



Selecting Participatory Tools for Street Transformation: An Information-Based Framework Using the StreetForum Toolkit

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ABSTRACT

Selecting appropriate participatory tools for street transformation requires attention to the people involved, the characteristics of the place and the decisions under consideration. This study develops an information-based decision framework for selecting and combining tools from the StreetForum toolkit. Eight contextual categories structure the assessment, covering demographic and socioeconomic conditions, sociocultural characteristics, physical and environmental conditions, street functions and mobility, participation accessibility, governance, decision objectives and implementation capacity. The framework connects these categories with the documented purposes, interaction formats, participant requirements, and outputs of the tools. A qualitative matching procedure identifies relevant tools and examines their feasibility under local conditions. The assessment distinguishes a tool's relevance to the decision from the practical conditions required for its use, including communication support, participant availability, facilitation, and access to suitable spaces or digital services. The analysis indicates that suitability depends on the configuration and purpose of an activity, while combinations can address complementary information needs and participation barriers. Implementation requires sufficient resources, trained facilitators, and clear arrangements for incorporating public input into decisions. The framework provides a structured basis for explaining tool choices and adapting participatory processes to local circumstances, with residents actively involved in shaping, implementing and reviewing proposed street transformation activities.

1. Introduction

People are influenced by the environment they live in, and they shape that environment. To support this, people's social and cultural characteristics influence the way their built environment is shaped, while the built environment may, in turn, influence these characteristics [1]. This reciprocal relationship has continued since the beginning of human history. Many societies, states, and empires have come and gone, and throughout history, they have sought to protect the territories they inhabited while continuously changing and developing their surroundings to improve their livability. The Roman Empire provides a historical example of this relationship, as territorial expansion and the

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development of public buildings within the city were both associated with the strengthening of imperial power [2]. In the past, communication between societies was limited, and information was often exchanged through the accounts of travelers, merchants, and others who moved between different places. In fact, travel diaries and written accounts produced by navigators, explorers, missionaries and other travelers since the sixteenth century also served as important sources for early anthropological studies, which largely relied on such records before direct fieldwork became widespread [3]. Cities influenced one another architecturally or in other ways, perhaps through drawings, perhaps through descriptions. Such exchanges were naturally limited by the means of communication available at the time, and ideas could take considerable time to travel from one society to another. Today, however, in this globalizing world, information and communication technologies have strengthened global interconnectedness, allowing information to reach almost every corner of the world and increasing the need for knowledge sharing across geographical boundaries [4]. This allows people to learn about societies, cultures and ways of living that they may never experience themselves. This has made it possible for societies to become more aware of not only their differences but also the challenges and needs they share. Alongside these developments, the concept of universal human rights has gained international recognition, with the United Nations playing an important role in promoting and protecting these rights. A similar commitment to improving human well-being can be seen in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [5]. These goals address social, economic, and environmental challenges, seeking to improve living conditions for people around the world and, going further, to leave a better world for future generations than the one we have today.

As much as we are happy to see the world meet on common ground, we must also remember how important it is to embrace different cultures and, in fact, how enriching this is for the world's heritage. Cultural diversity provides opportunities for individuals to learn from different perspectives and experiences, while the meaningful expression of cultural identities can also strengthen social connections and inclusion [6]. These differences are not simply characteristics that distinguish one society from another, but also contribute to the diversity of ideas, perspectives, and approaches that humanity has developed over time. If every society approached the world in the same way, much of this diversity would have been lost. We have acquired our present knowledge and cultural heritage through different cultures influencing one another. Cross-cultural learning can enrich individuals' knowledge and broaden their perspectives by exposing them to different cultural values and practices, while also deepening their understanding and appreciation of other cultures [7]. From this, we can also say that different cultures and different societies communicate in different ways and may value different things. They do not even have to belong to different societies; individuals within the same society can also value different things and perceive the world differently. People's experiences, backgrounds, and priorities influence not only how they understand their surroundings but also how they express their opinions and respond to the opinions of others. Differences in verbal and nonverbal communication styles, cultural norms, and social practices can contribute to misunderstandings between individuals from different cultural backgrounds [8]. Therefore, even when people are discussing the same issue, they may approach it from entirely different perspectives, and understanding these differences becomes an important part of establishing meaningful communication.

In that sense, this project's objective gets clearer. If we acknowledge that people perceive and communicate differently, we should also acknowledge that bringing them together does not necessarily mean that they will understand one another. Simply providing an opportunity to participate may not be sufficient if the way participation is organized does not accommodate these differences. Some individuals may feel comfortable expressing their opinions in a group discussion,

while others may prefer to communicate through written responses or individual conversations. To bring different stakeholders together and improve communication, we should be as inclusive as possible by developing different ways of engaging, rather than expecting everyone to adapt to a single approach. This is not only about increasing the number of participants, but also about ensuring that different perspectives have the opportunity to be represented and understood. By offering different ways of engaging, we can reduce the barriers that prevent some stakeholders from contributing and create an environment where communication is not limited to those who are already comfortable with a particular approach.

2. Methodology

2.1 Contextual Categories for Tool Selection

Selecting a participatory tool for placemaking requires an understanding of the setting in which it will be used. The relevant information concerns the people affected by a proposed intervention, the characteristics and functions of the street, and the conditions under which participation can influence a decision. The framework organizes this information into eight categories, designated C1–C8. These categories establish what should be understood about a place before selecting an activity. They also identify the mechanisms through which local conditions may influence a tool's relevance, accessibility, and feasibility.

Here, the categories are operationalized as information requirements for tool selection, Table 1. The StreetForum documentation is subsequently used to identify how individual tools respond to these requirements. This distinction allows the contextual assessment to precede the choice of tools and avoids defining a community's needs solely through the activities already available in a toolkit [9].

Table 1

Contextual categories and their implications for participatory tool selection

Category	Information to establish before selection	How the category influences tool selection
C1 Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics	Age groups; household and employment circumstances; education; economic constraints; relationships to the area as residents, workers or visitors	Identifies affected groups, differences in exposure to change and potential participation burdens; informs recruitment without inferring preferences from demographic attributes
C2 Sociocultural characteristics and community relations	Languages used; local attachment; preferred forms of expression; previous participation experiences; trust; interpersonal or intergroup tensions	Influences communication, facilitation and the starting point for dialogue; indicates whether experience sharing should precede negotiation or roleplay.
C3 Physical and environmental street characteristics	Usable space; street dimensions; pedestrian clearances; surfaces and level changes; seating; shelter; greenery; noise; weather exposure	Determines the suitability of activity locations and installations; identifies spatial and environmental conditions to investigate or evaluate
C4 Street function and mobility characteristics	Residential, commercial and institutional uses; movement patterns; parking and loading; public transport; emergency access; variation by time of day	Defines the substantive problem, relevant street users and competing uses; establishes operational constraints for activities and design alternatives
C5 Participation accessibility and inclusion	Digital access and skills; reading and communication support; disability-related requirements; available time; travel and caring constraints	Determines how people can contribute, what assistance is needed and whether complementary participation routes are necessary

Table 1
Continued

Category	Information to establish before selection	How the category influences tool selection
C6 Stakeholder configuration and governance conditions	Affected groups; decision authority; organisational relationships; representation gaps; permissions; procedures for responding to public input	Identifies who needs to participate, what can be influenced and how the output of an activity can enter a planning decision
C7 Decision objectives, information needs and process stage	Purpose of placemaking or transformation; unresolved questions; required output; stage of the process; spatial and social scope of the decision	Matches tools to the immediate task, such as identifying experiences, developing alternatives, assessing effects or discussing a defined proposal
C8 Implementation capacity and resources	Available budget; staff time; facilitation skills; equipment; preparation and analysis capacity; transport; storage; maintenance; opportunities for repeated engagement	Determines which configurations can be delivered and followed up; influences program scale, duration and the number of tools that can be combined.

C1 and C2 describe the social setting, but their implications require direct investigation. A population's age or income distribution does not establish its digital competence, willingness to join a game, or preferred street design. These descriptors identify questions for recruitment and engagement. For example, employment schedules recorded under C1 may motivate an assessment of available participation times under C5. Languages and previous experiences recorded under C2 inform the support and facilitation needed for people to express their own views.

C3 and C4 distinguish the material conditions of the street from the activities it accommodates. A narrow pavement is a physical condition, while delivery activity is a functional requirement that may vary over the day. Together, they affect where an event can take place and which issues a design exercise should address. They also describe potential subjects of a placemaking intervention. A lack of seating may motivate a temporary installation, whereas conflicts between walking and loading may require a tool that makes competing spatial demands discussable.

C5–C8 concern how participation is organized and connected to action. An accessible activity requires a practical route for the intended participants to contribute. Its relevance also depends on whether an unresolved decision exists and whether the responsible organization can respond to the information collected. These categories therefore connect participation conditions to decision authority, the required output, and delivery capacity.

The categories are interrelated without being interchangeable. Household economic constraints belong to C1, while the organizing team's budget belongs to C8. Community languages are recorded under C2, and the interpretation required for a particular session belongs to C5. Recording these connections preserves their different meanings without treating one barrier as several independent disadvantages. The framework does not assign predetermined weights to the categories; their importance is established through the specific decision and proposed activity.

2.2 StreetForum tools and their operating characteristics

The StreetForum toolkit contains tools with different forms of interaction, participant roles, and information outputs. Some introduce temporary changes to the physical setting, while others organize storytelling, perspective-taking, spatial design, deliberation or digital analysis. Describing these operating characteristics establishes what participation involves for both organizers and

participants. Their suitability for particular contextual conditions is subsequently examined in Section 4.

Art Installations

Art Installations introduce temporary interventions that attract attention and create settings for interaction in public space. The documented examples, *umbrella.blossoms*, and *carriage*, operate differently: *umbrella.blossoms* uses umbrellas mounted on poles to mark and reinterpret a place, while *carriage* provides a movable parklet that can accommodate sitting, performances, meetings, or other participatory activities. Participants can encounter and use these interventions without completing a structured workshop. Their central mechanism is the physical experience of an alternative use of space; collecting participants' responses requires an accompanying conversation, observation, or feedback activity. Suitable participants include local residents, families and passers-by interested in experiencing alternative uses of public space. The format may appeal particularly to people who prefer informal, experiential participation and opportunities to engage spontaneously during their everyday activities [10], [11].

#residentialstreetlife

#residentialstreetlife activates residential streets through informal social activities and temporary uses, allowing residents and other street users to experience the street as a place for interaction. Participation can vary from a brief encounter to longer involvement in an activity. The tool centres on spending time together in the street and exploring possibilities beyond its routine use for movement and parking. Organizers establish and support the activity setting, while participants contribute through their presence, conversations and use of the space. When the activity is intended to inform a planning decision, a procedure for recording these experiences needs to accompany it. The tool can accommodate residents of different ages, including families with children and older people, through activities adapted to the neighborhood. Its flexible participation format is also relevant to people who can join only briefly or feel more comfortable contributing through informal conversations and familiar community activities [10], [12].

MoBil

MoBil is a modular street furniture toolkit that supports collective assembly and activities such as meetings, exhibitions and play. Its modules provide physical structures through which different uses of public space can be organised, and they can also host other StreetForum tools. The activity therefore involves both assembling a temporary setting and using that setting for interaction. The selected modules determine the construction tasks, spatial requirements and activities that can take place. Preparation also involves arranging the transport, supervision and subsequent removal or storage of the components. MoBil may appeal to community groups, volunteers and residents interested in hands-on activities, collective making and experimenting with public space. People who do not participate in assembly can still engage through the meetings, play and other activities hosted by the completed modules [10], [13].

rich picture.talk

rich picture.talk combines drawing and facilitated discussion to explore experiences, relationships, problems, and possible responses associated with a place. Participants explain the meanings of the elements they draw, and the developing picture becomes a shared reference for further discussion. Artistic expertise is not required; the emphasis is on expressing and connecting ideas. The moderator supports the drawing and discussion, while accompanying notes help organize arguments and identify possible next steps. An optional participatory presentation allows additional people to comment on the picture after the main workshop. The tool is suited to residents and other

stakeholders willing to explore their experiences through drawings, symbols, and group discussion. Participants do not need artistic expertise, although facilitation and communication support may be needed to help them express and explain their ideas [9], [14].

Storytelling Game

The Storytelling Game uses Action, Problem, and Solution cards to guide participants in constructing narratives about a place. The instructions describe a small-group activity for three to six players, with a designated game master recording the stories. Participants share their narratives and use Connect cards to indicate elements of other players' stories with which they identify. The game master combines the most frequently connected elements into a collective story, which participants then discuss and reconsider. Its central interaction moves between individual expression and collective interpretation, with the final discussion examining whether the shared account reflects the participants' different perspectives. Suitable participants include residents, workers and regular visitors who can connect stories to their knowledge and experiences of the place. The format may be particularly appealing to people who enjoy storytelling, imaginative expression and small-group interaction, with appropriate language support where needed [10], [15].

Stakeholder Personas

Stakeholder Personas use fictional characters to introduce perspectives that participants might otherwise overlook when discussing a street or proposed intervention. Character profiles describe circumstances, needs, and concerns that participants are asked to consider during an accompanying activity. The library includes human and non-human perspectives, and the templates can be adapted to the local setting. The central task is to reason from a character's position and examine how a proposal might affect that character. The guidelines recommend allowing participants to express their own experiences before introducing this exercise. Statements produced through the personas remain interpretations of possible perspectives rather than accounts collected from the people represented. The tool is suited to residents, business representatives, students, and other stakeholders willing to consider situations from perspectives beyond their own. It can be adapted for children and adults by adjusting the characters, language and complexity of the exercise, after participants have had an opportunity to express their own concerns [10], [16].

Keep the Balance OPEN AIR

Keep the Balance OPEN AIR uses a board and facilitated speaking rounds to structure information sharing, opinion formation, proposal development, and consent. Participants move through these stages together, while the moderator guides the process and ensures opportunities to speak. The board makes the current stage of the discussion explicit, helping distinguish questions about information from opinions and objections concerning a proposal. Unanswered questions or serious objections can return the group to an earlier stage. The central task is to develop a proposal that can proceed without serious objections within the participating circle. The tool is appropriate for residents, community representatives, and local officials who need to discuss a defined issue or proposal together. Participants should be willing to listen to others and follow structured speaking rounds, with the moderator supporting those unfamiliar with this form of deliberation [10], [17].

Design Game

The Design Game uses a shared representation of a street, spatial elements, and game cards to explore alternative arrangements and competing priorities. The manuals specify four to eight players, one game master and one documenter. Players adopt stakeholder characters, pursue personal goals and take turns placing elements on the board, explaining their choices and responding to action cards. The game master prepares the session, explains the rules and facilitates negotiations, while

the documenter records the evolving design and gameplay. Its central mechanics therefore involve turn-taking, role adoption and negotiation within shared rules. Fixed-point and flexible-point versions provide different scoring arrangements, with optional point allocation in the flexible version. The game may be particularly approachable for young people and adults, including middle-aged participants, who are familiar with board games or video games involving strategic choices, turn-taking or roleplay. Participants without gaming experience can also take part, with the game master introducing the rules through demonstrations and supporting the initial rounds [10], [18].

Placetoplan

Placetoplan is a web-based dialogue tool combining map questions, multiple-choice questions and free-text responses. Organizers define the geographical area, questions, participation period and scope of influence, while participants identify locations and submit comments independently or with assistance. Its central interaction connects reported experiences and suggestions to particular places, alongside responses to broader questions about the project. Participation can take place asynchronously or be incorporated into physical meetings and facilitated visits. The manual treats outreach, accessibility, moderation, analysis, and feedback as continuing parts of the dialogue process, extending the organizer's role beyond publishing the questionnaire. Placetoplan is suited to residents, workers and other street users who prefer contributing online or need to participate outside scheduled meetings. People with limited digital experience can also participate through assisted sessions, with access to suitable devices and language or communication support where required [10], [19].

Streetmeter

Streetmeter estimates aspects of street performance across health, social, economic, mobility and environmental dimensions. Users provide information about street dimensions, design and use, and the tool applies documented formulas, assumptions and evaluation thresholds to calculate performance indicators. Basic dimensions and explicit assumptions can support an initial assessment, with more detailed information incorporated as planning develops. Its central function is to make the modelled implications of street arrangements available for examination and discussion. Interpreting these outputs requires attention to the assumptions behind them and their relevance to the street being assessed. Direct use is particularly suited to planners, designers, engineers and other users able to prepare street information and interpret modelled performance indicators. Residents and community groups can also participate in examining the results through facilitated explanations that connect the indicators and their assumptions to familiar street conditions [10], [20].

2.3 Analytical Approach

The study uses a qualitative, rule-based approach to examine participatory tool selection. The contextual categories and the operational characteristics of the tools are documented separately. The categories define the information required to describe a participation setting, while the StreetForum Guide, manuals and supporting materials establish the tools' purposes, participant roles, interaction formats, inputs, outputs and implementation requirements. The relationships between these two sets of information are developed in Section 4.

The unit of assessment is a tool in a specified configuration, including its venue, participant group, facilitation, language arrangements, timing and supporting activities. Documented characteristics are distinguished from analytical assumptions about suitability and from conditions that remain unresolved. Intended benefits described in the manuals are retained as intended benefits rather than treated as demonstrated outcomes.

In a site application, the context profile would be populated through demographic information, site observations, street measurements, stakeholder discussions and an assessment of organizational capacity. Each relevant condition should be linked to its source, date, affected group and verification status. Information about participation preferences, previous experience and support needs should be established directly wherever possible. The hypothetical cases in the Discussion illustrate how such information could inform selection without presenting assumed conditions as collected field data.

3. Decision Framework

3.1 Matching Tool Characteristics to Contextual Categories

Selecting a participatory tool for placemaking requires an understanding of the setting in which it will be used. The relevant information concerns the people affected by a proposed intervention, the characteristics and functions of the street, and the conditions under which participation can influence a decision. The framework

A tool–category match explains a relationship rather than assigning a tool permanently to a single category. Two types of relationships are relevant. The first concerns the information or interaction that a tool can provide for the decision. The second concerns the contextual conditions that shape how the tool can be used. Table 2 presents the principal matches and their reasons. It is an analytical interpretation of the documented tool characteristics, not a classification supplied by StreetForum.

Table 2

Reasoned relationships between the StreetForum tools and contextual categories

Tool	Relationship to the information or decision need	Conditions shaping its use
Art Installations	C3: makes an alternative spatial arrangement tangible. C7: supports awareness and exploration of possible street uses.	C2: local meanings affect interpretation. C3 and C5: the installation must fit the site and preserve access. C8: construction and supervision must be feasible.
#residentialstreetlife	C2: creates opportunities for informal contact and experience sharing. C4: explores social uses within a residential street. C7: supports initial engagement or temporary activation.	C5: different attendance lengths provide different opportunities to contribute. C6: permission and local coordination shape delivery. C8: staffing must match the duration and scale of activities.
MoBil	C3 and C4: provides a physical setting for alternative street activities. C7: supports collective making and hosts other tools.	C5: the chosen modules and activity must accommodate intended users. C6: site use requires coordination. C8: assembly, transport, storage and maintenance affect feasibility.
rich picture.talk	C2: elicits meanings and experiences of place. C6: makes stakeholder relationships and tensions discussable. C7: supports a shared account of interconnected issues.	C5: drawing must be accompanied by communication support and an accessible participation format. C8: facilitation, workshop time and synthesis are required.
Storytelling Game	C1: elicits how people's circumstances shape their experiences without inferring views from demographic attributes. C2: explores attachment and everyday concerns. C7: supports problem identification.	C5: participants need language support where relevant and time for a complete small-group session. C8: facilitation and recording must preserve individual as well as shared accounts.

Table 2
Continued

Tool	Relationship to the information or decision need	Conditions shaping its use
Stakeholder Personas	C1: makes differences in life circumstances explicit. C4: introduces different street-user needs. C6: draws attention to perspectives missing from the discussion.	C2: readiness for perspective-taking matters. C5: language and content need adaptation. C7: the exercise must serve a clear question and cannot replace direct engagement with absent groups.
Keep the Balance OPEN AIR	C6: structures the exchange of positions and objections. C7: supports deliberation on a defined issue or proposal.	C2: facilitation must address trust and conflict. C5: participants need time and support to follow the rounds. C8: trained facilitation and documentation are required.
Design Game	C3: represents spatial arrangements. C4: exposes competition between street uses. C6: supports discussion of stakeholder priorities. C7: develops and examines design options.	C2: roleplay should follow opportunities to express lived concerns. C5: the board and rules must be understandable. C8: site preparation, game facilitation and documentation require capacity.
Placetoplan	C3 and C4: locates reported conditions and use-related concerns. C1: available respondent information can reveal participation gaps. C7: collects feedback on places or proposals.	C5: digital access, language support and assisted routes shape reach. C6: influence and feedback arrangements must be explicit. C8: moderation and analysis require continuing staff time.
Streetmeter	C3 and C4: estimates consequences of street form and use. C1: predefined user profiles support examination of possible differences between groups. C7: informs evaluation of alternatives.	C5: results need accessible explanation and discussion. C8: input preparation and technical interpretation require capacity. User profiles and modelled values require checking against local concerns.

3.2 Applying the Matches to a Selection Decision

Selection begins by defining the immediate decision under C7 and identifying whose experiences or interests are relevant under C1, C4 and C6. The organizer then uses the context profile to determine which tool functions address the information gap. If the problem is still poorly understood, a tool that elicits experiences may be appropriate. If alternatives exist, the task may instead require design assessment, discussion of trade-offs or deliberation on a proposal.

The proposed configuration is then checked against requirements that can prevent delivery, including accessible space, necessary permissions, communication support, equipment, staff availability and sufficient time. Each relevant requirement is recorded as satisfied, unsatisfied or unknown. An unsatisfied requirement prompts consideration of an adaptation, such as changing the venue or providing assisted access. An unknown mandatory condition leaves selection pending until it can be resolved. Advantages in other categories do not remove an unmet requirement.

Among feasible configurations, preference is based on an explicit account of the required output and the local priorities. The framework does not generate a numerical ranking because the documentary descriptions do not establish calibrated measures of comparative effectiveness. A tool may be selected as the main means of addressing the task or as a supporting activity that improves access, interpretation, or delivery. Additional tools are justified only when they address an identified gap.

The selection record should state the local condition, the relevant category, the tool characteristic supporting the match, the necessary adaptation and the expected output. It should also identify who will interpret that output and how it will enter the planning process. For example, limited availability for evening meetings under C5 may support an asynchronous Placetoplan dialogue, provided that assistance, moderation and feedback can be delivered. The reason for selection is therefore traceable to both a participation need and an operational response.

4. Discussion

4.1 Combining Tools Within a Placemaking Process

Tool combinations are useful when a decision requires information or participation routes that one activity cannot provide. A physical installation may make an alternative use of space visible and attract people to a site, while a structured conversation records what they value or find problematic. Storytelling or rich picture.talk can then explore experiences in greater depth. The combination has a clear purpose when the information generated by one activity informs the questions addressed by the next.

The same principle applies to digital and physical participation. Placetoplan can collect location-specific concerns before a workshop, capture comments during supported visits, or obtain feedback on options developed afterwards. Its manual explicitly supports integration with physical meetings, language assistance and facilitated access. A digital channel therefore extends the available routes into a process, but organizers still need to check who has contributed and whose circumstances remain unrepresented.

Design development, technical assessment and deliberation can also be combined. A Design Game may generate spatial alternatives and reveal the reasons behind them. Streetmeter can help examine their modelled implications, while Keep the Balance OPEN AIR can structure discussion of a sufficiently defined proposal. New concerns may lead back to another design iteration or further information gathering. The sequence follows the dependencies of the decision and can begin at a later task when earlier information is already available.

Combining tools requires attention to redundancy. Stakeholder Personas may add little as a separate activity when the Design Game already introduces the relevant perspectives through character roles. Similarly, conducting both a complete Storytelling Game and a rich picture.talk workshop may impose unnecessary demands if they address the same question and reach the same participants. An additional tool is warranted when it contributes a distinct output, includes an otherwise excluded group, or resolves a limitation in the existing program.

The outputs also retain different meanings. A collective story identifies connections among participants' accounts; a game layout records choices made within particular rules; sociocratic consent indicates the absence of serious objections within the participating circle. These outcomes do not constitute interchangeable measures of consensus. When they are combined, the record should preserve minority concerns, qualifications, and unresolved questions so that later activities do not erase disagreements present earlier in the process.

4.2 Interpreting Participatory and Technical Information

A map comment locates a reported experience; it does not by itself measure the prevalence of that experience. Attendance and response totals describe participation, but they cannot establish that non-participants are satisfied or that an active group represents the wider population. Placetoplan's reporting functions can support analysis of patterns and participation gaps, provided that conclusions remain proportionate to the people and responses actually reached.

Game outputs require similar care. Fixed element values can shape the choices rewarded during the Design Game, while flexible points reflect judgments made within the particular session. Neither constitutes a direct measure of public welfare. Explanations, negotiations and unresolved objections are therefore important alongside the final layout. Where several tools are used, their outputs should be connected through the questions they address, without converting different forms of expression into an unsupported common score.

The Streetmeter manual provides an explicit technical basis for interpreting its outputs. It presents formula references, evaluation thresholds and recurring assumptions, and distinguishes scientific, investigated and rational bases for its calculations. It also states that the results are intended to support argumentation rather than provide exact truths.

Transfer to another setting requires attention to these assumptions. Some concern street geometry, some use Swedish contextual references, and others simplify the behavior of street users. The manual also acknowledges that property-value increases can accompany risks of gentrification. An apparently favorable economic indicator therefore needs interpretation in relation to the affected population under C1 and local concerns under C2 and C6. Modelled performance and participants' accounts can inform the same decision while retaining their different evidential roles.

5. Policy Implications

Decision-makers should allocate funding for preparation, facilitation and follow-up, alongside the activities themselves. Budgets should cover accessible venues, materials, language assistance and supported digital participation where needed. Compensation for participants' time, travel reimbursement or support for caring responsibilities can also be considered when these costs prevent people from taking part. Facilitators should be prepared to explain the activities, manage disagreement, and support participants with different communication needs.

Local organizations should help identify suitable locations, participation times, and ways of reaching residents, including those outside established community networks. Authorities should involve these organizations and residents in choosing and adapting activities to local circumstances. When participation remains limited or important concerns are left unexplored, organizers should be willing to adjust the format or provide additional opportunities to contribute. Small-scale trials can be used when experiencing a proposed arrangement would help residents assess its suitability.

Donations and contributions from local businesses can support materials, equipment, or continued community activities. Their sources and conditions should be transparent, and contributing money or resources should not provide greater influence over decisions. Authorities should maintain public support for communities with limited fundraising capacity so that opportunities to participate do not depend on neighborhood wealth.

Responsible institutions should explain how residents' input has affected proposals and identify the funding, responsibilities, and anticipated timing of agreed actions. Where suggestions cannot be implemented, the reasons should be communicated clearly. Residents should also have opportunities to review interventions after implementation and work with authorities and local organizations to make further adjustments.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that participatory tool selection should be guided by the characteristics of the community, the street, and the decision to be made. Connecting the eight contextual categories with the operating characteristics of the StreetForum tools shows that suitability depends on both the information an activity can produce and the conditions under which people can participate. The

same tool may therefore require different configurations across settings, while similar objectives may be addressed through different tools.

Tools can also be combined when they provide complementary information or participation opportunities, provided that the program remains manageable for participants and organizers. The resulting framework offers a structured basis for explaining these choices and identifying the support required for their implementation. Its practical value lies in making the relationship between local needs, tool characteristics, and implementation capacity explicit; the effectiveness of particular selections requires further evaluation. Authorities and local organizations should support this process through adequate resources, facilitation and follow-up, ensuring that residents' contributions inform the development and revision of street interventions.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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