

# Quality

in Canada's Built Environment:

## Roadmaps to Equity, Social Value and Sustainability

Third annual convention of partners and  
representatives of stakeholders across Canada

## Final student reports on roundtables

Calgary, May 2023

Edited by Jean-Pierre Chupin, PhD  
Scientific Director of the SSHRC Partnership on Quality

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada  
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Canada Research Chair in  
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# ***FINAL STUDENT REPORTS ON ROUNDTABLES***

*Third Annual Convention*

*Calgary, May 2023*

***SSHRC Research Partnership  
(#895-2022-1003)***

Edited by Jean-Pierre Chupin, PhD, CRC-ACME, Université de Montréal

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## Spatial justice & heightened quality of life

### Roundtable 1 - TorontoMet & UBC & McGillU & DalhousieU - May 1

Monday, May 1, 2023, from 9:30 to 11:00am.

#### THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:

#### Sharing Positive Experiences of Quality

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## 1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:

### A) Experiences of quality in the built environment

The first roundtable on May 1 was focused on *Spatial Justice & Heightened Quality of life*. The majority of the conversation during this roundtable was centered on the sharing of the participants experiences of quality of the built environment, particularly the sensorial experiences of those places – the intangible qualities that are not often represented in discussions of architectural quality – and how those affect the feeling of the space for the inhabitant.

Through this conversation came a series of key themes for understanding the experience of quality in the built environment:

- Understanding that different lived experiences of users can have an affect on how each individual experiences a piece of the built environment.
- Quality in the built environment means that all users, regardless of physical or cognitive ability, cultural background, age, race, or sex, are able to feel comfortable and safe within that environment.
- Adaptability of space allows for environments that are useable and viable for each users' needs and ensures that they continue to change along with the users requirements over time.
- Spaces should allow for the user to decide how to inhabit them. They should allow for users to choose the extent to which they engage with not only the space itself, but also the other inhabitants and the public life that takes place there.
- There is a value in spaces that elicit an emotional response from the users, a response that goes beyond the fulfillment of basic functional needs.
- The built environment should remain connected to the surrounding community and its landscape.

It is important to note that the majority of spaces described were not strictly architectural, many of them included some aspect of the natural environment or a connection between the built environment and the natural environment beyond.

### B) Responses to and discussion of shared experiences

Following the presentation of personal experiences of quality in the built environment the participants responded to and discussed aspects of their own and other's experiences. These are some key points that came out of these discussions:

- There is a lack of public life in Canada at night when compared to somewhere like turkey.

- The presented experiences of quality were beneficial for increasing understanding of quality in the built environment, but at this stage they are difficult to translate into practice.
- Adaptability of space must go beyond how spaces are furnished, the design of the spaces themselves must work alongside the program to ensure a varied and equitable experience for all users.
- There are issues that arise when designs are created based off of personal experience alone, and there must be opportunities for other perspectives, experiences, and viewpoints to be heard throughout the development process.
- There needs to be considerations in the planning process for people of all ages, and that there are spaces in which younger members of communities can safely gather alongside older members and feel that they are able to take ownership over the space as much as anyone else.
- The frictions that come out of user interaction with the built environment, both between them and the object, and with other community members, are not necessarily a detriment to quality but can lead to better solutions moving forward.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

With the roundtable discussion primarily focusing on the sharing of experiences within the built environment, there were a number of different approaches used with respect to how this might be accomplished as well as suggestions for how the discussion of quality in the built environment might progress moving forward from here. This started with the opening comments of the session by the facilitator, prompting the participants to flip their perspective from designer to user, and to focus on the effect that the built environment has on us as inhabitants in an attempt to shift their focus away from the materiel aspects of the space as object and onto those intangible qualities that dictate how you feel within a space; reinterpreting the built environment as actor in our experience of it. The following are some themes that emerged in the descriptions of quality spaces by roundtable participants.

### A) Storytelling and Memory

Many of the descriptions of experience featured some element of storytelling, connecting the listener to the speakers' feelings within a space through the telling of their lived experience as narrative. One participant described their experience as a swimmer and the community pool that they frequented, for them the smell of the pool connected them back to this place and the sensorial experiences that they had there. They described how "sometimes cording makes me want to cry because it reminds me of growing up. I think swimming shaped me into who I am today and specifically Crescent Town itself." This effect of sensorial qualities of space eliciting memories was echoed by another participant who expressed their own memories of swimming as a child. By describing the sensorial qualities and emotional response to a space a connection was created in a listener who had not experienced the physical space itself. Another participant shared their experience of growing up alongside a ravine in Toronto and how it served as a

common connection between different time in their life as they grew up, and how being there connected them back to the memories they made as a child with friends and family.

**B) Built Environment as Sensorial Object**

A more typical method for sharing lived experience of quality was to describe the material features of a space and then relate those to how the user was feeling while observing or interacting with them within the space. One participant described being in a Bazaar in Iran and how the architectural qualities contributed to the feeling of being present and immersed in the present moment in the space. Here they didn't focus on the materiality of the markets various elements or the spatial organization in a technical sense, but described how the market played with light, scale, and time to create a sense of immersion for the occupant within the current experience. The physical features made them feel more in touch with and aware of their own presence.

**C) Built Environment as Social Object**

Similar to the trend of describing the built environment through story, many participants in this round table session chose to describe the actions of others occupying the space just as much as they did their own. This outward perspective took the form of observing and noting the actions, movements, and demographic makeup of the people using the space rather than the feelings elicited by the participants own experience. Descriptions of food hubs, bazaars, apartment complexes, and waterfront parks all focused on the social inhabitation of the space as means to describe their inherent quality. Though they all shared a focus on the manner of inhabitation by other occupants, they differed presentation. Some looked at individuals sunbathing or taking shelter under shaded trees, while others looked at the connection of the space to wider social landscape beyond its borders. Particularly one participant's description of an apartment complex as being a community hub or town center for recent newcomers to the community serves to show its role not only to the individual users, but also to a larger social demographic.

A similar recounting of the joy felt while smelling spices and food being prepared in a bazaar highlights the effect that a quality space can have not only by influencing the feelings of inhabitants through its design and spatial qualities, but also how and environment can be created which causes people to begin to positively influence one another as well. While describing a community food hub in Toronto, one participant was most taken by the ability of the space to make you feel connected to a larger social experience, describing how "a place can have a story that makes you part of something bigger. Make you feel empowered, make you be more innovative, creative, and that was something that was something unique for me in terms of this story that I can be part of, and it is more than just being a user, but also being part of the community."

**D) Quality as Policy Framework**

One participant, a former public health inspector, described their desire to shift the role of public health officials from having a focus on enforcement and health protection toward becoming more involved in social justice and accessibility. They described how traditionally the profession has been focused on very tangible aspects of the built environment, specifically mentioning how public pool cleaning systems should operate in a manner that ensures adequate water quality without imposing excessive chemical exposure to users. Moving forward however they are trying

to instill in public health program students they teach that there are aspects of their professional duties that extend beyond the technical and involve understanding of and communication with the communities they work within. This may lead to ways of bringing together the different aspects of quality under a holistic policy framework in the future.

**3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

- Methodological protocols and case studies were not discussed in this round table session apart from possible future investigations discussed in the following section.

**4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research):**

A) New Issues

- Designing from personal experience

It was highlighted that some environments and experiences within a space can elicit an emotional response that connects to memories for users. This is not a phenomenon of the user but also the designer, where they design spaces based on their own experiences. This can be problematic because their own experience is only the viewpoint of a single person, and the spaces they produce will be used and experienced by many people that do not share that same experience with them. What is a positive experience for one user may not be positive for another, and designers need to be aware of their own spatial biases when designing spaces for others. For example, the tactile strips at the intersection of roadways and sidewalks or the edge of train platforms might be helpful for those who are visually impaired, while at the same time present issues for those with decreased mobility.

A possible approach to this problem was identified as increasing the diversity of design teams working on public spaces so that a multitude of individual experiences can contribute to the experience of the space.

A shift in the practice of architecture toward more consideration of other perspectives outside the design team was also suggested, with a focus on early community engagement to ensure that these voices are heard throughout the design process. There is always a danger however in who gets to decide which voices are heard and consulted and which ones are excluded because it may not be feasible to consult each individual that a project is going to impact.

## B) Potential Future Research Avenues

### - Public life after dark

One participant presented their observation that public life at night in Canada was far less vibrant than that in other countries and posed the question to the group as to why that may be the case. They were speaking specifically about Montreal and the lack of outdoor public life along the Lachine Canal despite the cities reputation for having a vibrant night life. One response to this was that the lack of nighttime engagement may have something to do with the canals residential location resulting in people filtering back home or to a house party later on in the night after the daytime activities had concluded. It was then presented that public parks in Montreal, and most other cities in Canada, are restricted to daytime use with signs and gates prohibiting nighttime activity. Another perspective on the issue was that climatic issues may prevent the extension of nigh time social activity outdoors when the temperature drops after sunset. This differs from Turkey and other temperate climates where the air remains warm throughout the night, allowing residents to remain outdoors for longer. Another participant presented that in Pakistan the daytime temperature is too hot for gathering and cooking with family, so the nigh time gatherings come more out of necessity than from a desire for specifically social activities. Similarly, these gatherings come from a cultural tradition that has been established there, which may not be present in Canadian communities. These differences may in part be from the social organization of families, in the west it tends to be very nuclear family oriented were as in Pakistan what is considered your family may be as many as 50 or 100 people.

## **Spatial justice & heightened quality of life**

### **Roundtable 2 - TorontoMet & UBC & McGillU & DalhousieU - May 2**

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, from 10:45 to 12:15am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Engaging Community Members and Partners in Research**

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##### **Citizen groups:**

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- Blank, Sonia (Architecture sans frontières Québec (ASFQ))
- Beeston, Laura (MTL 24/24)
- Ehling, Doramy (Rick Hansen Foundation)
- Farhoodi, Marveh (Open Architecture Collaborative)
- Ganon-Creeley, Michelle (Mount Pleasant Mutual Aid/CRAB Park Tent City)
- Tafazzoli, Afsaneh (Open Architecture Collaborative Canada)

##### **Cities and procurement:**

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##### **Professional organisations:**

- Speigel, Susan (Ontario Association of Architects - OAA)

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## **1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:**

The main ideas shared during the roundtable include:

- The importance of engaging diverse stakeholders and community members, and using methods beyond normative forms of engagement.
- The necessity of building trust with community members and research partners, and the tension between building authentic community relationships and balancing the demands and deadlines of the partnership.
- Recognizing that as designers, our skill set may not extend to community engagement, and that others with more knowledge and experience should take the lead.
- The importance of clearly articulating benefits of research to participants.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

Rather than discussing the proposed research question on how to share lived experience of quality, we discussed the following questions:

**How are research teams engaging communities in their research? How are researchers approaching community partners? What are some challenges?**

### **A) Engaging diverse stakeholders and community members**

We discussed ethical challenges in engaging young people, people who are unhoused, people with dementia, and Indigenous Peoples. Despite these challenges, it is important to include voices and perspectives that are often absent/unheard even if it takes more work to do so.

The Dalhousie team discussed how children are often excluded from research unless it is directly tied to spaces related to children such as schools. This was discussed as an important consideration in their project. In addition, they pointed out that children are just as much a part of everyday spaces as others that are commonly involved in research engagement. In a reflection on the idea of lived experience and the previous roundtable, it was brought up that many ideas of quality in the built environment are tied to memories of certain experiences in childhood.

We also discussed alternative methods of engagement that go beyond interviews and conversations. Often, these normative forms of engagement can lack authenticity. Ideas about a sense of belonging are not necessarily quantifiable and require alternative methods of comprehension. In addressing these challenges, there was discussion about using different modes of engaging and communicating through the creation of art, making

space for sharing stories, and avoiding technical jargon to make communication more inclusive and less alienating.

## B) Building relationships and trust

### ***There is no timeline to building trust.***

In this roundtable, a central topic was the tension between urgency of research and time to build trust. How do we negotiate partnership needs/deadlines with building authentic community relationships? Developing relationships with the community takes time. This is difficult to foster within the project's deadlines and the more structured processes within academia. We discussed how it is necessary to create research together, and sometimes that's slow and it's okay.

It can be helpful to seek out leaders within communities and those with lived experience who are excited to participate in research. Connecting with leaders who are working within and alongside communities can be entry points for more appropriate and meaningful conversations, where they have the experience and knowledge to engage the wider community and to guide the research process. Communities are not homogenous but are diverse, composed of people with different lived experience, customs, and linguistic backgrounds. Community leaders can help to bridge divides, navigate cultural differences, and even help to translate research questions for community members. Thus, researchers should be open to adapting and listening to those that have knowledge of their communities. It was noted that this research project is special in that it has the opportunity to build trust over 5 years.

### ***Prioritization of engagement through deepening relationships***

How can we foster conversations that are more authentic rather than extractive? How can we better connect with people on a deeper level? First, researchers can shift their approach from *getting information* to *getting to know* people. In getting to know people, researchers can build trust with community members and foster two-way dialogue. This is important, especially in communities who may distrust academic engagement due to lack of transparency, lack of communication of benefits, and lack of tangible interventions and plans to benefit the community.

Many organizations, especially those that serve marginalized communities lack staff, funding, and resources to engage with academics. Often research with academics is not a priority. Some organizations also distrust researchers where relationships have been extractive with researchers failing to listen and meet the needs of communities. It is essential to develop an understanding that engagement goes two ways so that it does not feel as though people are being treated as an object of study.

Similarly, designers and architects can shift their approach to projects and prioritize designing *with* users rather than designing *for* them. In this approach, designers play a supporting role, offering assistance to participants rather than making decisions on behalf of a community. It is important to note that engagement strategies such as building relationships should not be generalized and that engagement should reflect the context and backgrounds of the groups being engaged.

**C) Designers/ architects must work within their capacity.**

Designers, architects, and researchers must understand their limitations when engaging with marginalized communities because they may not have appropriate experience or training. We must also acknowledge historical harm and violence our professions have done in communities and this must inform our practice and approach when engaging with communities. Engagement can cause harm, and as designers/ architects, we may not be the best suited to conduct engagement.

**D) Clearly articulating benefits of research**

It is important to clearly articulate the benefits of the research in order to manage expectations. For projects that do not have a clear benefit, how is this communicated? It is also good practice to reimburse participants with lived experience for their time. This shows that we value them and are engaging in mutually beneficial work. The lack of funding for research participants can be a barrier for teams engaging with marginalized communities such as people who are unhoused.

**3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

**Strategies for Engagement**

Throughout the discussion, members of the roundtable shared experiences with engaging community members and partners.

Some ideas for engagement include:

1. Connect with local community leaders and seek out research “allies” to support relationship building and community engagement.
2. Learn from successes and failures of previous community engagement work to help ensure research is conducted in a mutually beneficial way.

3. Connect through shared experience. One roundtable member spoke about engaging with communities through creating a collective experience. This researcher cooked and shared a meal with community members and obtained information through observations and informal questions rather than conducting formal interviews or focus groups. This allowed participants to open up and the information gained was more rich and productive.
4. Researchers must go to where people are. Academic engagement with the public should be done by going into the community. In the past, methods of engagement have often involved asking members of the community to attend sessions at a local institution. This can create barriers to access because not all people have the time to participate or means to commute.
5. In going to a place to engage with people, it is important to understand who is there and who is not and then evaluate how one can engage those who are missing.
6. A member of the roundtable suggested go-along interviews are a great way to engage people in their own context. It can also allow for more substantial results as responses are often prompted from physical cues rather than just memory.
7. Engagement should be responsive to local and cultural context. Each community is unique, with their own customs and geographic, cultural, and socio-economic conditions. An approach to engagement cannot be generalized and applied to all communities, but must reflect the intricacies and nuances that are unique to participants.

#### **4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research):**

NA

## **Integrated resilience, material culture & adaptative reuse**

**Roundtable 1 – LaurentianU & CarletonU & UWATERLOO & UTORONTO - May 1**  
Monday, May 1, 2023, from 9:30 to 11:00am.

### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE: Sharing Positive Experiences of Quality**

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## 1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:

The roundtable discussion began with the participants sharing their positive lived experience of quality in the built environment, highlighting several key aspects that contribute to their positive experience.

Firstly, participants noted that a visually appealing space leaves a positive impression and enhances the sense of quality. Spaces that exhibit continuity of history, where the historical architectural elements can survive and be integrated into the present design, add character and uniqueness to the environment while also reducing construction waste. The roundtable discussed the environmental impact of demolition waste and new construction, advocating for design with nature and expanding green spaces. They highlighted the need for policies promoting reuse, circular economy, and recyclable buildings, while recognizing the importance of deconstruction and combating throwaway culture. They emphasized the significance of sustainable practices through the evaluation of recyclability, such as a deconstruction audit, and embracing Indigenous principles of adaptability and modularity.

Secondly, the roundtable identified a direct correlation between the vibrancy of a place with its occupants, thus emphasizing community-driven design as fundamental to quality. Involving residents and diverse voices in the decision-making process promotes a sense of ownership and ensures that the design reflects the needs and aspirations of the community. The participants stressed the need to incentivize developers to engage in meaningful conversations with communities, and community land-trust was raised as a successful model of inclusive development approach.

The discussion then addressed the issue of over-regulation in planning, recognizing its potential to stifle creativity and prevent the informal design and organic growth of space, which are key factors in promoting authenticity and diversity of the built environment. They're also crucial to provoking the intangible qualities of spaces, such as memory, feeling, and a sense of belonging, contributing to people's emotional connection with their environment. While some regulations perpetuate the lack of quality, there was a debate about the necessity of regulations to protect organic spaces. Finding the right balance between regulation and organic development is key to preserving quality while allowing for flexibility and adaptability.

Finally, the roundtable stressed the need to shift perspectives and challenge the assumption that housing and land are merely commodities. Indigenous values and the question of ownership and power dynamics were also brought to the forefront. Recognizing and appreciating the value of existing spaces and resources and prioritizing the people and things that currently exist are crucial for enhancing the quality of the built environment.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

There was confusion among the writers regarding the precise meaning of "share" in this question, as it could potentially mean either "express" or "experience together." This report mostly presumed the latter meaning, considering the limited discussion about the former during the roundtable.

Throughout the roundtable, common themes emerged regarding who shares an experience and through which lens. One participant raised the point that while reading the lived experience handbook, they could discern whether it was an architect or a planner writing about a specific experience. It raised the question of whether reflection on experience will change if we take off our professional hats and think in a personal way. Some participants pointed out that they were able to take those off and reflect on the feelings that certain intangible qualities of a space evoked, rather than focusing solely on technical aspects through their professional eyes. It was suggested that if designers/decision makers (planners, developers, architects) of the built environment can sense those intangible qualities, they are much less likely to override them through design and regulations. This recognition helped us understand the different perspectives and values of each member when it comes to identifying quality through lived experience.

The question of whose experience is being shared made us think about the missing voices from the lived experience narrative. As a community of people is inseparable from the livelihood of the neighbourhood that they inhabit, community engagement in sharing lived experience was agreed to be very important. The participants highlighted that building trust with the people that we design spaces for is crucial to make them comfortable to share their lived experience. Members of the community should feel confident that their ideas and values are used in a respectful and meaningful manner to improve their environment. The roundtable agreed that to get a comprehensive overview of lived experience of quality, we should include a diversity of voices.

When sharing their lived experiences, the participants emphasized the layered aspect of a space that made them feel quality. The first interpretation focused on the architectural changes that a building undergoes throughout its lifetime, creating layers of historical continuity. The participants agreed that when a building evolves and survives through different historical and cultural periods, either through heritage preservation, adaptive reuse, or its mere durability, it contributes to the experiential charm characterized by layers of historical continuity. One example mentioned in this context is the Scarboro Community in Calgary, Alberta, which combines a picturesque cultural landscape with single detached houses representing various architectural styles from different eras. This intermingling of architectural eras allows for linkages between the past and present communities.

Another interpretation introduced the sensory elements of smell and sound as additional layers to the experiential aspect of architecture. A famous example in this regard was the Kensington Market in Toronto, Ontario. It was defined as a neighbourhood that not only preserves its Victorian houses but also provides a unique social and sensory experience with its wide variety of boutique shops, galleries and restaurants. In addition to appreciating such neighbourhoods, the participants expressed concerns about their gentrification by real estate

developers. Gentrification poses the risk of eroding the layers of cultural and historical continuity and can therefore cease the sharing of lived experiences of quality. Ultimately, if old architecture is entirely replaced by new, the shared experience is lost. Old architecture becomes strictly a thing of the past, rather than a continued presence within the community, and the community begins to lose touch with its historical and cultural roots.

Finally, the roundtable shifted its focus towards the material aspects of quality. By considering building elements as objects with embodied emissions, the participants acknowledged the significance of maintaining the lifecycle continuity of materials. The shared experiences mainly revolved around examples of poor quality, hinting at missed opportunities for achieving good quality. One participant drew attention to the literal quality of materials, particularly in terms of durability, longevity, and repairability. They provided an example of Calgary Farmers' Market South, where the roof couldn't be efficiently replaced due to its strict original design as a rock processing plant. Other participants expressed environmental concerns regarding the increasing waste generated from demolitions and vacant buildings. This led to discussions about the fate of buildings once they reach the end of their intended use. The consensus was that the repairability and recyclability of materials in existing buildings enhance their quality by extending their lifespan and enabling future use in other projects. The topic of repurposing abandoned or vacant buildings also garnered significant attention. An example brought up in this regard was repurposing underutilized office spaces. A specialist in Indigenous Studies highlighted the relevance of indigenous values of circularity in waste reduction. They emphasized the importance of modular and adaptable design principles as the foundation for constructing non-permanent structures that can evolve in response to changing needs. Throughout these discussions, the roundtable agreed on the necessity of involving more developers in such conversations, as they play a crucial role as agents of change in the built environment.

In summary, the roundtable participants identified several shared aspects related to experiencing quality in the built environment. They recognized both architectural and sensory layers as integral parts of the shared experience. Additionally, the participants agreed on the importance of material recyclability as an indicator of quality. They emphasized the necessity of greater involvement of the public and developers in conversations about quality in the built environment.

### **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

An overarching theme throughout the entire roundtable discussion was that of members' individual lived experiences of quality. What stemmed from this conversation was that it is hard to design high-quality spaces if you do not appreciate the pre-existing ones. One must discover the visual history of the space to fully understand how to adapt to it. With Carleton University studying adaptive reuse within their research cluster, this became a major discussion point.

A topic of interest was the old general hospital in Sudbury's downtown. While the building was abandoned a few years back, the building still stands, and is now the biggest mural in Canada. Uphere, a Sudbury organization, painted this hospital in its efforts to revitalize the downtown core. However, this use for the hospital became a controversial topic within the city as Sudbury's homeless population is currently at an all-time high. The question arose, why not create a living space for them within this old hospital? A student piggybacked off this question with the topic of office buildings in Downtown Toronto being abandoned due to COVID-19's work-from-home standard. The suggestion is this; why not use abandoned buildings to house those in vulnerable positions, and keep the downtown streets safer, which will liven them as a result.

The second suggestion was suggested within the context of the reparation of old automobiles, or the "do-it-yourself" framework. We as a society have moved past this idea of fixing our own things. To allow for quality buildings to last longer and prosper, they must be built in a way to allow individuals to fix them themselves. One must consider the 4 R's, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Repair. Another necessity is a modular environment that is adaptive to change, we're currently building as if these structures or spaces are permanent, but they're not - so thinking about how to better deconstruct spaces in ways for the mutual benefit of person and place, and to welcome the built environment. Becoming independent rather than dependent.

The final suggestion is to remove the mindset of assumption everyone possesses in relation to ownership, and to remove preconceived notions of quality. One must not assume capitalism is limiting these suggestions, housing isn't a commodity but a right. A forward-thinking approach will be more beneficial to this research.

#### **4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research):**

- The literal question of ownership and our assumptions of power and the ownership of said power. How can we influence developers, how can we encourage the use of a specific building for better groups?
- Who has the power to make change here? How can we influence real change?
- How can we build less, use less, consume less?
- How can we avoid over-regulation within a space and create a positive form of density?

## Integrated resilience, material culture & adaptative reuse

### Roundtable 2 - LaurentianU & CarletonU & UWaterloo & UToronto - May 2

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, from 10:45 to 12:15am.

#### THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:

#### Engaging Community Members and Partners in Research

##### *Authors of the summary*

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*Date of submission: 2023 / 06 / 14*

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## 1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:

Roundtable day two was unique in that the predetermined topic had been waived, in lieu of a less formal open forum regarding the partnership as a whole. This brought a variety of interesting perspectives and questions to the surface, many of which asked questions of the partnership.

- A) The first 'main idea' that surfaced centered around the partnership. It asks a hard question of "How do we leverage the partnership further?". Many other participants joined in to contribute when this topic was raised. Participants questioned how the partnership will facilitate an advanced understanding of the various partners and use this to learn from each other moving forward. One of the participants came forward and voiced their thoughts on the importance of further student involvement in the program and their process in seeing research come to fruition. (Timestamp 25:00) Later in the discussion it was further brought up that students are the cornerstone of the partnership, and they are the key to leveraging the partnership further (Timestamp 55:10)
- B) How do we support positive change as the partnership moves forward in its research? One of the first points brought up by a participant was about the interesting way that this roundtable session was proceeding. The participant noted that they were reluctant to speak because the microphone was moving counterclockwise which was opposite of their tradition. The participant went further to explain that this situation might be fitting because "...we may need to move backwards to move forwards." (Timestamp 13:30). This prompted a brief conversation about how the partnership should move forward, in terms of defining goals. Later in the conversation (Timestamp 38:30) another participant would build on this and express that the impact of the partnership should not only be measured at the end, but also should be measured as we move forward. This would ensure that positive change is supported throughout the partnership's work.
- C) The last main idea that was encountered throughout the discussion was a general atmosphere of confusion throughout the participants. The participants expressed confusion about the definition of quality and the grey area that surrounds its definition within the partnership. At the very start of the discussion one of the participants set an idea in motion that would continue throughout the whole 1.5hr discussion. The participant stated that they are interested in defining "ways of measuring quality" (Timestamp 21:20) as a way to move the partnership forward and decrease the amount of grey area within the research. Multiple other times throughout the discussion, the idea of clarifying and narrowing down the parameters of quality in the built environment was brought up by the participants. They expressed interest in the establishment of a baseline or definition, curated by the leadership of the partnership.

## 2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:

As mentioned in an earlier part of the report, this roundtable session was thrown off the original themes and encouraged to explore different ideas and discussions. As a result the participants steered the conversation towards conversation about the partnership itself and the framework of the research. This compelled an engaging conversation between the participants, but left little room for discussion about 'lived experiences of quality' as such the quantity of information about lived experiences of quality was limited within the discussion. However, a general scope of what affects quality in lived experiences were briefly introduced and different methods of measuring quality were shared.

It was mentioned that there are social and economic barriers that impact the quality of lived experiences and spaces. Identifying these could help generate a solution in defining quality (*Timestamp 58:21*). Moreover, identifying the various meanings of quality was discussed. For instance, it was mentioned that "*quality should mean equity to someone, quality to someone like me is durability. It's going to be there in 100 years. Quality could be something else to someone*" (*Timestamp 59:21*). However, instead of focusing on one definition, the participants found it helpful to focus on equity, which itself could still be broad as "*quality means everything*" (*Timestamp 1:02:34*). This led to participants finding road maps of quality as a more productive way of tackling quality. The discussion further reiterated that there are many parameters of quality where each group is tackling one or two of those definitions (*Timestamp 1:03:03*). The participants also discussed that perhaps it is not the definition of quality that is the end goal, rather "*a criteria for the definition of it*" (*Timestamp 1:03:42*).

Moreover, it was mentioned that quality space is not what the research team defines, but the process it took to understand what makes the quality of space for the people. It was mentioned that quality is not limited to the design, but the "*extra leap of saying this is what we imagine the future to be*" (*Timestamp 1:09:25*) to facilitate an alternative future.

This led to the discussion of what those processes could entail. The participants mentioned potential questions when analysing the quality of sites such as "*...how are they getting maintained? How are decisions being made?*" (*Timestamp 1:11:10*).

Make the conversation more visible to the general public (*Timestamp 10:00*). This point was brought up as one of the structuring questions introduced by the moderators of the roundtable. The first principle of the whole research grant is the people that use the spaces; this partnership is studying the quality of built environments and an essential part of that is the people that will ultimately use these spaces. As such, integration of the partnership with the public was a top theme brought up throughout the discussion. An idea brought up by one of the participants wanted to include the broader public within the conferences. This would mean including the public in roundtable discussions and possibly interactive seminars as a way of bringing new perspectives to the partnership.

Concrete data collecting can aid in backing up subjective opinion with objective data; data tracking and collection in studied spaces can provide a concrete background to ideas discussed and proposed. A large sentiment from the participants of roundtable 2 was the grounding of the research that was taking place. A possible solution for this could be the development of parameters that can be tracked and studied per case study, to document the use of the space and its viability as a space of quality. A key part of data collecting will be direct discussions with the users of the space, as a way of collecting data for the described parameters.

Participants of the roundtable felt that the public's concerns and priority are not heard in the face of developers and municipalities (*Timestamp 45:30*). When the public doesn't feel represented in spaces within their city, it can lead to a disconnect that affects the quality of that space. A participant expressed that '*when the rubber hits the road*' the public feels underrepresented because "higher" objectives are prioritised by the developers and municipality. To combat this, it is imperative that the public is consulted about lived experiences of quality and how those experiences can be used to influence future municipality and developer decisions.

### **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages)**

The roundtable discussion resulted in a variety of concrete suggestions to move forward with the research. These were grouped into three themes followed as: the organization of the research teams, levels of collaboration and specific case studies.

- A) The first theme relates to the efficiency and organization of the research team(s). It was mentioned that power needs to be more identified; a way to visualize and map out power to better understand who could make changes to the overall system of the research teams collectively (*Timestamp 18:24*). In addition, it was suggested that a flowchart diagram is a concrete way to learn of other teams' methodologies and processes that could be integrated into one's own research. This led to the suggestion of having milestones and short term goals as a collective to help individuals like students who will not be on the team for the entire duration of the research (*Timestamp 47:40*).
- B) The second theme identifies methodologies of collaboration in various levels. It was mentioned that a collaboration amongst research teams could be facilitated through the formatting of conferences. Instead of a lecture setting, the participants suggest having more informal conversations and roundtables between different research clusters (*Timestamp 48:35*) . Moreover, the participants acknowledged the need to facilitate conversations outside of the research team. It was suggested to "*find the people who work for the people*" (*Timestamp 31:50*) through means of community engagement and surveys. In addition, it was suggested that research teams facilitate conversations with individuals who are not necessarily from a specific group but may benefit from a collective conversation such as "*lawyers and bankers that may provide constructive friction*" (*Timestamp 50:35*) .

- C) The last theme focuses on making sure that what comes out of the case studies are implementable. For instance, it was mentioned that the economic aspect plays an important role in the quality of the environment, hence, research teams need to make sure their case studies are covering that (*Timestamp 28:37*). Moreover, it was suggested to pay attention to “*poor quality places that don't kind of meet the quality*” (*Timestamp 27:44*) as a way to acknowledge the need for climate action. Such case studies are a way to understand how to “*inject quality in existing spaces*” (*Timestamp 28:15*) and disrupt belief systems.

As a whole, the participants made these to aim for impactful research results not solely just as an atlas, but to be implementable and useful.

#### **4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research))**

A major issue throughout the whole discussion was clarity in the definition of quality. Multiple participants agreed that the definition of quality was vague and were unsure about its rooting in award winning architecture. The participants questioned whether awards could measure quality in all aspects of architecture. For example, it was mentioned that this is concerning for the “*incredibly important vernacular spaces*” that tends to be underrepresented with awards (*Timestamp 44:15*). It was further noted that in other circumstances, it is not about “*the loveliest, the big things*” (*Timestamp 44:36*), but rather what works for the people and the community. This led to the question on how the leadership of the partnership address these concerns and incorporate more clear definitions and parameters for assessing quality in the built environment. Subsequently these discussions about the partnership, led to more inquiry throughout the roundtable about the core structure of the study. First, the participants questioned how the process and results of the research could be impactful and useful in facilitating architectural projects (*Timestamp 46:25*). Secondly, participants questioned whether there needs to be more inter-cluster collaboration; similar to the roundtables that occurred at the conference, but more often throughout each term.

## **Inclusive design for health, wellness, aging & special needs**

### **3a - Roundtable 1 – ConcordiaU & UCalgary - May 1**

Monday, May 1, 2023, from 9:30 to 11:00am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Sharing Positive Experiences of Quality**

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*Date of submission: 2023 / 06 / 05*

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## Introduction

The discussion opened with a round of reflections on what are the positive aspects of quality in the built environment. Each participant brought in their perspective on the factors that affect an exemplary lived experience, such as seamless universal design, access to green spaces, consideration of neurodivergent needs, barrier-free access, etc. Many examples of positive experiences and processes were shared but the topics discussed can be broadly divided into: (1) the challenge and complexity of identifying exemplarities, (2) the tension between nature and built spaces, outdoor vs indoor, (3) the need to design multisensorial and diverse experiences in the same spaces, (4) the people, processes, and costs involved in enabling or hindering positive experiences, and (5) the ways forward for coordination, communication, engagement, and continuous evaluation of quality.

## Challenges and Complexity of Identifying Exemplarities

After an initial round of collective sharing of lived experiences that were exemplar cases for quality in the built environment, it was starting to become clear that some criteria could not be generalized and some of the experiences shared were context-specific and subjective. So, the table began reflecting on why it was hard to put into words what good design or quality spaces are. It was easier to come up with barriers to quality in the previous in-person convention, but most participants in the room agreed that it was challenging to come up with examples that showcase good design which incorporated not just aesthetic but also socio-cultural values of the inhabitants. Through the discussion, it was recognized that privilege and affordability of services played a role in access to quality in the built environment. There are complex issues faced by vulnerable populations, including homelessness and lack of access to basic amenities, among others that lead to an unequal distribution of positive experiences in the city. Therefore, the 2-pager to share examples was seen as a reduced and simplified approach and sometimes quality was not discussed based on lived experiences but best practices in the building industry which may or may not result in positive qualities. What constitutes quality and positive experience for some may not be the case for others. Hence, “Quality for some but not for all” was the general idea echoed by everyone present. This led to a collective understanding that addressing inequity and access to quality are important going forward. Moreover, “Who gets to decide what quality in the built environment is?” was a key question that shifted the conversation from not just built spaces and lived experiences, but also the processes that enable these “qualities for all.”

## Tensions of Nature vs Built Spaces, Outdoor vs Indoor

Over the course of the roundtable, the participants observed a pattern of sharing outdoor and green spaces as exemplar cases for quality in the built environment, while lesser indoor spaces were cited. Lived experiences of well-being, sense of belonging and connection were often tied to public and collective spaces than private or indoor spaces. Most of the positive experiences shared were connected to nature such as parks, community gardens, walkways, linear green

spaces along canals, etc. Some examples like the Insectarium in Montreal were shared which reflected the emotional benefits of increased interaction with biodiversity. The ability of nature to engage people and their emotions and learn from them was seen as vital for quality lived experiences. Their sense of place and belonging, as reflected by some participants, was heightened upon contact with birds, bees, trees, and the public realm in general. It was also observed that sense of ownership and responsibility of care and up-keep of outdoor spaces on a long-term basis was more compared to indoor spaces due to their communal nature. In this regard, researchers highlighted that somehow there is a lack of range in quality when we move from outdoor to indoor.

### **Designing multisensorial and diverse experiences in the same spaces**

The challenges of phenomenologically capturing positive lived experiences were discussed from the point of view of diverse sensorial needs of people. Scholars raised their concern that sensory information of people through phenomenology is hard to put into words. Yet, this could enable sharing of ideas and exemplar cases that are beneficial for all designers. Some researchers proposed a shift toward scientific methods to assess empirical data of stimulus associated with lived experiences and perceptions of the built environment. However, this was met with the argument that not all positive characteristics of sensorial experiences could be captured quantitatively, thereby requiring close engagement of the citizens through interviews and focus groups. Relational values of spaces such as socio-cultural and aesthetic qualities could not be translated into indicators and could only be studied qualitatively. Multisensorial experiences need to be studied in partnership with those actually living in the spaces since the question was raised, "How can we understand different points of view without actually living their experiences?" Invisible aspects such as neurodivergence add complexity to this process and there is a general lack of understanding of human neurological experiences. Therefore, it was proposed to collect examples and data such that we could design a variety of sensorial experiences related to sound, smell, touch, etc. within the same spaces. For example, parks and playgrounds have multiple modes of sensorial interaction between humans and built spaces.

### **People, processes, and costs that enable or hinder positive experiences**

Although the goal of the PG is to gather substantial examples of buildings and public spaces that could be analyzed for quality, the roundtable took a step back to assess the people, processes, and costs involved in realizing these qualities in the built environment. Involving diverse points of view and being inclusive of unheard voices in the room were key factors observed in the integration of quality. For example, some of the participants equated quality to designing for disability and inclusivity of marginalized populations. Addressing the needs of vulnerable groups was argued as the way forward to provide equitable access to quality for all. Some participants also proposed to investigate social factors like safety and nightlife for women, diversity of neighborhoods, etc. which affect certain groups of the population who are often overlooked in the design process. Therefore, members of citizen groups and city officials echoed the need to

assess not just buildings but the design processes as well and who are present at the table. Concerns were raised on how cities are often built to cater to the “loudest people in the room”, leaving other perspectives behind. Rethinking the way design processes and decision-making bodies operate in relation to the built environment was seen as beneficial for the larger goals of the partnership project. Most importantly, some of the participants shared that the lack of access to funds is one of the main reasons why some qualities in the built environment like barrier-free access, greenery, etc. may be compromised. So, the table agreed to use this research platform to explore, “How does cost hinder the realization of quality?” through the cases studied.

### **New methods of coordination, communication, engagement, and continuous evaluation of quality**

While discussing the ways forward, students raised concerns about how to formulate methods that are effective in capturing the diverse voices that we want to include. “How can we effectively merge ideas, policies, and indicators from various disciplines such as architecture, social sciences, empirical sciences, and neurodiversity to promote a comprehensive approach?” Questions on what sources students could access in order to analyze quality in the built environment were shared. The need for collaboration on shared resources between citizen groups, city departments, and scholars became clear as the discussion progressed. Working together to speed up the data collection process and also gain access to information that are otherwise not openly available was agreed upon. Participants also shared concerns about the collective vision for quality, perhaps aiming for a common understanding of quality in the built environment on a country level and breaking them down into manageable indicators for provincial, municipal, and local cases. Also, the need for mixed and collaborative approaches was reiterated to address the concerns, “Do we engage the right populations regarding quality? How do we allow the voices of all the stakeholders to be heard effectively? How do we get lived experiences from users in a way that we have lived them ourselves?” Community-building efforts through a common framework were discussed so that those who feel like there are not heard could have a platform to do so. Furthermore, the need to continuously evaluate and test these frameworks (including indicators and certifications) for functionality over the years was shared.

## **Inclusive design for health, wellness, aging & special needs**

### **3a - Roundtable 2 - ConcordiaU & UCalgary - May 2**

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, from 10:45 to 12:15am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Engaging Community Members and Partners in Research**

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##### **Citizen Groups**

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- **McBride, Laura** (Rick Hansen Foundation)
- **Nomura, Matt** (Calgary Homeless Foundation)
- **Zepada, Nilson** (Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal)
- **Ramji, Nabeel** (Pedesting)
- **Shilliday, Erin** (Pedesting)
- **Doan-Lavoie, Eva** (GRAME)

##### **Cities and procurement:**

- **Marmen, Patrick** (Ville de Montréal)
- **Down, David** (City of Calgary)

##### **Professional organisations:**

- **Monfries, Jonathan** (Stantec, AAA)
- **Cavar, Frano** (Calgary Construction Association)

##### **Students**

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- **Nizar, Firdous** (Concordia University)

- **Seyedabadi, Mohammed Reza** (Concordia University)
- **Yaseyan, Tatev** (Concordia University)
- **Gutierrez-Kellam, Belle** (University of Calgary)
- **Masihay Akbar, Hasti** (University of Calgary)
- **Pinchbeck, Lara** (University of Calgary)

## **1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:**

On the second day of roundtables, the discussion theme was “How do we begin to better understand, measure and shape experiences of quality in our places and spaces?” The discussion in roundtable 3a converged on the measuring component of the topic, as participants shared approaches and challenges to measuring quality in the built environment.

The two approaches discussed are akin to the duality between qualitative and quantitative research methods. The first is a narrative approach, promoting the importance of storytelling and subjective lived experience, and the second is a quantitative approach promoting the role of KPIs that can be implemented. The former is needed in order to have a broader understanding of quality, as what makes for a high quality space can vary according to whom you ask and according to the specifics of each project. The latter is needed in order to have a sound methodology to follow in project management processes.

These approaches were discussed in terms of their necessity but also in terms of their many challenges. As quality is by definition qualitative, establishing the meaning of quality is a process that must involve many people and many perspectives. This is the only way to create an inclusive vision of quality that can foster a sense of belonging. Yet how can we even measure such things as a subjective feeling of safety, comfort or beauty? There must however be a way to quantify new quality indicators, and there must be a justification as to why these indicators are necessary, if they are to be implemented in the context of municipal project management, where there is a constant pressure to lower costs. Another challenge is that KPIs are always lagging: the building codes and standards are always one step behind, making it difficult to bring about meaningful change. Even if we exceed building standards, that doesn't mean we have met accessibility criteria.

These conversations then took a turn away from the question of “how” we measure quality, towards the question of “who”: Who decides what the policies, standards or benchmarks are, and how? Who is missing from these conversations? Who's sitting at the table of decision makers? Whereas city officials engage citizen groups when creating new policies, some groups are left out nonetheless. The process set in place to evaluate these policies must be able to be reviewed regularly to ensure their relevance. This

The roundtable concluded with a conversation on how to move forward in collaborating on data collection, as well as reconditioning our data analysis processes to ensure we do not embed our old assumptions as a result of outdated theoretical frameworks.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

As the theme of the roundtable was altered slightly from what was originally planned, the discussion only offered a few concrete ways in which to share lived experiences of quality. The important takeaway from the discussion however was the emphasis on the evolutionary nature of indicators of quality and how by sharing lived experiences, we are able to understand emerging values as new indicators of quality in the built environment. By recognizing and prioritizing these values, a more holistic and inclusive understanding of quality can be fostered. Indicators should be flexible and adaptable to the changing needs and contexts of different communities and individuals. This allows for a more nuanced and comprehensive assessment of quality over time, rather than relying on static or fixed measurements.

Although not concrete, the discussion did include some abstract examples of the methods to express and convey lived experiences of quality:

The initial and most obvious way to share lived experience is through a collection of stories, written from the experience of any and all individuals involved or willing to be involved with the project. Participants stressed that the goal should not be limited to collecting stories but also analyzing and extracting insights from them. By gathering diverse narratives, patterns and common themes can emerge, contributing to a deeper understanding of quality in places and spaces.

It was emphasized that by involving the community in the design process, architects can gain valuable insights into the lived experiences, aspirations, and values of the community members. This participatory approach ensures that the quality of the built environment is informed by the needs and desires of the people it serves. Trauma-informed design was mentioned as an example of how lived experiences can be shared and incorporated into the design process.

One other effective method of sharing lived experiences of quality was discussed as engaging the community through education and planning workshops. These workshops should be open to all members of the community, even those who may not initially be willing to participate. By providing opportunities for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and active involvement, diverse perspectives can be integrated into the decision-making process and the understanding of quality can be enriched.

One of the participants emphasized reconditioning and reminded that professionals in the field also have their own lived experiences that are relevant to the understanding of quality. Professionals were encouraged to reflect on their own biases and assumptions and consider how their lived experiences can inform and shape their practice.

The use of online platforms and tools to collect and share lived experiences was also highlighted. Online platforms can provide a means for individuals to express their perspectives and contribute to the understanding of quality in places and spaces. Recognizing the limitations of online experiences, participants emphasized the importance of conducting site visits and field research.

Going directly to the sites allows for deeper exploration, engagement with the physical environment, and gathering firsthand experiences.

Participants also discussed the importance of promoting existing datasets and collecting new data in a transparent manner. This approach involves using empirical evidence and analyzing quantitative data to gain a better understanding of quality experiences.

### **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

The roundtable discussion brought forth many suggestions for better measuring quality in the built environment, which centered on two main subjects: promoting inclusivity and reconditioning frameworks.

First, participants noted the importance of building a pluralistic vision of quality resulting from sharing subjective lived experience. In order to make this pluralistic vision a part of policy making processes, we must identify who's missing from the table of policy makers and bring them in. When engaging citizens, we must keep in mind that we must meet people where they are, as not everyone has the same level of education on topics like urban planning. One participant argued that we must improve accessibility and inclusivity not only by relying on regulations and policies, but by changing people's beliefs through education and by promoting self-reflectiveness.

In the conversation on how to approach current and new frameworks for defining quality in the built environment, one participant first brought forth the idea to create new value-based frameworks that are evolutive and adaptable, focussing on project-specific aspects of quality, where some values and characteristics are promoted over others. This led into a conversation on the challenges of having lagging quality indicators, in other words, by the time new quality indicators make it into building codes and certification, they are already obsolete (and the certification systems themselves are sometimes corrupt) and better frameworks have already been developed. To overcome this challenge, participants raised the importance of having evaluation processes for policies, frameworks, standards, and certifications, in order to ensure they remain relevant. We must also ensure that in our data analysis, as we are creating these new frameworks, we are not embedding assumptions resulting from outdated theoretical frameworks, such that we can recondition current practices and promote a new baseline of what is deemed acceptable in terms of accessibility.

Finally, in going forward with the research, we must set up better data collaboration practices between the city, citizen groups, professional organizations, and researchers. As researchers are constantly creating new knowledge through their field work and interactions with citizens, they should feed organizations with the most recent data that can help them evaluate and improve their practices.

#### **4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research)):**

The majority of the round table was spent discussing the future potential of the research project and the opportunities present. Three specific research questions were raised based on the discussion.

The first question is who decides? This would include decisions around policy, what issues are important, and deciding which individuals get to make the final decision. The second question is who is missing? In the discussion a need for the use of everyday language was identified as a way to improve the project's community outreach, this way voices that aren't being heard at the moment have the ability to be involved. The third question is who is analyzing? It was identified that personal belief systems are embedded in evaluation systems therefore academics, governments, differing professionals, and community members all have a different yet equally valid interpretation of quality.

Each of these research questions shows that moving forward there needs to be an intersection of the priorities and expectations of the 4 stakeholder groups. Transparency of data, collaboration, and reconditioning of what is deemed acceptable in the built environment are pathways to moving beyond just the definition of quality.

## **Inclusive design for health, wellness, aging & special needs**

### **3b - Roundtable 1 – UCalgary & UMontréal - May 1**

Monday, May 1, 2023, from 9:30 to 11:00am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Sharing Positive Experiences of Quality**

##### *Authors of the summary*

- **Paloma Castonguay-Rufino**, PhD student (*Université de Montréal*)
- **Victorian Thibault-Malo**, MDesign student (*Université de Montréal*)

*Date of submission: 2023/06/04*

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##### **Researchers:**

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- **McCormack, Gavin** (University of Calgary)
- **Patterson, Matt** (University of Calgary)
- **Amaral, Izabel** (*Université de Montréal*)
- **Helal, Bechara** (*Université de Montréal*)
- **Chupin, Jean-Pierre** (*Université de Montréal*)

##### **Citizen groups:**

- **Ranasinghe, Srimal** (Sustainable Calgary)
- **Reid, Meaghan** (Vibrant Communities Calgary)
- **Ng, Kevin** (Rick Hansen Foundation)
- **Evans, Leslie** (Federation of Calgary Communities)
- **Lawrence, Joan** (Calgary Alliance for the Common Good & Calgary Climate Hub)
- **Stiestol, Tulene** (17th Avenue Business Improvement Area)
- **Danahy, Sarah** (BEA Calgary)
- **Huxley, Sarah** (Fondation Véro & Louis)
- **Cardinal, Isabelle** (Société Logique)

##### **Cities and procurement:**

- **Alinaghi Pour, Sara** (City of Calgary)
- **Thibodeau, Rosie-Anne** (Public Services and Procurement Canada)
- **Mahler, Thom** (City of Calgary)
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##### **Professional organisations:**

- **Couzens, Dustin** (MODA)
- **Black, Bill** (Calgary Construction Association)
- **Lam, Elsa** (Canadian Architect magazine)
- **Guvenc, Pinar** (SOUR)
- **Parent, Lyne** (Association des architectes en pratique privée du Québec)
- **Grande, Allie** (Calgary Construction Association)
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- **Ekoué, Mak** (Université de Montréal)
- **Berg, Traci** (University of Calgary)

## **1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:**

This roundtable was the first out of two of the annual convention, so the participants really took the time to share their perception of the lived experience exercise, what they understood of it, what they didn't understand, what they thought worked well, and what could be improved: most of this talk was a collective review of the lived experience exercise, focusing on sharing how it could be improved, and the challenges of this type of exercise knowing that not everyone is at ease talking about the built environment coming from different backgrounds.

Participants have been overall creative with this exercise, taking it to their communities, and trying to put themselves in other situations than their own personal lived experience.

The idea of expressing how we feel in a space is a different definition of quality than the one we are taught in school as designers of buildings, in the end it's a whole other vocabulary that is used to talk about space. Could the vocabulary used to describe space in the lived experience exercise be analyzed more closely?

Participants of this roundtable, especially the ones representing citizen groups, have expressed the need to be advocates of other people, people that don't usually have a voice in architecture or construction.

Process was a concept that was mentioned by different types of stakeholders: How can this research partnership also be interested in the process, not just buildings or places as a result?

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

When completing the lived experience exercise, the participants of this roundtable have had three types of reactions: some had a satisfactory experience as is, others reframed the exercise to include other voices than their own, and some did not feel involved or concerned. The following part of the report will be divided into two main sections, first focusing on positive feedback from the lived experience exercise and then discussing more challenging and constructive feedback.

First, several participants indicated that they had approached this exercise with the intention of including the experience of people other than their own, to show more than just what they felt as individuals. These participants were mostly part of the citizen groups, thus having the professional duty to represent communities, which resulted in the inclusion of a multitude of voices. In this case, a participant mentioned that this was a more empathetic way to consider the lived experience exercise, projecting the needs of others into their own experience. For example, the participant may not be on the autism spectrum, but may nonetheless factor the needs of people who are on the autism spectrum into the definition of quality through lived

experience. In this case, the participant acts as an ally, a representative, of people with disabilities. Participants indicated that the exercise could be considered an act of generosity in inviting others to participate in their personal experience.

A participant found it interesting that they looked for a building they had a relationship with, as opposed to only being familiar with a building, which can be the case for various places. This participant specifically looked for a building where they have been on several occasions. Another participant also took this exercise thinking about a building that they had used a lot, and that could be adapted to various situations. It made them look at the architect's drawings and compare them to their lived experience in the building. The participant suggested that this might be a next step in answering the question of what to do with these texts and testimonials, focusing also on the conceptual and architectural process.

With the intention of summarizing the lived experience exercise, another participant stressed on the two aspects in this exercise: first it is about an experience of quality in the built environment, so the participant tried to answer with their background and expertise, second it is about a positive experience in the build environment, which did not necessarily had anything to do with the quality mentioned in the first part, the second part being more about emotional bond, place dependence. This participant mentioned a sort of separation between physical quality and lived experience of quality. To overcome this dichotomy, the participant suggested thinking about places that have a negative quality, places that we try to avoid and don't wish to visit.

A participant has noted that no one has mentioned their workplace as a place of quality and suggested to add examples of more common places in the lived experience call, so that people feel that they can do it and that their experience is valid.

Another suggestion that was made was about the categorization of the lived experiences, that it could be organized according to the background of the authors. That way, the information would be displayed based on the attributes of people, not just about architecture.

Secondly, one participant shared that the exercise of talking about their lived experience of a place was a challenge, because we usually think of building as aesthetic, so it is harder to try to describe it based on emotions. This participant explained that the way we feel about a place is personal and based on memories, so it can be a difficult task to share something so personal. They were specifically looking for a good example of universal design, which unfortunately made it hard to find a building to write about.

Another participant explained that they did a community roundtable where they had indigenous elders come and discuss what is a good place for them in Calgary, what feels comfortable for them, and they said there is no place, no building in Calgary where they feel welcomed, that they feel is part of their experience. Indeed, it was mentioned by participants that the exercise of lived

experience is critical for indigenous people: they say they never experience build environment quality.

The question of representation was raised again by a participant who said they saw a pattern in the partners who represent community organisations, and struggled with the fact that they had to represent the group they are working for in this partnership while being asked to talk about their own personal experience of space. The participant realized that while trying to find places where both them and the group they represent could live a positive experience, there were very few of these places.

A participant made a general comment on the accessibility (or inaccessibility) of the urban realm, encouraging the research team to integrate that line of thought to the partnership, compounding maybe some exclusionary practices within design that have happened for a very long time but have become more present since the pandemic. The participant explained what was accessible in terms of space has become very interrupted, a lot of norms have been put in place where people question whether to go inside places, what is accessible, what is public versus private. The participant said they have encountered so many examples of micro design choices in their immediate built environment, like funny signage or accessible chairs in places where people really feel safe, whereas a lot of these other buildings have felt inaccessible, and it is not clear how to regain access to those buildings.

A participant also thought the lived experience exercise was a difficult task and decided to add another person to the exercise. They explained the complexity of adding a second person. They needed to find places that they could both relate to, which was a long process. They were going back to public realm spaces. This participant stressed out that they really wanted to think about how to take this exercise broader as they did not know what the partnership team was going to do with it. They did not want to share something too personal and had to find something they had both shared feelings in, which was an incredibly difficult task. It was then discussed that the exercise can be intimidating and that the use of words or phrasing are not necessarily comprehensible to non-architects.

This other participant didn't submit their lived experience yet and said they didn't feel like they should be reflecting just on their own experience. They would rather think about process when thinking about quality in the built environment, not just about a better checklist, not just about the final product but rather what was the process that led up to that project, who was involved in the project team, the communities that were involved, how it was activated afterwards. This participant insisted on this idea that more questions rose than just about their own experience as an individual.

Finally, another participant also found the exercise difficult from an accessibility standpoint and wanted to make sure to include a variety of experiences and disabilities, and share it with different people that had hearing, mobility and vision perspective disabilities. This participant

looked at how they would approach a building if they had a disability, navigating the space with that person who may have a physical mobility disability, taking the same route, really thinking about it from that equity perspective. That is the true meaning of universal design according to that participant.

### **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

Questions and recommendations have been raised throughout this roundtable that provide food for thought for a critical review of the lived experience exercise.

First, participants shared that they felt like some buildings were not worth mentioning in the context of the lived experience exercise, such as shopping malls or workplaces for instance. Indeed, some participants expressed their concern that buildings that fall into less prestigious categories may not be considered valid talking about. The participants were looking to share an extraordinary or even grandiose experience, sometimes despite their authentic experience, which raises the risk of the standardization of shared experiences.

It was also discussed that one's experience is bounded in a moment in time and is a complex phenomenon based on a multitude of factors, such as the temperature, the mood, the hour, etc. A question that what raised by participants was considering going back more than once to a building or place to capture the lived experience in all its complexity. Participants considered experience mostly as a personal matter, and thus making it difficult to talk about their own individual perspective in a public setting. A participant suggested making the process of collecting the lived experience anonymous, or partly anonymous.

The question of accessibility of the partnership was then raised by participants. Indeed, architectural language is not necessarily common and understandable to everyone. How can we make the partnership more comprehensible? Furthermore, spreading the exercise outside of the partnership was suggested, to reach a broader range of lived experiences in the built environment. Would it be possible to include "non-participants" in the lived experience exercise with a clear commitment to reach a wider variety of people, for example people who cannot write or who have disabilities, such as children or people with autism?

Ultimately, the hypothesis of quality lying in the process was also brought into the conversation by a participant who mentioned that architects and builders also contribute to the lived experience of a building. Everyone carries a baggage of their own lived experiences of spaces, which then affects their experience of space and so on. Architects and builders have professional experience in conception and construction that impact their understanding of space. Participants raised the idea of different layers of appreciation when experiencing a space. Lived experience could be understood as a much broader concept, that surpasses the present occupation of a building, taking place also in the conception and construction phases of a building.

#### **4- MISCELLANEOUS NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research):**

In the context of this round table, it was discussed that experiences of space can greatly differ from one person to another, and even be contradictory at times. With that in mind, participants have questioned the validity of lived experience as data. Can feelings be examined as data? There seems to be various depths to the notion of lived experience: everyone has a lived experience and the way these experiences diverge from one another is what is interesting.

A participant mentioned that people are the experts of the spaces they evolve in. If architecture is to be oriented mainly on lived experiences, what is the architect's role then? How can architects and designers integrate lived experiences into the spaces they create? Participants expressed that this last question takes a different meaning and scale when raising it in the context of this partnership.

Should the intended users of a space be more actively and critically involved in the creation of that space? Who is to decide what is quality if experience varies so drastically from one person to another? The participants indicated that a redefinition of the partnership approach on the notion of quality seems appropriate.

## **Inclusive design for health, wellness, aging & special needs**

### **3b - Roundtable 2 - UCalgary & UMontréal - May 2**

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, from 10:45 to 12:15am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Engaging Community Members and Partners in Research**

##### *Authors of the summary*

- **Mak Ékoué, BArch student (Université de Montréal)**
- **Shantanu Biswas Linkon, PhD student (Université de Montréal)**
- **Traci Berg, MLA student (University of Calgary)**

*Date of submission: 2023 / 05 / 02*

#### **Names of participants by type of stakeholders:**

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- **McCormack, Gavin** (University of Calgary)
- **Patterson, Matt** (University of Calgary)
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- **Chupin, Jean-Pierre** (Université de Montréal)

##### **Citizen groups:**

- **Ng, Kevin** (Rick Hansen Foundation)
- **Lawrence, Joan** (Calgary Alliance for the Common Good & Calgary Climate Hub)
- **Danahy, Sarah** (BEA Calgary)
- **Huxley, Sarah** (Fondation Véro & Louis)
- **Cardinal, Isabelle** (Société Logique)

##### **Cities and procurement:**

- **Alinaghi Pour, Sara** (City of Calgary)
- **Thibodeau, Rosie-Anne** (Public Services and Procurement Canada)
- **Leblanc-Trudeau, Jeanne** (Ville de Montréal)

##### **Professional organisations:**

- **Couzens, Dustin** (MODA)
- **Black, Bill** (Calgary Construction Association)
- **Lam, Elsa** (Canadian Architect magazine)
- **Guvenc, Pinar** (SOUR)
- **Parent, Lyne** (Association des architectes en pratique privée du Québec)

- **Grande, Allie** (Calgary Construction Association)
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- **Ékoué, Mak** (Université de Montréal)
- **Linkon, Shantanu Biswas** (Université de Montréal)
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- **Bisati, Ahmad Ali** (University of Calgary)

## **1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:**

The main ideas shared during this round table revolved around four general spheres for discussions that the various participating members felt are subject to change, innovation and/or development, namely methodologies, education, communication, and the award system.

In terms of methodologies currently in place for the process of quantifying quality, members of this round table shared ways in which their particular organization or research site is already modifying them in order to allow for a wider and thus more accurate range of experience to be recorded; for example, the Fondation Véro & Louis representatives spoke on the post-occupancy evaluations they perform through recorded and filmed guided tours of the living tours with the occupants so that even users with communication limitations are able to have their voices heard. The creation of flexible and adaptable spaces that account for the inevitable changes to come was pushed to the front to counter the tendency we have of building things that are essentially already obsolete. A representative for the city of Calgary spoke on how the city uses buyer interviews, previous research, and a review of established best practices to assess the quality of proposed projects.

In terms of communication, it was mainly a great issue being put on the forefront, that of the discrepancies found in the jargon and lexicons of architects, builders, users and decision-makers. A representative from a professional organization brought up that this could perhaps be bridged by the creation of tools within the partnership made to facilitate communication and agreements.

Questions from community organizers about the awards system and its value led to the establishment of solutions from professional organization representatives, such as using it to our benefit by turning the culture of ratings and scoring cards into a way to make more decisively scalable processes that are inclusive and authentic. Furthermore, the need for awards that recognize the design processes more than just its final products was brought up among the many limitations of prizes as we know them; the fact that younger, more innovating firms aren't yet being invited to the table for lack of built projects is another.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

NA for this particular roundtable.

## **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

At this roundtable, we were hearing from industry professionals especially that there is a need for concrete tools that would allow for the creation of pilot projects and authentic outcomes. . Regarding the idea of processes over checklists was brought up in general discussion, the professional representatives of this roundtable voiced that while this mindset certainly exemplifies an ideal we would all like to someday reach, in reality, they are unfortunately constrained by very tight time and money restrictions at the moment. Because of this, they are hoping the partnership can instead lead to *better* checklists at the very least; it was said that such lists, endorsed in this context by a plethora of collaborating academic institutions would be valuable to them as documents created outside of a marketing-driven context to refer to. The specific example of the flower wheel as presented by the Association des architectes dans la pratique privée was brought up to illustrate this.

It was then brought up that quality-conscious processes could very well be embedded into design education, especially considering the prevalence of continuing education in the architectural profession. It was also said that there is a need for a major shift in design education considering most students come out of school having never interacted with the communities they'll be building for, and that this is particularly necessary when looking at the mindset of designers who tend to always believe they are the only experts in the room when put in touch with said communities.

#### **4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research)):**

This roundtable saw some interesting interactions and noted tensions between the different sides represented at the table, notably between community representatives and industry professionals. The issue of rehashing previously explored ideas without moving forward toward the end goals of the partnership was brought up and echoed by many.

Two questions were brought up within this context: Is it possible to go from records of the lived results to actionable results and changes in the industry as well as education? And, is the quality of a building defined by the satisfaction of each and everyone one of its individual occupants? The latter also begging the question of the danger of looking so closely and so deeply into the significance and importance of user experience that it devolves into the realm of consumer demand. A community organizer brought this up and closed by mentioning that such an outcome would also lead to ramifications in terms of climate and equity, amongst others.

## **Processes & policies supporting the re-invention of built environment**

### **Roundtable 1 – AthabascaU & ULaval & UManitoba - May 1**

Monday, May 1, 2023, from 9:30 to 11:00am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Sharing Positive Experiences of Quality**

*Authors of the summary*

- **Dener François**, Doctoral student (*Université Laval*)
- **Danielle Fenn**, (*University of Manitoba*)
- **Cara Shan**, (*Athabasca University*)

*Date of submission: 2023 / 06 / 04*

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- **Kumar, Vivek** (*Athabasca University*)
- **Stuhlmiller, Keir** (*Mount Royal University*)
- **C. Auger, Josie** (*Athabasca University*)
- **Roche, Stephane** (*Université Laval*)
- **De Blois, Michel** (*Université Laval*)
- **Baker, Janelle** (*Athabasca University*)
- **Madonna, Veronica** (*Athabasca University*)
- **Hanson, Lorelei** (*Athabasca University*)
- **McAdam, Sylvia** (*University of Windsor*)
- **Thompson, Shirley** (*University of Manitoba, Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership*)
- **Mallory-Hill, Shauna** (*University of Manitoba*)

##### **Citizen groups:**

- **McAdam, Jenna** (*One House Many Nations*)
- **Berens, Maisie** (*One House Many Nations*)
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- **Montpetit, Thierry** (*Public Services Procurement Canada*)
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***Professional organisations:***

- **Van Leeuwen, John** (Manitoba Association of Architects)
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- **Paula Rodrigues Affonso Alves** (University of Manitoba)
- **Panos Polyzois** (University of Manitoba)
- **Vincent Yong** (University of Calgary)

## **1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:**

The key idea of this round table session was that which led each participant to reflect on a definition of the concept of Quality. What is quality? This was the question that served as a starting point and a guiding thread for the discussions for this first part of the session. A session led by Professors Michel de Blois (Laval University) and Josie C. Auger (Athabasca University).

Some have explained that quality refers to the unique feeling we have when we find ourselves in a welcoming place where each element of the built environment blends harmoniously with nature to testify to the beauty of this place, of the space. For others, quality can be reflected in a personal or collective experience that encourages us to have moments of exchange and socialization while forcing us to return to them, to revisit a monument, a site or a historical heritage that continues to talk to us. For participants, quality is therefore something that is appreciated, something felt, a place that we love, where we like to spend time, an enthusiastic, stimulating, relaxing, welcoming environment.

Over the course of the discussions, finding a definition of the concept of quality became an increasingly difficult exercise taking into account the multiple factors of influence and different perceptions in relation to this term, depending on the actor involved (Citizen, government agency, promoter, municipality, Engineer, Architect, Planner, researchers.). This is an a priori question that is very difficult do they constantly report.

Participants explained that this concept is a kind of box in which each actor tries, within his field of action within the limits of his capacities, to contribute to the achievement of the overall quality objectives pursued by intersectoral interventions., interinstitutional. Others even spoke of a "composite" concept integrating several components and dimensions to qualify the meaning of this terminology. This angle of reflection led them to consider quality rather at all stages of the action implementation process with control and evaluation measures throughout the implementation. Since, they say, the quality is greatly influenced by the way in which the constraints, circulation of information, challenges and issues are managed in the implementation environment which is a priori a taxed multi-process context, of multi-actors aiming for intersectoral collaboration in a dynamic with growing complexities.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

The posture of the participants during the definition of quality exercise was taken up to express the specific and personal way in which they experienced quality in their daily lives, in their lives. Indeed, it is the most comfortable approach for them (her) to address this question as an actor and not a spectator. Many of them shared with great emotion personal experiences that were able to bring this apprehension of quality in the built environment to a human scale. Some have put forward memories linked to places in old Quebec where they spent memorable moments in

the heart of nature, in the company of monuments full of stories, souls and experiences of multiple generations.

Considering that quality is a function of time, space, issues and challenges, in a word, contextual concept. Testimonials from a professor highlighted how elusive this concept was in the context of a geospatial data management course, as understanding it independently of other factors or dimensions made the exercise almost impossible. As a result, it was very difficult for him to manage to design and develop a framework aimed at understanding the concept of quality seen in this way.

Some testimonies address their experiences of the quality concept by contrasting two concepts: Rightsholders and Stakeholders. They find that the real guarantors and trustees of quality should be the people who are in the field, in the fields, who are in contact with the environment and the context daily. It is difficult to envisage an understanding of the concept when it is generally the key stakeholders who lead and manage the interventions and who give themselves or have the prerogatives to define quality and its criteria.

In his relationship with place, his vision of comfort and therefore of quality, the end user who will live his whole life with the product should be an important link (if not the most important) in this process of apprehension, definition of quality and its criteria. Often, it is when visiting the place, the residence or the developed neighborhood that citizens find that this architectural work was not designed with them in mind, as living such an experience is not encouraging. The beautiful works from the point of view of the architect, the engineer, the planners, the promoters need to be improved by the experiential knowledge of the citizens, the residents.

Participants recounted with great emotion that ultimately, they belong to places that provide them with comfort.

For researchers who took the floor, quality often relates to tangible and intangible aspects of the issues, concerns and perceptions that should be sought at all costs to capture, document, analyze and understand the connections and influencing factors that fuel the dynamics and its complexity in the context of implementation of inter-institutional and multi-process projects. This is essentially the conclusion of the team from the Université Laval site, which put forward the exercise which consisted in reviewing the mechanisms and tools of inter-institutional collaboration to capture the concerns of citizens during the sessions. public consultations organized around five themes of the City of Quebec. The idea is to look at the extent to which these mechanisms can help to understand the processes, what works or what does not work in order to formulate theories, recommendations.

### **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

- The Université Laval site indicated that it continues to observe and document the multi-actor processes implemented in urban transformation projects. In this sense, a round table of co-creation between the partners of the project is scheduled in order to better address their

understanding of the concept of quality in its multiple dimensions, its multiple levels and facets. This will ultimately better document the composite concept of quality;

-Consider activities that value more the contribution of citizens, residents, end users or customers as well as the relationships maintained with them as a key or main component in the process of defining quality in all its dimensions.

-Promote a better dynamic favoring the management of knowledge, information, data between the "stakeholders and Rightsholders" in order to strengthen the framework for defining and managing the quality of the final product.

**4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research):**

N/A

## **Processes & policies supporting the re-invention of built environment**

### **Roundtable 2 - AthabascaU & ULaval & UManitoba - May 2**

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, from 10:45 to 12:15am.

#### **THEME OF THE ROUNDTABLE:**

#### **Engaging Community Members and Partners in Research**

##### *Authors of the summary*

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*Date of submission: 2023 / 06 / 04*

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- **Berens, Maisie** (One House Many Nations)
- **Yellowbird, Shawn** (Standing Rock Innovations)
- **Armstrong, Alexandre** (Ville de Quebec)
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##### **Cities and procurement:**

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- **Armstrong, Alexandre** (Ville de Québec)
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***Professional organisations:***

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- **Bisson, Jonathan** (CIRCUM.ARCHITECTURE)
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## **1- MAIN IDEAS SHARED DURING THIS ROUNDTABLE:**

When it comes to fourth roundtable on the processes and policies supporting the re-invention of the built environments, there were at least four main ideas. The first main idea was the thought of great disparity between the rich and the poor. Therefore, there is a need for a design and a process that is truly inclusive. Often, even if we notice this need in design, there is clearly a lack of inclusivity in some instances. This may be due to a problem within the value system of the construction domain. Indeed, some consider empathy as dangerous, but in fact it is not. Having a more socially inclusive approach in the construction of environments is a good way to help reducing the disparities.

Secondly, we talked about the fact that we need to consider land acknowledgement in opposition with landowners. For example, there was comment that we are not owners of the land but stewards of the land.

Third, we realize that we are to focus on the end product. Prize winners are most of the time determined with the end product without considering the whole process that came beforehand. Therefore, that's a shame that no developers participate in discussions. They could have learned about the importance of the process and on the impact that it can have on the end product. For example, consultation is not manipulation, we must do it. It allows a better understanding of all knowledges which all have the same value. These different knowledges can bring quality to the project by an aspect that one of the actors, as the developers, would not even consider.

Lastly, everyone has a gift that can be useful, so we need to work together to build quality. For example, the use of local resources (material, people, etc.), and the importance of communication are two social aspects of construction that can favor cooperation and the sharing of knowledge. Also, there was a comment on the importance of building trust. The actors need to clearly understand each other to trust all the information and the knowledge that they share together. Actors of the built environment can't be based on individuality, but they have to see the big picture for today and tomorrow.

## **2- CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF WAYS TO SHARE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF QUALITY:**

There are many ways to share lived experiences of quality. One important feature is to get the development community involved in the process. There are many actors not only the developers, but the architects, the people living in the community, the client with whom the build is for. Especially the First Nations inherent rights over the land before the treaties even existed, and the importance of the quality of living. There are major issues like the Indian Act that prevents these rights and quality of living. The statement "Empathy is not dangerous" was discussed and was a challenging conversation. What are the components of quality and how can it be implemented in our society was a significant dialog. There was also a discussion on the issue of land, most should be considered stewards of the land and not owners, we should be engaging the rights holders in the process of land use. A process needs to be built to create the project

goals. The supply chain should include recycled materials, built fabric, regenerative communities, and use of local materials. There is an issue with societies view of quality and the results of the end product. Those were the main issues of discussion explored for the lived experiences of quality.

Process is needed to be expanded, to include groups like architects, more engagement with communities and think about issues like occupancy incorporate that into the design. From a business point of view how do we incorporate it more into a service we provide, how does that become a standard or how does the expectation that the service architects and other professionals provide meets these ideas of quality. That in turn will be what a developer is essentially purchasing is, the buy in, the service, there needs to be this expectation that the service being provided meets these ideas of quality. That is what a developer is expecting, or what the rights holders are expecting to be received.

There is an issue with statement of anti-land acknowledgment. There is a class society that exists here in Canada. The rich are profiting over this buying of property. As First Nations, there were processes and policies that existed, and our inherent rights existed before the treaties were signed. They are based on natural laws, kindness, honesty, caring, strength, we need all of that to work together and to have the trust. In the old Nehiyaw ways there was rules and responsibilities for everyone in a community. Today in Canada, there is now an issue with homelessness especially in the First nations community. Maslow's hierarchy of needs does not state the needs connection to land, language, and culture of the First nations. There are various factors of homelessness that are overlooked, like health, genocide, and racism.

There's a saying in native culture, "We are from the land all of us and once we're done with the world we return to the land." "How can you not acknowledge the land it is saying you do not acknowledge yourself?" There is another issue with how much we are taking from the land, the more we take the less we have. "What kind of world are we leaving for our children?" Environment, quality of living as a collective, we have to do something about it.

In Northern Manitoba there was a study between Covid 19 rates and houselessness, or over crowding. On First nations housing has only CMHC funding because of the Indian Act. The Indian Act curse is because the only funding is provided by CMHC, and the state of housing has only gotten worse. The Indian Act is a land trust it's so the land can be held by the Crown. Because of this people can't take out mortgages because they don't own the reserves, it's held in trust, and they are wards of the state. This is a race-based legislation that has blood quantum. Blood quantum is only done with animals, and it is really defining people as animals. Native people have human rights and should be acknowledged.

Empathy is dangerous, quote from another discussion. It is not though, as First Nations we learn from the most uncomfortable situations. Empathy is needed in this world, more than ever. Sustainability is needed as well, having native consultation is important especially when it comes

to empathy. Empathy is not dangerous; it is necessary is where the discussion came to a close on this issue.

What are all these components of quality and how do we bring that into a way we can implement into our society. Quality is not only architecture, sometimes it's the client the source of quality. If we don't have great clients that understand what they should do with their money, it's the source of the problem.

This is a personal experience, we inherited land from our father, we are stewards of the land not owners of the land. We had a responsibility as stewards, we would be keepers of that land. When we decided to sell it, it was important to who we sold it to. It is a responsibility everyone has as an owner. There is not enough energy spent on the process, engaging everyone that needs to be engaged like the rights holders. Proper consultation needs to be done with a project, community buy-in, rights-holders buy in. In most cases, these people are not in the meetings. Quality is fed into process; we must shape that process according to the project characteristics. If you understand what the project goals, what the specificities are, then you can build a process to make sure that you can deliver that project. It is a machine, what ever you put into the process. For example, supply chain. The need for recycled material, the built fabric needs to have more cultural awareness of what quality is and speaks to what regenerative communities is. This needs to be part of the process, a cultural understanding of regenerative. Construction can sometimes become extractive, but it can be a form of social procurement where you are using local labor, local materials.

We look at quality of the built environment through the end result. The person responsible for the end result is the client, put on the shoulder of the client the responsibility of promoting that quality. The only thing that we see is the end product and is the assessment of that quality of the end product. The one person promoting the end product is the one receiving the congratulations. This leaves out all the others who helped create the product, like the supplier, the consultant. We, therefore, do not learn from the process.

Coming from varied backgrounds, we came together to discuss lived experiences of quality. In outlining what process should be, it became apparent to acknowledge the First Nations as existing with inherent rights to the land, and needing good quality of living. To have a good quality of living, the process of any project should include consultation with those who live on the land. The land use is vital to the process of any project, the need to have more regenerative communities, finally local use of labor and materials should be incorporated into the built environment.

### **3- CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS, METHODOLOGICAL PROTOCOLS AND CASE STUDIES (i.e., for forthcoming stages):**

First, there needs to be proper consultation for the project. These consultations should include all the people who are influenced by the project or who can contribute to it. Effectively, these consultations are key elements of the process. They help feed the process by opening a world of possibilities that traditional construction actors may not consider.

Second, Indigenous knowledge teaching is an action that was proposed during our roundtable. On one side, it was an interesting suggestion, because it could be easier to integrate the Indigenous people and culture in the project for all the construction actors. Indigenous culture and knowledge include a lot of values which can help bring quality in the built environment. For example, the importance to protect nature, of sustainability, of empathy, of inclusiveness, etc.

Third, we realize that there needs to be more energy put on the process of a project from every actor. Three concrete examples were given, for which some actors could put more energy. For starters, a city worker made an interesting comment. To summarize, she said that there is a lot of criticism made on the developers, but maybe there is also a problem from the cities that are not always clear with the developers about what they want. Also, the cities need to involve more citizens in their process. We know it is difficult, because if everyone who is interested, but also imperative to listen to everyone who may have something important to say. Furthermore, we advance the idea that there should be prizes that reward projects based on the process. As a group, we only succeed to identify one prize like this: The Civic Trust Award from England.

Finally, one interesting and personal case study was given by one of the partners. It was an example of a farm that his family owned for generations. Sadly, someday, he had to sell it. But, for him, it was important for him to know and choose the people he was selling to. It is something that landowners could do when it is time to sell their land. For example, if a person or a city was to sell a beautiful natural land to a developer who wants to make maximum profit with massive/dense buildings, it is hard for a professional hired by the developer to make a quality project because of the minimum knowledge of his client.

### **4- MISCELLANEOUS (NEW ISSUES AND POTENTIAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS (for future research):**

Incorporating community in the conception and the realisation of project seemed important for most of the participants to the roundtable. So, one important question raised during the discussion was "How to incorporate the local community into the planning process as well as into procurements." "How can they really participate to the project and have an important impact?" Also, there was a debate about, "Is knowledge a commodity or not?" Some were saying that knowledge was a commodity because our scholar system is not completely free even though it's public. Others said that it's not true because school is not the only place where we can acquire knowledge and that sometimes this type of knowledge is not considered in projects. Moreover, there was animated discussion about "What is anti-land acknowledgment?" Another good

subject that was discussed was “How to build for future generations?” Sustainability and respect of nature were the primary characteristic raised of a project that consider future generation. Finally, at each of our roundtable, there was always a phrase or a quote that stand out. For this one it was: “Empathy is not dangerous, it is necessary”.