agricultural training and inclusion in a supportive community of farmers and food lovers. Individuals are given basic agriculture training and are employed at the farm based on their capability.”

Sharing Backyards

Web: http://www.sharingbackyards.com/browse/Vancouver,BC&welcome_box=3

Stance/Notes: “Sharing backyards, a pioneering project that connects homeowners who have a yard with people who want to grow food, but have no land.” “City Farmer has been helping people set up food gardens in Vancouver for 30 years... Our non-profit society is recognized around the world for its expertise in urban agriculture.” “City Farmer teaches people how to grow food in the city, compost their waste and take care of their home landscape in an environmentally responsible way.”

CoLab (Makers)

Web: <http://vancommunitylab.com/home/>

Stance: “The Vancouver Community Lab is an open and accessible workshop where makers, hackers, artists and tinkerers can create, destroy and re-build. We believe that everyone has the desire and ability to create things and can be trusted to develop the skills needed to do so. CoLab members work on personal, group or community projects.”

Our Community Our Plan

Web: <https://ourcommunityourplan.wordpress.com/>

Stance/Notes: “Our Community, Our Plan! is a group of residents in the Grandview-Woodland neighbourhood of Vancouver who have come together to ensure that local residents have significant influence in the Community Plan currently in process.”

Vancouver Ecosocialist Group

Web: <http://ecosocialistsvancouver.org/>

Stance/Notes: “The Vancouver Ecosocialist Group has been formed by political and social justice activists of varying backgrounds in metropolitan Vancouver. We have come together because we believe the struggle to avert the deepening climate emergency is a fight for the survival of humanity and the Earth as we know it. We join in common struggle with all who seek to bring human economic pursuit into harmony with the other species with which we share the planet. We are committed to support social and environmental initiatives that confront entrenched interests and build towards real and comprehensive social transformation. We must create a cooperative society, if we are to overcome the destructive, downward spiral of capitalism.”

BROKE (Burnaby Residents Against Kinder Morgan Expansion)

Web: <http://brokepipelinewatch.ca/>

Stance/Notes: “Through education, advocacy, and partnership, our goal is to prevent the expansion of the Kinder Morgan Pipeline and related infrastructure in Burnaby, and related supertanker traffic in Burrard Inlet.”

Annex 4: Interview Protocol

The Initiative

Tell me about [initiative/policy] (goals, role, how it started)

How did you get involved?

What was your major accomplishment and challenge (and why)?

Copenhagen/Vancouver

Copenhagen/Vancouver is globally recognized for being a green city, what do you think about this?

How did it become a green city? Who was involved? Who is involved now?

Sustainable Lifestyles

What is the key to living sustainably?

Do you think others would define living sustainably in this way?

Is it possible to live sustainably in Copenhagen/Vancouver, why or why not?

Future: what about the next steps for [initiative/policy]? Is there anyone else I should talk to or events that I may attend?

Snowball: can you recommend any other sustainability initiative or City policy to check out while I am in Copenhagen/Vancouver?