Partnerships for green cities

Cor van Montfort, Ank Michels, and Stefan Lubberding

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Cor van Montfort
Tilburg University
Tilburg School of Governance
Tilburg, The Netherlands
c.j.vanmontfort@tilburguniversity.edu

Ank Michels
Utrecht University
School of Governance
Utrecht, The Netherlands
a.m.b.michels@uu.nl

Stefan Lubberding
Utrecht University
School of Governance
Utrecht, The Netherlands

1. Introduction[1]

Nowadays, we live in the 'century of the city'. More than half of the entire human population now lives in urban areas (Wu, 2014). Consequently, the world's cities are becoming increasingly congested and polluted (Wolch et al, 2014: 234). Scholars argue that urban green spaces could be used to combat the adverse effects of urbanization (Niemelä, 2014). Green spaces here refers to 'soft', impermeable surfaces such as soil, grass, shrubs, trees and water (James et al, 2009: 66). Within the urban context, this can be anything from a park, green rooftop to a green corridor. This urban nature, the trees, bushes and other vegetation filter the air and reduce noise pollution. Moreover, they provide all kinds of other 'services' for city residents. Children can play in parks, people walk their dogs, or take a walk to relax and 'clear their head'. Urban green spaces are therefore positively associated with physical activity, psychological well-being, the public health of urban residents, and livability in general (Niemelä, 2014; Wolch et al, 2014).

Planning and maintenance of urban green spaces were traditionally the responsibility for the municipality or local governments (James et al., 2009). However, the last decades, the role and responsibility of governments in green space development have changed (Leroy & Arts, 2006). Environmental governance is no longer purely government dominated, but also involves civic society, as well as the market (Fors et al., 2015: 723). Urban governments appeal for shared responsibilities and facilitate or seek partnerships with other actors (Leroy & Arts, 2006). However, there is no clear-cut answer how these partnerships are established, which parties are involved and what the outcome of such partnerships is on the planning and/or maintenance of urban green spaces and accordingly, the perceived livability by the local community. This brings us to the main question guiding this paper: how do partnerships regarding urban green spaces contribute to livability in cities as perceived by the local community?

To answer this question, we first explore the various forms of partnerships. We use a classification model that is based on the distinction into three societal domains – state, market, and civil society. Within the scope of this triangular model, various partnerships can be plotted. This variation in partnerships will be illustrated by giving examples of green (in) cities. In the second part of the paper, we discuss what has been said in the literature about the contribution of partnerships in green urban spaces to livability. Attention will be paid to both the question what makes the partnerships in itself work (output) as well as to the (positive and negative) outcomes of the partnerships in terms of livability. In the final part of the paper the findings from the literature review will be illustrated by presenting three cases of partnerships that contribute to a green and livable city. The three cases represent different types of partnerships. The first case is the *Toronto and Region Conservation for the Living City Foundation*. The TRCA was set up as a non-governmental organization, working together with multiple stakeholders. The second case is The Wilgenplantsoen in Rotterdam, a community garden established by two citizens in Rotterdam in 2014. The third case is the

[1] The authors would like to thank Arnoud Verstraaten, Dylan Maas, Heleen Ballemans, Martin Fuchs, Tamara Houweling, Thijs van der Vlist and Kim Bischot for the case studies.

Millennium Park in Chicago. This park was an initiative of the local government and is co-funded and managed by private parties.

2. A Classification of partnerships

The idea that the government takes care of the citizen's need on its own, belongs to the past. After the era of traditional public administration, with the rise of New Public Management and more recently, New Public Governance, all kinds of strategic partnerships and collaboration between government, private sector and or civic society have popped up (Considine & Lewis, 2003). Regarding the governance of urban green spaces, this tendency can also be seen as local governments increasingly reach out to non-state actors (Fors et al., 2015: 723). Hence, other stakeholders and collaborations excluding a governmental party are also becoming a possibility (Brands, Van de Donk & Putters, 2005).
There are numerous definitions of partnerships. Mathur, for example, defines partnerships as new organizational arrangements that embody a commitment for joint action towards collective public policy goals (Mathur et al. 2003). Other definitions include a number of characteristics of partnerships. Baud and and Dhanalakshmi (2007: 135) define a partnership as follows: it involves two or more actors; it refers to a long-term relationship between actors regarding public goods provision; the relationship benefits all actors (without assuming equal benefits); it is expressed in concrete activities, in which actors invest materially or immaterially; the bargaining process can include tension and conflict as well as cooperation; the partnership concerns the provision of public goods.

What these definitions have in common is that they emphasize the public character of partnerships: joint action in partnerships concerns collective public policy goals or the provision of public goods. Apart from that, definitions of partnerships may allow for many interpretations. Partnerships between public and private actors come in various forms: some are based on legally binding rules or contracts, while others are more loosely organized; some focus on just one activity, while others are involved in many activities; sometimes tension and conflict are more prominent than cooperation; and sometimes the partnership can vary within one single project according to the different functions a partnership may have, such as financing, organization, and day to day management (so-called 'layered partnerships').

In this paper, we proceed from this broad concept of partnership. Taking the relation between state, market, and civil society as a starting-point, Brandsen et al. (2005) classify three category stakeholders – government-related, private sector-related and a civil society consisting of NGOs and citizens (figure 1). Within this triangle, multiple forms of governance are possible(figure 2): within and between the different categories (based on: Van Montfort, Michels & Frankowski, 2014, p. 10).

Figure 1: Category of stakeholders

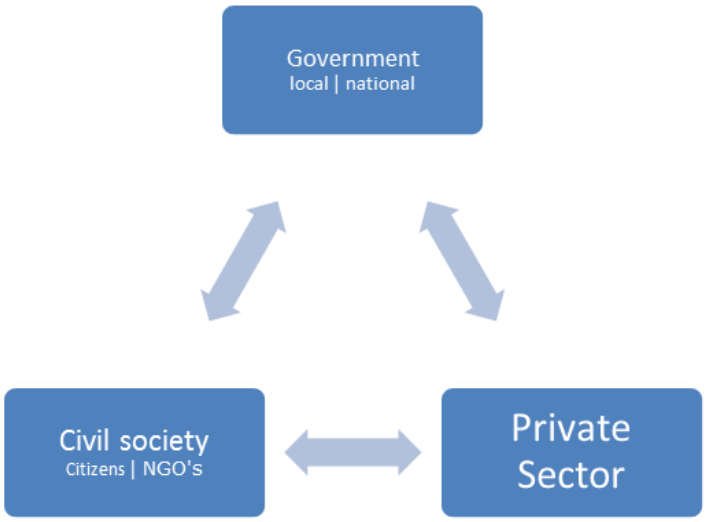
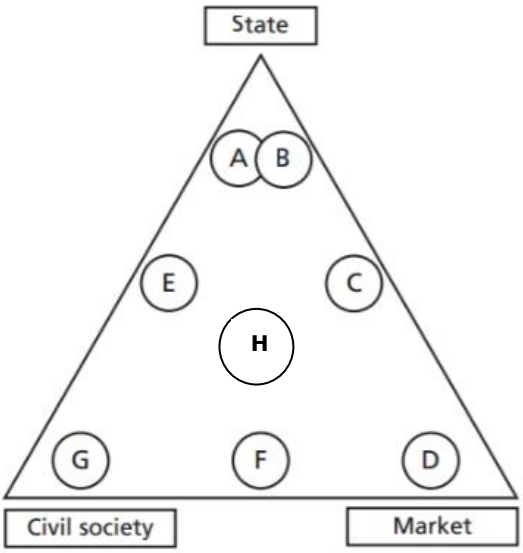


Figure 2: Various forms of governance and partnerships



A. Public organizations
B. Public-Public Partnerships
C. Public-Private Partnerships
D. Private companies
E. Partnerships between civil society and public organizations
F. Partnerships between civil society and private organizations
G. Grassroots civil society organizations
H. Partnerships in which civil society, market and state are involved

Regarding urban green spaces, in most cases, local government is still heavily involved in the creation or regeneration of urban green spaces. The partners of the respective department or municipality do differ though. It varies among others, from social housing trusts (see Dempsey, Burton & Duncan, 2016; O'Brien, 2006) to residents (see Drake, Lawson, 2015; Marche, 2015; Bendt, Barthel & Colding, 2013), business (see Pincetl, 2010; Clement & Kanai, 2015), other governmental bodies (see Slater, Pugach, Lin & Bontu, 2016; Shafer 2000; Kabisch, 2015) and various NGO's (see Nastran & Regina, 2016; Moskell & Allred, 2005; Kozová et al, 2016).

Yet, the overwhelming amount of partnerships is between public and civil society organizations (hence type E). Examples are the project aimed at developing parks in the Inner city of London, where the NGO Trees for Cities and the local city park department cooperate (O'Brien, 2006) and the 'Brown plot' programme in Ljubljana in Slovenia which started as a bottom-up approach, and developed into a partnership between a local NGO and local government agencies (Nastran & Regina, 2016). Although initiatives sometimes start as a bottom-up initiative by residents and citizens' organizations (type F or G), often these projects later develop as a collaboration between civil society, private sector and (local) government (type H) in which public organizations become responsible for facilitating or funding the project. An example is *Dakpark* in the city of *Rotterdam* in The Netherlands. The *Dakpark* is a public park on the rooftop of a shopping mall. Less common are public-public partnerships (type B); examples are the development of high quality green spaces in Berlin, which have been developed and implemented by various governmental organizations at the national, city, and district level (Kabisch, 2015), and the urban green trails in Houston and Austin in Texas which were initiated by federal agencies and implemented in a partnership with local agencies (Shafer, 2000). Public-private partnerships (type C), finally, are often formalized in contracts that lay down responsibilities between government(s) and private companies or consortiums. One example of this type is the Detroit Works Project (part of the Detroit City Program) which is in charge of developing urban green spaces and which is funded by both federal funding and large private investors (Clement & Kanai, 2015).

3. Partnerships and livability: a literature review

Before analyzing some examples of partnerships in urban green and their effect on livability more into detail, we first discuss what has been said in the literature about the contribution of partnerships in green urban spaces to livability. Livability in this paper is understood as perceived livability, that, is the appraisal of the individual for his or her habitat; in other words, livability as perceived by individual residents, people using the parks or greens, volunteers and professionals maintaining the park and other stakeholders (Van Dorst, 2012).

For this literature review, two databases were used, Web of Science and Scopus. Both only offer peer-reviewed scientific articles. After a first initial research, the following key words were used to select the articles: "participation" OR "involvement" OR "engagement" AND "urban green space" OR "park" OR "urban forest". Given that only recently in the governance of urban green spaces worldwide more and more partnerships and collaborations pop up, as globally local governments face budget cuts (Fors et al. 2015; Considine & Lewis, 2013), a time period was included as well to refine the search. Therefore, only articles published in or after 2000 are considered. On Scopus, these search conditions yielded 1949 results. Within Web of Sciences, over 540.000 hits were presented. Further refinements included the following search terms "Urban green space" AND "liveability" OR "partnership" OR "governance" and *"park" AND "collaboration public private" OR "partnership public private". This yielded over 200 results.

Several rounds of selecting and excluding articles followed. First, based on the abstract and title. Second, a further selection was made by determining the relevance of the article in regard to the research question. The relevance was evaluated using the following criteria:

- Prominence in the data base;
- Presenting evidence on any form of urban green space;
- Published in English or Dutch;
- Published from 2000 onwards
- It should present evidence, hence conceptual papers where not considered.

Based on the search term and aforementioned criteria, 30 articles were selected as they provided concrete results of several forms of governance of urban green spaces. The analysis of these articles provides a clear picture of: the dominant characteristics of these partnerships (section 3.1.), the positive and negative outcomes (section 3.2.), and specific aspects that make partnerships in itself work or not (section 3.3.).

3.1 Characteristics of partnerships

- Top down versus bottom-up

Going through the articles and as said before, it first of all appears that the overwhelming amount of partnerships is between public and civil society organizations (see references under 'a classification of partnerships'). Local government is still heavily involved in the creation or regeneration of urban green spaces. Within the reviewed articles, twelve of them report bottom-up initiatives. These were cases where local residents, NGO's and, or social housing trusts took the initiative to improve nearby green spaces. In all the other cases, it was a governmental party, varying from central government to the mayor or a local department that initiated a change and formed a coalition.

- Formal versus informal

Following from the type of partnership and who took the initiative, arrangements in most cases were more or less formalized. In some cases, it was simply unclear whether responsibilities and tasks were put on paper or whether it where merely expectations. From eight articles, it became apparent that the partnership had a more informal character. However, the level of collaboration varied quite heavily. It differed from simply tolerating by the local government when a vacant plot is used for urban farming or borrowing material (Drake & Lawson, 2015; Marche, 2015; Nastran & Regina, 2016; Rosol, 2010; Bendt et al, 2013) to extensive collaboration but simply without a too tight framework (Barnes & Sharpe, 2009).

- Funding

In line with the heavy involvement of local government in partnerships in green spaces, it should not come as a surprise that most of the funding comes from municipalities. In addition to this, the analysis of the articles also suggests that a vast array of governmental parties - these are specific departments, local governments, national programs or even donations from foreign countries – almost always deliver a contribution to the establishment and maintenance of urban green spaces. Only for some community gardens, costs covered through membership fees and/or donations (Rosol, 2010; Marche, 2015). In most cases, a mixture appeared to be necessary to ensure that green provisions meet the needs of the visitors. Also, due to a lack of finance, some projects were taken over by the government simply to sustain them (Foo et al, 2014; Nastran & Regina, 2016). Donations

and additional resources, through fundraising activities or profits made in a café run by volunteers, can merely pay for an additional bench or other additions that better reflect the demands of the park users (Barnes & Sharpe, 2009; Mathers, Dempsey & Molin; 2015), but the most part of necessary funding came from government parties.

3.2 Outcomes

In the reviewed articles, a diverse set of outcomes can be seen. We start with the positive outcomes.

Positive outcomes

- *Improved facilities*

As funding becomes tighter, it does help if volunteers or private companies form a partnership with the local authorities to improve facilities. Especially when the local community is involved and provides additional funding, urban green spaces are more tailored to their needs and they value the greenery more (Dempsey et al. 2016; Mathers et al. 2015; Barnes & Sharpe, 2009; Kozová et al. 2016; Barker & Kenney, 2012; Sipilä & Tyrväinen, 2005; Huang, 2010; Slater et al. 2016; Lutafali & Khoja, 2011). Improvements were found in various ways, from simply cleaning up the park, installing benches, restoring playgrounds, putting down information boards, up to (volunteering-run) services such as walking tours or a café.

- *Social cohesion*

The literature shows that bottom-up initiatives, such as community gardens, are clearly intertwined with high levels of self-reported social cohesion (Marche, 2015; Bendt et al., 2013; Rosol, 2010). Volunteers valued the time they spend together as valuable and as an important aspect of their involvement (Barnes & Sharpe, 2009). This is less so for top-down initiatives. Remarkably, only a study of Shafer (2000) on established greenway trails in Texas, USA, respondents argued that the trails led to more interaction among residents, hence increasing social cohesion and a sense of belonging to a community. O'Brien (2006) found that some respondents in her study wished for more community involvement in the partnership as a mean to regain community spirit. A few projects that aimed to regenerate urban green spaces in poor neighbourhoods, involved the community to create more social cohesion (Dempsey et al., 2016; Slater et al., 2016; Lutafali & Khoja, 2011). According to Chanan (2003), this fits in a more general trend, that community engagement in deprived areas are often part of a structured intervention by local authority-led partnerships.

- *Well-being*

The literature also shows that there is a clear positive impact on the physical and mental health of its users (Niemelä, 2014; Wolch et al, 2011; Wolch et al, 2014; Konijnendijk et al., 2013). Parks, greenway trails, community plots or river corridors are not only places where individuals can play or sport, these are also places where people can relax and find their peace. Hence, it makes sense that these benefits are mentioned in the reviewed articles as well. However, the findings also suggest that, how people use greenery depends on their perception of the area. For instance, where the community was involved in the development, regeneration or maintenance of the specific urban green space (usually a park), they valued the services it brought better than those that didn't felt heard (Dempsey et al., 2016, O'Brien, 2006; Huang, 2010; Foo et al., 2014; Mensah et al., 2016; McInroy, 2000; Sipilä, Tyrväinen, 2005; Miller, 2016).

Negative outcomes

Although most articles reported positive outcomes of most of the partnerships, it also led to negative outcomes. Sometimes, these adverse effects showed right away, others showed over time.

- *Gentrification*

Although local authorities sometimes initiated partnerships to improve the overall conditions in impoverished neighbourhoods, leading to more social cohesion, it can also lead to an adverse effect: gentrification. The presence of urban green spaces does reflect in the estimated value of property (Donovan & Butry, 2010). Tree canopy cover is found to correlate with median household income, resulting in lower tree canopy cover in poor neighbourhoods in comparison to better-off communities (Pincetl, 2010). Hence, as Wolch et al. (2014) state, the challenge is to make the city green 'enough' without necessarily pushing the original residents out of their neighbourhoods. Various scholars made notions of gentrification in the found articles, varying from community plots (Marche, 2015), to improvement of river corridors (Lee & Anderson, 2013; Miller, 2016) and public-private partnership in Detroit focused on 'urban farming' (Clement & Kanai, 2015). It seems that in those areas, where the local authorities and other third parties (such as social housing trusts or NGO's) cooperate with the local community, gentrification seems to be less of an issue.

- *Other negative outcomes*

Other negative outcomes that are mentioned in the literature include the increase of crime over time and conflict between different groups of users. Slater et al. (2016) found that with the improved playgrounds in parks in Chicago, not only visitor numbers increased but also litter and crime, leading to a decrease in visitors on the long-term. Although most of these improved playgrounds could be found in poor neighbourhoods, it was not expected that crime rates would rise as initially more visitors came. In addition to this, conflicts between groups of users may arise due to different perceptions of how to use a park or green space.

3.3 Aspects that make partnerships in itself work or not

The question remains what exactly the role of partnerships is in generating these outcomes. Based on the literature, some observations can be made. First of all, without a partnership, many parks and urban green spaces would not have been developed. As globally local governments face budget cuts, it has become more necessary to seek for smart partnerships and collaborations in order to create and maintain green urban spaces (Fors et al. 2015; Considine & Lewis, 2013).

In addition, the literature also reveals that certain characteristics and aspects of the partnership are decisive in making the partnership work and sustainable in the long run.

First, multiple studies show that, if the *local community feels heard and sees its needs reflected* in the facilities offered by the (regenerated) green spaces, they value and appreciate these sites higher (Sipilä & Tyrväinen, 2005; Huang, 2010). Where residents feel excluded from the planning process, mistrust between the park management and the community arose (McInroy, 2000; Mensah et al., 2016; Nilsson et al. 2007).

Secondly, *commitment* by every partner that is involved in the partnership is of vital importance for the sustainability of the partnership aiming at the creation and maintenance of urban green spaces. Partnerships to regenerate a park or the establishment of community plots are nice, but if they collapse soon as the construction workers and gardeners leave, the delivered efforts are not sustained and soon everything will go back to the way it was before. If stakeholders feel that not everyone is equally committed, the efforts and improvements might erode in the long-term. Dempsey et al. (2015) found that some efforts were not sustainable because the local authorities were not committed to the end of the deal, resulting in vandalized parks quite quickly after the renovations. Equally, partnerships that are dependent on other specific actors need their full commitment (Barker & Kenny, 2012; Pincetl, 2010; Drake & Lawson, 2015; Conway et al., 2011). Drake & Lawson (2015) for instance found that declining participation of volunteers was the main reason for ceased community plots. Conway et al. (2011) reported a similar finding, stating that the Resident Associations (RA's) involved in urban forestry are often dependent on volunteers' time and expertise, let alone funding for material and actual trees and plants. They found that some projects came to an end the minute key volunteers stepped down (Conway et al., 2011).

A third important aspect relates to *funding*. Some of the projects changed over time due to insecure funding. O'Brien (2006), Nastrad & Regina (2016), Foo et al. (2014) and Kabisch (2015) all reported that the funding scheme behind the partnerships was a bottleneck. As communities often do not wish to pay for the management of green spaces themselves, they are looking at the government to pitch in. But as most municipalities have slashed the budgets of Parks and Recreation departments, they often do not have the capacity to address the needs of the local community. It seems that this leads to a negative spiral. Citizens are looking at the government to act, whilst the government awaits participation from its residents. Not only does this lead to dissatisfaction with local government, it also leads to a lower appreciation of the existing and present urban green spaces. The literature seems to suggest that partnerships in urban green spaces can only be sustainable if responsibilities of the partners concerning tasks and funding are clear. This demands some sort of organization. At the same time, the partnership must be flexible enough to encounter difficulties.

4. Three cases

4.1 Toronto and Region Conservation for the living city

4.1.1 Case description

Toronto and Region Conservation for the Living City manages a multiplicity of projects to build on a natural foundation of healthy rivers and shorelines, greenspace and biodiversity, and sustainable communities. The Living City® Foundation is the fundraising and charitable arm of Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA). The Living City Foundation is governed by an independent volunteer board of directors, and funds key TRCA programs including: outdoor education, habitat restoration, studies on ecology and ecological monitoring, community engagement, trail development, recreational park development and other key environmental projects within the Greater Toronto Area.

TRCA focuses on Toronto and surroundings. Their strategy is to get involved in both a top-down (by managing, and financially supporting projects) and bottom-up (by educating, informing and inspiring

communities and individuals) fashion. TRCA was set up as a non-governmental organization, working together with a wide variety of stakeholders. They fulfill a supportive role in building on existing, long-term and short-term policy by the province and municipality. What stakeholders are exactly involved differs per specific project (and there are many of them), yet the concept is to a large extent the same for each neighbourhood. This comprises a combination between especially government and civil society (referred to as “local communities”), but also the private sector (with mainly local businesses) involved.

One of the projects that TRCA is working on is the Sustainable Neighbourhood Retrofit Action Plan (SNAP). The SNAP-concept is used to transform neighbourhoods into healthy, green and self-sufficient communities, together with many different partners. In total, there are 140 officially recognized neighbourhoods in Toronto. One of these is called Black Creek, located in the northwest of the city. A couple of years ago, the neighbourhood scored as one of the lowest on a scale that measured social development and equity. Thorough demographic studies have revealed that many elderly people and immigrants who live there have a low income and feel detached from society. Therefore, a SNAP has started, since approximately six years now. Besides the residents, its main partners are the municipality, the Metcalf Foundation, Black Creek Pioneer Village, Jane Finch Center for Community and Family and the Black Creek Community Farm.

In 2014 the Black Creek SNAP partnered with FoodShare Toronto (a non-profit organization that works with communities and schools to deliver healthy food and food education) on a hugely successful pilot balcony container gardening project. For this purpose, over 54 balconies received 60 containers and produced over 500 pounds of fresh products. In total, FoodShare measured approximately 1,350 servings of locally grown fruit and vegetables. Participants of the project attended workshops about how to take care of their plants, received the plant and container materials (or made containers out of found materials), and measured and recorded their production. For some balconies the crop was so good in the first growing season, that the owners donated the surplus to a school. FoodShare maintained close contact with the residents in a very organic way and in that way established legitimacy for the program as well as more publicity for what they do.

4.1.2 Outcomes

The advantages in the projects of SNAP are predominantly for the participants. In case of the balcony gardens, it takes the tenants time, patience and space to make the plants flourish. This process of growth requires investment, yet once this has been completed successfully, many advantages appear. Firstly, the project encourages participants to eat more healthy food (such as fruits and vegetables). This means a lot to the people, as the products in the local shops are usually not affordable for them or of bad quality. Secondly, it allowed them to efficiently use the space they have, even when living in an apartment. Instead of using a balcony as storage space, it can be very useful and even profitable to explore opportunities of balcony gardening. Also, adults as well as children have become more aware of the importance of nature in the city and the joy this can bring. Before the project, many children did not know how a tomato grows on a plant; getting acquainted with natural production processes is expected to increase their appreciation for it. Besides that, the plants on the balcony decreased the temperature inside the apartments by providing shade. Residual energy absorption of large numbers of plants can make the difference. Another advantage, they increase the take-up of CO2 and stimulate biodiversity by drawing butterflies and other important insects of our ecosystem toward them. In addition, people got in contact with each other during the

workshops, which is very beneficial in a neighbourhood such as Black Creek with reasonably high criminality rates and where people tend to not easily trust one another. Moreover, people got interested in other forms of gardening. Three residents started to specialize themselves in among other things orchard maintenance and urban agriculture and found employment in the branch, due to the balcony gardening project. Finally, people saved money on products they would normally buy in the supermarket. The feeling of independence that followed from it has been a positive side-effect as well.
Considering the bigger picture, a neighbourhood with many green balconies may look quite attractive and friendly to visitors and the inhabitants themselves. Besides that, it could lead to a healthier lifestyle, which overall is a positive change with respect to among other things health care, labour productivity and general wellbeing. Especially when you get closer to the buildings where the balcony gardening occurs, it looks more playful and natural in a landscape mainly consisting of concrete.

A potential disadvantage is that the project limits itself to only balconies of residents, yet TRCA found a solution for this by building common gardens, orchards and developing edible forests in urban areas as well. Another disadvantage would be on the side of the local shops, especially the groceries and supermarkets. Those may start to see their profits decrease, mainly in the summer times when many of the residents of Black Creek are self-sufficient in their vegetables and fruits provision.

4.1.3 Factors of success and failure

According to program leader, Cathryn Winkelmann, and Project Coordinator, Adriana Gomez, so far mainly positive sounds have been heard from the stakeholders in the balcony gardening.[2] However, the residents as well as the municipality had some concerns. First of all, a balcony gardening project can only work if the climate supports the production. In Canada, the growing season only takes 4 to 5 months; this is similar in many European countries. So the plants will not stay green or provide food all year long, meaning that supplementary ways of greening up the urban environment should be found. Besides that, balconies are bound to weight restrictions – the maximum limit should not be exceeded in order to prevent accidents from happening. Investigations in the design and solidness of buildings should be required for safety purposes. Also, only the apartments with balconies that were directed toward the sun could participate in the program. Other balconies had to be excluded, which led to some minor frustrations in the Black Creek pilot. Feelings of inequality should obviously be avoided as much as possible. Finally, internal frustrations between owners of the apartments had to be combated, for example by making sure that water from the balcony upstairs will not fall on the lower balconies. These pitfalls are specifically for the balcony gardening project, but they can be generalized and apply to other projects as well. For example, a lack of good communication between the organization and the citizens can lead to negative feelings of being excluded from a project, whereas for the organization the project only succeeds when the distribution of the product (in this case plants) happens effectively.

[2] Interviews through skype held by students of the Tilburg University in spring 2017.

4.2 Wilgenplantsoen Rotterdam

4.2.1 Case description

The 'Wilgenplantsoen' in Rotterdam is a community garden established in 2014 by two active citizens, Rutger Henneman and Daniel Opbroek. Because of their experience with establishing community gardens in Rotterdam, the municipality had asked them to help the residents to establish a community garden. The basic idea of these community gardens is that the municipality initially supports the garden financially, but after some time the garden should become independent and fully managed by the residents.

However, during the process of establishing and maintaining this community garden, the role of both Henneman and Opbroek and the municipality changed. Henneman and Opbroek were first paid by the local government, but are now volunteers spending lots of time and energy in improving the garden. The option of becoming fully independent of both the municipality and of Henneman and Opbroek appeared to be unrealistic. For a sustainable maintenance of the garden and for a more professional supervision and support of the users (mainly children) of the garden, financial support by the municipality was provided.

4.2.2 Outcomes

Apart from being a garden for growing vegetables, the Wilgenplantsoen also is a popular place for children to play. There are a number of facilities for children, and they can run and play freely because cars and bicycles are not allowed. Most of the visitors are people living nearby. From interviews at the spot[3], it appears that most of them often go there; they like the garden, meet other people, and are positive about the improvement of the neighborhood. At the same time, some are critical about people who walk their dogs in the garden where children are playing. It is also interesting that no one mentioned the litter in the garden, although observations at the spot showed lots of paper, plastic, and empty tins of energy drinks lying around.
The garden also has an important educational function for the children in the neighborhood. Together with other active residents, Henneman and Opbroek learn children about food, how to grow their own vegetables, but also that it is important to cooperate and do it together.

It must be said that the garden is located in a so-called 'difficult' district. This sometimes leads to conflicts between people, for example about the borders of their plot. The handling of complaints of the users of the garden and of the residents having adjacent gardens has become one of the tasks of the initiators of the community garden, although they are not professional mediators.

4.2.3 Factors of success and failure

To a large extent, the success of this community garden depends on the enthusiasm and involvement of a few very active citizens. As long as they believe in the project and are willing to spend a lot of time, the garden will survive. But as soon as one or some of the initiators opt out, the garden is doomed to drive wild.

[3] Interviews and obseravtions by Kim Bischot, research master student at Utrecht Universtiy

At the same time, government support is another crucial factor in maintaining a broad use of the community garden. But, government involvement also raises a number of problems. For one part, the municipal government of Rotterdam is inert and not used to handle innovative ideas. For another part, it is difficult to get ideas through the bureaucracy, because there are always many departments involved. For people with ideas, it is frustrating to find out that your idea has not been considered because it covers both sustainability and welfare issues and therefore no department feels able and willing to respond.

A third factor has to do with the process of applying for subsidies. The municipality of Rotterdam only provides financial support for the short term of one year. As a consequence, each year organizers of activities have to fill in forms, project proposals need to be assessed, and by the end of the year organizers have to account on what they have done with the money. This leads to frustration of the initiators and may, in the long run, lead less involvement of volunteers.

4.3 The Millennium Park in Chicago

4.3.1 Case description

Millennium Park is a public park in Chicago, U.S.A. In 1997, the mayor of the city, Richard M. Daley planned to put an underground parking garage on the site and some landscaping on top, but the city lacked funds to do more with it. $30 million was needed from the private sector, Mayor Daley turned to a local entrepreneur and philanthropist with ties to Chicago's wealthiest citizens. He formed the private, not-for-profit Millennium Park, inc., whose members raised money for the construction of the Park's above-ground amenities (Farbstein, J., Axelrod, E., Shibley, R., & Wener, R. (2009), p. 97) So, the Millennium Park is the product of a public-private relationship between the City of Chicago and Chicago's philanthropic individuals, families and corporations. According to the City's accounting, of the $490 million final price tag, $220 million came from public funds and $270 million from the private sector (source: 2009 Rudy Bruner Award: Silver Medal winner Millennium Park Chicago, Illinois, p. 113).

In 2004 the Millennium Park was opened. The park has proven to be a major tourist attraction: in its first year alone it drew five million visitors (Johnson, 2014, p. 90).

4.3.2 Outcome

The Jury report for the *Rudy Bruner award 2009* reports:

> *"Millennium Park has had very positive impacts for the City of Chicago and its surrounding areas. it has generated a tremendous increase in property and sales tax revenue for the City. Individual buildings in proximity to the Park are known to produce over $10 million more than pre-Park amounts annually in property taxes. Additionally, over $4 million is generated annually in sales tax revenue from the new population of downtown residents. …….Local businesses have seen a tremendous rise in revenues. restaurants and stores now attract more customers, and historic retail strips such as state street are experiencing an urban revitalization, with retail space being constructed or renovated at a rapid rate." (2009 Rudy Bruner Award: Silver Medal winner Millennium Park Chicago, Illinois, p. 115-116)*

> *"The design of the Park features creative, eco-friendly architecture and a universally accessible landscape. Over 15 million people visited the Park between its opening in 2004 and January 2009. The Park further secures Chicago's position as a major Aerican center of art*

and culture" (2009 Rudy Bruner Award: Silver Medal winner Millennium Park Chicago, Illinois, p. 119)

4.3.3 Factors of success and failure

The Millenium Park is widely seen as a successful example of urban transformation: more than 15 million visitors, the park did Chicago rise on the list of most attractive cities in the U.S. and the economic impact was big. Several lessons can be learned from this project.
According to the Jury report for the Rudy Bruner Award, one of the most important lessons to be learned from the Millennium Park project, was the decision to create Millennium Park, inc., to establish a clear contractual separation between City-run projects and those that were designed through private donors. This balance was essential to establish a base for donor participation, and for giving donors the decision-making authority. The donors also wanted the amenities they were providing in Millennium Park to be "their" gift to the City.

Furthermore the combination of strong leadership (the mayor), vision (the private entrepreneur) and responsive project management ("the public sector and the private sector were both able to do their jobs, and the project manager moved adeptly within both of these worlds to coordinate their activity"), are mentioned as success factors (2009 Rudy Bruner Award: Silver Medal winner Millennium Park Chicago, Illinois, p. 112).

At last, the combination of an adaptive planning process in which new ideas could get a chance, the lack of a 'grand design', and some basic general principles concerning accessibility and free use contributed to the success of the project.

5. Conclusion and discussion

Based on the literature review and the analysis of the cases of three different types of partnerships, we can now draw some conclusions. The main conclusion is that partnerships regarding urban green spaces can successfully contribute to the livability in cities. First of all, without a partnership, many parks and urban green spaces simply would not have been developed. As globally local governments face budget cuts, it has become more necessary to seek for smart partnerships and collaborations in order to create and maintain green urban spaces (Fors et al. 2015; Considine & Lewis, 2013).
Furthermore, as both the literature review and de cases have shown green partnerships do have added value, compared to either fully public or private initiatives, in terms of both efficiency and scale (more opportunities for improved facilities and innovative approaches) and tailor made solutions for specific groups and needs (which may contribute to social cohesion and increased well-being).
However, and this is our second conclusion, partnerships will only contribute to livability in cities if these partnerships meet the following four conditions:

- *legitimacy:* all partners must feel strongly committed to the partnership and its goal. All partners should feel convinced that participation in the partnership is better than not participating.

- *responsiveness:* it is important that the management of the partnership stays responsive to (changing) needs and wishes of the public and private partners and/or users.

- *stable funding*: stability in public and private funding is an important factor for success (continuity, innovation) in the long run.

- *leadership:* vision and positive energy are, at least at the start of the project, very important in order to convince possible new partners to join the partnership or to gain political commitment.

Only then, partnerships can contribute to livability ánd have added value compared to projects that are either fully public or private.

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