

Quality

in Canada's Built Environment:

Roadmap to Equity, Social Value and Sustainability

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Section 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

"First Version of 14 roadmaps to quality in Canada's built environment"
May 1 & May 2, 2024

Edited by:

- **Jean-Pierre Chupin** (Scientific Director of the SSHRC Partnership on Quality)
- **María P. Farfán** (Postdoctoral Fellow)
- **Morteza Hazbei** (Postdoctoral Fellow)

Session Coordinator:

- **Dimitri Weibel** (Partnership Administrative Coordinator)

Authors of the summaries and full verbatims: (Alphabetically)

- **Belle Gutierrez-Kellam** (University of Calgary)
- **Ben Johnston** (Dalhousie University)
- **Camille Simard** (Université Laval)
- **Iris Pintiuta** (McGill University)
- **James Barrett** (Dalhousie University)
- **Maëlanne, Armstrong** (Université Laval)
- **Michaela Pratt-Tremblay** (Laurentian University)
- **Paloma Castonguay-Rufino** (Université de Montréal)
- **Paniz Mousavi Samimi** (University of Calgary)
- **Trishtina Godoy-Contois** (Athabasca University)

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ROOM 1

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room1_ Location: Medjuck Architecture Building - Room 1202			12 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Mariana	Esponda	Carleton University	Carleton University
Brian	Sinclair	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Alanna	Thain	McGill University	McGill University
Mike	Brennan	Royal Architectural Institute of Canada	National Partners
Alex	Wesang	Royal Architectural Institute of Canada	National Partners
Éloïse	Richard-Choquette	Administration portuaire de Québec	Université Laval
Rosa	Milito	ICOMOS	Dalhousie University
Alan	Sukut	Saskatoon Public School Board	University of Manitoba
Mohammad Hasan	Sohaib	University of Manitoba	University of Manitoba
Narita	Ico	University of British Columbia	University of British Columbia
Siba Américain	Bilivogui	Université Laval	Université Laval
Cara	Shan	Athabasca University	Athabasca University

Room 1 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: (to come)

Report produced by (to come)

1.1. Summary

1.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion:

ROOM 2

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room2_ Location: G.H. Murray Building - G215			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Robert	Wright	University of Toronto	University of Toronto
Enrica	Dall'Ara	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Izabel	Amaral	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Grace	Coulter Sherlock	AAA Representative - Lemay	Alberta
Michael	McClelland	ERA Architects	Carleton University
Robert	Balay	Town of Athabasca	Athabasca University
Talayeh	Saghatchian Shomali	Open Architecture Collaborative Canada (OACC)	Toronto Metropolitan University
Sonia	Blank	Architecture Sans Frontières Québec	McGill University
Shantanu Biswas	Linkon	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Justine	Bochenek	Toronto Metropolitan University	Toronto Metropolitan University
Michaela	Pratt-Tremblay	Laurentian University	Laurentian University
Nic	Kuzmochka	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Meg	Berry	Athabasca University	Athabasca University

Room 2 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-06-17

Report produced by
Pratt Tremblay, Michaela (Laurentian University)

2.1. Summary

The workshop began with participants introducing themselves, representing various academic institutions, municipalities, and community organizations across Canada. They discussed their roles and interests related to architectural research and community engagement. Topics ranged from urban planning and landscape architecture to accessibility, heritage conservation, and community-driven projects like affordable housing initiatives for First Nations.

Participants shared positive outcomes from their projects over the past two years. Examples included innovative research methodologies, enhanced community partnerships, and transformative impacts on neighborhoods through revitalization projects. New perspectives on inclusive design and accessibility were highlighted, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration and community consultation in shaping built environments.

Challenges such as balancing diverse needs in accessibility design and navigating economic pressures in urban development were also discussed. The session underscored the value of ongoing dialogue and practical outcomes in architectural practice and education, aiming to foster more inclusive and sustainable built environments across Canada.

In the recorded discussion, participants explored diverse perspectives on quality in the built environment. Shauna Mallory-Hill underscored the importance of post-occupancy evaluations and social justice in assessing building performance, especially concerning stakeholder expectations. Meg Berry emphasized stewardship and ecological considerations, highlighting conflicts between development projects and sensitive environmental and cultural sites. Michael McClelland discussed the evolving focus on ingenuity and community engagement in urban planning, integrating indigenous perspectives into design processes. Sonia Blank argued for the inclusion of activism in defining quality, advocating for diverse forms of community engagement in design. Grace Coulter Sherlock focused on the trend of retrofitting and adaptive reuse as sustainable practices amidst funding uncertainties. Izabel Amaral expanded the definition of quality beyond aesthetics to encompass environmental and social impacts, advocating for the preservation of existing buildings. Nic Kuzmochka highlighted challenges in educational infrastructure and the need for adaptable spaces that evolve with community needs. Justine Bochenek stressed the importance of maintenance and longevity in sustaining quality, particularly in urban settings where repurposing existing structures can mitigate environmental impacts. Overall, the

discussion emphasized inclusivity, sustainability, and adaptability as central to redefining quality in architectural practice.

2.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name

[00:05:23] Dall'Ara, Enrica	The objective of these workshops includes sharing main personal outputs, views on quality or positive lived experiences, to get a better sense of how our personal understanding of quality has changed in these two years. For people that were already part of the project, create a comfortable atmosphere between the participants to share and discuss. So, we have two questions. One question at a time and it is important that all of us have a moment to share. Before starting with your input, share your name, organization and research site that you are associated with.
[00:06:54] Amaral, Izabel	I'm Izabel Amaral. I'm the director of the School of Architecture at Université de Montréal. I'm also a professor and I'm part of the team at Université de Montréal, looking at qualitative accessibility.
[00:07:14] Dall'Ara, Enrica	Associate professor of landscape architecture and associate Dean for planning and landscape architecture at the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape, University of Calgary, and I'm here representing the University of Calgary site.
[00:07:34] Balay, Robert	Hi, I'm Rob Balay. I'm the mayor of the town of Athabasca. So my interest is in forming policy and the direction and consultation, public consultation, very important to me. So I'm here to listen and learn.
[00:07:53] Linkon, Shantanu Biswas	Hi, I'm Shantanu Biswas Linkon from Université de Montréal. I am doing my PhD. My topic is evaluating social value in public architecture.
[00:08:06] Mallory-Hill, Shauna	Shauna Mallory-Hill from the Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba. I'm the project lead for our project, which is exploring quality roadmaps to quality of affordable and sustainable First Nation housing.
[00:08:28] Berry, Meg	Hi everyone. My name is Meg Berry. I'm a researcher with Athabasca University and we are focusing on deep commodifying quality through food sovereignty and housing. And so, I'm supporting that research program.
[00:08:43] Kuzmochka, Nic	I'm Nic Kuzmochka. I'm a graduate student at Dalhousie University. I'm a sociologist and our project is on the experiences of individuals working and studying in high schools that have won architectural awards.
[00:09:01] Bochenek, Justine	My name is Justine Bochenek, and I am the research coordinator at the health access and Planning Lab at the Toronto Metropolitan University. Our focus area is actually the Toronto waterfront and the accessibility and quality of that built environment.

[00:09:24] Hi. I'm Sonia Blank. I work at architecture Without Borders Quebec, and I'm involved in the partnership at McGill university working on nighttime design for marginalized communities cause most of the work I do is with un-housed people.

[00:09:44] Hi, I am Grace Coulter Sherlock. I'm here representing the Alberta Architects Association. I'm an architect, principal with Lemay and I don't believe I'm affiliated with any one site, but maybe I've done the most touch points with the University of Calgary site.

[00:10:02] Hi, my name is Talayeh Shomali. I am from the Open Architect Collaborative Canada. I'm one of the citizen groups that consult the TMU project. I'm new. It's my first conference, so nice to see you all and I'm also not an architect. I'm a human rights lawyer by day and I work with lots of equity, diversity, inclusion projects, including the project I'm working on right now in Toronto which is about accessing education for undocumented youth.

[00:10:47] Hi, I'm Michaela Pratt Tremblay. I'm a graduate student at Laurentian University. I'm also brand new to the project. But I wrote my thesis on accessibility and quality in the built environment.

[00:11:09] Hello, my name is Antoine Cogulet. I'm from Laval University. I'm working as a researcher and my main topics are on sustainable buildings. I work as a process engineer in private companies.

[00:11:38] My name is Michael McClelland. I'm really pleased to meet you all and I love all the study groups, but I'm with the Carleton Group and they're looking at adaptive reuse of buildings. I'm a heritage architect. I've got practices in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Calgary, Vancouver.

[00:12:03] So, the idea for the session is to start with the first question which is: "In your opinion, what is the main positive research outcome of the project after two years", so we can speak on behalf of the sites we've been working on, or we can speak from our perspective as being part of the partnership. I know that some of you are new to the project, so it's hard to talk about an output, but maybe in that case you can talk about what you think the project is and what the project can evolve to.

[00:13:05] There were some people saying that it is the first time joining the team. So, for participants who are new to the project, there is the second question. That doesn't mean that you cannot answer also to the first one, but the first one is for people that have been in the project for the two years now. For people that are new to the project, the question is: "Can you share one example of a positive lived experience in the built environment?" That was a question that we addressed early in the project, and we would like to hear from people that are joining us now.

[00:14:01] Who would like to start to break the ice and share?

[00:14:15] Hi so I think that since I've been involved with the project for over a year, I can share a bit of my own experience. One positive output for me as a citizen group has been to explore new research methodologies, alternative research methodologies. So that's something that was kind of proposed by students from McGill University. They did a few workshops on counter mapping that were quite interesting for us and then providing some support to help us do these counter mapping experiences. It has resulted in new partnerships amongst community groups. So, I've met a few new community groups while working with the McGill site group, so I think that's something that was quite positive about my experience.

[00:15:24] So, I as I mentioned, our project is to develop is to do Community lab led approaches to quality First Nation housing. Our first positive output is about education and it's about learning about the enormity of structural barriers and racism that is against achieving quality First Nation on reserve and in community, and the whole concept of reserve systems to begin with. Our community rep Sylvia McAdams stood up and talked about what the Indian Act had done to her people across Canada. I think that one of the big things we've been doing is developing relationships with communities and listening to the community members. We've delivered homes into communities, small, tiny houses. As you may recall, that's one of our projects with one house, many nations, but we're also delivering education into community for people to build homes for themselves by themselves with community input. So that whole process of engagement has been very rewarding and a positive output. Out of that has come new methods for community engagement. We've been using classical methods for participatory research, but then embedding cultural practice and respect and relationships in that way. That's been really rewarding and educational for all of us who are nonindigenous to understand our own biases, understand our own racism, understanding our privilege and how to start to engage with community in a in a authentic way. That's been positive experience for me and the rest of our team.

[00:17:28] I am an archaeologist and heritage manager by trade. I'm not an architect and I have a lot of experience with engagement and consultation. I've worked with First Nations and indigenous communities on big infrastructure projects for many, many years. My grounding in quality comes from the ground up, because we're usually the first boots on the ground. When we first started having these conversations and I was invited to the table for Athabasca, I was sitting at the back of the room and I was like, we've had this conversation 20 times before. I've listened to this in community engagement sessions so many times, so what's going to be different? What is different is that I'm seeing that Athabasca University is really community driven. We are starting to listen to the voices and we're starting to hear about the importance of the environment and the interconnecting web of all these things that build quality, and so I think that's really one of the most positive parts of the research program that I've experienced over the last two years.

[00:18:37] I've only been involved with the project for two or three months, but we've done some of our most ground field work in that time which I was brought on for. We've been going into schools and talking to people about their experiences within those. These are all schools that have won various architectural awards, so they're supposed to be really, wonderful spaces.

And we've also had the privilege of having some of the architects who built the schools on the team and talking with us about them. Seeing the difference in experiences and needs between teachers, students, administrative staff and architects and understanding how this disconnect happens. Understanding how a process like consultation can end up creating harm by making people feel as though they had the opportunity to speak and then weren't heard, and can cause even more of a distinct disconnect has been really important to conceptualizing the problem itself and to thinking about the bigger barriers that are there, as well as understanding the very different needs that staff who are there every day for 10, 15 years have a very different relationship to the building than do students who are there for four years or one year or two years and maybe have much less experience. They may not have as many gripes or frustrations with it, where staff might have those going on the entire time that they're there. Understanding that users are not a comprehensive category. It's very subdivided and the way that those differentiations come to affect the experience of the building and then also understanding that those buildings were designed with the best intention that often doesn't translate to user experience, that there's a disconnect between the theory and the practice has been, one of the most positive outcomes.

[00:21:16]
Bochenek,
Justine

I would say from my experience at Toronto Metropolitan University is that we have architecture faculties and urban planning faculties finally working together in our school. Urban planning is in the Faculty of Community Services which is separated from the architecture school and so the most positive outcome I've witnessed is this change in relationship between the faculties, but also the pedagogy. We're really involving students in a different way. Particularly with the upcoming studio projects. We've done projects that involve the architecture students and the urban planning students working together to help collect data for this project, which is both a bit sneaky and really helpful for the students as well to see the pathway that they could take after school, which is pretty focused on private or public work.

[00:22:45]
Coulter
Sherlock,
Grace

I've been with this project now since the beginning, so this is my third time around. I'm deeply interested in practice models and applied research. I've done studies myself into emerging practice models in Canada approaches to design postgraduation. My day job, I'm part of a very sizable Canadian design practice and I've been able to use that platform to test kitchen. I wear a couple of hats, I very distinctly understand business practices and how architecture firms approach projects and then on the other side of it, what can you do to augment it or shift it? And where can you find the most value? When I first came on board and was part of this conversation, I was very curious as to how it would translate to the emerging professionals entering the workforce. I am not a professor, and I am not an academic, which is why I'm representing the architect's association but what I'm starting to see is tangible definitions and approaches and these are things that can start to be disseminated at large. This morning, there was a reference that it's going to start at the education level and I 100% agree that if we are able to shift towards practices in the Canadian context that disseminating that knowledge with those that are going to be coming forward and continuing their education, that's fantastic. To become a licensed professional in Canada, you graduate and then there is quite a process under the supervision of a licensed architect to get to the point where you are. Then within that role,

there's a component during that internship period that could be explored through these definitions. And how does that shift the process of what we qualify as essential skills? Furthermore, there's a continuing education requirement for professionals, so I think that there's a mandate. There's many places that we can take this information and inject it at the fundamental level, but also continue it through holistically across the profession.

[00:25:54]
Saghatchian
Shomali,
Talayah

Since I'm super new to the project I'm answering the second question about positive lived experience of the built environment. I'm an immigrant to this country. I came here 23 years ago, and I've lived in downtown Toronto ever since I've been here. One of the positive changes that I've seen in my neighborhood was the revitalization plan of Regent Park, which was done intentionally with extensive community consultation. It has its own flaws. I'm not saying it's a perfect project, but as someone who's lived here for a long time, I can see how it has transformed the neighborhood, and it became more inclusive. There are a lot of newcomers and immigrants that come to the neighborhood because the foundation of community consultation was there from the beginning. Regent Park historically didn't have any public spaces. Now there's a beautiful park where you can see children from all over, in front of a very rich neighborhood. You can see people, rich and poor, playing together in the public space. The aquatic centre is free for everyone to use. They have women only swim spaces. We have our own bank after 54 years of being in that neighborhood. Historically, the neighbourhood was notorious for being very crime ridden with the streets having corners where people could hide and do drug dealings and commit lots of crimes. Since the Regent Park revitalization project, the crime rate has been coming down in the neighborhood.

[00:28:02]
Pratt
Tremblay,
Michaela

I am also very new, so I don't think I have much to add to what the positive research outcomes are. The McEwen School of Architecture at Laurentian University is involving students from the indigenous program and merging different faculties together to work together on the project. In terms of positive lived experience, like I said, I'm doing my thesis on accessibility. I've learned a lot about the importance of including dignified, inclusive and equitable spaces for people with disabilities. I'm from Ottawa originally so, in terms of spaces there, I know a lot of their museums have been redesigned to include spaces that provide access to people with all disabilities and that also includes auditory and physical disabilities, as well as different trails that you find in Ottawa are also now made accessible.

[00:29:27]
Cogulet,
Antoine

OK, because I'm new, I think I will try to answer the second question. It's a tough question, but I think if you put a human in a red environment, you're going to see red. It's a translation from France so I don't know if you understand, but what I want to say is that I think that quality in built environment should promote connection. It's great to have beautiful buildings, sustainable buildings, waste management, etc. What is more important is that people connect between each other. You have to promote places where people can meet each other like in kindergarten, it's a great place because parents have to speak with other parents because your kids are playing together. I'm living in a small community where we share land with 11 other families. The built environment was not made to promote connection. But finally, when you live with other families, you realize that the

most important thing is connection between people when you share a vision, you share a goal. What is very important, for example in our community, is a common house. We have a building that we share together and we meet in this building once a week and that is so important because we talk together and we imagine the future and we brainstorm together. And I think that makes us happy just to be together. What is meaningful? What is meaningful is the link between people, so the quality of built environment should promote this link.

[00:32:18]
McClelland,
Michael

I'm going to make two points if I could. I'm with the group at Carleton University, looking at adaptive reuse. I'm in Toronto and I do a lot of work in development. Development has now become so expensive that right now all the condo developments in Toronto are on hold. They can't afford to build condos anymore because you can't afford to build for the price of construction costs. I really want to bring adaptive reuse to the forefront. Everything we're doing has got to be voted up for use. We've really got to think very carefully that it may be different in different communities, but certainly in cities like Vancouver and Toronto, they've got to start thinking about adaptive use and that that does run counter to an issue about a popular opinion like the public. Our politicians say we've got to build more housing, but they don't understand the dynamics of the economics or anything about development and so there's a short circuit we need to be aware of about that being a populist public opinion but not actually representing real people on the ground. The other thing I just wanted to bring up is accessibility. I'm an architect, heritage architect. I don't find there's any conflict between accessibility and consent. I find good designers can manage to do things and it means just sitting and sharing and not taking assumptions about a certain person. If we break down the rigidity, I think we can find all kinds of solutions and there's really a question when you look at this issue of accessibility. You really want to ask accessibility for whom? 25% of the population of Canada has a disability of some sort. How do you address all of that? And so, architects need to be very open to solutions. And if you're good architect, you can do that. And if you don't have rigid ideas of what heritage is, you can do that. But also, you must have a clear understanding of accessibility for whom, because the blanket of accessibility for all and for what reasons? Accessibility to a courthouse is different than a museum is different than an art gallery. There are different ways to approach accessibility, so as this project moves forward, I really want to focus on that component piece because with adaptive reuse there always seems to be this stumbling block about accessibility and I don't think it's a stumbling block. I think we need to really think creatively. And as architects, we need to dissect that difference.

ROOM 3

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room3_ Location: Medjuck Architecture Building - Room 1208			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Susan	Fitzgerald	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Anne	Cormier	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Stéphane	Roche	Université Laval	Université Laval
Terrance	Galvin	Laurentian University	Laurentian University
Nathalie	Dion	Provencher Roy	Université de Montréal
David	Down	City of Calgary	University of Calgary
Afsaneh	Tafazzoli	Open Architecture Collaborative Canada (OACC)	Toronto Metropolitan University
Adrien	Kazup	Vivre en Ville	Concordia University
Tatev	Yesayan	Concordia University	Concordia University
Sneha	Mandhan	University of Toronto	University of Toronto
Camille	Simard	Université Laval	Université Laval
Victorian	Thibault-Malo	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Nirmal	Adhikari	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University

Room 3 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-05-29

Report produced by
Simard, Camille (Université Laval)

3.1. Summary

- Quality is more complex to define than what we originally thought. The project broadened our perspective on quality. Reflective practice increased our understanding of quality.
- We are trying to balance design excellence with a range of shared values (social, cultural, emotional, environmental).
- The multidimensionality of affect must be considered. How can feelings be qualified/quantified? What makes the building worth visiting?
- Meeting with a wide variety of people and hearing different perspectives is very important.
- Changing policies is an important part of the project, but it may also be the most difficult.
- Building a review system for construction quality (the roadmaps are already a big step in this direction).
- Awards are given when a project is freshly released. What would happen if we waited a bit to see how the materials hold up and how people really appreciate the construction/built environment? This could help us see how people really use the space versus how we thought it would be used.
- Buildings are there for a long time, so they have to be designed, not just made.
- Quality needs to be evaluated through the right scale/context/people/time.
- The primary cause of fatalities during natural disasters is not the calamity itself but the substandard quality of the infrastructure. People desire structures that are familiar and dear to them yet robust enough to maintain good quality over an extended period.
- Using advanced techniques is desired but difficult to accomplish due to materials and labour constraints.
- Adding Indigenous voices to the project: what is THEIR vision for THEIR realities?
- The involvement of the public is necessary in the process.

3.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name

[00:01:11] I'm a Citizen and with a Citizen Group called open architecture collaborative
Afsaneh Canada. We're based in Toronto, and we're partnered with tnu University. And OK,
Tafazzoli I suppose I'm the first one that you know can start talking about this. We only have
like two to three minutes each of us to talk about the first question and we have
like about forty minutes for both questions. Ok, so talking about the positive
Research Outputs and outcomes, for me, most of my professional life, I was
practicing architecture what with the professional side, not that much with
academia. So when I encountered with this, you know, quality Research question,
I was like, no, it's a pretty straightforward thing, so we should be able to just map
it out. And like what we do for projects like most of the time, right? But then just
getting Deep into it, I realized how actually complicated it is and it's not as easy
as I thought, and there are so many drivers in here, so I realized that it's so hard
to measure the quality but at the same time what really helped me, especially with
the online convention that we had, was some of the principles like maybe get to
the minimum threshold of quality that you know we can all agree on or some
shared value. So that helped me structure my mind a bit like OK that's the way
we might be able to do that. But at the same time, I thought that it's important who
we have in our teams of projects, like inviting team, I mean everyone who's
involved in a project. Let's say from the client to the other stakeholders and
architects, also the people who will operate the building you know, and you know
program that facility management and things so important that we kind make the
awareness and as much as we can educate what we learn from this research and
help the people at the table for all the projects. So that was basically what I
thought, that having a bigger project and each person has their own unique
experience can help us come up with more ideas, more values and personal
values come to the table, so I guess that is the main output for me that just
broadened the individual involvement in the creation of a project.

[00:06:11] My name is Nathalie Dion and I work for Provencher Roy. I am new so I can't say
Nathalie Dion how it changed but instead I will share something with you. When I was with
Quebec association of? and we worked with the government to adopt a national
policy, which was finally done, maybe not at the level we wanted, but it was done.
I would say that through that process, one interesting thing we've done was to
meet with the public. We went to 13 cities around Quebec to ask the public what
they were expecting from architecture and I would say, what I find very interesting
from this project is the diversity of people that are sitting around this table, around
the groups, different organizations, not only professional, not only educational but
also people from different organizations as well for example Vivre en Ville which
are very good partners to help define quality. I would say that when we did the
exercise and met with the public, my perception of quality changed because we
expect, we see things, we have our definition of architecture but we can certainly
meet with others or different groups with different definitions and the definition of
quality does change because people are not expecting the same thing from
architecture as we are expecting and they would be the ones that are

experiencing our project because we don't necessarily live in our project as some of these people are. Everyday my perception of quality changed, and it was the very interesting process that led us to finally go with the government, just convinced them that it was a thing that was important, not only for architects but for the general public. I'm very interested in this project, but one of the things I'm concerned about is where are we going? What are we going to do in our roadmap that brings that project to another level? How are we going to change the policies? The political part that are the rules that are setting the code for construction, inclusivity and everything. That's interesting and see how this goes further?

[00:09:09]
Stéphane
Roche

My name is Stéphane Roche and I am a professor of geospatial science at Laval University. I am not in architecture or urban planning but I am interested in data and data science and how to use data to make issues more understandable, so in this perspective my main improvement in the project is the direction of the master students working on the development of data and constructing typical indicators associated with the different guiding principles of architecture proposed by the national architectural planning policy to try to find a way of using special data in order to make maps in order to give a chance of visualizing architectural principles. So this is my main contribution to the project. And when we compare, we have tried to compare the variability of data and the data we should use to represent concepts. And there is a huge gap so, what we are currently facing in terms of issues is really to find a way of using our available data in an innovative way. And what has really changed for me in terms of quality perception, you know, because I am coming from engineering data science. So the definition of quality I had in mind was really related to the quality of? there is a lot of work, a lot of research being done with the data. We usually? (couldn't hear this part). And what could be different from the internal quality, which is really related to the main characteristic of the data and I try to transpose this kind of definition to what I understood of the process, because we really work on the process more than the project process and how different stakeholders (actors) are involved in the business and what kind of questions arise from this education of different points of view and so I found that this idea of fitness for youth (?) is really relevant to better understand the quality issue in the process because it's essentially a problem of trying to not fit, but make compatibility between different understanding of what is environment.

[00:15:38]
Terrance
Galvin

So, what was the big gap you said between two kinds of data and (couldn't hear)?

[00:15:51]
Stéphane
Roche

Most of the data available is the data related to infrastructure. And so, it's quite easy, for example, to get some data information about the age of the building, even depending on the age, you could imagine what kind of what kind of material has been used. But when we try to get information about some less perceptual component, there is a lack of data and what we really try to understand is how we could use the available date in order to build upon this data and propose some indicator that could at least give approximation proxy of the perceptual component.

[00:17:20]
Terrance
Galvin

I think that's a good one to share from your team because I think many groups are running into that data that's there and data that we know is there, but things are not recorded and I think the same thing as you jumped ahead and you're worrying about the policies and many of the discussions on the roadmaps at whatever level city. Anyway, that's not the positive research outcome of the project but it might be. Because the observation conference to the next level as of where those objectives are in relation to, in our case, like the city officials and how policies might change.

[00:18:28]
Victorian
Thibault-Malo

Hi my name is Victorian I am a student at Université de Montréal and the project I am studying, my study is on Canadian? (couldn't hear) and I think that my concrete understanding of the quality in the built environment is really linked to awareness so as I have said this morning like we have a lot of public spaces that are not public spaces because they're not accessible, so I feel like that's how my perception of quality changed every time, because I was studying the impact of design on people but not really how people can access the building. I was studying the impact of people that are already in the building, not the people that cannot come in the building. When I interviewed people at the National Holocaust monument and when I talked to them about empathy, they all linked accessibility to empathy. It was not a result that I anticipated. I thought they would talk about how they understand the Holocaust better at the end, but they talked about people in this space, they linked empathy to the subject of the monument so I thought that was very interesting.

[00:21:03]
Terrance
Galvin

That's a very good one, right? Access to the monument is as important as the content.

[00:21:27]
Victorian
Thibault-Malo

I thought the link between the two was very interesting.

[00:21:33]
Camille
Simard

I'm new to the project so I will keep this short. I'm Camille Simard, I study at University Laval in graphic design. I worked on my roadmap with my colleague Maëlanne. I loved working on it, especially because I'm very interested in the subject. I will answer the question "can you share one example of a good experience in the built environment?" I am from Quebec, so a good example for me would be the promenade Samuel-de-Champlain, it used to be a big unused road on the side of the water and they remodeled it with a pool and people can go there during the summer and walk around the water. People can hang out with friends and family, in the first weeks there were so many people going. I think in Quebec what makes people appreciate projects like this is when they can easily go with transportation, it just makes their life better and easier. Sharing moments with family and friends when it's easy to do so is really fun.

[00:23:39] Adrién Kazup I'm quite new to the project too, so I'm Adrién Kazup, I'm working at Vivre en Ville, it's a nonprofit in urban planning. I actually here with a colleague, she's been here since the beginning. We are working with Université Laval, but we are working with Concordia at the moment, we are working on active aging. I do have one experience in Quebec, I will take yours (talking to Camille Simard), I agree with all the aspects except one which is how to get there and that's the main problem and I know that's not ? it's how we can get there and that's one of the main problems that we have in Quebec city and with Vivre en Ville we are working on that. When you think about aging you have new realities, sometimes new mobility problems, which is linked to accessibility. So yea I would say that this is one of my lived experiences.

[00:26:49] Anne Cormier I am Anne Cormier, I'm a professor and researcher, I'm also an architect in private practice. So, I make note, basically, I don't think I'm going to say anything very original here. What has changed have been with the partnership since the beginning. What has changed probably or what I've been thinking more about is the appreciation of "le sensible" or "le physique" (French – it means something tangible) So that whole question of the impact of architecture is something that is of great interest for me, but at the same time it's totally banal. However, it varies from person to person and there's a wide spectrum and I think that whole impact of the built environment on the effect is hyper important and maybe one of the things we should be aware of is the broad spectrum of the sensibility to that environment and I'm concerned that the specific end up being drawn and that in the opposite way, some appreciation of architecture that is probably very much accidental bays end up being washed away and I totally recognize the imperfection of the occidental appreciation of the architecture and the obvious fact that it's ? (I couldn't hear) However I am still a bit concerned that this gets washed away so it's very positive to get a broad spectrum but I'm always a bit concerned so sorry for not answering precisely the question.

[00:30:02] Sneha Mandhan Hi everyone. My name is Sneha and I am representing the University of Toronto site. I'm a PhD student and I think this is my second year. It's definitely my second in person conference. I think I started one year into the project, and I think for me one of the things that I've been sort of I don't know if this is a positive output, but I've been grappling a lot in these conversations with the idea of process. Like was mentioned before, because we've been working with the city of, so our project is more a parks project. So we're looking at neighborhood parks in Toronto and how we can sort of build in equitable resilience into these parks and so we've been working with the City of Toronto's parks for us and Recreation team and very closely on sort of what is their process, understanding their process for decision making for like, how are they putting money into specific parks, what are the decisions around development, application negotiations and things like that I should have mentioned I'm a planner. So a lot of the policy conversations and sort of conversations around process and we're kind of trying to figure out how we can supplement some of that work or be more critical in terms of challenging their

process and so a lot of the conversations that I've been having especially in Calgary last year and through the through the partnership, the process I've been paying a lot more attention, I think to the methods and the process that have been used and for me that's incredible because process doesn't get documented. Oftentimes it's the outputs of projects that get documented. And so, it's really nice to talk about process a lot and get to learn about how other people are approaching projects and I think for us in the context of parks, we've been thinking about how do we broaden the definition of accessibility, which has come up so much. So not just thinking about physical accessibility, but what does it mean to go beyond that? Think about cognitive accessibility, cultural accessibility. So not just how much can a person physically access the space, but how welcomed in this space do they feel and how comfortable do they feel being in that space for different age groups for different ethnic groups, racial groups, even thinking about like signage, it's often time signage is a scary thing if you're a newcomer into a place, especially in the context of Toronto, it's something that we've been thinking about a lot. So I'll just throw that out. There is something that accessibility I feel like has come up so many times in all of the conversations in this partnership, until we're trying to kind of broaden that context, especially because parks are public spaces and they're used. Basically anybody, they're not as limited to a specific user as buildings might be.

[00:32:49] In addition to events with the research project that you're doing is the question (I
Terrance couldn't hear the next part, but Terrance was asking a question)
Galvin

[00:33:00] So, we're trying to map sidewalks and quality of sidewalks, not just where
Sneha sidewalks exist. So, we're starting off with the parks and that particular sub
Mandhan watershed in Toronto and the sub watershed it just is in an underserved
neighborhood and so or has a bunch of different underserved neighborhoods. So
we're thinking about more walking access and driving access because we're
looking at neighborhood parks.

[00:33:24] Right. So it is about not just the park itself, but the routes to it.
Terrance
Galvin

[00:33:29] Yeah, and yes. And we're also thinking about resilience. And Toronto has a
Sneha flooding issue and we're getting more and more rain. So also thinking about are
Mandhan

these sidewalks getting flooded? Are they cracking, like so quality in terms of those sidewalks?

[00:33:47] Question. So, you mentioned about the process, so I've been being exposed to the process from the parks and recreation. So, were there any positives like getting from that process or any negatives or?
Afsaneh Tafazzoli

[00:34:07] So, it was interesting because a lot of the slides that were shared this morning around like the quantitative nature of process or like the metrics that are used for process at municipal levels. That's still true for a lot of the work that we did with the City of Toronto, a lot of what they're trying to measure is in numbers. And so that was one of the challenges that we kind of were coming across because they were focused on numbers and acting. We're looking at a neighborhood scale and they were looking at a census tracked scale, so the scale question came up a lot as well and because the city of Toronto is a very, very big corporation. Oftentimes we were just confused. I think we're still a little bit confused about a lot of the parts of the process is just because someone like subdivision of the of the department is making decisions around maintenance. Another one around the capital investments, another one about trash collection and so all of we've kind of mapped the different layers of management that happen at the city parks level and we're trying to understand how that can be more streamlined, especially for neighborhood parks, because they were designed like or I don't even know if they were designed right, like they were just made in some ways. And oftentimes there's, like baseball diamonds everywhere, which don't serve the cultural needs of the communities that live around it. So, we're trying to map all of that but similar to what Stéphane shared, we're kind of grappling with data because we only have data at a higher level and this year we're starting community engagement and starting to engage with lived experience to get more granular information I know it's not a direct answer, but it's we're still kind of figuring it out.

[00:36:03] Just to add something, but I don't want to take any time. This is just because I wanted to answer. I'm sorry I wanted to insert like the main outputs but I'm not sure we do that or kind of I do have like mine of my own with that question. Princeton did a live map and with integrating inside the map 15 minute walkable area radius. Yeah, thanks. With all services and other many things and it's a live 1. So it's based on Google Maps. It's a basic thing but still integrating like new data inside like every day. So that's very useful. And like for the many positive outputs for, again, as a nonprofit, it's the use and the tool that they develop and that we can maybe one day and in return it's like, you know the the of course the sharing, the knowledge sharing between us like we are more on the field work of

course. But we do have with that partnership access to another level of data, another level of thinking of or representing some problems, some realities. So it's like the of course the meeting between those representations I wanted to underline the tool that was developed by Concordia and it's very interesting but it's not really related.

[00:38:26] I'm just wondering, does it mean that the map is updated depending on the location of one people if someone moves on the map is that how the map updates depending on the location?
Stéphane Roche

[00:39:07] So again, just for the technical part, it's not what I meant, it was more with the buildings because it's on the aging perspective. So, it's for the people that live here or there. What's the reality there and it's very, very useful because, you know, it's it's all about accessibility and all about participation so.
Adrien Kazup

[00:39:36] I've already introduced myself. I'm. I'm Susan Fitzgerald. I'm associate professor here. And I'm also a architect. I'm flying director of SCM and our team has been studying schools and we are in the process of studying three different schools, 3 awarded schools. We took that seriously. I guess from the beginning we awarded and we stuck with it and it's been very interesting. We've been studying them through and photographic research and also through spatial mapping and by spatial mapping. What we have been doing a few to one of the schools that we are going to go into next week. It's actually a school our design so we know how it was we imagined when we interviewed people within the school how we thought it would be used because of course we listened to people's lived experience. But I think what we are becoming very surprised by and it's sort of fascinating because we go into the schools and we record the material culture of the school and by that I mean how we do it as this rule, that sort of particularly what we imagined and lived experience would be but as we go in these schools, we realize that they are not used in the same way at all. And then we also, through interviews of different groups within the schools, understand all different things. And I guess one of the things that has been very fascinating, which has actually not come up. So, I hope this is a fascination to others. Is this idea of quality like we've talked a lot about the city and the sort of users and visitors how we want to record their experiences of and find out what to how, how to shape these spaces. And you of course have mentioned to clients who of course are financially responsible and sort of direct schedules but the groups that we haven't talked about and as I see that we've got obviously representation from design firms, there's another, there's another few groups of people that we actually at all. And those groups of people, of course, are the people working within design offices and the sort of the, the

employees and the people that sort of, you know, how those people all engage projects. And then of course, there's the trades. And one of the biggest things in quality right now. And in fact, this is what we've heard from most of the buildings we've gone to is how the craft and the trades and how they're engaging. And if you look around this city, I mean it's now possible as well to other people, cities, how they're faring under the Titanic times that we're in. But the impossibility of trade. But then there's another group beyond that, there's the people and there's sort of fabricators and the factory workers who are involved in the raw material, etc. And the manufacturing, the transportation and the end of life, disposal of all of those materials to put garbage in the project, I mean is one of the profound things that, you know, is constantly being discussed. If you were actually on that working on the project so it's kind of trying to unpack all those different groups. And of course, the Earth and the kind of planet and the kind of and how those are all separated. And really, they're all separated by time, wealth and space. So those are, I guess, some of my sort of thoughts about what's become come to the forefront and what I see as you know the enormity. What we're dealing with here and you know it's been fascinating so far.

[00:43:34] With the three schools research, what's one of the main positive research
Terrance outcomes you think?
Galvin

[00:43:39] It's kind of understanding that enormity, understanding because you know as a
Susan practicing architect. And as I see things one way and act as an academic, I see it
Fitzgerald as another way. But then when you listen to lived experience, it's not just that the
user groups, not just of the people using the built building, not the people who
might use. But you listen to the lived experience. The people working on the
building. And even if you went further downstream for that, which is a group that
we I have no access to because a lot of those are in China or you know they're
many miles away, but we've shortened this space. Regarding the and fabricators
manufacturers, so I know it's important for the construction of the project, but how
would it impact the users? It's the quality, the quality, because the quality of the
things that have built quality, the things that that the buildings that are constructed
and one of the things that we're constantly we've heard in the last two schools
we've gone into is how bad the quality is and anybody and I see people nodding.
I mean that is we are in a time of profoundly bad like I mean. And because we've
got no trades, you know people aren't in trades anymore, they don't want to work
in trades. It's not very glamorous working in -30. And you know it's it's, it's really
tough and that's the end. That's the getting people in a in a -, 30 to build a building
where they get paid. Not very much. Where there are delays in all the materials.
It's hard to get them to put, you know, really build it well and then when things fall
off the walls, which is literally what we're hearing you know it's it's it's, it's shocking,
but it's always, it's not shocking.

[00:46:30] So by employee you meant the facilities management and the legislations?
Afsaneh
Tafazzoli

[00:46:37] Well, all the all the people. I mean, even within architecture and architecture and engineering firms, if they're how they feel invested in it. So, I mean they're all adding to quality. So, it's not just the, you know it's the group of architects that you see or the person that you see kind of representing a project. In fact, it's an absolute team of people we used to joke, and we worked with the library next door. We used to say we needed a bus to take everybody to the to the meetings because the, the, the, the, there's the, you know, there's all the people working on the project that this is sort of cost estimators. The spec writers, and they're all adding to quality. Some of those never meet the the people's lived experience, all in the trance.

[00:47:35] It's interesting because we talk about the quality of environment, but component is the quality of the working conditions of people building the built environment.
Stéphane
Roche

[00:47:55] Exactly. And fabricating the materials.
Susan
Fitzgerald

[00:48:12] Hi I'm Nirmal, I am from the Dalhousie university and I am very new in the project. Not years, just five or six months. I'm not in architecture, I'm more on computer science and I'm working with the project called visualization but to decide the quality, I just want to share my experience because before coming here as a PhD student, I was working in a nonprofit organization which works for post disaster relief. And my journey started in 2015. If you have heard, there was a mass in Nepal. So, I'm from Nepal and I was there, and I had that experience. And then I joined the nonprofit organization called? (couldn't hear) where I learned the first things like it's quote UN quote from? (couldn't hear) of that will change in the hospital. So. So the code is it's not the natural disaster that killed people, it's the poorly building that killed people. So, then I that was the first definition of quality I learned in terms of tangible things on the construction. So, we work for we I usually went like village and then talk with different people and then then again, I realized I worked for like Maria Hurricane and then Philippines, and I talked with different homeowners. Then I realized it's not only the quality of building it's this attachment is also their experience attached their emotion attachment, so it's they say like OK, I need to reduce the house for example even strong house. But what

are my emotion with the past house. So, they want to do exactly the same house as they have but will be strong architectural component or the structural component additional. So, we also so it is more related with the value their culture is not only the construction nowadays like building we are concretizing the building but we are forgetting the cultural value of the beauty. And when I came first and then I talked with one of the indigenous people of heritage like it was really beauty. If you go to the downtown, you'll see 80s and that one building is so bad reviews, it doesn't have that like original ethnicity, ethnicity. It doesn't carry our culture value. What are we doing? Are we building a conflict? And then then I realize there are more, more acceptably structural component structure, but there are more other things that is related with the quality that are the cultural value, their emotion, I would say more emotional attached with overall beauty, that's why I realized there is more into the quality. It's not the structural part of the facing part. They're more intangible like like nontangible things that we care about.

[00:51:51]
Terrance
Galvin

Thank you. I think I might just tell an anecdote to address the positive research outcome of the project. One of the stories that I've tabled in teaching at different places is a project that's well known in Canada architecture secret and that was we were looking into it a number of years ago and the question of this lived experience versus the image of it in the magazine and how many awards. It was through an indigenous trend. It's on indigenous territory that school and PC (or BC) and Indigenous friends from Southern Ontario. In elementary that building is great, but we got called in because the building has a series of wood trusses and it's a gymnasium. So when the kids went to play basketball, every time they got a basketball it bounced off these and they couldn't play it wasn't the right know. He and another person got called in, so they built what looks much more like a Costco. Next to this came out. It was on the front page of every magazine. That kind of changed the way we thought about craft, and we all went back to looking at wood and detailing scale and that's what's there. So that's part of this narrative, but this is the other part of the narrative. So from there on I would like to use that building as an example for this. Look at when architects talk to architects. But then there's this other side of the story. Almost always. So when they came they came up and they built this building right next to it. If you look at it Google map you actually see clearly, but that's something that never was published at King Architect. It was never mentioned by the back as a whole, by the way, like 25 years later this lived experience that the community right made us rethink it. And this indigenous firm that went and built this project and they're proud that they actually built the facility as a gymnasium that works for the community so there's this gap. Where do we meet in the middle? How does the design process work with people's voices? So, this is one example of many, and that's the kind of case studies we're looking at in our own group are trying to look at examples that may transcend that right. Examples that might not be so beautiful and may not be published in the magazine, but they're working. They like the building more than they dislike it because of this, so trying to close us in different ways we're trying to close this gap between design and one level and citizens are people at the other level, and that, as you say, all of you, like, there's a complexity in every single one of those issues that is, you know, would take us a long time to unpack

that question of how hard it is going to get fabricated and bring back so I'm trying to look at the gap between the design image of things and how the reality is and I also know many examples. I know many examples where those things do come together, so we're trying to look at those as case studies.

[00:55:04]
David Down

For those that don't know me. I have been on the project since the grant writing process for a while, so. My name is David Down, I am a? (couldn't hear) for the city of Calgary. I was an architect in private practice for many years. I am also an adjunct at the University of Calgary since the 90s so closely involved with the school. Brian and others on the team. But in my work at the City of Calgary and I won't go into too much detail because some of you already know this, we were tasked at the City of Calgary with actually evaluating, defining and communicating quality in architectural design as a way of essentially justifying the work that we were doing, pushing the development community for higher quality, higher standards of quality. So this started some years ago. We started with a process of coming up with a series of evaluating criteria and shopping those around with a lot of stakeholders. Survey with 750 stakeholders to try to assess the gaps in perception and they were wildly different, even within? (couldn't hear). They're designers, we're not data scientists by any means, but we were collecting data and processing it in the best way that our limited resources, the city is not a research institution by any means. So that's why our involvement process is so precious to us, it's provided us with a lot of additional, incredible insight that over the last few years we've evaluated, probably getting close to 3000 building on a scale of one to five and collected data. And I would say maybe to our most recent point, I really value all these together today because it really rings true with a lot of the things that we're doing process wise.? example, when we started this process, there was a real focus on 500 projects a year we evaluated. None of those could be awarded projects in a particular year. Because we get an awarded project every few years. Other ones by well known architects that will get published in the magazines but 500 projects a year. None of those get awarded. I mean, the gap is enormous and we're dealing with all those projects. We're dealing with all different typologies across the spectrum and trying to understand first of all, how we evaluate quality process and use that evaluative system to push developers to higher standards of quality. And one of the big issues is we'll evaluate something that we'll talk about the applicant of over problems are or the architect where they don't meet city expectations, we'll get it to a level that everyone agrees is supportable and then the quality will decline through the process because of available trades and costs are changed and so when we do a post occupancy evaluation, evaluate something at a 405 when it's built. So I mean it's a bit of almost a fool's game in that regard, but it really is a fascinating process and I would think that in terms of the questions that we've asked, the real value of all of this is bringing this diverse group of experts together and for us to be able to learn from kind of a cross disciplinary. And I think the positive that I think has come out of this in the last couple of years is the evolution in the conversation because it has gone to something that was kind of more qualitative, actually this sort of gap between qualitative and quantitative and more about

buildings to something that's more about our response to buildings. And this kind of cognitive and perhaps neurological aspects, emotional aspects, social aspects. I've been talking even more about those things now, and I think that makes this project that's we're going to see Calgary even more challenging and even more difficult to understand. How do we reach the public now? We understand what their perception are how we build a system, a review system, an approval system. It's kind of a wonderful challenge to have I would say that when we started with our project so very silly to try to quantify something like design. But now they're coming back and saying we really appreciate setting parameters around what the cities expectations are because it impacts the purposes and we can promise a better, simpler, smoother process if there's a clear understanding of everyone because we have the right policy that includes these definitions, and that policy dictates the process, and that process, even patents, the architects and the developers ultimate costs because they can't use slow? Low? (couldn't hear) process which is a costly project.

[01:01:04]
Sneha
Mandhan

I have a question. When you're doing the review and evaluation, are you also reviewing the design process or the process of community engagement or like just how the designers got to because in a lot of my work, it's sometimes community engagement gets quantified. It's like, oh, we did, we got 230 survey responses, but the nature of the quality of the responses is not recorded and I'm just curious if part of that evaluation is also evaluating or reviewing the process that the designers undertook to get to the design that they got to

[01:01:54]
David Down

We certainly encourage them to understand how their process impacts the design and how they got to their design because in many cases, we're the ones that were present fan of the authorities having jurisdiction, Planning Commission or City Council review project. We have to represent their process that we have to say yeah, we feel people were brought into it. Here's why they made these design decisions because the designers themselves are always given the opportunity to represent themselves so there is a real push to understand.

[01:02:47]
Anne Cormier

I have a question about what you just spoke about. If I understand well, there's a difference between the time you started the evaluation process and now, and could you be a bit more specific both on the funding you made at the beginning versus the funding you're making now through the evaluation process? And the question you were? The way you were going dealing with that evaluation when you started and the way you're doing it now, I don't know if my question is clear, but I thought I understood that you said that when you started it was. The way you were going dealing with that evaluation when you started and the way you're doing it now, I don't know if my question is clear, but I thought I understood that you said that when you started it was outcomes that are different from the ones that you get now.

[01:03:50] I think when we started, this? more straightforward approach like rate something
David Down from 1 to 5 if it only if it comes into one have a conversation about where the gaps
are

[01:04:04] But when you say rate, what does rate mean?
Anne Cormier

[01:04:06] Yeah so we have, we have a set of evaluation criteria based on six different
David Down elements of the design in each of those elements, there's a whole series of
questions which we ask form which we ask the applicant to ask their project and
all of those are based on requirements that exist within city policy. So if you're in
a particular policy area, there's policy expectations that you're required to...We
don't design the building by any means we don't tell them how to solve this
problem but we say if you come to us with an application, policy requires that you
meet these expectations. We just laid it out in a very simple way, and then we
within each of those place, scale, vitality, sort of basic criteria areas. We rate them
and that just helps us to understand where their project guide is doing a little poor
job at approaching expectations for a better job and you just focus as our
conversation.

[01:05:15] OK. So have you changed this questionnaire between the time you started and
Anne Cormier now or it's the same?

[01:05:26] We changed it in that we've learned it has to respond to various building scales
David Down and typology so you can't evaluate a new library at the same point distribution
centre. Something like that, you'll have to develop it with some flexibility. I mean
by using this what we have seen though, the city, like Calgary, their architects that
apply far more often than other are frequent Flyers that we see constantly. We've
seen their evaluation and submission constantly rise as they understand it more
clearly. How do we these criteria get through the process? I mean, we feel that
equates to higher quality design. They feel it's a policy a, a process.

[01:09:35] Yeah, I think this will go around (the mic) for your answers for the question "how
Terrance did your understanding of quality change since the beginning of the project?" for
Galvin those of us that were here and "what comes to mind when you think and
experience quality in the lived environment?"

[01:09:52]
Afsaneh
Tafazzoli

OK. So yes, how my understanding of quality change. So, in real life I have a full time job that planner with a University of Toronto producing projects. I also have a side job at the OICC to add more of the social value to the project. So, I'm kind of, you know, trying to make that balance between the actual project and being the clients and also you know, bringing all these values so making that change for me in my full time job was that when I'm putting the RSP for a project together and that's the process thing right? To think about OK for this one psychology of project that I'm putting together, just referring to what you said. What are those common criteria that you know I want to put there? As a baseline and I want all the architects that send the proposal to follow and then what are some of the other priorities that we need to add on? And that's where the hard thing actually come into play. That am I the person who should decide? What are the other priorities? Other than the baselines and that's where I get to my let's say, side job. Other job about social value. So, what I'm trying to do and just going through the whole...And research thing is that OK, I tried to reach out to as many people and stakeholders possible from the students in the university to the facilities to the maintenance utilities. Everyone, and talk to them and talk about that shared experience, values and things and not to decide by myself as an individual. So what should be those evaluation criteria given for selecting the architect and what should be the scope of work of that project? So this is a very interesting thing for me because I now have the power to define what are those things and I think it's very important that we have representatives like me in the city you know. Any public procurement, I'm not sure about the private sector, but having a voice in there to know a little bit about this process would help this project to go beyond those baselines.

[01:13:12]
Nathalie Dion

(There was a beginning here, but I couldn't hear it – this section was difficult to hear) There are things that can be defined. There are social values that we might ? (couldn't hear). All of this produces a good project because we don't really know and we don't want to lose some of the criteria that we think make good architecture, so I find it very difficult. The difficulty of this... We could say that the project is met. First of all, you (Terrance) mentioned it was to be used to play basketball it offers you to play basketball but, how do we manage if you know comparable projects and builds meet all the criteria, how does the criteria in it make the project better? It's accessible, it's great, but then there's the question of feeling, too. And it will always be very difficult. It's something that you know, you go into a project and there's something that you feel in relation to the city, the relation to the people and how they appreciate it there. So, I find it very interesting and I wonder, because you were talking about quality of the building itself, and that's true. How do we come together all together and manage to define something that will clearly help us define quality and in the end, they are building that will make people say "oh that's quality". I guess somewhere with all this they might need things that we don't know why.

[01:15:18] Stéphane Roche I think I have really covered...but I will maybe change? At the beginning of the project, maybe I had quite narrow understanding of environment. Essentially, as I mentioned, the physical characteristics really linked to the physical of the building. Also, my perception was limited as well because I had this idea of quality that's an absolute. And regarding what I knew, the query of data and the position that I made me realize that even for a specific intrinsic characteristic could improve the quality of the building regarding certain context like you mentioned (Nirmal) with the earthquake in Nepal and so some characteristic of the building could fit in a certain context, but the same characteristic could make the building...less, for another context. This is the idea of the first composite characteristic of the quality, but also the fact that the same building with the same intrinsic characteristic would be good in certain context, but bad in another one, so it's not only defined building, and its relationship with... (sentence ends here)

[01:18:07] Victorian Thibault-Malo So yeah, I think it changed my perception of architecture and in general architectural quality with the architecture, the fact that designers and architects know what they do, and there's a social value in architecture that as you said (Stéphane) that it can fit in the context but not in another. And people in certain contexts as values that are reflected in the architecture. So I feel like we need, we really need the public to be inside the process designed to reflect those values and also and the? (couldn't hear) can be sustainable because it reflects the needs and...(couldn't hear)

[01:19:07] Camille Simard I will take the second question because I am really new. I will add to what we said earlier and say that the ambiance when you arrive somewhere really counts, the way you feel people perceiving the environment they are in. Example, when you step in a building and people seem to have fun and thrive, that's when you appreciate the built environment more, like a domino effect: the more people appreciate the building, the more they seem to have fun, the more YOU enjoy the building, etc. In Québec, there are "rues piétonnes", which are streets blocked from cars and made for walking for a few weeks or months during summer. It's so fun to see people walking and chatting and enjoying the environment and you feel it. I feel like we often talk about quantitative quality, but this is more about qualitative quality, "le ressenti", the experience: the things that are hard to describe but that you can feel.

[01:21:29] Anne Cormier It is related to emotional reception of architecture, for me it is very important to talk about the "felt" more deeply and considering the "sensible / sensitive (French)" of a wider range of people, in time. So, the question of the time, the sensibility, sensitivity to architecture and in time is hyper important, like has

become much more important. I think it was, but I don't think I was realizing how much because we're talking about ourselves right now, it was important to me. Architecture stays here for a long time, like we're in an old building. It's entirely possible that this building will still be operating in many years from now when we are all unfortunately somewhere else. The question of how the perception of architecture true time I think is very important and if we go back to the question of awards in architecture, I think sometime, or most of the time, awards are attributed shortly after the completion of the building and it would be very interesting to wait a little longer, not only to see how the materials survive, but also to see if the appreciation of the building has, how it has fluctuated with time.

[01:23:41]
Sneha
Mandhan

I think for me, this sort of partnership has complicated the idea of quality even more. Thinking about contacts but also but time also in terms of through the day, equality of a place might change. And so how do we? It almost feels like it's just balancing between specificity of lived experiences of sort of intersectional identities, of people who are experiencing those spaces and the need to generalize and measure and compare and standardize to some extent, so it almost...yea I think it's complicated in a lot of different ways and that showing that it's not fixed at all, ever. At some point it becomes a practice in finding a balance.

[01:24:25]
Susan
Fitzgerald

So, I think what has changed in my understanding of quality is really the need for kind of reflective practices and also sharing...Both in terms of...among different groups, very different sort of very extended groups of people. Also, the need for both practice and research and how they're sort of and also teaching, because of course they start all kind of work together and you test ideas and I think the other thing that that that's also been brought up is time. So, you almost need all of those ingredients to really reflect on quality.

[01:25:42]
Nirmal
Adhikari

I believe that the positive experience of equality should reflect a harmonious blend of functionality and emotional regiments. Whether to participate in design, process or opportunity for personal personalization so that they can personalize.

[01:26:15]
Terrance
Galvin

I think two specific things that have certainly changed in my mind since we sat down and started writing the grant. The 1st is my question. You mentioned with the kind of shift from an honor your wider range of buildings and then built environment. Of course, not only buildings, right, but master planning CFL's (?), clerks, community projects and programs as well. So that's me isn't a good one.

That's number one, number two take the box (?) for sure, but it was going to be about some right indigenous word and that was a fairly long discussion at the end, you know the way it was framed with quality-built environment. It didn't take that much, but I've been really happy to see it. As you saw this morning that the indigenous voices have joined and become a major part of the project. And I always thought I wasn't new to me that idea, but the fact it's been folded properly into the project to talk about all the rights, right. You've heard like last year, sessions and November sessions from people from indigenous communities or something. We're talking about designers or designers, but I'm in the tiny house I don't own Internet I can't fix the windows. I don't have water. So what does quality mean for me? Expanding it to that level and having that grass first discussion that included indigenous voices was important and I'm really glad that the project has shifted to where it is today.

[01:27:40] My sense of the understanding of the definition of quality in the build environment
David Down broadened and got more complicated. I think that the sense of individual perception and the emotional response to building, it's become more important than? (the mic cut). We're trying to understand how that sends emotional connection with buildings that influence or system as it is influencing the built environment to a certain extent as much as policy of the city, so we feel some responsibility to be more responsive. Stéphane, I really like your comment on the individual perception and I'll just, I'll just have a quick case study. You're probably all or many of you are familiar with the library. It was a bit of a case study at the Calgary. Most people think that's a very good building, but there are some segments of the population like disabled population that thought the designing was very poor. So, depending on who you speak to...We need to look and see where we made those failures and make them successes. I love that building of course, but I can't really love it completely because I know there's people that don't, and my job is to make everybody happy.

[01:30:20] So, Camille, is there a strong consensus about what is quality in this group?
Terrance
Galvin

[01:31:22] I noticed that a lot of you said that perception changes depending on who speaks,
Camille who you are. Also, people that can go in the building and people that cannot. Easy
Simard to access mobility, making sure people can get to the built environment and that it is easy for them to. And that accessibility is physical, but also emotional. Design with purpose instead of just making. Integration of data into existing territory. There is also taking into consideration the reality of the people living in the area specifically because they're the ones living in it. The difference between how we

thought the space would be used VS how it's really used. Taking lived experiences and applying them to the built environment to make quality better. There was also a pretty interesting part about people in trades, maybe, not wanting to be in trades anymore? Making it more difficult to have good environment. Also, the city and familiarity and people's love for the space changes their perception of it. Using quality to justify the work being done, that's also interesting.

[01:34:06]
Terrance
Galvin

Yeah, I think that one of the things that was that since we've been on the project, we all find that quality is more complex than to define it right is more complex than we thought. I think the respective practice has increased and I think you said it well Susan, you know, practice research certainly can teach, which is why the student can only this one for this project. So I think practice research, teaching, time, those are important.

[01:36:19]
Stéphane
Roche

I realized that this scale effect, depending on the scale, you could have a different understanding of quality.

[01:37:13]
Afsaneh
Tafazzoli

I think one question that came up from both of you was OK how can we keep having like the sophisticated and the right word like architecture and still having, you know all these values added to the architecture. You also mentioned that you were a bit worried ...? (couldn't hear)

[01:37:36]
Anne Cormier

That can be a way of summarizing, I'm not sure sophistication is the right word. I'm not sure Sophisticating is the right word and maybe Natalie has another way of more complete way but the question of affect I think is hyper important aspect of architecture because...The difference between. Maybe I'll go back to Terry's example that that was a good example about affect and it shows the complexity of affect. Because on one hand, the dumb butts of the gymnasium you're talking about built next to Seabird, it's cool in term of affect worked because it responded to a need, however, I've not seen the butts so I don't know how it is, but from what you've said, I think it's unfortunate that it couldn't go further than being a dumb Costco butts? (Maybe I didn't hear this right). The multi dimensions of affect need to be considered in the definition of quality. And it's not obvious to do because they vary from one individual to another as well. So let's keep it that way.

[01:40:04] It also goes back to what you mentioned Camille, you go into a building and
Nathalie Dion there's a lot of people who appreciate it...so what created that appreciation? How
come this project works so well? And then you would have a grid of criteria. You
got this build with all the same criteria as the other. You tick the boxes of what you
think what makes this.... what creates this affect? I think it's something that is
very difficult to quantify.

[01:40:58] And also, it varies from this variation of the reception of the architecture. From
Anne Cormier one person to another, it's broad. So, I think part of the definition of quality is the
sensible perception. Does at some point that range of sensible perception
converge to a positive sensitive perception?

[01:42:06] Because the building, the Costco or the fabricated building that houses the youth.
David Down Is seen positively by the community because they love the use. They love the
availability of the use, the accessibility of the building, how much more would they
appreciate the building if it had been moved closer to this, not intersection, but
place where there was some architectural sensitivity to the building. Would they
appreciate it more? Or is it just that it's perfectly accessible?

[01:42:55] Just to add to the complexity of, just like we said, time scales of time like
Terrance geological time. You think in 10,000 years 50 maybe one, right. So the other piece
Galvin is this is historical that building's 30 years ago, right? So now that phrase, that
Jean-Pierre showed this morning, right. Nothing about us without us right there
be no indigenous bank council building being done today, 30 years later. Without
that architect, that ended up doing the second building being part of it from the
beginning, right? Or some. So even there, say in 30 years we move from the
projects being done for council communities right to projects being (?) So there's
also that historical lens, if that has a very different critical aspect than saying It's
done far enough away in time that there's a process again for quality. I think it's
right in all (?) So that has been a public institution and the way the Community
works is is now being included compared to then. And I think what we're asking
this project is how do we do that even much more so right now to include voices
of every version of public community from the

[01:44:30] So is it fair to say that we all want to get to that middle ground? And let's say
Afsaneh having the design excellence as well as all the values that we (?)
Tafazzoli

[01:45:58]
Nirmal
Adhikari

So I have something. So, The thing is, as human beings, we evolve our perception of quality is just involved. So, if we are thinking in terms of quality for now, we are developing a quality. So, we need to think like, what's the next time spending to please evaluate that particular quality like all the quality we have because our expectation of quality keeps growing like changes as we work. So what quality 20 years ago is different than what quality is not. So if we are developing some sort of quality here, So what time expand we're expecting in existence, like through work, like what we spend, like when do we need to reevaluate?

[01:46:57]
Susan
Fitzgerald

I'll tell us a story about this building. And so this building was actually designed as it was designed as both a museum and also a school. So and overtime I mean if you go through the, I mean you're only seeing half of the school, you're not actually seeing the design studios, this is actually students with the students working up there, we may see them up there, but this school, you know, is well over 100 years old and it's sort of kind of being able to change it. But I mean, you may look at it and say well, it's really old. It looks like it's, you know, whatever. But I mean, it has a certain quality and then, but then we worked on the library, the architects, we kind of showed them the school and said this is terrible. It's a really terrible building because the first thing you see is the stairs. It's not accessible and all we see here is it's not accessible and they couldn't move beyond that and they saw it. They said it's like this sort of colonial building that the next in between the next the law court but you know, that's how they saw it. So it's all in different perspectives. Now you know a little bit about the school.

[01:48:16]
Terrance
Galvin

So, is that good? Do you feel comfortable attending? That's a good summary consensus.

[01:48:29]
Stéphane
Roche

Just because we really, I think we're focused on building. Not, but in terms of scale, if we talk about the quality of the built environment, I don't know for example, the scale of neighborhood changes a lot. That means if you take one building independently, the quality could be good. It could be considered as a good building useful, but if you look at it, it's surrounding, its neighborhood, devaluation of perception could be different.

[01:49:26] And I think it's really a connection to land as well, like contextual light to what
Afsaneh you're doing and not just designing isolation, but to look at all your surroundings.
Tafazzoli And I think that's one of the main teachings. Collections will land in nature. It's not
just, you know, narrowed down to the, let's say, the lots building or designing your
project, it's about all those interactions that may be adding to that, let's say space,
so.

[01:49:58] As I mentioned in the beginning, connectivity through the mobility transportation
Stéphane infrastructure role in the perception of quality.
Roche

[01:50:19] Just to (?) on Stéphane, I also think so the quality change is also from the
Nirmal perspective of the purpose of the building. So same building if we think for the
Adhikari different purpose that might, we might think different, we're thinking the quality for
that particular purpose building if we are thinking we use that for the different
purpose of, for example, same building if we use as a hospital that might change
the perspective.

[01:50:55] And maybe if I can just comment again on the work that we're doing, all of this
David Down data we (?) also, beyond the six elements. We're evaluating it, we're evaluating
site architecture and so on-site scale. You must meet regular requirements
regarding connectivity within the site connectivity. The neighborhood piece is also
very important to achieving basic quality and I have to say that some of it does a
lot of reviews of the architecture school. For many years, one of the things
students look at its area outside and so architects as well, they're often not looking
at the impacts of their building beyond. And it's a constant conversation.

[01:52:11] So, we're going to summarize with Camille and then we're going to leave (?)
Terrance
Galvin

ROOM 4

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room4_ Location: Medjuck Architecture Building - B015			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Josie	Auger	Athabasca University	Athabasca University
Fatih	Sekercioglu	Toronto Metropolitan University	Toronto Metropolitan University
Gavin	McCormack	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Brian	Lilley	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Bill	Black	Calgary Construction Association	University of Calgary
Miriam	MacNeil	Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC)	National Partners
Simon	Blakeley	reThink Green	Laurentian University
Doramy	Ehling	Rick Hansen Foundation	National Partners
Steve	Bowers	Pedesting Corporation	University of Calgary
Taly-Dawn	Salyn	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Tess	Adebar	University of British Columbia	University of British Columbia
James	Barrett	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Negarsadat	Rahimi	Concordia University	Concordia University

Room 4 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-06-17

Report produced by

Barrett, James (*Dalhousie University*)

4.1. Summary

The group concluded that quality in the built environment is a shared journey and evolving definition, shaped by the lived experiences and perspectives of the communities and individuals who live within. Quality emerges from a shared endeavor to create spaces that facilitate belonging, safety, liberation, and delight while embracing the diverse needs and aspirations of past, present and future generations.

Question 1) Can you please share one example of a positive lived experience in the built environment? In your opinion, what is the main positive research outcome of the project after two years?

- The group explored ideas of housing, indigeneity, creating space for dialogue, as well as more tangible learnings revolving around research methodologies, student and community engagement, and applicable learnings for the private sectors.

Examples include integrations of traditional knowledge in architectural practice that have been revealed throughout 2 years of research, new opportunities for cross disciplinary collaboration, and a general broadening of language and design understanding from collaborators that have no formal architectural or planning education.

Locations discussed include the rural northern Ontario, the Skyway system in Calgary, and European cities.

Question 2) What comes to mind when you think and experience quality in the built environment? How has your understanding of quality changed since you joined the project?

- The group explored themes of accessibility, user needs and participatory design, resource demands of achieving quality in the built environment, and collective knowledge. The group concluded that their understanding has changed to a position that quality cannot be defined, as its parameters change

depending on the user and the context.

Examples include broadening the understanding of quality from a building centered approach to a more holistic approach that considers users, the environment, and community.

4.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name

[00:00:01] My name is Fatih Sekercioglu, I'm an associate professor with the School of
Fatih Occupational and Public Health from Toronto Metropolitan University.
Sekercioglu

[00:00:45] Hi, my name is Simon Blakely. I'm the regional manager for Rethink Green,
Simon Blakely which is a nonprofit organization in Northern Ontario. We're a community
partner affiliated with Laurentian University, the McEwan School of Architecture.
Pleasure to be here.

[00:01:03] I'm Steve Bowers, director of business development and sales operations at
Steve Bowers Pedesting Corporation. We do map for the built environment for accessibility. I'm
in from Calgary and originally grew up in Halifax.

[00:01:25] I'm Josie Auger, I'm associate professor at Athabasca University. I'm here as a
Josie Auger steering committee member and looking forward to our next couple of days
together.

[00:01:37] I'm Negar Rahimi and PhD student at Concordia University with background of
Negarsadat architecture and working and on the Research Grant project.
Rahimi

[00:01:48] Hi, Doramy Ehling, I'm the CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation and a member
Doramy of the steering committee and really excited to be part of the conversation today.
Ehling

[00:01:57] I'm Gavin McCormack, professor in the Department of Community Health
Gavin Sciences at the Cumming School of Medicine at the University of Calgary. I lead
McCormack a research program in the built environment and healthy living lab.

[00:02:11] I'm James Barrett. I'm a master's student at the Faculty of Architecture at Dal,
James Barrett and my involvement is through my work with Susan Fitzgerald.

[00:02:20] Brian Lilley	I'm Brian Lilly. I'm an associate professor here at Dalhousie University. I've been involved since the inception of the conference and I'm a site chair for the Halifax Conference.
[00:02:33] Miriam MacNeil	I'm Miriam MacNeil. I'm a senior director with public services and Procurement Canada. I've traveled from Ottawa, we're one of the national partners on this research project and we're happy to support the work. I'm an urban planner by training and lead a team that does planning and design in the parliamentary precinct, so all our buildings of our national parliament. It would be great to understand this research and hopefully bring it in eventually in our procurement, RFP documents, so this work is super important and can really make a difference in how we design and build key spaces around our Parliament and elsewhere in Canada. So thank you and it's a pleasure to meet all of you.
[00:03:25] Shyniaya Duffy	I'm Shyniaya Duffy. I have a few roles. I'm an intern architect and a sessional instructor, an indigenous pathways program coordinator at University of Calgary. And I graduated from Dalhousie, so I'm happy to be back.
[00:03:45] Taly-Dawn Salyn	Hi everyone. My name is Taly. I am a Master of Social Work Student at the University of Calgary, specializing in community development.
[00:03:57] Fatih Sekercioglu	For the first timers, the question is, can you please share one example of a positive lived experience in the built environment? So that's what you can think when you have your turn. For the others, in your opinion, what is the main positive research outcome of the project after two years? So, what is the main positive research outcome or the project after two years? So, from the process perspective, for our recording purposes - and again your name will not be attached to kind of any outcome in the report per se - but for the ease of documentation the organizers ask you to share your name, organization, and the research site you are associated with.
[00:05 :48] Simon Blakely	It's Simon Blakely from Rethink green. This is my second trip, if you like, as part of this research cluster, I was in Calgary last year, and it was a great introduction to it. In terms of my involvement, I'm in northern Ontario, rural, very different to where I come from in the United Kingdom, where I spent the 1st 10 years of my career, if you like, doing kind of long-range planning, strategic planning, master planning of new developments in towns and cities. So, to move somewhere that's full of lakes and moose, as I found out, to my detriment, I hit a moose within the first six months, and it's a culture shock. And to learn lots about indigenous peoples as well along the way, still learning every day and still so much more to do. I suppose in terms of the positive outputs of the partnership locally, working with the McEwen School of Architecture, it's been great because a lot of what they do is very much infused by integrating some indigenous ways of designing into different approaches, lot of wood-built construction methods and so with them what we've done is a series of initiatives to engage people, stakeholders across the wider area. So, we've done some design charettes, we've engaged high school students at the at the center, we did a walk across the city. A lot of this was trying to build on Sudbury 2050. It was an international urban design contest which took place

during COVID had more time on my hands and was stuck behind zoom like everybody else, but we really try to reenvision and imagine with a group of about 20 community partners, how could Sudbury be improved to make it more resilient? We work with nonprofits and really try to pull together our partners and work with the city to inform its community energy and emissions plan. Northern Ontario is a tough crowd. Not everybody believes in sustainability, or climate change, but Sudbury, fortunately, did declare a climate change emergency and has proceeded to build out a greenhouse gas inventory and action plans. So, we're very much integral to that. And so, my work here, really, and learning from all of all of you across Canada, is to try and discern what these best practices are and how can we bring that back to the communities that we serve to make Northern Ontario more sustainable and a better place.

[00:08:45]
Steve
Bowers

So as a guy who grew up in this town, Halifax, you generally see, you know negative 10 negative 15 is your max number that you're going to see, as far as your winters go right. So, I moved out to Alberta in 1996, and I moved there on November 11th. And I remember landing and it was negative 45. So, it paints a pretty quick picture about, you know, the difference in dynamics of the temperature out West. In the context of this of the question, a positive experience that I've experienced in the built environment in Calgary is our wonderful plus 15 networks. So, for folks that don't know, I think most of the folks at this table do know, we have a system there that connects the downtown core between buildings that's 15 feet above the major roads, so you can stay inside and not have to deal with negative 45 in the winters. So that's a great experience that I've had from the built environment in Calgary. Who would want to roll around at. Well thought out process for our architects in in Alberta.

[00:09:59]
Josie Auger

I'm Josie Auger with Athabasca University. And how has my understanding of quality changed since the beginning of the project? Well, I look at Montreal and Calgary and Halifax and right from the beginning, you know what stood out for me from Montreal was the Indigenous panel that we had with Sylvia McAdam there as well. William Moran was there and there was some young like indigenous people. And so there was also elders from Kanyan Hayaka, they were a couple, and they were very strong orators of their culture, of their oral history. And so, you know, when we talked about, like housing, housing was the essential topic really, because the lived experience gravitated in and around the housing crisis in on First Nations and also housing in an urban setting. And so how does that have to do with architecture per say. Is that more of a you know is it beautiful? Is it purposeful? Is it meeting user needs? So, from the lived experience of indigenous people who have experienced crowded housing, especially on First Nations reserves, that has been a huge outcry. I was thinking about Carmela's talk this morning, both the inward and the outward, and so I was kind of joking with William about our belly buttons, like sometimes they're inner and outer belly buttons. When you say in Cree, where are you from? You're identifying like your "utsi", because your belly button is your "utsi". So where are you from? Is your maternal ties to place making and to the land, and our Earth. So where are you from? The inner and the outer aspects of knowing whether it's the individual or the collective lived experience is hard to gauge because people don't know what they don't know,

right? Just as many indigenous people, myself included, architecture has been a dream. However, few indigenous people are entering architecture which they bring that two eyed seeing approach to the work that they're doing. Moving on to Calgary, we talked about like through the lens of lived experience, and we tried to use that honest reflection of the awareness wheel and having people share their senses, their feelings, their thoughts, their intentions, and their actions going forward, when they think about what quality in that is lived experience no matter where they are. Some people might feel like it's more out on the land, more with nature, for the Mi'kmaq people that might be out near Peggy's Cove, what they call Indian Harbour. I went to the one of the stores near there and I thought to myself, Gee whiz, like, you know, it's 2024. Is it possible that we can change the name? And I think that's someplace where we think that quality resides in how we refer to one another. There must be an indigenous word for indigenous peoples in Mi'kmaq, in Cree we would say Nehiyawak. So why couldn't it be of something like that, Nehiyawak Harbour or something like that? We're always being called something, whether it's Indians or Aboriginal peoples, these aren't words that we use to describe who we are. Whether you're Scottish or whether you're British, or whether you're French, you're going to refer to who you are, just as we want to refer to who we are and not be like called you're this you're that and the other thing, we want to be recognized and our places need to be recognized in that way. So when we look at the thing about the inward and the outward, about where we're from, that lens of lived experience really is from the time when we're in our mother's wombs, to the time that we're learning to walk and talk and grow, from teenage years to our adult years, to our elder years, so our lens of lived experience changes across time and space. And so, while we're here and we're talking about my understanding of quality, that has changed since the beginning of the project. I'm grateful. I'm a lifelong learner, and I'm grateful that we can continue to learn and to grow. One of the things that pops out to me with regards to the overall question is this idea of caring and sharing. When we come back to the questions, I can't see what you see as an architect and you can't see what I see like as an indigenous person, but we're here to talk about that balance, I suppose, and perspective of moving things forward. So, it's really changing as we go, and I don't want to get too much into things because I know tomorrow's another day.

[00:16:50]
Negarsadat
Rahimi

Thank you. So, to answer first, what's the main positive research outcome? I think my belief that this program is going to make methodology for the quality and built environment and as Josie just mentioned, making a bridge between different disciplines. From the architecture view, residents and all over. So here is a way to make a bridge and I think the outcome would be a new methodology based on research for design and architecture. My understanding has changed over time. I've been working always as an architect, and I've been admiring lots of buildings that as mentioned are winners of different competitions. In this convention, this partnership, I learned that I must look from different sides like. I see different spaces. People's lived experience in the buildings and built environment, not from just the side of architect or designer or residents. How they feel and from these different aspects. So to me it was the most change that happened.

[00:19:09]
Doramy
Ehling

Thank you. For me, this has been probably one of the most exciting projects I've had the privilege to work on because you know I'm very passionate. I come from a cross section. My father was an architect, my brother is an architect. We had lots of conversations at the table about the importance of design and that buildings are built for people. In the work that I do with the foundation, it's all about removing barriers for people with disabilities and looking at a broader perspective when you go to look at design and not just do the same thing that you've done before, and so how do we change design culture? And that's the challenge we took on seven years ago. And the closer we get to seeing success, the more pushback occurs. So having an opportunity where we could come together through the three conventions, I have to agree with Josie. The first convention was really mind altering in terms of hearing from First Nations, from the community and hearing all the different perspectives in the room and really realizing that we have to be really open to that and looking through an intersectional lens. Som while I may come from a disability perspective, you know, there will always be many other voices around the table. As we heard this morning, how do we create those tables for consultation early in the design process, so you don't end up with something and then you take it out and say here it is and then you go well, I'm sorry the concrete has been poured, there's little we can do. So, I think there's a tremendous opportunity here as a collective community to be allies, to learn from one another, and to also get a chance to have input to the research that will inform policy in the future, and that's what I'm hopeful about. And that for me is one of the biggest outputs so far, is just creating those spaces for dialogue because it's through those dialogues at every convention, we've learned more and more, and we reflect more. And so, I think that's exciting. The second positive output for me is the engagement of the students, because that for me, that's the generation that's actually going to design the future buildings and I can only hope that we are in a very different place than where we are currently because a lot of what I see on a daily basis is that entrenchment of no, no, we have to do it this way because we've done it always that way. We've got to move beyond that. Because otherwise, we're shutting out huge percentages of us of our communities and I don't think that's really what we want to do in terms of the objectives and the vision we set for ourselves. So just really appreciate the conversation.

[00:21:34]
Gavin
McCormack

So, from my experience and I guess my perspective on this project, when I was asked to come onto this project two years ago, I was a little bit unsure as to what it was. It seemed like this massive beast. I don't work in this area. I come from an area of epidemiology where we like to estimate relationships and count in populations, right? And so, a lot of the work that I've done before I came to this project was basically done these built characteristics affect these health outcomes in the population or specific populations? And so, for me, being involved in this project has sort of increased my awareness of the need of doing transdisciplinary kind of work and certainly realizing that there's a lot more stakeholders and partners invested in this problem around quality in the built environment than I had originally thought, where we used to have sort of the token urban plan or the token transportation planner. And that was sort of our gateway into disseminating some of this epidemiological research that we were doing. And so, I think this whole program of work has provided a platform for that and certainly I think has been effective. In my experience, I've become

much more aware of, you know, the IT I need to talk to more people and the work that I do individually to make what I do relevant and to understand that it's not just about the numbers, you know, is there a strong relationship between X&Y. But in terms of X, what does that mean to people, right? It's not just whether they have it, but what's their experience with it? Is there attachment to it? Do they feel belonging with it? Is it inclusive? And so, on so. Certainly, for me I benefit from being part of the project, even though I was quite nervous signing up to begin with and it's been great in terms of building partnerships and really looking at this as from a transdisciplinary kind of way of designing, way of researching and evaluation.

[00:23:47]
Trishtina
Godoy-
Contois

Hello. I'm Trish. I am one of the indigenous students and a research assistant with Athabasca University and I'm also on the steering committee and a resident troublemaker, antagonizing all of you. So, in terms of the positive outputs that I've learned. Coming into this, the first experience in Montreal was quite a dramatic one that hit people hard and what was positive to see as an outcome of that is people in this room and in this Group are very action-oriented individuals. So just seeing that progress from convention to convention and being able to invite new members and even different faculties like social work to come into settings where you're talking about the built environment is probably the first time in my life, I've seen people really look at it holistically and people are very uncomfortable with being uncomfortable. But this group makes it easy to do that because we tend to try to do something to remediate that feeling. So that's been a very positive output and just exploring the system deeper and having those critical conversations where we're disagreeing but it's because we're trying to arrive at a consensus. So, it's been overall very positive. Thank you.

[00:25:20]
James
Barrett

James Barrett, Dalhousie University. I'm brand new to this research cluster, so I won't be able to speak to any of the research outcomes, but my own experience of quality in the built environment is something I've been thinking about since I started my architectural education. I was in accounting and finance before this, which was quite dry and very different, but over the last few years, I'd say I've moved around a lot. I've lived in of a lot of urban centers, both in Canada and in Europe. And so, a lot of my ideas around positive experiences of quality in the built environment are through these kinds of lenses of contextualizing it within different cultures, and what it means to different groups of people. And what I've really found, especially in urban centers, is that the positive experience quality in the built environment is also directly related to, I think the quality of public space and how these kinds of social infrastructures support daily life. And again, what it means to these different global communities. How it can be equitable or diverse but not general and how it can again support daily life.

[00:26:37]
Brian Lilley

I've got two observations and just an aside. I grew up in Calgary and now I'm in Halifax and. So, I understand where you're coming from. I'd also like to just say that I appreciate Josie's remarks very much and I my own history. I moved here back to Canada from Europe after practicing in Europe for 10 years and one of the first projects I got involved and in fact was for a First Nations Health Center, and it turned my world upside down. I have to say. Usually, we talk

about time and money and architecture. These are, you know, the normal gods. But in fact, by the end of that project I was very proud to have tripled the budget on the project and to take in three more years than was projected. And the reason for that was creating a community work group that helped build the structure. Bent Greenwood Timber was used as the structure. So, this was something I think we all have to do occasionally, which is just put ourselves out on the boundary of what we do and just really see what the possible performance is. So, for me, I think I've got a huge - Josie say you were talking earlier or maybe writing about traditional knowledges, traditional ecological knowledge to this day, I think that's one of the best discoveries that's come to my life in this kind of most recent reincarnation. So that's brilliant. And then if I could just say a word about our project group, we're doing research into schools and we're trying to develop feedback mechanisms from them and we're looking at it from two different ways. One is a more conventional way, we have a sociologist, anthropologist on our team. We've done school research. We've just learned the whole thing about ethics approval, which I'm sure Jean Pierre knows very well. But this is a massive undertaking. It's almost like doing a small project. It's just something you have to get through to get to something good and the next stage of our project is actually working with the province. They have actually a manual, the recommendations for school design. And so right now, I think very apropos to the slides this morning, we're looking for those mechanisms of taking observations into some kind of design framework. So that's about where we're at right now.

[00:29:29]
Miriam
MacNeil

Miriam MacNeil, with the public services and Procurement Canada. So, thank you and it resonates with me, Brian, what you said about being at the edge because in our world, you know, as you know when we put requirements together for a project, it's very regimented and it has to pass many tests. So for me to be a national partner here and part of the steering committee as well, is really kind of putting me on the edge, but then I can come back and bring the important work that this research project is doing and all your voice is to the work we do and I think since Montreal, and I'm sorry, I missed Calgary, and here today just seeing the potential of the research to really affect change in certainly in national procurement for built environment and public spaces. So, the promise of the research project, Jean Pierre, is huge, so we're happy to be supporting the work and all the voices that we hear today and see the work of the students as well. So, I'm really excited to be a part of the project and I think the spirit of the young people, the indigenous young people we heard in Montreal is still with us today. Like it's so strong, it's beautiful. So, I just wanted to note that. It's like a wave that's following us and super important. And I love troublemakers. So, to have met Josie and Trish. Like your voices, and then the way you speak about the project and is special. So, thank you. And the other thing I'll say is you'll hear me throughout the two days is when we talk and when I listen to you all is I'm always in the parliamentary precinct, so around the national legislature and the spaces there. And so, this idea of the eyes and seeing the eyes and bringing many eyes to those places and those perspectives really resonate with me. And I kind of keep thinking conceptually about when we prepare our work and design requirements - whose eyes am I bringing when we do that? This idea of many eyes resonates with me right now. And I love this idea of two eyes seeing tomorrow. Josie mentioned it, and I've had the experience of walking the site with many people from other

countries and most recently residential school survivors because we're planning for a National Monument on Parliament Hill, and every time I walk the site and I'm with others and see the site with their eyes, I think we're not doing things right, or we could do much better, I guess I'll put it in a positive light. So this research I think allows us to bring these many eyes to the work we do in public procurement, so just know that. Thank you.

[00:32:36]
Shyniaya
Duffy

I think I'm supposed to speak to a positive experience in the built environment, but I'm going to go on some tangents. I'm also a troublemaker. I think there's a pattern of who the troublemakers are in the group. Josie, you said that something about the little representation of indigenous people within architecture. I have a stat for that. The number of licensed indigenous architects in Canada comprises .02% of the total number of licensed architects across Canada, so very small. I think the total number is about 15 and hopefully that number is rising, some personal stuff I'm working on is promoting the architecture profession to indigenous youth, part of that is partnering to design a free lab here, hopefully in the next couple of years. What started my thinking of a tangent was that a positive experience in the built environment for me is in my backyard, the house that I'm living in currently. It was built at a time where instead of being backed by an alley, it is backed by a green space with a walking path and stuff like that. And that is so important to me. And so I could literally sit in my backyard and feel like I'm in a forest. This idea of two eyed seeing and bringing in like multiple lenses into what the built environment frames not only the built environment itself and everything I practice is with the two eyed seeing approach. Working within architecture as an indigenous person it is very important to acknowledge the strengths of Western knowledge through one eye and the strengths of indigenous knowledge through the other eye. And for me personally, I try to emphasize the strength of indigenous knowledge. There are certain strengths that I try to take from Western culture include structure, efficiency, cost analysis and stuff like that. Whereas everything else I try to bring in ideas of indigenous ways of knowing and how we do that within the work that I do is we very heavily engage with communities that we work with and talk to them about what it means to be in a building to them, because one of the strengths of Western knowledge, unfortunately, is that a rectilinear structure is very cost effective and efficient. And so the question comes up of, how can we make it feel circular in some aspects without completely going away from that grid or one project I'm working on right now, one of the conversations we had with elders was, how can we make this building a reflection of the land rather than being imposed on it and a big part of that is incorporating nature, but also taking inspiration from the land rather than the current built environment. I'm very happy to like to be involved in this to give this other perspective, both combined in architecture and as an indigenous person.

[00:36:54]
Taly-Dawn
Salyn

Listening to all is amazing. I feel a little bit out-of-the-box because I have no design background. Any of my own personal research is not in design. A little bit of a troublemaker too. I also came into this project a little bit before the Convention last year. One thing that I've notice, I'm just going to speak to our Calgary team, our positive outputs have very much centered around relationships and relationships with each other as a team, relationships

between students and relationships between community partners. So, I can't speak about the design aspect of our Calgary team, but we have worked really hard. We've listened to what our community partners mentioned to us that there's this big gap between academia and community. And so, we've worked hard to try and bridge that gap a little bit. We've done different initiatives. Brian has invited Brian Sinclair. He's invited community partners into his classroom to do presentations. So, we're really trying to bring those community voices, those lived experiences into the academic world.

[00:39:13]
Fatih
Sekercioglu

Thank you. And I'm the last, Fatih from Toronto Metropolitan University. Like Gavin, I'm also a public health person. I guess one of the few public health people on the project. I worked in the field for about 15 years before joining academia. I was a public health inspector and then the manager for the public health Inspector for about nine years. So I just brought both field experience plus some academic experience, but this project by itself was definitely an eye opener to me. Just thinking outside the box, teaching housing and built environment since I joined the university, just training public health inspectors or environmental health officers based on where you live, they have to kind of the job descriptions there. Talking with my colleagues from the architecture, we have 3 architects in our group, 1 Urban Planner and our community partners are also architects. Just understanding that language, you know, award-winning projects like for my language, it would be visiting a cheesecake factory for a meal, then I come and say, OK, award-winning is something interesting and understanding case studies. So eventually there are lots of variances around it. But it was very rewarding to think outside the box with those terms. Working with students over the past couple of years, just designing different projects. And I personally tried to bring more health equity determinants of health kind of perspective. And I'm starting a project with a master student in public health, which is exciting to me. So that's that students focus on her thesis will be this project. But overall, I'm happy to be a part of this project. This is my third year I was a part of it. Since the get go, but I think every new meeting with our internal meetings in our site, I just learned something new from my colleagues and partners. Now, as the moderator, my task is to walk you through the second part. So, for newer folks, what comes to mind when you think and experience quality in the built environment? That's the question for you and for other folks. We are going to discuss how has your understanding of quality changed since you joined the project?

[00:42:14]
Simon
Blakely

Gosh, I got to go first again. Being born and raised in the United Kingdom, I didn't know any different to that growing up. I'm from Leeds in northeastern England, which is probably the birthplace really of the industrial Revolution which has caused a lot of the damage that we see around the world right now. I mean, there's been some progress along the way - people have been brought out of poverty in some parts of the world. There's been good elements to it, but then obviously now over the last few years learning about colonialism and the impact of where it came from and all different approaches to it, how that's reflecting architecture and the design of communities. It's really eye opening. Like everybody said, to kind of like, really reflect and look at different approaches and try to, as you said, to try to find ways to integrate different approaches. Having spent the first part of my career working for the private

sector, largely a lot of pressure from the top down to deliver this project on time. When you just start in your career, you don't really have too much power or influence to push back against people that want you to do stuff that way. I did a master's in urban design at the time. For me it's important that we start to integrate better environmental performance into these developments, at least achieve the minimum green space standards, not try to fight that, but ideally go above and beyond. It can be as we're seeing now with many best practice examples of community gardens and interactive children's play areas and energy results, different approaches to the design of public space and buildings themselves just over the years attending different conferences about green roof technologies and solar systems and working with people in Northern Ontario now that are really trying to do some awesome stuff that's not spoken about. And so, I want to help give them advice and help share that best practice with all of you and with people in our region and inspire more change. So yeah, I think for me it's just continuously learning.

[00:45:02]
Steve
Bowers

And again, Steve Bowers here. This is an interesting conversation, guys, because, you know, I do feel like Taly, I'm kind of new to this project, the organization that I work for, I've been with since March 4th of this year. We're a startup. So, when you're in startup mode, you're wearing 17 hats. And because I'm the technology guy within the organization, things get thrown at me every morning and it's a totally dynamic day-to-day for me every single day. I didn't even really have a lot of time to read all the content before I got to this event. I was literally doing LinkedIn updates yesterday on the plane. Just to give you some context on how crazy it is in my world when it comes to technology, I've been in technology my whole working career since 97, I've been on the rocket ship of technology growth. If you think about you know how fast technology has changed the world with all these magic boxes we have in our hands right now, you know we're dealing with computational power today in our pockets that they didn't dream of having, you know, 50 years ago, right. So, the growth of the industry that I've worked in my entire life has always been about speed, speed, speed, not necessarily about research and understanding. It's been about getting it done, making it happen, you know, private sector like you say Gavin, full speed ahead. There was a time when Motorola, who sort of invented the smartphone back in the day, thought that North America was going to have 100,000 users in the span of the 1st 10 years, and there was more like 10 million. So, the growth was straight up backwards upside down, crazy speed. We're a technology company that is mapping out the built environment. The built environment has all kinds of different dynamics to it. As I'm learning my core technology principles, start with wireless technology. We're all sitting in this room with amazing tech using wireless, right. So, the reason to talk about this is because the academic world, the architectural world, generally hasn't thought about technology in the same way that the technology guys have. The technology guys are thinking 15 years ahead, faster than they can possibly keep their finger on the pulse of what's happening. So when I look at what's happening in the built environment, in connection with technology, I feel like technology is key to solving a lot of these problems that we're talking about today. We're all carrying it in our pocket. We all live on it. It's part of our everyday experience. That's where that's where my experience comes into this, into this room. I'm feeling a little bit, you know, out of place as far as the built environment conversation, I don't speak the

language, I haven't had time to really consume a lot of the content yet considering the number of things that that I'm dealing with in the startup world. But we have a lot of wind in our sails and we're doing something good that can change the world. I look at geomatics, mapping, wayfinding, how we can make buildings better from a technology perspective and help understand how we can make them better for accessibility. There's a group of people that are marginalized. And we talked about the lived experience and my lived experience and why I'm in this room today is because I had an invisible disability. And that was a back problem for 20 years of my life, and I spent 20 years trying to get around in a built environment that never cared about a guy who had a problem that wanted to work, wanted to be contributing to society. I didn't want to be considered a disabled person. And because of having that invisible disability, it's not something you necessarily wear around as a big sign across your back. This is why I'm in the room today. I think that there's a way for us to facilitate collaboration, connection, conversation between designers, I think that the secret to our future is about collaboration. I feel like I'm going to learn all kinds of great things from you guys in the next couple of days and hope that the technology piece can be the next thing that helps to solve the problem when we have a product. We're not doing research. We're providing a solution to the problem. I think that's an important thing for us to be thinking about when it comes to accessibility in the built environment and how that is defined is very interesting to me.

[00:51:13]
Josie Auger

Thanks, Steve. That was great. So a lot of people don't have access even to technology and so no matter which projects that I'm working on, I always remind people that there's a lot of people that don't have, can't afford the technology or the Wi-Fi in their remote areas, especially in rural environment and so that brings me to another idea; on the plane here, I was talking to a fellow who used to work in the field of justice and he talked about those call boxes. So, say if it was like in a dark remote area where a person doesn't have access to telephones or anything like that and something's happening, how can people be safe? And this is of course like some of those problems. So, having those old-fashioned call boxes, how can that contribute to lower rates of incarceration or improved justice? I think that's important because sometimes those old-fashioned ideas help and sometimes, we need to go back to making things more accessible. So, whether there's an issue of domestic violence or something like a car accident or, you know, a child has been hurt or fallen or something like that, how do we make places safe again? So, with that too as well coming into this quality in the built environment, people have been talking about traditional ecological knowledge and connecting to our earth and to the waters as well, and I'd like us not to lose sight of that as we continue to think about quality in the built environment, because I don't think that quality is cheap, it requires your heart. And I think that investment in the process is really, important and that humor - like this morning - Catherine was talking about the humor and something that comes to mind as an indigenous person, we can joke around, but then I'm sitting here beside Jean Pierre, and he talks about peacemakers. And so, I think is it possible to be an activist and be a peacemaker? Yes, I think so. I think that we should, I think that language even in its of itself can be like enhanced and that we can embody that. So that is another thing that comes up in terms of like quality in the built environment. I think like since being involved like in this work

and in this project is that say even back up in northern Alberta. So, Athabasca University is in a rural area and there's a lot of farmers and there's a lot of people using the land in that way and there's people who are also advocating for the rights of legal personhood for the rivers. And so, this is another part of that challenge. Looking at quality in the built environment, how do we balance the needs of people? That comes back to like our work at Athabasca University is having those conversations that are difficult to have because this impacts the industries like the oil and gas industry and the consumption of water for instance. 4 corporations in northern Alberta can use as much water as the entire city of Calgary. So, these are the kinds of things that we have to be super, super mindful about when we talk about it and it's not cheap. Quality is not cheap, it's going to require peacemaking, it's going to require heart and it's going to require a lot of collective knowledge. So, I think what's changed is I can talk about these things now, whereas maybe when I first started here like I couldn't talk about that because you know, I'd be a troublemaker. And I want to be a peacemaker. So, I just wanted to share some of those thoughts.

[00:56:56]
Negarsadat
Rahimi

It's super to hear from other people their description of quality in built environment and it's opening my eyes in different aspects. When I joined this project, my understanding of quality was just focused on the building. I believe that the quality of the building can increase the quality of lived experience for the residents, but after joining, I realize that there are some other factors as well, especially in our research team, we focus on biodiversity and sustainability aspect of the building. So, I realize that that it's not always just the building, it's a built environment first and there are tons of aspects that we cannot measure all of at the same time and some of them can be opposite to other. So, when we are working on the characterization, we might put some facilities that make noise and decrease the livability, so they can impact on each other. And I learned how we should integrate different disciplines and we should have conversation as I heard from most of you, that's the most important detail there is. Having conversations with a different person. So not just focus on one aspect and have conversation and thinking, rethinking and rethinking.

[00:59:01]
Doramy
Ehling

Thank you, Doramy Ehling, the Rick Hansen Foundation. For me, probably through this project, the most important learning I've had is that this is about research, and I always enjoy the dialogues and the opportunities to meet people. And then I get reminded by Jean Pierre that this is a research project and that excites me too, because oftentimes there are many people who need to see the research in order to agree to make change, and so this is what I'm really hoping is that as a result of all these conversations, taking into account everybody's different perspectives, because there's so much still to learn. And I think that we have a way to go to actually help redefine for the students of tomorrow how quality in the built environment is going to be taught in school, how it's actually going to be taken into industry, how it's going to be portrayed in government policies, and how we can incent people to actually move down the pathway to in a more inclusive community and environment. I started with a very simplistic view of how you define quality in the built environment and then I realized no, no, you have to really look at holistically how this goes exactly as you've just shared through the multiple eyes of the community and in a variety

of settings because one of the things we learned through the indigenous ways of knowing is that when you place yourself in a community, we've had wonderful projects with architects in northern British Columbia, and they go well that's a great idea. And number one, you can't have an elevator in the north because there's no one to service it #2. We don't have roads the same way that you do in your communities. And so, we must rethink our design. That forced us to stop and say, OK, hang on, there's not one single definition. This is something that we're going to have to be dynamic in terms of how we approach this. But are there ways in which those of us that play leadership roles in the Community can take this research now and translate it into actual policy perspective, procurement regulations? Statements of leadership, how can we be allies in that so that we move the marker. And so, for me that's the piece that every time I come and participate in these conversations, I learn another layer, and then I go back to my organization and say, OK, how can we now put this into a fact in the work that we're doing and how do we change because otherwise we're just part of the problem. So, we have to be open-minded and look at how do we restructure and take in new information in order to get better at what we do. That's been a huge learning curve and it's a privilege again of why this partnership is so important.

[01:01:34] Gavin McCormack
Gavin McCormack

Gavin McCormack, University of Calgary. So, I think in terms of how my understanding or my change in understanding of quality in the built environment has changed, I think I feel that there is no definition of quality in the built environment. I think based on what you know about the two years hearing the different lived experiences of the built environment, hearing different perspectives on what would make a great environment. I think it's so different and so diverse that we're never going to land on a single definition of quality. But I think what these whole two years have taught so far is that maybe what we're going through is a process or identifying a process or a framework for achieving something around quality. If anything, improving the built environment to make it more livable, sustainable, equitable and resilient, and so on. For me I look at this now as you know how could what has been done so far and what will continue to be done in the project be a prototype for what might be done in the future? That's just done normally in urban planning, design, architecture, health or whatever it might be regarding the built environment. So that's where I've landed on this. At the beginning I mentioned this in my previous comment, that I thought it was quite ambitious when we think about definition of quality in the built environment. I'm not sure, but I'm going to see how we get there, and I think it's become clear, not because it's bad, but it's forced a conversation and, just hearing all these different perspectives, and some of them are contrasting and discordant. I think even about that where before we'd be quite siloed and sort of do what we do in our little sort of ivory tower or wherever we might be sitting in. The fact that we've come together with these different perspectives, we're going to get something bigger than the sum of the smaller parts.

[01:03:54] Trishtina Godoy-Contois

OK, so I've been thinking about this deeply for a few weeks at least, well longer. But I've been trying to organize my thoughts over the past few weeks leading up to this. It's interesting that we ended up in Halifax for this convention because if you think about the first federal intervention in housing,

it happened in Halifax with the Richmond explosion of the ammunitions, and they had to it leveled I think 3000 homes and they had to rebuild. And that was really the first time that the federal government at that time established a way of utilizing the wartime Measures Act to intervene to create all this housing to be able to replace the housing that was lost. But if you were to look at that first initial part and you're to weave that through. How was it designed, how was it planned? What was the, what did the structures look like? What did the material look like? You start to really see the values that were being brought through to our system that has shaped our entire suburban life. And then coming at it from our research team, we're looking at real remote and regional angles and you start to see that while we're along the southern belt for a reason and you know that also kind of corresponds every single major settlement, we have been an indigenous settlement that was a major settlement too. We're living on those settlements now, because why would indigenous people live here for thousands of years, not pick the best land, right? So, they're moved into these rural remote areas and same with farmers and other workers, and it's primarily for the use of natural resource extraction, and that's how we develop our economy in those areas is to move food, move resources, do what we need to do, develop economically the infrastructure at that time. You're thinking about it strategically, numbers counting and you're creating roads to essentially lead to more extraction to support our urban experience. But then you're looking at housing. Well, how temporary does that housing have to be? And that's where weaving in the First Nation, indigenous policies like the Indian Act, like this catalog of housing designs that's being pitched that was already done with indigenous housing from the get-go all on reserve housing is based off a catalog of housing that was designed for them down to the chairs. And so, when we're thinking about how do we weave all of these experiences together to create a definition? Well, how can we create a definition of quality when we don't even know who influences our entire thing? How did the CHC come to be? How do we fund things? What priority is it based off? What voices were already shared? Issues of building low-income housing and then how did that get whittled down to sacrifice for a different value? That's more important to us as our governmental collective. And I think that's kind of what's been shaping my experience coming into this is now when we're trying to define and change your definition and realizing the more you know the less you know. And it's never been truer until this point and being able to now sit with that and think, oh, geez, like, now, how do you restructure and vision for the future, knowing that we have this whole system we're dragging along with us.

[01:07:26]
Shyniaya
Duffy

I wanted to go next because I have so many thoughts building off what you were just talking about, and I'll start with what I was originally going to say. So, when I go into indigenous communities to design with them, I always approach it from the framework of I know nothing regardless of my education, regardless of my experience, I know nothing about this community. I don't know what they want. I don't know what they need, and this very much builds into the thought process I had that, you sparked this idea talking about the housing catalogs. At one point through colonization, quite a few indigenous communities were given a how-to manual on how to live in a house and so it was quite opposite of going into a community and saying I know nothing. I don't know what these people need. It is very much saying this is what you need. This is how you're

going to live because how you were living previously was savage, that's a word that's associated a lot with indigenous people and it makes me very angry. And so, along with that catalog, I have pictures from family in Nunavut where they are harvesting an animal like on the kitchen floor on a tarp because there's no places in the house that accommodates space for that animal and, they must drag it up a few floors to get it there. And so, it's very inaccessible for culture and for how they live, and it does not promote success for continuing their culture. And in addition to that, there is a housing crisis in Nunavut as there is everywhere. But part of the reason there's this crisis in Nunavut is that they're not using vernacular architectural methods to build and design the houses out there. They are flying in or shipping in wood from BC. So, first, moisture levels do not match the climate. And so, what that's leading to is mold, unsafe housing conditions and so on. But then also you must consider that there's not these road accesses, you're only able to access none of it by airplane or boat. And so, any materials that are needed for upkeep and maintenance are not easily accessible and so by using materials not in Nunavut to begin with, it leads to these conditions where the locals and the communities cannot keep up their own houses because they were given houses or houses were imposed upon them that don't match how their culture was living. And there's examples of indigenous buildings, let's call them before colonization, that utilized what was available to them. One of them I believe is called the Winter house. And so, what they would essentially do is dig half of the house in the ground and then the roof would be made of whale bones and the skin of animals. And basically, all these structures would be built big enough for the families inhabiting them and no more. They were also nomadic, like a lot of indigenous communities. And so, in the summer they switched to a tunic, which is similar to a teepee. And again, they moved around to hunt and gather. And so very much like building houses in places with materials not easily accessible created this way of living that is not quality to anyone, and people are living in overcrowded conditions, unsafe and unhealthy conditions.

[01:11:41]
James
Barrett

James Barrett from Dalhousie. I'm very new to this research cluster, so I'll tackle the first question. But first, this has been great, I'm learning so much this morning and there's such a diversity of experience. So, it's very nice to see and it's getting my brain spinning a lot. In terms of quality in the built environment, I'm deciding that it's quite relative. There's a lot of relativity in the definition. For me, a gay man in Halifax, I probably have a very different definition of quality in the built environment than an indigenous person from Alberta, than like a family living in northern Quebec, but I think there's some probably good baselines for quality like considerations of accessibility and equity and sustainability, local context and vernacular and user groups, but I think there's also a real component of intention behind spaces versus the architectural aesthetic and physical quality of a space that maybe need to be considered as well. It makes me think of grand parade in downtown Halifax, which is just a very traditional western civic space that's really failed the community in the last couple of months as the city has displaced a huge number of unhoused people and an encampment that was there. So, you wonder, how can this objectively quality built space be an example of quality in the built environment when it's in a way been weaponized against members of the community. So, I think that's something that needs to be considered as well. Just the intention behind the space, and I think Josie made a good point

that quality is expensive, and it takes a lot of hearts and real consideration of the users and the communities that will use this space to ensure that the quality is lasting and present.

[01:13:33]
Brian Lilley

A lot of good points there, Brian Lilly, Dalhousie University. I think, Trishtina, there's a lot there in what you're uncovering in your research groups. It reminds me that the CMHC in the early 60s did the same thing again, and it was with a black community, and had to do with that scourge called slum clearance, but CMHC actually produced a community that was supposed to be like the the golden answer, so to speak. I think I really appreciate this dialogue between troublemaker and peacemaker. I think that's excellent, and I have those two things going on in my head all the time so that's really great. Gavin, just one thing that you were saying about not being able to define quality, but that we're working at it, and I would agree with that. And for me, I think It kind of comes back to how research filters into your academic, say, pursuits. And what I'm really trying to get across to my students now is that design is collaborative and there's a whole set of actions and behaviors to do with collaborative design that I don't think existed in our schools even 10 years ago. So this discussion, this grant is actually really productive in terms of a reflection back into academia and how we actually teach and think about design. Shania, when you were doing your thesis, you're wrestling with these things a lot. So I think it's really interesting to start to see the architect is no longer the person who's in control of everything, but in a way is much more like a good theater manager that's trying to emphasize some things and take the temperature of the room and other things and really just have some technical knowledge, but also really try to understand what an identity is for a community and what best serves that kind of way forward. I think that's all I want to say right now.

[01:15:59]
Miriam
MacNeil

Thanks, Miriam MacNeil with Public Services and Procurement Canada. Echoing some of what was said earlier, I guess how my understanding has changed, and I know nothing about what the quality of the built environment and that is OK and that's why this this research project is so important and necessary. Then I started to reflect upon how in our work, we've tried to kind of bring in the lived experience like I was, you know this morning, this idea of the definition is, you know, kind of global has been and technical and the ethical is missing. And I think that's obviously why we're here and this is why it's important and Gavin spoke to the idea of process and in the last few minutes this co creation and how we designed spaces with others and those eyes, many eyes and I mentioned about walking the precinct with others and the residential school survivors, most especially, and those with persons with disabilities as well. Some heritage restoration projects have won awards and are seen as excellent, and then when I walk the site with residential school survivors, they felt like this space was so oppressive and hurtful and took away from them and they just could not even stay too long in the space. That brings me back to the ethical space that this project will explore and walk through. So, this idea of the road map, Jean Pierre and that the journey I think is important also to the DNA of this, this research is that we're on a journey and those steps and bringing those eyes, I know as part of the work we're doing in the precinct, we're redesigning a parliament welcome center. So, the biggest building that

you usually see when you think about Parliament, there's a new Parliament welcome center that all visitors and parliamentarians will go through for security, etcetera and will be underground and etcetera. So, it'll be a very important place. Everyone will come to this the space, but you'll have to go through this to go to the key buildings and we've done workshops with Inuit and First Nations and your point about architects and designers that come from those voices that, I mean, just really looking for that perspective as part of the program. So, I'll be interested to see, I think that's where we're trying to get into that ethical kind of gray zone and making sure that those spaces will feel welcoming will be different from what we've designed over the centuries anyway, on Parliament Hill. I'm just reflecting to keep an eye on that process and seeing how it is, you know, bring results. But I guess that's just where I am at in my understanding is can see trying to test things out, but I think hopefully this research can create a frame around how you do that in a way that is positive that is sensitive and can yield some results.

[01:19:51]
Taly-Dawn
Salyn

You know, I feel like by the time it gets around to me, I've had like 1000 thoughts. I must try with my ADHD mind to collect everything that I've thought of and say a couple things. I appreciated what you said, Gavin, about not having a definition of it. Maybe there is no real definition of it, of quality. I think we're too complex have a single definition, It doesn't work. A quote that came to my mind by Kwame Ture after you spoke to Josie was you can't have peace without liberation. And I think that's also core to what we do. We're building for people, but if these people are still living with injustice, then we're not actually creating quality. We're not creating that kind of peace that we need to have and a part of that liberation is knowing history. I really appreciate what you said about the housing methods from up north, because I didn't know that, and there's a little bit of history that's so important that we know and it's so blessed to have you have shared that with us right, because we probably won't be able to read that in a book very easily. Another thing that I think of with quality is not so much about the output, but about the process. Everything leads up to the creation of something. I came onto this project doing my practicum, and my practicum supervisor Hieu Ngo who's one of the only social workers on this entire project. He always was like Taly; you have to think about the process. I didn't understand, I was like I don't know what you mean, but it's like finally started to make sense to me and it ripples into many, many different areas of my life beyond this project. But again, it goes back to that process that being in a relationship with each other, not knowing, recognizing we're not the experts, even though we have degrees, we're not an expert by any means. Even using that word expert feels performative. But a part of that process, yes, its relationships is about being intentional and authentic, being wholehearted. Two things, whose voices are being heard. This is another word, community that's starting to lose its meaning. Who's at the table voice is being heard. Recognizing that if we are talking about accessibility and we have one person here who has a visibly physical disability, like that's one person that were tokenizing. It's so important that this group is representative of the world we live in, and our respective cities or our communities. We need to also respect that each person has different identities, and they hold different intersectionality's and that needs to be represented and that needs to be understood and heard as well, right? And then one more point about the process that I think is important is being able to have these respectful

	<p>conflicting conversations. Side note, I went for dinner last night and I happened to sit beside somebody who is the CEO of one of the top arms manufacturers in Canada. I had a very difficult time conversing with this with this person, but it proved to me the importance of being able to sit beside those folks and have these tough conversations and be uncomfortable.</p>
<p>[01:24:41] Fatih Sekercioglu</p>	<p>That's awesome, Taly. Thanks. And it puts me in a difficult situation too. It's hard to be the last after so many great comments. I'll just be very brief. I just feel when I read the question my first idea was just walking the talk like as a professor in public health and knowing that I can't really do it alone. And first considering the physical structure and adding all other layers like equity, sustainability and inclusivity, just thinking along with those terms, that was key for me. We are great with the timing. As your facilitator, I can say we are doing a great job. For us, there is only one delivery between us and lunch. A strong consensus here about what quality is and then we have a PowerPoint slide here that right is there.</p>
<p>[01:26:48] Simon Blakely</p>	<p>I'd say the consensus might be that there's no consensus yet, but also that you know that we need to keep these conversations going and be respectful and the dialogue and all the points that other people made and just rethink like the name of our organization. Rethink green. But rethink, you know, quality in a sense and what that means. Do our best, be good people and engaging and world citizens if you like.</p>
<p>[01:27:23] Steve Bowers</p>	<p>I'm with Gavin on this 100%. It's going to be very difficult to get to that conclusion what is quality? I think it's one that brings us all together. At the end of the day, I think that that's really what this is. It's as simple as that.</p>
<p>[01:27:49] Josie Auger</p>	<p>Yeah, I'd have to agree with Fellows who spoke already. It's like a dream. That's all I can think of. It's just like something that we hope to achieve, but it needs to be a sacred bundle of many different things. Many different things are required for that relationality, and that process, and that outcome. So like our thoughts, our intentions and our actions, it's all a part of that. I think we talked about this last time when we were in Calgary and there seemed to have been some really good ideas about quality at that point in time.</p>
<p>[01:29:23] Negarsadat Rahimi</p>	<p>I think I agree with Josie. Maybe quality is just a dream to me, it's the level of comfort that is different from person to person from different perspectives and maybe there is no real definition for quality and it's different from the way that you are seeing and you're experiencing.</p>
<p>[01:29:58] Doramy Ehling</p>	<p>I'm going to pick up on Taly's point to which is that there's no peace without liberation, because I think that says it all to me in terms of if you can't access the space or you don't feel comfortable in that space, or you don't feel safe in that space, then that can't be quality. And it's all going to be based on someone's experience, right? So how do they feel in that space? And how do we put ourselves into that place where we are prepared to explore what that means and what it means? You said that beautiful remark earlier, Josie, that quality is expensive. But it's part of the cost of being part of a society that values various perspectives, because otherwise that's always going to be the line that comes</p>

up. That we can't afford it, and they don't stop to say, well, what's the cost of containment? What does it mean if we don't change our design principles? So how many people are we leaving behind?

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- [01:31:00]
Gavin
McCormack
- I think quality is anything and everything depending on who you ask or who's at the table. And so, I think when I said before that I don't think you can define quality, that doesn't mean there's not multiple definitions of quality. I think that depends on the context in which groups are working, and I'm thinking you know, you could have a group, know, something like this in, say, Japan, and you're talking about quality. The characteristics going to be very different, or the features or attributes of quality can be very different, right? So, I think any definition of quality is contextual and who's there.
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- [01:31:50]
Trishtina
Godoy-
Contois
- Maybe to build on that and quality is defined by the environmental context. Does it live with the land? Is it representative of the land? The people? Is it reflective of where we want to go 7 generations from now?
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- [01:32:15]
Brian Lilley
- Just building off that I think a lot of say, my experience in architecture has been finding quality in the active community building, and an agreed aim or goal and the resolution of that goal. Again, I think I'd agree with Gavin. It's not a long-lasting moment, but it's something that we seek to attain.
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- [01:32:59]
James
Barrett
- Yeah, I feel like I'm a bit of a broken record with this as well, but it's an ever-moving target I suppose. Quality is an admirable pursuit and I think a quality space is somewhere that would facilitate instead of alienate those feelings of comfort and safety.
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- [01:33:20]
Miriam
MacNeil
- I don't know that I have much to add because I really support what was said previously. And again, it's maybe not what, this idea of it of even thinking of death definition is really challenging. So, it's about how we got there and the word process comes back, but it doesn't mean anything, I know, but just the how we brought different perspectives together and hopefully by doing that in a way that's thoughtful and helpful, then that dream comes true. You know what you've said about this Josie mentioned in and others about this. It is a dream. It's when you get there, if all the people that are in that space feel accepted and seen etcetera, but that will only happen in the how that space was designed and if those eyes and voices were there from the beginning. So, I guess that would be my contribution.
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- [01:34:26]
Shyniaya
Duffy
- I'm going to echo a lot of what's been said about there not being a singular definition of quality in the built environment, but I think all definitions of quality would have in common as people, and not only people today, but 7 generations into the future, and how we build for today, how it impacts our seven generations.
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- [01:34:55]
Taly-Dawn
Salyn
- I feel like everybody said so many good things. I don't know what to add, but what I thought of is there's a little project that was created and what came out of it was these little magazines in Calgary made by Vibrant Communities
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Calgary and it was called enough for all, and it came from work with Brian Sinclair and this project specifically. But yeah, I think enough for all is a beautiful way to sum it up and through this, they spoke about the idea and the concept of sharing the connection to the earth systems of care enough for all in terms of medicine and safety is huge and enough for all being founded on the principle of delight, which I thought was beautiful.

[01:35:56]
Fatih
Sekercioglu

I definitely agree with the group about what's being said and I just also want to add, I just feel quality as a process to be always recognized and considered a journey, not a final destination. And I feel like it would change over time. A decade later, if you sit around the table, we could have a little bit different definition of quality, probably a couple decades ago people would have a different definition of quality, but I think it's always something to be considered in every process and fundamental portion of any decision making of any kind. OK, James, the easy task now. Any consensus that we can think of what we should present. I guess they just thought what we should present to the larger group based on this discussion, like what the key points would be.

ROOM 5

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room5_ Location: G.H. Murray Building - G214				13 Participa nts
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site	
Henry	Tsang	Athabasca University	Athabasca University	
Martha	Radice	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University	
Sara	Jacobs	University of British Columbia	University of British Columbia	
Thomas	Strickland	McEwen School of Architecture	Laurentian University	
Gregory	MacNeil	The Association for Preservation Technology International	Carleton University	
Danielle	Catley	Royal Architectural Institute of Canada	National Partners	
Isabelle	Cardinal	Société Logique	Université de Montréal	
Matt	Nomura	Calgary Homeless Foundation	University of Calgary	
Ben	Johnston	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University	
Maisie	Berens	University of Manitoba	University of Manitoba	
Yolene	Handabaka Ames	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal	
Ryan Bang Yan	Ma	Toronto Metropolitan University	Toronto Metropolitan University	
Alex	Larose	Carleton University	Carleton University	

Room 5 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-06-19

Report produced by

Johnston, Ben (*Dalhousie University*)

5.1. Summary

This workshop discussed the attendee's relationship with quality in the built environment; determining what experiences they have had with quality in the built environment and what quality means to them.

- The places discussed included the Halifax Public Library, a local park in Toronto, and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.
- The idea of quality as a social construct and a variable entity was discussed.
- The juxtaposition and balance of quality as preservation of heritage vs quality as updating for accessibility was discussed. What gets kept and what gets changed?
- A major topic was the role of awards in the discussion of quality. With ever-changing definitions of quality, how do we objectively state quality in an award setting? Can a private home that does not serve the greater community be compared and contrasted with a library or public-facing building? With more community-centred and holistic approaches to defining quality, can a home ever be considered award-worthy?

Each attendee introduced themselves and briefly discussed what their site is working on. The top positive outcomes from the year were discussed.

Some main questions are as follows:

- How can we narrow down a concept as broad as quality into one singular definition? Is quality not an ever-changing and evolving concept?
- How can quality change over time? For instance, there were debates about the Halifax Public Library fitting into the city before it was built (lack of formal quality in keeping with its context), but now it is a very well-used and desired space (programmatic quality).

5.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name

[00:00:01] Sara Jacobs	Good morning. My name is Sara Jacobs. I'm an assistant professor in landscape architecture at UBC, and I was asked to moderate and facilitate this group with Henry, so we'll start with just a round of introductions I think just to sort of get to know who's in the room. Where you're sort of representing today, but perhaps also where you traveled from to come here and then we'll get started on the questions. And I think I just would reiterate that this is supposed to be casual so, get up if you need to use the washroom or get more water, etcetera when you need to and if it makes sense to take a break, we'll probably take a break at some point also.
[00:00:45] Henry Tsang	Well, good morning. My name is Henry Tsang. Just call me Henry. I come from Athabasca University, which is if you don't know where it is, it's a couple of hours north of Edmonton in northern Alberta but I actually live in Calgary, so I'm an associate professor of architecture and a practicing architect living in Calgary as well. Working specifically on projects involving equity, diversity, inclusion and also accessibility, professional Rick Hansen, foundation practitioner and I work with Danielle with the REIC as well. So I flew from Calgary yesterday so it's like still 6:00 AM in the morning. So, I'm a little bit tired and sleepy and, you know, woke up at 4:00 in the morning. So, you know, feel free to. I'm, I'm drinking a lot of coffee just to stay awake and feel free to walk around as, as Sara mentioned. So, I'll pass it to Ben.
[00:01:43] Ben Johnston	So I'm Ben Johnston. I'm a student at Dalhousie working with Martha and with Susan's team. I'm at Dal. I traveled a very long distance of two minutes to get here, so it's very, very tiring.
[00:02:00] Danielle Catley	Thanks, I'm Danielle Catley. I'm with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, national partner for this project and I've recently been appointed as Co-chair to the DOC, The Destination Outreach Committee.
[00:02:13] Martha Radice	Hello, I'm Martha Radice. I'm a social anthropologist at Dalhousie, associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology. So Susan invited me to part of the Halifax team because I've got a long standing interest in the anthropology of place and space and lived experience of places. So yeah, we're mainly working on schools at the moment. So I'll pass it to and when I travelled from about maybe a kilometer and a half away this morning from the North End of Halifax and was thinking about the people coming from the West Coast for whom it would be really early start. So sorry about that.
[00:03:01] Alex Larose	My name is Alex. I'm a student at Carlton University, so I came from Ottawa, but I got here yesterday, so I slept really well.
[00:03:32] Maisie Berens	Hi, I'm Maisie Berens. I'm from U Manitoba team. I just finished my undergrad degree in environmental design and I'll be going into my masters for interiors this fall. And yeah, I came in yesterday, so I'm all rested.

[00:03:48] Ryan Bang Yan Ma	Hi, my name is Ryan. I'm a masters student from Toronto Metropolitan and also flew in yesterday so it's been pretty good and I guess our site has been focused on the waterfront in Toronto and yeah.
[00:04:05] Thomas Strickland	Hi, I'm Thomas Strickland. I'm an assistant professor at the McEwen School of Architecture in Sudbury, so also northern and cold. Anyways, I'm also practicing architecture and focusing mostly on building residences for aging the aging population, but also now focused on how to deal with some of the exploding transit-oriented developments and to ensure that they sort of accommodate for the complexities of people in in our society.
[00:04:52] Martha Radice	That's true. What developments?
[00:04:53] Thomas Strickland	Transit oriented developments.
[00:04:54] Martha Radice	Oh transit oriented development right? Thank you.
[00:04:59] Isabelle Cardinal	Good morning. My name is Isabel Cardinal. I'm an architect working with Société Logique in Montreal. Société Logique is a nonprofit organization. We promote universal design in the built environment. I'm with the team of university the Montreal, and we represent the citizens. But I also have a foot on the professional side because in my work day-to-day. Société Logique our mission is to take to consider the needs the special needs and to implement them in the built environment. You heard that my big accent, so I would ask you to speak slowly. Thanks. So I'll try in English and maybe some people can help me.
[00:06:14] Matt Nomura	Good morning, everybody. My name is Matt Nomura. I'm the vice president of the Calgary Homeless Foundation, so I'm part of the U of C team. I had the distinct pleasure of calling Halifax home actually for about 6 years. So very pleased to be back here and get the chance to explore. I get the opportunity to bring a perspective from a private sector build and inclusivity when it comes to vulnerable populations and program design. When we think about aging in place, it's something that probably we are not that all concerned about when you think about vulnerability and accessibility and individuals with significant mental health concerns, how do we create a space of where everybody's included in the design of a space to call home? So that's perspective, I get the ring and a pleasure to hang out with you guys this morning.
[00:07:08] Gregory MacNeil	My name is Gregory MacNeil. I'm representing the Association for Preservation Technology this morning. I'm a practicing architect of practice globally. I've restored everything from Roman churches to Baroque and Rococo. I'm also, I could label myself today as a wood conservation specialist and I'm also I think the only architect in Canada who's a licensed lumber and timber grader.

[00:07:37] Sara Jacobs	Thank you. And I should have mentioned they traveled from Vancouver very, very late last night, so I'm like, I'm a little bit sleepy this morning, so if I forget things that's why, yeah.
[00:07:52] Martha Radice	I use hearing aids and appreciate like Isabel, the slow talk. I appreciate the loud talk. So thank you.
[00:08:07] Sara Jacobs	Great. So we have sort of two main questions that we'll discuss this morning and this is the first of four sessions that will sort of be in together. So a lot of these questions for the first session are meant to sort of be a bit of to get the conversation started. And so we were asked to begin with the question and I'll just read it as it's sort of was stated to us. In your opinion, what is the main positive research outcome of the project that you're associated with after these first two years? So I think for probably all of us, this is very much a work in progress. But what are sort of I might frame that as not only positive but is there something that you're kind of excited about or that's starting to emerge from the research or the folks that you've been collaborating with that you would want to share. And then if you're new to the project, that means that you maybe haven't been to one of these conventions before or kind of joined the team this year. Think about what an example of a positive lived experience within the built environment is that you yourself have experienced. So, for both of these questions I think we're speaking from a personal place of either what are the sort of positive outcomes within the research project that you're working on, or what is a positive lived experience within the built environment?
[00:09:35] Henry Tsang	So I I'm going to walk around and pass the mic. And we don't have to go in sequence. Whoever who wants, who has an answer.
[00:09:51] Martha Radice	There's this mic here as well, so this I have not been to the previous in person conventions because they've been times when I couldn't go or I have not had funding to go. So this is my first in person convention and it's also it's kind of good because it's a point when our work in Halifax is actually really getting underway in that one of the things that we're focusing on is looking at schools. Learning spaces more broadly, but particularly high schools and what people's experiences are of working and learning and playing in high schools, and we finally got into the field last month. So that was really great because of course first we had to kind of think about and design the project, then we had to apply to, our own research ethics board which was fine, but the school board Research Ethics Board took a long time to give us permission to actually go into the schools and do research. So and then, of course coordination with our other projects like I, you know, I was away for the first two months of this year working on my other research and we finally got into the schools last month and we're going into another one next week and it's just really interesting. So, it's very positive that we've finally got to go and the idea is to we're visiting 3 high schools that have one architectural awards and finding out there's kind of double edged, a 2 pronged project with the architects documenting all their rooms and their use and kind of figuring out what's the difference between intended use and actual use. And then the anthropologists and sociologists talking to people about their qualitative experiences, so talking to students and staff. range of staff, teachers, custodial staff. It's personally just been really rewarding to actually start talking with users on the ground instead trying to trying to get my head around very abstract notions of quality that come from a lot of different disciplines. It's very fun for me as an anthropologist, to actually listen to people's experiences and see how the

	buildings are going. So that's my positive is we're making progress. I mean, later we could talk about the goals and what we want to do with that progress, but that's just a start.
[00:12:46] Henry Tsang	Thank you just by show of hands who's who for who is first time joining this conference? 1234... So this is the third conference, right, so I'll maybe I'll ask some of you guys to maybe start answering the first question that we had last year, which was give us an example of a positive lived experience, a building that you really liked, a place you really like to go back often. What defines quality for you and if there was a particular example of a space or a place or a city that you really like that you can share with us, and that was what we talked about last year. So just to kind of catch you up on what we've been doing over the last year is to kind of define what this word quality means to different people, especially if you're an architect or if you play as a stakeholder in the built environment, what are your priorities in in your work in, in developing a build a build project? Maybe I'll start with that. You want to go first.
[00:14:01] Ben Johnston	All right. So also, just to add on to Martha stuff, it is so much fun to like go into the schools, we're going into the schools and like. We're going into the schools and like talking to the teachers and going through every room. And it's really great giving these teachers also all of them want a voice to be able to talk about their issues or what they love and it's great being there to provide that voice and actually make them feel heard and know that there's going to be some change based off of that. But as far as quality that I've experienced in the built environment, I'd say actually the library right there, the new one, is a great spot, might be a bit intrusive from like a formal like physical point of view into the built environment of Halifax, but the amount of diversity of programming that it provides, I tend to think of diversity or quality as being diversity of use and what it brings to like the tapestry of the community and that library has everything from programs for children. There's a food bank that runs out of it on certain days. They have an amphitheater with public programming and some diversity programming as well to get people in Halifax historically hasn't always been very diverse, so to try and bring some of that, like the education, and introduce people to new things and it's just it's always a place that throughout the day from like when it opens at 9:00, there's people waiting to get inside and it's just it's constantly being used.
[00:15:51] Matt Nomura	A bit of an uproar when it was created and built, though if I remember correctly, right, I think there was a bit of pushback. So, I've had the chance to be part of this for the last three years and just reflecting on Calgary's progress and some of the positive outcomes, I think in our city, we have quite a close connection with social services, the private community and governments and indigenous communities, so collaboration is really at the forefront of how we approach social issues. Let that be from food insecurity to homelessness to this type of project that we're working on when it comes to inclusivity in the built environments, people in our community tend to really gravitate towards this. We've hosted a number of community workshops and opportunities to bring lived experience and the sectors together to talk about what they feel might be important as we go through reimagining what the built environment could look like in a Calgary context, and I think that's really positive. I think it really just highlights community spirit and a lot of what we saw Carmela talk about this morning in regards to the way that you're co-designing and doing Co-creation with community partners. I think it's been a really good initial step into that space and I think it really kind of sets the groundwork and the foundational next steps for

	implementation if we get to a space of where implementation is something that comes out of this project.
[00:17:33] Isabelle Cardinal	I've been with the partnership for two years, so I stepped in in fall of 2022. I missed the 1st Convention. So to answer the first question and the more positive outcomes of our partnership research. Like I said on my presentation, the organization Société Logique works to promote universal design. We've been doing that for over 40 years and trying to encourage and convince stakeholders in the planning sector to consider capacity diversity as a lever for innovation. I don't want to be negative, but for 40 years underground and in the buildings in the built environment people with special needs would say we failed. We failed. So on my point of view, the most positive outcomes of the partnership, even though we're at kind of a beginning and even though it's going to take a little time before we see really real changes in the built environment. I think that the most valuable thing is to put together all these people, the bonds that were making and I really hope that there's going to be an acceleration for real changes in the life of people and it's for now, it's really theoretical. It's going to be in the teaching, but I'm really eager to see new students and all kinds of planning, architecture, landscaping... And there will be our new professionals. And I hope for an acceleration in some real changes. OK. So that's my point for the partnership. When we had last year to write about life experience, I spoke about building in the downtown Montreal. It's called Esplanade tranquille. It's the new place where you can skate in downtown Montreal and there's a building that was thought as a kind of chalet urbaine. So it's a fun place, a new place comforting place. So that's what I wrote about last year. But being in Halifax, I want to talk about the lived experience. I lived maybe four years ago when I came on vacation with my husband and my son, who was 11 or 12, and we spent a whole day in the it's is it called the Maritime Museum? I don't think it's a nice building! But we really had fun, so the building itself is a thing. But what you do in it is another thing and who you are with is another thing. Because if I had been there for myself, I wouldn't. I wouldn't talk about it today. But the experience you have, we really spent the whole day and at the end of the week there was bad weather and we couldn't be outside and so we asked our son what you want to do the last day and you wanted to go back. To redo the whole thing.
[00:22:02] Martha Radice	Wow. That's great!
[00:22:02] Isabelle Cardinal	So. Yeah, that's another side of a nice lived experience. So. But I remember, and I passed in front of it yesterday. It's not nice at all. Well from my point of view but what you do in the building, and who you are with, makes a nice or not nice experience.
[00:22:34] Martha Radice	Umm, like the programming like Ben was saying.
[00:22:39] Isabelle Cardinal	Yes.
[00:22:40] Isabelle Cardinal	The museum? Yeah. Is it being a great place? Yeah. And I arrived yesterday and last night I spoke. I made a little FaceTime with my son and I sent a picture from my hotel room and he was able to tell me, oh, the citadel is there and remember we went to the museum. It's probably just down the hotel where you are. And he still remembered it. It was four years

	ago and he was a young teenager now he's an old teenager, but he really remembers it. If we had done the Convention in another city, I would have. I wouldn't have talked about this.
[00:23:34] Henry Tsang	Anyone else? OK.
[00:23:40] Thomas Strickland	Hi I think I want to talk to Ben's comment for sure and I think it's kind of one of the interesting tensions that that this, that is exciting about what's coming up in the discussions and it was presented this morning by Jean-Pierre. Basically, the idea that you know what we as or myself was trained as an architect to do is really kind of deal with the kind of formal problems at stake, right and how to resolve that? And of course, the debate around the library next door was this kind of monster that arrived, you know, on the lovely street of Halifax. Right. But now, if we look at it later, are we finding that it's actually a really productive space and for people to use and so that the formal condition sort of becomes part of the city now, and part of a place we enjoy celebrating. So I think that that's for me, one of the big things that's starting to I'm experiencing is this tension and then how do we start to think through it. But for, for me personally in our project in Sudbury there's a huge watershed, right, massive and it runs through the city underground because they have these, it's a Canadian shield so there's these huge grooves that over, millions of years filled with dirt, and then they put Sudbury on top of it and all the water. Now, kind of diverts around the city and so forth. So there's been a lot of talk about how to allow that, that watershed to kind of reemerge, right, and become part of the dynamic of the city and it becomes sort of a part of the social space of the city, but what we've encountered, and this is what's interesting, is as we've been talking with city planners who we now have on our team there, they will say things well, OK, I mean, but what's happened is you're now limited by the bylaws and zoning bylaws that kind of frame the shape of a house on a piece of property. So what we need to do is maybe look as is there a way to change the bylaw so that when you build a house on a piece of property you can get a variance? For example, on the bylaw so the house could be moved to allow the water to move across that property, rather than the house being framed into this, you know, like set back of four and three and so forth. So that's been that's been great for me to be a part of the conversation where it's like maybe we just need to change one line in a bylaw and it could start to really open up opportunities for water to move more freely in the city. That's been my positive experience.
[00:26:32] Henry Tsang	What's next?
[00:26:35] Martha Radice	Can I ask a question about the library controversy? Umm that you mentioned, and you mentioned cause I was living here during that time and I don't recall it being controversial.
[00:26:50] Matt Nomura	Yeah, I remember just when I was growing up, people were mixed.
[00:26:54] Martha Radice	Mixed reactions to the building.
[00:27:02] Matt Nomura	A mixed reaction to a modernized building going into the historic construction of Halifax. You know, Halifax, I think has done a really good job of preservation of heritage, specifically considering the Citadel and the construction around and protecting the view, which I think is a mainstay. Well, was a mainstay, and so I think the construction of a modernized

building and you look around that I think that was the, the conversation that was happening, was it complete outrage? No. But I think, you know, the, the Tom's points and what's happened is it's kind of morphed into the fabric of the downtown core and the utilization and utility has grown. And as the diversity of the population of Halifax has changed. Ten years ago, if you would have told me that a food bank would have been operating out of there, I was working for the I was working for CIBC in senior management here, and that wasn't even part of my vernacular to understand vulnerability, but to understand that that's happening now, I think really speaks to how it can be used in so many different ways with the way that Canada itself is completely changing. So, I think it's quite timely that we're in these types of conversations to really have an ideal of what a candidate looks like for tomorrow because I would never have guessed that a food bank would be running out of the out of that building there. So, I appreciate you sharing that. Anything you want to add to that, OK.

[00:28:29]
Gregory
MacNeil

I'm intrigued with Martha's comments cause and under for what I hear you're doing post occupancy evaluation, which is very interesting because back in the 1970s the then Dean of the School of Architecture, Dr. Peter Manning, was probably the expert in in North America on it and he was thrown out because he was too program orientated and too much about finding the finding out how buildings actually work and the students and the faculty actually protested it on the front lawns until he was removed, which is very interesting. And I will also say growing up in Halifax, within the sphere of an architectural firm, probably the last good building done prior to, the library was probably the Killam library and we entered into a period of I'm going to say a price, quality and service and the profession as an opportunity was asked to deliver price and service but not quality. And so I think we've, we've actually that's and that was part of I think the not the opposition to the library, but maybe the shock and awe effect of it that all of a sudden we were spending money on buildings and people were a little shocked actually the budget of it. Which was kind of interesting.

[00:29:53]
Martha
Radice

That's interesting because it yeah.

[00:29:56]
Gregory
MacNeil

Now, yeah. OK. And then the other thing I want to say about quality, of course, quality has different connotations to it. We can take it quality as a, as a professional opportunity. We can take it as a cultural aspect, and we can even take it in a sense as an institutional aspect. Now, as I mentioned before, I did work on. I worked for the Bishop of Augsburg for a while and I did Baroque churches, conservation and restoration. At that time period the wall had come down in Germany. These churches were still being used, but by obviously a smaller crowd of people. What was interesting is they were all open in the communities with no locks on the doors despite the fact they had gold gilded objects despite the fact that they had precious art in them. One of ours actually had a Renoir in it. It was a neat aspect to work in. But what became interesting was when the Ukraine started to open up and the wall came down. These artifacts started disappearing because there were vacant churches in the former Soviet Union and they needed the objects. So we started to lock them. The coat. The effect of that was the increased use of antidepressants in the communities where the keys were put on the on the doors. If you were the locks on the doors. So I think quality is a is a it's a contract, constructive space. I think it's also a construct of social need and I think we have an interesting question before us because are we going to take quality as a mantra or as a market

	condition? And those two are not necessarily just opposed to each other, but they bring different foundations to them.
[00:31:42] Sara Jacobs	Maybe I'll invite anyone who hasn't spoken who's also new this year to the conference to share a positive lived experience, yeah.
[00:31:56] Yolene Handabaka Ames	Thank you. For me. Well, we've talked a lot in Montreal at the university. We've talked a lot about accessibility and being inclusive and that's probably what I found because accessibility in the. Maybe at a certain point, all of us in our lives have experience, in a way or another accessibility. For example, once I sprained my ankle, and when you have something like this, you realize how important are elevators in some, you know, in some places, and when you don't have them like we you did, we didn't used to have them in Montreal, in the Metro, no, in the metro stations. And you said how come? But in the in the round tables that we had, we were talking also about the being inclusive with the people that are less visible. And for example, they were talking about people that had neurological problems that were hyper sensible to sound or some other.. sound light and how they could not, many activities were not so simple to be experienced by them, you know. And that's one of the reflections that I thought a lot about during these conversations because we unless talking about me personally, I always think more about physical accessibility, but I was not thinking about, you know, the other aspects that are more neurological and now are important also for you know to be inclusive with everybody in the in the built environment.
[00:33:52] Ryan Bang Yan Ma	So as my first year here, I guess I'll just talk a little bit about kind of a positive of the experience that I've had before. And whenever you know, I've thought about this question a lot. And whenever I think about it, it always comes back to this park that I used to go to in my childhood and even as I've kind of revisited for various reasons, it's still kind of resonates with me as this positive kind of built environment and I think looking back now with the privilege of understanding these different concepts, what made it so much of a positive experience was it being able to kind of facilitate a diversity of users and different activities kind of at all times, so that year. So whenever I went to it, I wouldn't just see, you know, it wasn't just a playground, it wasn't just kind of a sports field. You had everybody of all ages and of all kinds of different users being present at the site and at the park. And I think that kind of inclusivity and diversity in the users made it a real kind of strong. It really resonated with me as kind of this positive experience kind of. Whenever I visited throughout the year.
[00:35:22] Alex Larose	Thank you. It's also my first year with the grant, so I'll speak to the same. At Carlton we're looking at adaptive reuse and heritage buildings and how that sort of contributes to quality in the built environment. And I think one of the biggest things is being able to give new life to existing buildings kind of allow us for multiple authors and buildings which can be really exciting because it provides opportunity to create new communities and give space to people, and that's something that's been really exciting that I've seen so far in Ottawa and yesterday we did quite a few site visits here in Halifax and so it was really nice to see that that's sort of the case here as well and some of the policy changes that have come into effect in Halifax have promoted all of this development on existing buildings, and it's sort of reduced vacancy and helped communities to enter spaces that otherwise were desolate. So, I think we did a walking tour kind of around this neighborhood and we were able to go into a development that's currently going on in an office building. It's with sidewalk. They're converting an old office into residences, so it's like they're like in the middle of demolition, but

it was really exciting to go up and see kind of how they're addressing the buildings and what they're thinking about and how they're trying to make these heritage spaces or even just existing spaces more inclusive for people and some of the like thoughts that are going into it and how we can sort of try to create community in this space? I can't remember the name of the street, but we were looking at a bunch of existing homes in the Halifax style and some of them were converted into hotels or whatever and we saw the one that was kind of like lifted up on stilts and moved. So it's really exciting to see like all these innovative ways that people are trying to address existing buildings and one of the things that was mentioned to us - We were on a tour with the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals and they were saying that this space in the past couple of years, like at night kind of became quiet like it wasn't a space that people felt really welcome to be. But since there's been more development with these heritage buildings, it's come to be a lively place that night and they kind of speculated this was because of the policy changes. But I just think that's so interesting how it has sort of changed the whole dynamic of a certain neighborhood.

[00:38:19] Can I ask you a question?

Isabelle
Cardinal

[00:38:21] Yeah.

Alex Larose

[00:38:23] I was wondering if in your research you were studying accessibility and heritage building, what's the.... Your team? Your research? What's the title? Reuse of heritage? What do you study specific comp? Not components, but because we're really concerned about accessibility and heritage and we are often told that we have to preserve certain iconic or original components and we cannot change them, but when you think about the citizens and all the people with special needs, we're in 2024 and we think that there's a priority and people... No, I'm trying to say it politically correct, but there is a compromise? You have to study the needs and the building and the components and all is not ...Speaks in French... So there is a balance on everything. So do you study that?

[00:40:04] So, we are making an inventory of case studies that we think have addressed issues very well. So, one of the criteria that we look at is accessibility. And So what we have been doing is meeting with architects or developers that have addressed accessibility in a way that doesn't necessarily have to compromise heritage in order to get accessibility like they work creatively to empower both. I think a lot of times heritage is put at odds with other things, maybe because in the past it hasn't been very flexible, but I think that when you think creatively about a building you can find opportunities that are maybe context specific and a little bit out-of-the-box. So for example, we were meeting with ERA in Toronto and they were talking. I'm not sure what they... Yeah, it's an architecture firm. Yeah. But they were working on a series of industrial buildings, it was the waterworks complex, and accessibility was one of the issues that they were trying to well, bring in to make the complex more accessible because it was being converted into sort of a community area and residence. And they opened up like a former carriageway, so they were able to use something that in the past was part of the design and was closed off to make a beautiful new accessible entrance. So like those are the types of projects we're trying to look for that instead of trying to work with an existing entrance that isn't accessible and having to demolish things and just kind of cram it in to

make it work. People are thinking about how can we look at what was there in the past and how can we think about what we're doing in the future to make a beautiful new space for everybody. It is something that we're trying to look at, but we're trying to kind of look at a series of things so looking at like sustainability and looking at accessibility, and there's a lot of sorts of interconnections with heritage because it's something that we kind of have to deal with all the time. So, I think we need to sort of change the conversation to not be how can we find the priority and think about how we can creatively work together to make a solution that really promotes accessibility, promotes sustainability, promotes heritage preservation, and creates a sense of pride for a lot of people.

[00:43:28] I think a couple of people haven't spoken yet. Maybe I'll pass it to Maisie.
Henry Tsang Do you want to say something?

[00:43:38] So I went to the convention last year, so I'm kind of new still to the team.
Maisie I've only done a couple round tables with them. So, I guess the question is,
Berens what is the main positive research outcome for the project right? So I guess in my personal opinion, it's just actually like the roundtables we go to community because our project is community led pathways to affordable and sustainable First Nation housing and I think that's really important because usually in the past that's kind of just shoved under the rug, in my opinion like First Nation housing. So actually going to community and working with members and actually hearing what they want to say and what they think they need for the community. So one of the projects we work on, sorry, I also suck at public speaking, so I get a little bit nervous. So we work with One House, Many Nations, and they are an initiative that came from Idle No More. I'm not sure if everyone's familiar with that. It's an initiative that came or Idle No More in 2011, I believe, if I remember correctly. I don't know the politics behind it, unfortunately. But this One House Many Nations is the development of trying to like tackle homelessness with First Nations youth, so we have been working with Big River First Nation to bring tiny homes for the homeless youth there. And this past last summer we delivered the third tiny home for a participant and we actually have a few people that receive the home here today so you can meet them. Later we are going to go back this summer and deliver the 4th tiny home. Yeah. So I think that's a pretty big positive is actually talking with members and hearing what they want. And they finally have like a voice. I didn't grow up in community, so even though I am indigenous, like I don't have that perspective of what it's like to actually grow up in community and not have access to these resources. But yeah, that's what I think.

[00:45:59] Thanks Maisie. So Danielle you've seen all the best projects in the country.
Henry Tsang

[00:46:09] Yeah, so I forgot to mention I'm from Ottawa, so I came in last night, but
Danielle I've actually just came back from Europe on Monday, so I'm still heavily jet
Catley lagged. So brain fog today so apologies. So I am with the RAIC, and national partners. I'm not part of a specific project team. I'm excited to see how national partners will be able to engage more thoroughly in this project because we haven't really had that much of an opportunity, we've more just been kind of listening and seeing how it could be brought into our organization or like fed back into the community of architects. But we haven't really been participating actively or contributing. So excited to see how that might unfold in the next two years. The RAIC specifically, we have an awards program and we've just actually completed a holistic review of

all of our terms of references with the idea of actually quality and identifying what is.... We had a lot of like archaic, I guess terms of reference that really makes sense when you're evaluating a project and we've brought in people from different committees that we have the indigenous focused sustainability focused on people outside of the organization as well to understand how our awards should be framed. And this is like an ongoing process. We're not just it's because you finished now that we're not going to test it again for another 15 years or whatnot because it seems to be, it's a topic that's consistently evolving and our world is changing so quickly and so it's not something that is just set in stone. I honestly can't really speak to specific project or that I've personally lived that as a positive lived experience. I find like in my community there isn't very much of that or even a prioritization by our government to create those types of buildings or fund those types of buildings. I'm kind of envious of others and who live in different cities who have these really beautiful projects that are public focused and accessible to the public where I find in Ottawa, that's not really the case.

[00:48:23]
Matt
Nomura

It's a good point though. I think the unconscious bias that we all have being able bodied to a degree, or some degree prevents perhaps that lens of looking at it through that worldview. So, it it's just as you were saying, that is an interesting point that made me think do I really think about my experience when I'm going through buildings? And I really don't. You know what I mean?

[00:49:07]
Sara Jacobs

I think there's been a few positive things that have come out of the UBC project in the past year that I'm still trying to sort of articulate because a lot of what we've been working on is sort of the... I mean even for the past years has really been the framing of the project. Still we're looking at public parks in the City of Vancouver and the ways that those parks are sort of made accessible or inaccessible in a whole sort of range of ways and looking at the history of in many ways a sort of colonial legacy of public parks in Vancouver and sort of what that means for redesign policy today. So I've been looking at a series of case studies, but then also at a kind of higher kind of governance and decision making level. So I think a lot of the first two years was really spent just trying to understand sort of our goals and intentions and sort of what we hope to get out of the project. So what I think is a positive thing is that I actually feel like in the last few months I think there's been a little bit of a shift in how we're working and how we're thinking as a team that we've been able to go from just sort of the asking questions and doing kind of doing research with our community partners to starting to understand some of the ways that that I think we can contribute positively to conversations around particularly sort of equity and by that I mean around kind of community access in relation to both social and sort of environmental policy in the city, as well as kind of very, very current events that are happening around on house populations in the city, and I think a lot of this has come from just simply identifying with the mission of the Parks Board is and then starting to through the specific cases that we're looking at being able to say, and I think this is what the positive thing is, is being able to say really specifically how the mission of the Parks Board is actually not doing what it says it's going to do, and so this like this means looking at, you know, kind of these sort of general statements of sort of creating, you know spaces that are you know healthy and safe for all. And then when we look at sort of one of the cases studies we're looking at is a place where there's kind of an active encampment and there's been through heavy sort of police force, but also Park Rangers acting as sort of

mechanisms for the police to sort of clear people out. And often that sort of put in the sort of lens of like public health or clean up and so just simply looking at that, that this sort of mission of the Parks Board doesn't align with the actual actions of sort of current policy. And I think that's been really positive because I think it's starting, we're starting to then identify like what can we actually do, what can you suggest as recommendations or sort of.. yeah, it's recommendations, not guidelines, recommendations. Where we might start to shift language around governance and decision making. But that I think relates like real like lived things on the ground so that's personally what I'm kind of pretty excited about at this moment in our project.

[00:52:25]
Henry Tsang

OK, I guess I have one minute to do mine, but maybe 11 experience that I wanted to share is that I Teach First year and 2nd year design studio at the university and you know it's quite interesting to see the attitude change from when I was in architecture school 20 years ago, which was very focused on these kind of jewel boxes. You know, it's very sculptural, very, you know, very precious little things. Whereas now the, the students attitudes are very focused on sustainability, social aspects of the project, connecting with communities, designing for homeless. You know all these issues are important to our younger generation and I think that shows in the projects and the type of projects that they want to take on. So my experience was that a couple of weeks ago I was on the jury for the Governor General's Medals of Architecture awards with the RAIC and the Council of Arts and 108 proposals came from all the whole, the whole country. So supposedly the best project in the last seven years in Canada, we saw from luxury homes on top of mountains and then these huge new building government buildings, hospitals, hotels, everything you can think about. It was very interesting to see the new terms of references because we were talking about. Sustainability, social justice, equity, excessively all of that was written in the TOR and we were five, three members that didn't had no idea how to judge that. We were like, how do you, how do you, how do you look at five photos and like four floor plans and say that this project was a community driven building, right? We're only judging on, like, you know, a, you know, a few photos and one of the jury members was like, just look at the photos and see if there's any people there. Because architects typically take pictures without any people, and it's just like fancy walls and materials and lighting and just putting like ghosts in in, in the background, right. So it's funny. So one jury member was like, well, just pick the ones with the most people in them and it kind of became one of our guiding principles to look at these projects. And that we're not designing for our eyes, but for how they serve communities and people, and I think that was a very interesting experience because I felt like that was a changing attitude. In what we are considering as excellence and quality in in our built environment. And on the jury, there was Wanda de la Costa, who's a famous indigenous architect who was looking at the patterns and saying, oh, I don't want to have this pastiche, like, just murals of our indigenous art. It has to be integrated into the design. And it's not just a sticker or bumper sticker on the on the on the on the on the building, or there was Michael Green who was looking at the grains of the wood and he was like that's not indigenous wood of that city. So he was like just looking at the patterns of the wood and he was immediately recognizing the regional woods and that was also a guiding kind of principle in our decision making that you know it has to be contextual but at the same time, serving the community authentically. It's not just a lip service that we're

	doing and it's just not just another bumper sticker that we're putting on the building. So I just wanted to share that that experience because after the two days of intensive reviewing of 108 projects, I went back to my first year studio and I was able to tell this experience to my students and well, these are, you know what we're considering the best of the best in Canada and you guys are, you know, at your first and 2nd projects and it was kind of nice to make that connection and to give that sense of hope. But at the same time, there's a bit of confusion because we don't know how to judge these projects, I mean, be great if the RAIC sent us to all the projects and had a tour of them. But we were just looking at 10 photos and just awarding medals to 12 projects that we thought were the best.
[00:57:07] Martha Radice	That's really interesting cause it's just that the materials that are provided for the awards are no longer addressing that, you know that there's a gap and what they need. You know what needs to be presented as more of a narrative rather than an image of the buildings, yeah.
[00:57:26] Henry Tsang	Of course, there was like a 500 word description, and I remember one specific project that said, oh, this is a house centered around a living space for a turtle. And it had a central garden in the house, which was like an aquarium space for a turtle living there. But then, in the actual presentation, there was no photos of the turtle as like, well, you described it as a living building of some sort, like a biodome of some sort but it didn't even actually show the living thing that they described the whole project was surrounding this living space for an animal. So it was, you know, there there's of course the 500-word description, but there's also in recent projects the requirement of an EUI, the energy use intensity, right. So it's evolving into a more kind of data-driven. I think you know how then the next step would be to include like an LCA like a life cycle assessment or even an analysis of the accessibility like a Rick Hanson standard or something like that. It seems like it's going to be, you know, we're finding measures to find how we measure these new criteria, but I think we're still kind of confused. You know, we spent 4 hours to decide how we're going to, you know, narrow down 108 to 12. And then the last six was just you know another six hours of discussions.
[00:59:03] Sara Jacobs	So we're going to move on to the second question that we're going to, we're going to ask this morning which is how has your understanding of quality changed since joining the project? Or if you're new to the project, what comes to mind when you when you sort of think about quality in the built environment and I feel like these are very big questions. I'm trying to think like I could answer this in a few words and I don't think I could, but the reason I think that that we're being asked this is that our hope coming out of this session and the next 40 minutes is whether there is a strong consensus about what quality is within this group and that one of I think you're taking notes or one of the students is taking notes is going. This is going to be presented back to the Group as our consensus about quality is. So I actually wonder if we should take a few minutes just to think about this and then I think you could answer. I would challenge folks to answer as sort of briefly as possible like to even sort of brainstorm like words or sort of a single sentence that maybe again is sort of an idea of how quality has changed or just how you think about think about it and experience quality in the built environment. Does that make sense? I'll give a minute a minute to think about that. Unless someone's, like, already knows how they would answer.
[01:01:39] Sara Jacobs	Does anyone want to jump in?

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- [01:01:42]
Thomas Strickland
- I'd be willing to give it a try, only really I think I'll build on what Henry was saying and I think what's happened is, you know, for years in general, you know, you spend time with other architects and go for coffee and argue and talk about what's the best building in the world. And you see all the images in the magazines and so forth. The idea of quality is something that even if you know if I brought into question what I think it is, it's remained in my head right and kind of what I sort of hoped or imagined it to be and I think one of the things that started to happen here is I've actually gone through a process of trying to apply it, you know like what are what are the real things that are happening? Like if somebody asked me how do you define the experience of somebody using a building as quality like or how do you even as Henry was saying like there's these sorts of ideas of quantitative notions of quality emerging that are that are much easier to define, let's say than, say like a user experience, right? So I think that's what's been really interesting for me as far as like I wouldn't say I would be able to define quality differently, but I've certainly had to think about what those definitions are and then how they might actually be applied. Like. I mean as a, you know, I was thinking about that this this morning like what as a designer, do you have the capacity to effect, right? Like certainly you have the capacity to affect materiality, light, length of corridors like there are certain things. And then there's other pieces which, you know, come down to city bylaws or to, you know, the developers willingness to spend money on these kinds of things. Like there's lots of other pieces of quality that that are impacted that that when you when I think about them, they certainly like I have to put them into some kind of context and that's what being a part of this project anyways has done is asked me to put things in context. Which you know, I've been able to not necessarily have to do in a real way like, I mean when you're building designing a building it doesn't get done the way you want it to. You complain it's you, blame it on the developer, you blame it on the city, you blame it on a lot of people. But I mean, those are the things that are actually, you know, now coming to the fore as affecting or impacting our idea of quality and appreciating why those ideas are in place and exist. Anyone else?
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- [01:04:36]
Isabelle Cardinal
- My answer is completely different. What has changed? Well, like I said, we've been working on special needs for 40 years, so it's always been clear to me that quality equals experience lived by the people. But the partnership really gives me, I don't know how to say that, a boost to continue. I'm so proud to do what I do where I work. The mission of the organization and we've been working hard to really work with the people to understand their needs, to understand, to, to reduce these needs, into principles and recommendations and to apply it in the built environment. But for sure it's easier to work with what we call the visible limitations and like Allen said at University of Montreal, we're really trying to explode the barriers and to explore needs that always have been there, but we that we don't know a lot about. So, the invisible and visible limitations and neurological needs it really. I knew it was there. We know in our work that it's there, but it really gives us a boost and some new knowledge. So my perspective on quality has not changed, but we have to go through the whole research to have maybe some more answers, but we have been meeting some people and making some bonds and already we have some answers and I can really apply it in my work, so I'm really proud of being part of this and this is for the team of Montreal, but, knowing that 13 other teams work on specific subject, I know that quality go passes from sustainability and but I am forced to read about it, talk about it so it's more
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	concrete. So it's not just something, you know, it exists, but I think we have to take the time to meet and to read about the research so it ...speaks in french....
[01:08:18] Martha Radice	Can I ask a question about your work? What tensions or contradictions come up in trying for universal design? Because if I think about spaces in schools for example, everybody loves natural light, but if you put in lots of glass then the acoustics go to pot. So what you know what happens if you get a real kind of contradiction between fulfilling the needs of one group and fulfilling the needs of another group and how do you work around that and Société Logique and what are the ones that come up so like quality for one group is going to be a lack of quality for another group?
[01:09:11] Isabelle Cardinal	Well, nothing is perfect. So it's the I think that the best result we have is um the further we were able to go on a certain for a certain building. And we don't have e the means to...just your example. Imagine if we want to address this issue in one building. The time the effort, the energy, the knowledge, the measurement on the on the 3D AutoCAD to really have the information to take good decisions. We don't have. The projects are not organized with the time timeline that allows us to do all that effort. We have contradictory issue with blind people and physical limitation. Physical limitation you want no steps, no, no threshold and people with the visual impairments, they want to be able to know that they're going in the street. And yeah, so well in Quebec, like I said, we are working, we're trying to work with the people. So we're in linked with some groups or association and we do projects like small research projects and we all sit together and we try to find answers and the best answer is a little bit of compromise for each other.
[01:11:17] Martha Radice	And being able to talk about it, I guess being able to talk about it.
[01:11:22] Isabelle Cardinal	Yes. And everybody one group understanding the other group, so a little bit like we're doing here talking to each other. We don't have a choice to listen and to respect what the other person says. So it's rare that all these groups have the opportunity to sit together, express their needs and their frustration, but when you understand what the other side thinks, then you're more able to do compromise on your first thoughts. But there's no ideal building We try we to make the best out of every situation.
[01:12:15] Martha Radice	There's nothing in the design.
[01:12:25] Gregory MacNeil	It's a compelling question, quality. I'm going to say first that you know Heritage Properties, I'm going to speak to you in a sense. I've sat on the Heritage Advisory Board for Nova Scotia and approved all kinds of properties. They spend a great deal of money on them. They do not have a curated collection. That's where quality, if that comes into it. They have lots of little houses all over the place because somebody wants to be able to put a plaque on it and more importantly, get a grant. So a lot of there's a lot of a lot of plaques out there, but maybe not a curated quality. I also think that quality comes from the level of investment and the decision you want to make on that investment. So when I worked for the Bishop of Augsburg, we had 5000 churches, 8000 outdoor monuments and 15,000 accessory buildings. Everything from kindergartens to private homes. We would sit down every year. We'd roll them big map out on the table, 19 divisions, 19 architects, and we would decide what we will invest in and that investment had better have a serious, measurable result. So that's one way of tackling

quality. Quality can be cultural; it can be a material. It can be in longevity. If I look at the German example, 100 year mortgage says that the materials have to have a certain quality to last that that length of time before you get into maintenance because the bank walks away off it's falling down. The other one that's kind of perplexed me - And when we do it in Germany, we would look at all of those aspects, the cultural, the heritage, etcetera and we would say what's going to be the measurable outcome of this. And although we had \$400 million, we only had so much to invest in all of that infrastructure plus build. So there's a quality discussion to be had at that level. And then if I look at quality on another level, I say well. If I look to the UK, I'm on an organization there by appointment by the UK Government BIM for heritage and we've now relabeled that initiative to IM for heritage or information management. So quality becomes a different a different discussion. So we had a case study where a sexual assault victim in public housing was paired with for a roommate, a rapist. And they're saying that the information management system should have picked that up to give the assault victim, a better quality of environment and she didn't necessarily care what the environment looked like, but it didn't matter because that individual was partnered with somebody. So I think when we look at BIM, we have to go beyond BIM as a mechanism for construction of materiality of space and we also have to look at the information management that falls behind it. That can really serve as given quality of life in the space.

[01:15:32]
Danielle
Catley

Thanks. I find for me looking at this question of how my understanding of quality has changed since the beginning, I would say it seems like quality is quite subjective in a sense and needs to be very contextualized to the specific project. It seems that we can't really have just one definition of quality because it won't apply to anyone actually. If you only have one definition, cause we're all have different needs, we have different backgrounds, different and lived experiences that will shape that definition and then our communities are all different. So we have different communities, different contexts and different people who are within those communities who have different definitions of what is quality. So it seems to be even more daunting than at the beginning of when this project started on how are we going to define quality? Because it seems that there would never be just one or not even 100 definitions. Because for all of our definitions of quality are quite unique. And how do you bring that into buildings? It's quite interesting and I'm eager to see where that brings us.

[01:16:51]
Henry Tsang

Anyone else want to share?

[01:16:55]
Ben
Johnston

I kind of agree with you when I started going into this career path, I came from a mechanical engineering and so my idea coming out of quality is it's built to last. It's robust, it has a factor of safety and then now it's like since joining the project, even during before the project joining the project and like now, it's like every day it's changing and I'm having to do reading now for a thesis project and it's like God, quality can be defined in so many different ways that it doesn't really make sense to have a catch all this is clear. Even recording right now all of us have said something like there are overlaps, but it's also very distinctly different. So if everyone is different, everyone in this room is different. Every building we go into is different. Why are we trying to put one label on it.

[01:17:55]
Gregory
MacNeil

I'm wondering if in the heritage mode we should be looking at quality under two lenses 1 the tangible of 1 the intangible.

[01:18:05]

Does anyone else want to?

Sara Jacobs	<p>I can speak to that a little bit. I think I agree with what's being said so far. It's really I think exciting to look at both existing and new buildings and maybe it's a matter of defining quality by project, like when we start working on a project, we look at the site, we look at specific goals that we want to set out for a project and maybe quality is about setting out certain goals and working towards achieving them. Like maybe there's different definitions of quality for each thing, and I think looking at intangible values is super important I just finished my thesis last week and it was about, yeah, very exciting. But it was about intangible values of heritage and what sort of role that plays. So I think that's something that we definitely need to consider in the role of community making and place making in the buildings that we're trying to create.</p>
<p>[01:19:17] Martha Radice</p>	<p>But it's really hard because in thinking about the schools that we're going into, Halifax has grown massively in the last few years. I don't know if you know this, but I think Jennifer mentioned it this morning, Jennifer bane. So it's been one of the fastest growing cities, rate of growth has slowed a little, but in 2022-2023 it was growing at a rate that hadn't been seen for decades and so big problem is infrastructure is kind of running to catch up. School buildings are running to catch up, schools are overcrowded. I was talking with a member of our team who is responsible for planning at the provincial level. Our work is partly designed to feed into the school design planning guide that he's revising to try and make... so that there's kind of currently the planning guide is extremely technical, saying, you know, you need this many windows for this much space and so on but he's trying to add a qualitative element to it. But in talking with him, I was reminded that when it comes down to it as well it's also about, you know, for him is very much about how much money can they afford to spend on a new school versus repairing old schools and where do you put it? Like and all of those things need to be very quantitative, very, very much measured. And I am a qualitative researcher who is completely beguiled by ideas of, you know, social justice in the environment and sense of attachment and belonging, and the importance of belonging to a high school for students, for instance, in their learning experience. But none of that can really be well translated when it's coming down to oh we've got 4000 more high school aged kids concentrated in this neighborhood and this neighborhood and this neighborhood, and we need to decide what to build on the sites that we can get hold of in a context of very limited access to you know, limited numbers of tradespeople who can work on it, you know, delayed building all the time because of those limits like that. It's very challenging then to translate the qualitative notions of quality when so many quantitative metrics are pressing upon the questions.</p>
<p>[01:22:00] Sara Jacobs</p>	<p>Yeah, I was going to bring up something similar, actually. I'm still reflecting on how much my understanding quality has changed. But I think for me, I always think about just the question of for whom, so quality for whom, which if you start to ask that is going to even within the context of one site or one building or one landscape is going to have a whole range of responses. I really like Henry's story of like the sort of going and doing the jury for the projects and stuff. And I think as these more kind of like qualitative accounts of the built environment are taken seriously within sort of administrative or sort of official spaces, I'm also wary of attempts to make those measurable. Yeah, because I think there's a tendency to sort of want to be trying to use the same frameworks that we would use for quantitative data with qualitative and that's something I'm still reflecting on,</p>

but I think that that's kind of where my head's at a little bit with as a as someone who also comes to this as like a trained as like a human geographer and sort of environmental historian. I'm really interested in the qualitative aspects, but how the qualitative can sort of exist within the qualitative like not having it. I don't think it actually starts to change the fundamental things that we've maybe have been critiquing about the shortfall into the contradictions of the measurable impacts which we need also. Yeah, so it's a bit of the half formed thought, but maybe some of the ways my ideas of quality are developing.

[01:23:48]
Henry Tsang

I just wanted to kind of respond to that a little bit. I think that what has changed for me throughout this process and the project is also that we are finding ways to measure the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the of projects. And we're doing this award jury. We found out very quickly that it wouldn't apply to different typologies the same way. Some projects tend to be more socially driven than others and just have that quality right. A library or a community centre is much more socially driven and responds to the social value of buildings much easier than a villa or resort, you know? So we didn't know how to judge those single family houses that, you know, didn't really. You know, it's for a rich guy who just bought a yacht and the house is beautiful. The quality of the building is beautiful. But how do you give an award to that given the criteria's of an award like we are stating. It has to be sustainable, has to be accessible and inclusive and contribute positively to its community, right? We have to think about the context and what that building is actually adding to the local community. In some ways. I mean it's very hard to look at just, you know, a few photos and plans without... I would say we would have to let the building sit there for five years and see what happens to it in a few years and come back, you know, rather than awarding it when it's brand new built, you know, still smelling like paint. So it's kind of funny that we do that and we don't go back and you know you talked about post occupancy evaluations. I think that has changed how I've started to think about quality and just one more thought is that I read a book somewhere that talked about these issues and that person called this the three parts. One is the hardware of the building, which is the materials and the structure and everything. Then you have the software which is the programming and how you know how it functions. But there's a third component called the heart ware, the love, the passion, the people. And I think that comes back to your story with your son is who were you with and what are those memories that are created there? I felt like that kind of summarizes a little bit the categories that we're trying to kind of cover here in, in what we're defining as quality.

[01:26:32]
Gregory
MacNeil

You mentioned the schools that that was very interesting here in Nova Scotia. As you know, we did P3 schools for A while. Private public partnership that were our last big I guess group of high schools. We did interesting because of course they get locally pulled out of local communities and centralized and we bust everybody there. And so you say, well, what are the effects of doing that? Well, one of the interesting effects was community development because without the high school in public ownership. You couldn't rent the gymnasium easily, so that meant that every single fire hall community hall in rural Nova Scotia is booked solid. And that's a very positive impact on the communities. It changes the focus away from the high school to the Community centre. Which I always thought found kind of intriguing. So there's a there's a spin off of that one now. The awards I have to comment on this one because that building out there and I'm going to let a little cat out of the bag here, that didn't win an

	NSAA design award. They won a governor generals, but it didn't win an NSAA. And it didn't win because they didn't include a plan in their submission.
[01:27:50] Martha Radice	Which building the?
[01:27:51] Gregory MacNeil	The library you know and I was president of the NSAA at the time, and I completely changed out the awards after that. But what was interesting was three of the jury members were from the School of Architecture and they attempted to explain to me that they didn't understand how the building works. And I said you weren't in it. And they looked at me very funny. I said you can't tell me that in all credibility. You walk past that construction for two years or three years and you never went in it. So awards are, I think, probably the worst thing that the profession does. And I'm going to say that because I think they're absolutely a joke. As you said, we don't, we don't look at the longevity of the building. We could actually just weigh them and give out the award by weight if we wanted to. There's all kinds of ways to give out the award, but I really think that if we're going to discuss quality awards are not a topic of the discussion.
[01:28:51] Sara Jacobs	Great. Thank you. We're at the last few minutes, so maybe I would just ask if anyone had any very brief but pressing thoughts that they want to share. The sort of wrap up question, er...
[01:29:10] Martha Radice	The awards thing is so interesting, but I just want to say like that that and the change of criteria and the fact that it demands other materials of the candidates effectively. And I wonder how that's going to play out because we all want a line on our CV saying we won something, right.
[01:29:31] Gregory MacNeil	I'll go one further. I'll go one further. Universities, as a part of accreditation, need professors to get awards.
[01:29:40] Martha Radice	Hmm.
[01:29:41] Gregory MacNeil	Which is which is. I think a little problematic, yeah.
[01:29:42] Martha Radice	Yeah.
[01:29:48] Sara Jacobs	Well, I would also thank three of the jury members being from the University of which the building is being awarded. I think it to me just sort of highlights the small and sort of like self-serving sort of. You know it's the same the same people giving the same awards, who are then celebrated for that award, which then sort of like begets the whole process. This sort of final question we had was whether there was a strong consensus about quality within this group and maybe it no would be the answer that I think I've heard.
[01:30:25] Martha Radice	Multiple definitions.
[01:30:26] Sara Jacobs	But consensus that there's multiple definitions within that do you want to sort of review?

[01:30:33] Ben Johnston	Of like the million things I've written down of, we each person said, the thing that was stuck the most is quality. Shouldn't have one definition, it should change and cater to each community and project, and we can define quality instead of in this forum of like this is what quality is. We've done it being like as you start something or start a project determining what quality means to that project and use that as a driving factor.
[01:31:05] Matt Nomura	Any abstract concept demands definition work to be the starting point. I think what's really interesting is when I think about the deconstruction of any theory of change, it's really just understanding the principles that guide the project and what I've heard a lot listening to colleagues around the table are a lot of a lot of guiding principles a lot of typologies, a lot of different ways to approach quality and the built environments. And so when you contextualize it for a province or for a city and for demographics, how do you take that into context and design your guiding principles. And so that there is a common sense of definition when it comes to principal work as it relates to quality in Canadian built environments and what does that even mean? On a whole, because I think that you cannot have a homogeneous view on quality contextualized for Halifax versus Calgary versus Toronto. But there are certainly some agreements around this table in regards to some of the guiding principles that would go into the behavioral description of any work that you that you do and people can see themselves in a behavioral description more so than they see themselves in a KPI or a number, and also just as we were talking, it's a very colonial approach when we get into measurements as well. So how do we unpack that a little bit as well and deconstruct some of those systematic norms on westernized you know ways of viewing metrics.
[01:32:37] Henry Tsang	Just want to make sure that we're doing our homework. Does anyone know about the slide that a student has to prepare?
[01:32:48] Ben Johnston	No.
[01:32:49] Sara Jacobs	But they wouldn't.
[01:32:50] Henry Tsang	It says in my notes there's some one of the students has to prepare a PowerPoint slide to report to the group later on and I.
[01:32:57] Yolene Handabaka Ames	Yeah, there was. As far as I know, there is Maisie and Ben, you see.

ROOM 6

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room6_ Location: G.H. Murray Building - G215			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Douglas	MacLeod	Athabasca University	Athabasca University
Ipek	Tureli	McGill University	McGill University
Robert	Wright	University of Toronto	University of Toronto
Jonathan	Jucker	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Giovanna	Boniface	Royal Architectural Institute of Canada	National Partners
Leah	Perrin	Halifax Regional Municipality	Dalhousie University
Laura	McBride	Rick Hansen Foundation	National Partners
Sarah	Huxley	Fondation Véro & Louis	Université de Montréal
Panos	Polyzois	University of Manitoba	University of Manitoba
Maëllanne	Armstrong	Université Laval	Université Laval
Marc-	Fournier	University of Waterloo	University of Waterloo
Andrée-Ann	Langevin	Carleton University	Carleton University

Room 6 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-05-01

Report produced by
Armstrong, Maëlanne (Université Laval)

6.1. Summary

The participants had to share their understanding of positive outputs on quality after 2 years of partnership research and how their understanding of quality has changed since the beginning of the project.

- Quality and scale
- Tension between the different perspectives of quality
- Resource constraints due to the challenges of meeting diverse quality needs
- The missing middle in Urban Planning
- Quality in regard to population density

The workshop explores the themes of urban density, quality of life, and the complexities of defining and achieving quality in urban planning and housing. Participants highlight the "missing middle" in Canadian cities, referring to the lack of mid-sized urban areas that could balance the extremes of large cities and small towns. This gap contributes to urban sprawl and necessitates a car-dependent lifestyle, which negatively impacts quality of life. A key point emphasized is the distinction between high and low-quality density; quality density supports a walkable environment with accessible amenities, whereas low-quality density results in isolated living conditions despite similar population densities. The example of suburbs versus walkable city district is highlighted.

The dialogue also explores how perceptions of quality have evolved during the last two years, emphasizing that quality cannot be detached from scale—ranging from individual homes to entire cities. Quality is also considered over time, long-term sustainability and livability are crucial, especially in the 21st century where ecological concerns are apparent. Participants discuss the inherent tensions between different perspectives on quality, shaped by diverse professional and personal backgrounds. An example being the tensions between the need to reuse and readapt buildings to be accessible which often conflicts with the heritage world trying to preserve the historical aspect of buildings. These tensions highlight the complexity of achieving consensus on what constitutes quality in urban environments.

Resource constraints are another critical issue, as meeting the diverse needs of all residents within limited budgets and timelines poses significant challenges. Ensuring that all voices are heard and integrated into the planning process is essential but difficult. This challenge is compounded by the commodification of housing, which prioritizes short-term economic gains over long-term quality and affordability. The discussion touches on the need for a shift towards decommodification, aiming to

treat housing and related services as fundamental rights rather than speculative commodities.

Furthermore, the conversation delves into the importance of context in urban planning. Buildings must be considered within their broader urban settings to ensure they contribute positively to the overall environment. This approach counters the trend of designing isolated architectural masterpieces without considering their impact on the surrounding area.

The workshop concludes with a consensus on several key points: quality is intrinsically linked to scale, it evolves over time, it is shaped by diverse perspectives, and it is challenged by resource limitations. Addressing these issues requires a holistic and inclusive approach to urban planning that prioritizes long-term livability and sustainability over immediate economic returns. The participants recognize that while there are no easy solutions, fostering ongoing dialogue and incorporating diverse viewpoints are essential steps towards achieving better urban environments.

6.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

00:00:25 Douglas McLeod	I'm going to suggest that we start off by just doing a brief round of introductions and also to ask just a little bit about your own understanding of positive outputs on quality after two years of partnership research. And Jonathan, unfortunately I'm going to pass the microphone to you first.
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00:00:46 Jonathan Jucker	Hi, my name is Jonathan Jucker. I am the research facilitator with the School of Architecture, Planning and landscape at the University of Calgary, and I should probably add a disclaimer that I am not an architect. I'm more of a research person so I do work with our faculty researchers there in a number of capacities and I have been fortunate to be working with Brian Sinclair's UFC team on this project since it began.
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00:01:42 Douglas McLeod	Let's briefly introduce yourselves and then we'll dive into it.
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00:01:48 Andrée-Ann Langevin	So hello, my name is Andrée-Ann Langevin. I'm actually with Carlton University. I used to work at EVOQ architecture but they didn't change my nametag. I was a partner before. I'm also involved with APT a bit, so close to the heritage world. So our research is about the adaptive and reuse, we look about what we can do with existing buildings and the best opportunities in others. Regarding what the partnership brings..
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00:02:22 Douglas McLeod	The question was how your own understanding or understanding of positive outputs on quality after two years of partnership.
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00:02:30 Andrée-Ann Langevin	I'm going to say that coming from a professional standpoint, I was stuck in what is the performance of material and the insulation and really the technical side of it, now it's more general I'm going further in my comprehension of the comfort with intangible feelings and a more understanding point of view of others users or visitors of the things we do. So that's how it changed.
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00:03:01 Laura McBride	Hi everyone. I'm Laura McBride. I am the director of marketing at the Rick Hansen Foundation. So, we are a national foundation that represent people with disabilities, and we work on removing barriers for people with disabilities and making them a more accessible world. So, I'm really grateful to be part of this partnership and grateful that this dialogue is happening about quality in the built environment because in my work I see all the barriers that so many Canadians face. So yeah, just happy that it's happening and in terms of the positive output so far, I'm not working on a project myself, but I think one of the positive things I
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saw this morning was just the acknowledgement that lived experience is critical in the definition of quality. So, thank you.

00:04:02
Maëlanne
Armstrong

I'm Maëlanne Armstrong. I'm a student in graphic design at the University of Laval. I was put on this project very, very recently. As of last month, I believe I was hired to work on the roadmap because in our program in graphic design, we do a lot of infographics. It's a lot about communication, user experience, that type of things. So that's why we were brought on the project. Me and my colleague in the other room. As far as positive outputs, I haven't seen much yet because I'm so new on this project, but I think that our goal of improving the communication between the different actors to better define quality is really important and will ultimately improve quality as a whole, I believe.

00:05:05
Marc
Fournier

Hi so my name is Mark, I'm with the University of Waterloo. I'm a graduate student working with the project over there. I was also involved in the beginning of the partnership with the team at University of Montréal and so it's a recent shift for me. I think one of the key takeaways for me or the output at least is coming at the problem of redefining quality through so many different angles but in projects that are all deeply rooted within their context, I think this is really important to ground it and avoid the generic in this conversation, yeah.

00:05:55
Leah Perrin

Hi my name is Leah Perrin. I'm the manager of regional planning at Halifax Regional Municipality so welcome to Halifax everybody. I'm not an architect, I'm a planner and a long range regional planner. I'm definitely coming at this from a different perspective. I've been pretty privileged, happy and grateful to have attended the last two conferences. I do want to apologize in advance. I'm going to have to be in and out over the next couple of days because I was not able to take full time off of work to be here, but I'm happy to be here this morning. In terms of understanding of positive outputs you know my participation, it's mostly been in these yearly conferences, and so it's been really wonderful to see such a broad range of people come together and talk about this topic. I was really struck this morning listening to Jean Pierre and Carmela speak, because I'm a planner and coming at this as a planner into a space primarily full of architects, are the architects learning that planning matters? All of this, feels like planning to me. I'm like, this is just planning school. Everyone knows that, you know, you just talked about context for example. That's exactly what this is. So it's really interesting. The more that we can unsilo our disciplines and think about all of these issues, the better.

00:07:33
Panos
Polyzois

Hello, my name is Panos. I've been on this project for quite some time. I joined in Montreal two years ago and I've been to every convention. It's been a lot of changes and growth. You know, my personal and academic life over these last two years. I should also say I'm a PhD student from the University of Manitoba and our project is related to sustainable and affordable community led First Nations housing initiatives. When it comes to positive outputs, something that really came to mind is how over the last two years, it seems like this broader project is continuing to centre indigenous perspectives in the concept of quality, defining quality and understanding

pathways to quality and how these pathways are more accessible to some while maybe not so accessible to others. Speaking on the systemic and structural challenges that are here in Canada, being more aware of that. Seeing in the presentations today how the format of the conventions has been adapting overtime is something that I felt was very positive.

00:08:58
Sarah
Huxley

Hello, my name is Sarah Huxley. I represent the citizen organization. We're based around Montreal, and we build housing for adults on the autism spectrum who need support on a daily basis. I've been involved in the project since the convention in Montreal. In terms of my views on positive results so far, I was really excited to see the first roadmaps. I saw the positive in in mixing all these people together and having those discussions in and of itself, but then seeing it all illustrated through the road maps. I felt it was already, great work and sort of summarizing everything that happened in the past two years, even though, like Jean-Pierre said, they're sort of tentative, so I'm looking forward to the following two years.

00:10:06
Robert
Wright

So I'm Rob Wright. I'm from the University of Toronto. I'm actually a landscape architect by training who does lot of work in urban design. I also am on the steering committee for the grant, and I've been working on the 1st grant which we didn't get. And the second grant we did get. Our project at the University of Toronto, which is headed up by Fadi Masoud is basically on looking at sustainability, social justice, and equity in landscape. We've been for a number of years been taking areas of landscape, particularly in community areas of need and trying to figure out how to map social justice and equity in a way that you can enter into the kind of processes that normally are used in planning and urban design, so that people can actually begin to see these issues as exposed. Whether it's accessibility from the physical standpoint or sustainability from the standpoint of storm water or sunlight or shade, or a number of trees, etc. We've been working closely with the SRI, the GIS mapping people to try to figure out how we quantify and qualify these things in maps that can be put into a planning process so that people actually begin to understand. I would think that most important aspect of this has always been for me is the NGOs and the other communities which are being involved in this, because as a person of a professional discipline, we're kind of talking to our own choir all the time. We're all singing to the same voices and it's nice to hear the Toronto environmental groups or the sustainability groups or the housing groups or the parks people that represent the community use of parks, to hear their voices about what quality means to them. And I think that's the most critical aspect of that, also including the issues around indigenous people and how truth and reconciliation is also represented in some of the mapping that we're doing that identify those issues.

00:12:02
Douglas
McLeod

And I'm Douglas MacLeod. I'm the chair of architecture at Athabasca University. I am a registered architect, registered in California. About our project at Alabasta, we're actually focusing on rural and regional communities, but we're doing it through a lens of what we call regenerative design and for this project, the concept of regenerative design has helped quite a bit in evolving our understanding because the International Living Futures Institute defines regenerative design as being socially, culturally rich and ecologically restorative, and basically, they're making the point that you

can't do one of those things unless you do all of those things, and that's really helped me to understand the whole nature of quality. For me, almost regenerative design defines quality in the built environment when you have all those 3 aspects, so that's been very important, but it was certainly reinforced right from the first conference in Montreal where in a room sort of like this, Doctor Sylvia McFadden started to talk about housing and housing on indigenous reserves. It was absolutely eye opening, of course, and very tragic too. It really helped to evolve the thinking of the entire project by realizing that quality is much more than an award you win from say, Canadian architect. There's nothing wrong with Canadian architect, but we do need to really rethink awards and how they're given out. So! This has been great. Thank you very much everybody for your introductions and I think we can probably move right into the second question, which is: "how has my understanding of quality changed since the beginning of the project?". I think we've had hints all around the table. Jonathan now there's a chance to expand if you'd like.

00:14:04
Jonathan
Jucker

So my own personal understanding of quality, I think has evolved. And Jean Pierre touched on this a little bit, on the tension between the experts and the people and the need to balance what everybody wants. Maybe different groups of people don't all want the same thing; the experts know what is necessary, or maybe think that they know what is best... Actually a few months ago I was reading the newspaper and saw an article by Jean Pierre about the Afghan War Memorial in Ottawa. I think some of you are probably familiar with that, there was a design competition, and the committee chose a design. However, the procurement people or I guess the politicians went with something different, something that was maybe less abstract and more accessible to veterans' groups and people in general... At least as they perceived it. This caused a bit of a controversy and I'm actually not sure how it was resolved, but I thought that was quite interesting and I know that there is a parallel with the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, which was itself very controversial, but it ended up becoming, I think, a very meaningful place to the public, who were initially ambivalent or opposed to it, especially to the veterans and to the survivors and families. I guess that leads to my next personal observation, which is the way that buildings are adapted and inhabited by people after the fact, after they've been built and the way that people can take a building that, it turns out, wasn't designed with the needs of different groups in mind, but kind they make it their own. This is just the beginnings of some thoughts about that. But that's kind of how I'm evolving a little bit.

00:16:41
Douglas
McLeod

Thank you. Jonathan, would anybody else like to address that issue?

00:16:55
Sarah
Huxley

I like that you mentioned the tension between the lived experience and the expert advice. I remember in Montreal, in a roundtable, I said something that I didn't think would be controversial, but kind of was. I said that for me, the whole design process and awards process was architects patting each other on the backs for being awesome. What I wanted to express there is that it wasn't something that I felt I could be a part of, that I had a voice in or that anyone outside of that media could operate in. For me, that has hugely evolved over the past few years. I think this project is an example of that and

I think that's one of the outputs that we wanted to see at the end of this project. Having those voices heard throughout the building process and throughout the awards process as well. Yeah. On that note, I keep, I keep hearing this concept of, you know, expert knowledge and.

00:18:14
Panos
Polyzois

On that note, I keep hearing this concept of expert knowledge and lived experience as two pillars that are potentially in conflict or have some synergy potentially, and I keep thinking back to this conference that we held near Kenora and this concept of expert knowledge is maybe something that academics come up with. Maybe it's in itself something we pat ourselves on the back with. Thinking that we are the experts, and we have to go to the users or we have to go to the residence and get their lived experience to inform our expert knowledge, when really, who are the experts in that scenario? Is it the academics or is it the practitioners? Should we start to think that maybe the lived experience should frame everything? That the lived experience is more central? Maybe we academics should be used in a way that can supplement that and not the other way around? Because at the end of the day, when it comes to housing, it's the residents that will live in the house for the rest of their life. It's not just a building to them. It's supposed to be a home, and it's supposed to be far beyond anything measurable that is rooted in lived experience. So, there's something to think about regarding how we work together and how we Co-produce. We should maybe look beyond these divides and reframe them. Just my thoughts.

00:19:38
Douglas
McLeod

Thank you. Anybody else?

00:19:44
Andrée-Ann
Langevin

A small comment on what you have just said now. I'm working in adaptive review, so we go see buildings that already exist and we're trying to do something else with them and you need to adapt those buildings to make them useful. I see in residential areas for example, the trend right now is condominium. It may be because of the housing crisis, but I won't theorize on why people are moving more and more and more. But it's quite hard to personalize things right now in construction because it's made to be like fast fashion. We cannot paint, we cannot change anything. We have to build a white box ready for other people. So how, in that context of moving faster in smaller apartment units, can you reach better quality for the people when rooms get so small that you have difficulty to put a bed table in.

I think the research bring a lot of positive outcomes because we talk about these things and we exchange a lot between disciplines and we break the silo. We usually only get to work on our little things but this help and I'm really glad that we have partners from cities because the university alone won't have the same impact.

I forgot to mention earlier, but this is a positive outcome. Talking about what we notice about the market in real life (condominiums, smaller and smaller apartments, etc.) helps brainstorm solutions to correct the issues we observe.

00:21:47 Marc Fournier	I think I can speak to that because the project we're working on at Waterloo is specifically catered towards multi-unit residential buildings. The situation you're describing is something that we're trying to get past, this kind of commodification of housing and how residents must be at the centre of evaluating the quality of housing going forward. We're trying to go against this market trend of maximizing short term value and truly build for the people that are going to inhabit the buildings themselves.
00:22:32 Andrée-Ann Langevin	Can you share with us what you've discovered more specifically?
00:22:39 Marc Fournier	Sure. We've been focusing in recent months on looking at the social housing guidelines that exist in Canada that are assessing variables of quality and trying to complement these variables with more extensive frameworks of quality. We're working with the UN housing as a human right and trying to integrate that into a broader discussion about housing. We're also using this idea of alienation in the built environment from the social aspect, the subjective agency and on the environmental level as well. We're trying to assess quality in those scales: the environmental level, the social or community level and the individual level so that people can have agency over their environments, and they're not alienated by these components. Does that answer your question better?
00:23:52 Andrée-Ann Langevin	Yes, thank you
00:23:57 Douglas McLeod	Some of the work that Mark's group at Waterloo has been doing has been really influential on a lot of our research assistants as well. The concept of the commodification of housing and the idea that housing becomes a speculative commodity is really crippling in terms of making it affordable. From my understanding this economic dimension of the built environment is becoming more and more at the forefront. The seminar that Adrienne Blackwell gave on commodification of housing had a big impact on our research assistants, who decided that they wanted to explore the decommodification of housing, but also the decommodification of food production, which you might not think is naturally associated with the built environment, but what we're seeing is that just as in housing, food production and the associated buildings that are part of that have become part of a really speculative investment on behalf of very, very large corporations. So, we're trying to look at some of that, but the one wonderful benefit of this project is that we get to hear different points of view that sometimes inspire us to look at things differently. Are there other comments that people would like to share?
00:25:28 Leah Perrin	Yeah, I've been really struck by the multiple scales that these conversations are at. We're looking at the individual site level all the way up to citywide, regional wide. I think that's interesting... Do you have one definition of quality and how integrated is that understanding? You know, one of the things that I think about a lot as we spend a lot of time thinking about these individuals at

	a site level is, this building's great, but what's around it? How is the city involved in planning the road around a building or the parking space? These elements could really compromise your site. You might have the most beautiful building in the world, but if it's like surrounded by a sea of parking, then what does that really mean? So that's interesting.
00:26:31 Jonathan Jucker	I just wanted to add to that, maybe this is just part of a general trend in the architectural and landscape and planning professions, but I've noticed a trend that the models that people are creating for their proposed buildings are going away from the white model of the building that is just in splendid isolation and removed from the context where it would actually be built. People are starting to incorporate sort of silhouettes of the neighboring buildings, so you can see it in context. And I think that's a positive change.
00:27:35 Leah Perrin	<p>we talked at the last Convention about the lived experience and even this morning it was helpful for me as a non architect to be taken through the integrated design process and then the users of that space are not providing feedback until the end of the process. How do you even get it that? I mean some of the things should be obvious, but not always! This building (this is a bit of an anecdote) this is the School of Architecture, but it has the worst auditorium. If you were late for class you'd have to come in at the back for the professor to see you. It's been renovated since I was here. It used to be worse. It's still bad. Also, the seats were super close together, which was interesting in a post COVID world. I think they did that after COVID too... Then there's the exhibition room where all the posters are up, it's an open space with studios above, right? So I was in the planning school on the third floor and when the architecture students would give their crits and we would get yelled at by the profs who were like, everyone can hear you. Meanwhile we're like: "Well, we're in a working space. I'm sorry that you are in this room where voices are echoing. That's just how this works. There's not going to be architectural work for this old building anytime soon... But how do you adapt these buildings over time?</p> <p>I was very struck this morning by Jean Pierre saying that in all of these images of awards being given, there's not a single human in any of those pictures of buildings. So then is it really about the building or is it about how we experience the building? To me, I think it's really critically, and especially coming from a planning perspective, it's like we all live in these places. It's quality for us. It's not quality for aesthetic purposes. It's not art. We live here.</p>
00:29:45 Sarah Huxley	I think it was in the first convention as well that Cormier said that we should award prizes for buildings 30 years later, 50 years later and see how they evolved over time and how sustainable they were in the long term and not just in the first five years. For me, that sort of revolutionized my understanding of quality.
00:30:15 Panos Polyzois	Why aren't there more architectural awards like that?
00:30:20 Andrée-Ann Langevin	I can speak on that topic. We checked last year to see if there's awards in the heritage world and they're almost non-existent. Some organizations start to do some awards for retrofit building or adaptative buildings, but in the culture of our world, it's more about the new building, the shiny building, the

“wow effect” building. We can criticize critics that because our cities are already built, in a sense. Yes, we can build couple of new buildings here and there, but a lot are already built, and we have to use these in order to be sustainable. Our world needs to improve in that direction and maybe evaluating buildings 10, 30 years later is a good fit. We need to give time to people use our buildings to see what works and what doesn't. Sometimes we are not perfect, we make errors in our buildings, and they need to have a bit of a chance to really be adapted. I think it's really great when people are able to appropriate the buildings and make them their own.

00:31:25
Laura
McBride

I love that idea too, like an impact award. How impactful has this space been over time? And I also reflected in the auditorium today just on accessibility. I was seeing the slope and going “someone in a wheelchair would be in a lot of trouble in this room”.

00:31:44
Leah Perrin

I think you even need a key to get into the elevator to reach the exhibition room...

00:31:46
Panos
Polyzois

Oh wow, where would you even get that ?

00:31:52
Laura
McBride

One of the thoughts I was having was around planning at the beginning of the building process and how important that is and. Most of our buildings as we said are built now, so how do you retrofit in a cost-effective way? I think planning at the beginning is important for financial purposes because you're going to have to retrofit them later when standards hopefully catch up.

I was reflecting on how hard it is in regard to quality, like it's easy just to build things and go along with the plans. It is however hard to incorporate so many different perspectives and some sometimes quality is differing for different people with different abilities. So then how do you make a space welcoming for everyone? To me, that's really the definition of quality, a space that is appreciated and accessible by everyone while being welcoming to everyone. How do we get over those financial barriers though?

00:33:35
Douglas
McLeod

I do want to share with people that we face quite a situation now. The former President of the American Institute of Architects once said that the greenest building is the one that's already built. In other words, rather than make new bright shiny buildings, we have to think about retrofitting and reusing what we already have, because there's no two ways about it, building a new building is not as sustainable as retrofitting an old one, even though many of our older buildings are absolutely inaccessible. But there's another problem as well. Architects don't really do post occupancy studies. For example, Brian Sinclair at the University of Calgary, they told me they did a whole study of healthcare facilities and what could be done better. But the profession wasn't the least bit interested because they not only want to build a bright new shiny building, but they also want to make their mark on healthcare or whatever

and do it in a new way and not to learn from what's been done in the past. Of course, there's also the issue of if we went back into new buildings 5-10 years later and reviewed them and found faults with them or things that weren't working, it might have a legal implication in terms of the building. For example, many buildings under LEED you don't have to prove the performance of the building, you just have to check a box saying that you have. So a lot of the buildings that were originally supposed to be very green actually don't perform as well as they're supposed to, and there could be again a legal implication for that. So architects are very kind of wary of post occupancy design study, even though they're really critical.

00:35:30
Panos
Polyzois

That's interesting to me because I find that perhaps accountability is an important part of sustainability. I visited some LEED sites... I think it was a silver public school and every time I wanted to go check out what got them the award these things weren't in working condition or they said "oh, we don't have that running anymore" or "that was shut down a year ago" and yet they still had their LEED award very clearly in the front of the building and they were very proud of it. So it got me thinking like what is actually sustainability in this regard? Is it just building the building in a way that it should be built and then forgetting about the building after the fact?

When it when it comes to actual questions of sustainability and climate change, the planet doesn't care about all that. It doesn't care about our human intentions and the planet doesn't understand our worries about getting in trouble if things aren't the way they're supposed to. I mean, if things fall apart, they fall apart. And it's not serving the needs of the residents, or the in this case of the school, the students. It just gets me thinking a lot about what actually is quality. Is it something that can even be captured in an awards process or do we have to rethink how awards are distributed?

Based on that plot, Jean Pierre showed, it showed that a lot of more awards are being given out, but what does that mean exactly? I guess, part of the project it that what we're trying to get to the bottom of this... Those are just some of my thoughts.

00:37:13
Marc
Fournier

Yeah, I think you touched on something really interesting with that discussion on maintenance. It's definitely something that we're trying to implement in our research project. How does maintenance and the management of the buildings contribute to quality? Because if you are building right after it's done, you don't really assess the true situation of the building. So going back to users directly and the lived experience in order to assess these variables and going through sustainability measures or performance modeling of these buildings and at one point in time. For example, we're looking at buildings from the 60s, 70s, 90s and kind of going back and seeing how maintenance had an impact on the quality of life and the quality of those spaces.

00:38:12
Andrée-Ann
Langevin

So Panos you mentioned certification, you talked about awards, but you mentioned a certification like LEED and maybe that will be controversial what I'm going to say... I like that we do certification because it pushes us to rethink and go further in some ways, but I think LEED is a bit overrated right now because of that. People just take out the nice upgrade that LEED put there and turn off the all the mechanics or whatever LEED has put in place. So

what is the point? You put materials, electricity and money into something that people won't use. That is something I don't appreciate so much. LEED for me it starting to be just about checking boxes and feels like it's more for the owner. It's like an ad. Yes, maybe the LEED approved building is better than the building that doesn't have the LEED approval, but other certification like the living building challenge I think you mentioned? are starting to go way further and get the social and environmental impact. This certification looks at what happens outside of the building site. Where do the materials come from? What is the carbon emission generated by the building? I think it's really important to consider quality from an environmental standpoint that's not limited by property line.

My question for you is about relevance. We talked about our work, but what about certification to assess quality? What do you think it brings to the table?

00:39:59
Douglas
McLeod

Anybody have any comments on that one, Laura?

00:40:01
Laura
McBride

I do. So the Rick Hanson Foundation has a certification program for accessibility and one of the things that's important to us is to make sure it's not a check box. However, building codes differ in every province, and many of them are minimum in terms of real meaningful access for different abilities. Still, it's a way to try to allow people to have a standard measurement across Canada. We also have like a certification level and then a gold level for going above, doing even better. It's a way to measure accessibility, but I agree that it can't become a check box. It has to be continually evolving. That's why every few years we have committees regrouping people with different experience to help evolve, technologies, evolve accessibilities, etc. For example, we just introduced neurodiversity to our program. This goes to show that certifications must evolve with the times.

00:41:08
Jonathan
Jucker

Do you ever go back to a certified building and see if it's been maintained?

00:41:13
Laura
McBride

Yes, they have to recertify every five years.

00:41:23
Panos
Polyzois

I could see this problem if you need to certify, let's say every five or ten years where people might just do enough to meet that certification or to meet that test or observation. But then after it's done they don't do much until the next five years. So it might just be a plot for quality and they're just trying to meet it for those snapshot events instead of looking at it as a continuous thing. On the other hand, if it's a continuous observation, would that be like a Big Brother situation where everybody's looking over you to make sure everything is up to the quality standard, asking is this quality? Is this quality? All the time. That could also be a hindrance to quality.

Another thing that comes to mind is : I watch Food Network a lot and I know that the most prestigious award in restaurants is the Michelin star. And I know

that actually can be taken away from one little tiny issue. I remember Gordon Ramsay mentioned that when he lost two Michelin stars, it was worse than losing a child. I didn't understand that, it was a little crazy, but a lot of his prestige vanished after that. There may be some form of accountability here that the architectural world can borrow from.

Again though, I don't know what an architectural award is rewarding. Is it rewarding the presentation of the site, like a snapshot of the site or is it for the whole life of the site from the beginning, like where the materials are from to its eventual decommissioning. Where along that life cycle is important to architects. I'm not sure. I'm not an architect, but maybe there's some evolution there that could happen.

00:43:15
Douglas
McLeod

We'd love to share an anecdote with you. I'll try to avoid naming the building specifically, but I went to a conference and I knew that there was this building which was winning awards nearby. So, I drove to it, but I drove by it because it was almost unrecognizable from the photographs that had been submitted for the awards. It was a wood building. In the original pictures it's this beautiful golden shade of brown. However, it had weathered and not weathered well. It was Gray. And then as I looked at it, I realized somebody had photoshopped out all of the picnic tables and the other things that buildings tend to accumulate. But in the photographs, it was in this beautiful, pristine state. And I thought we really should give Photoshop, an award every year. Typically, the juries don't visit the site. I think that's changing now, but one of the problems is that juries don't visit the site they're considering for awards, particularly if it's a remote building. And so they don't ever get the lived experience of what the building is all about.

00:44:29
Leah Perrin

I just wanted to react. Isn't that a problem that we're trained to look at these beautiful pictures without the stuff pertaining to living? God forbid there be clutter around the building, but that's us! That's how we live. It's proof that there are people living there. So, we all need to retrain our aesthetic eye and say: "actually this place with clutter is really important".

00:44:57
Andrée-Ann
Langevin

It should be part of the design. We should plan to receive people and plan to have more grass or space for people running for example. It's true that we don't think about the trash for example, and we end up putting the trash in the front of the building because nobody thinks about that. A good architect or good designer should include all that. Maybe people will appropriate the place and make it their home despite the issues. But still, it's supposed to be thought of. We shouldn't just be piling storage outside because the school didn't care to put the picnic tables out this year. You know that's also maintenance, and it should take into consideration the user's way of using the space and understand their needs, and the design should take those elements into account.

What you say is true, we should look at more than the beautiful render. You can see that in student projects, a bad idea could look beautiful on the board with the nice renders and some people in front, but it doesn't mean that the project will be nice once built. Seeing the building once and living in the building are a bit different in my opinion.

00:46:21
Robert
Wright

In the Aga Khan awards, the building must have been built for five years. And they fly the jury to the building and the jury interviews people that use the building. Now imagine this. It doesn't matter whether it's a mosque in Iran or it's someplace else in the world. They fly the jury to that. So, this is a very moneyed proposition in terms of this. And we have to understand what the financial implication of this strategies that we're trying to do. I'm very much into systems theory, I have an ecology background and so it's important for us to deconstruct the systems as they operate now and then figure out where the catching points are. When an architect designs a building and puts their stamp on that building, they're liable for that building. This is a legal concern, so if they get a little edgy about the fact that some contractor has missed something in their building, they still carry the liability on that. For example, I've been sued on a project that's been in the court for 10 years in an area that I didn't have anything to do with, but I was named as one of the designers in the building. And I stamped my drawings. So, I have to wait for how many years? I don't even worry about it anymore. To actually go in front of a judge someplace to say I didn't actually have anything to do with that, so they can throw it out. But still, it's a legal thing. So, the legal leaves of the system really is a common denominator that throws flies through what we're doing, and then there's the financial aspect. We can deconstruct capitalism all we want, but who actually makes housing and how it is produced in our in our culture is a really interesting thing. And then how do we certify and manage certification?

One of the things Ted Kasich, who's my faculty is building scientists says is if you go and buy a car tomorrow and you spend 60 to 80,000, depending on what you can afford, you get a warranty on that car for five years. You can extend the warranty on that car. You get a safety manual. They do recalls. If something they've done is wrong. But you go out and buy an 800,000 to \$1,000,000 condominium and you get nothing. You don't get a manual, you don't get a warranty, you don't get anything! Then he shows that the average condominium being made today is less energy efficient than an Airstream trailer because of the way they use window wells, the amount of glass. This is changing though and now we're adding cars into our evaluation system. So this is a very much changing system. Therefore, it's really important for us to understand financially, how these systems integrate with each other. Which are causing some of these issues. One of the challenges for us today will be what are four or five of the points that we can make in this multi-dimensional problem. This system story will tell you; you have a multi-dimensional problem. If you have six issues and you multiply them against each other, that's 728 combinations of interactions that can happen. So, you can imagine a building of millions of parts interacting with people, interacting with the economy that built it, etcetera, becomes almost unbearable in terms of the weight of that particular problem. So, you know, in sustainability terms, LEED is known as the lowest economic environmental denominator. That's what people in sustainability call LEED, right? When architects used to phone me up as a landscape architect and say we're just missing our LEED numbers, what should I do? I said add more bicycles stands because they're trying to work the numbers, right? Because they get called into that system as well. Same thing in planning. We know that planners pick on architecture and design all the time, but zoning has probably been one of the worst things that ever happened to us. In Toronto, we call them yellow zones, single family, exclusionary zoning for any density. And not in my backyard and all that sort of stuff. It's haunting us to the date. Ontario has put a legislation,

anybody can build a floor without any requirements. They only have to meet the code and the per billing permits, but they don't have to. They can't be stopped from doing it, and that's creating a massive shift in what we're doing. And then part of it is the fire regulations. And if you've ever done building and stuff like that, understanding the double level of egress, which is mostly a Canadian thing in terms of fire safety, you won't find it in Australia or many places in Europe, because of sprinkling our Billings and stuff that are happening now makes a huge difference on the affordability buildings.

I sit on the on the Design Review Committee for the for the University of Toronto and we're trying to go through all our buildings, we probably produced in the billions of dollars now in terms of new buildings. Every building in the last five years has been 30 to 40% over budget, and is subject to cuts because of, supply chain and all these sorts of things. So we're also struggling in terms of our existing systems of how we can work this out because we want to all meet all these objectives and then somebody sits there and goes like you're 30% over cut, cut that back.

And that's where, you know, the kind of durability and the issues that come to us happen. You know, in terms of number of years later, we go: "oh, those idiots, why did they do it this way?" when in fact, it's not us. It's because of the financial aspects of doing it. I would argue that housing architects have very little to do with affordability of house because 80% of all architecture is not done by architects, particularly in the housing area, and it has more to do with subsidization and taxation. If we know what people's incomes are and we can subsidize those incomes to sit in high quality buildings, not poorly designed buildings that are cheap, but the same quality that everybody else has. This is what we did in Toronto for years and years 40 years ago. The cities actually built housing, now it's all done by developers and developers are profit motivated, so why should we be surprised that we get the buildings that we do? This is what's so great about this project, it's looking at a very difficult problem to find out where are the key touching points and what are the major moves that we can begin to do to make people aware of where these blockages are and then how do we impact them?

00:52:53
Leah Perrin

I just wanted to react to the zoning comment cause I 100% agree and I would argue, and I can say this because I'm a long-range planner and not really writing zoning at the zone level right now, but my colleagues are. I really see zoning as a political expression more so than planning. I have colleagues who have very recently rewritten the zoning for the area of the city that we're in now. I think among municipal planners, this really strong form-based code idea might be going out of fashion as we're getting more focused on how much housing we can build in the least amount of time. Form based code was a trend I think in municipal planning in the last little while, but ultimately, we built a box in zoning and building and the developers will fill that box with the biggest possible thing they can. A good developer who's going to spend a lot of money is going to build a quality building and a developer who's just interested in profit and not anything else will build a bad building. And there's no real way to control that with our municipal regulations, but the zoning and how much you can build and where is really a political expression. It's about how much. How much of the politicians willing to allow to happen in different parts of the city. And that's really important to mention.

00:54:24
Robert
Wright

When we deconstruct that, which I think is really important, we don't want to tar all developers the same, but the people who do rental buildings, who maintain them over a long period of time have a tendency to better buildings and they have more durability. Like the buildings we see in Toronto were built in the 60s. They're all rental buildings. And so they have more impact.

The second thing is on the economic side, we've made the House an investment. For most people, if you don't have pension plans, your house is your retirement plan. So those people in those yellow zones I talked about who are sitting on their properties that they bought for 300,000 now in Toronto, might be worth more than a million. That's their equity in their retirement, and of course they're going to defend that to the ground if they think that somebody's going to build a terrible building beside them, and they'll lose the value of their house. So, it's a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy the way we've done this.

00:55:25
Douglas
McLeod

I did want to share with you something that came out of this whole initiative that I thought was quite important. David Down who's the planner in the city of Calgary did a study of what kind of buildings people liked and it was a real eye opener. The kind of buildings that people like are very much not the kind of buildings that architects are currently designing. So people tend to like traditional styles of building and they definitely don't like contemporary buildings. We're going to be experiencing a very, very difficult problem going forward because there's been a number of instances where, for example, the central Public Library in Vancouver was done by a competition, and I believe it was won by Moshe Safdie and it was won on the basis of the public opinion poll about the design of the building because this building is reminiscent of the Roman Colosseum. Architects hated it, they just thought it was terrible and that it was a pastiche. But people liked it. So, it's a very interesting dynamic that's unfolding.

At the same time, when the Toronto City Hall, the modernist building, people hated it when it was first built, and now it's become an iconic structure of the entire city, so the two points of view are kind of at loggerheads. How we resolve that is going to be very, very interesting.

If there's other points that people wanted to make about your how your understanding has changed, this would be a great time to mention them.

00:57:29
Panos
Polyzois

I can follow up on that point. Regarding housing, I have noticed about modern housing like the one my older brother moved into, that it seems like a lot of these modern houses all just look like big boxes and have no uniqueness between them. They're usually all the same colour with very narrow spaces between them. I guess they're trying to fit as many houses as they possibly can each block. It doesn't always seem necessarily great for the resident. In areas where the homes have been built maybe 30-40 years ago or even more, each house has character, it feels like they each have some unique property, they're not just all the same all boxes.

Isn't there something about quality here too? I feel this extends even beyond housing, and probably even beyond architecture, this idea of fast fashion or

things that just need to be thrown out after you're done with them, like electronics, like our phones or just everything in our day-to-day life. We're not appreciating looking back on things and we're just about what's next, what's ahead. We keep moving forward and maybe we need to stop and take a breath and reflect.

00:58:54
Leah Perrin

Yeah, I just want to push back on that a little bit, maybe because I live in a house built in 1950, one of the post war prefab homes. You know, they're 1 1/2 story they're little boxes. I think there's neighborhoods like that all over Canada. It's incredibly energy efficient. We've gone through periods of needing to build a lot of housing very rapidly and that's a great example of when we did it really well. And it's very interesting to see the federal government now talking about having like a catalog. All they're going to do, I think, is rustle up the things they pulled out in the 40s and 50s after the post war period and build those houses.

It's the age. I think that makes those houses really interesting. I can go to different neighborhoods across the city and see that the houses are all same, but here's how someone has adapted that home over time. I think we're maybe doing that with lesser materials. I don't know how efficient the ones in new suburbs are comparatively. But I think actually there are great examples of places where we've been able to build a lot of housing quickly because there's a need and it's over time that quality is built. It's as the trees grow up in the neighborhood for example, that makes it home.

01:00:27
Andrée-Ann Langevin

Small question. Like you mentioned your brother moving in the new area, I guess he is a new owner. Is he proud to show you his house? I remember how people who just bought a house go : "Look at that tree" or "Look at that brick", and then they go "Look at this project I want to do, I want to renovate the roof". People make their building their home. But with policies, with cities requirements you cannot do as you wish. In Montreal for example, you cannot change the colour of the door, you cannot change the colour of the brick, you cannot change the colour of the stairs... You cannot change anything actually. So it's bothersome to do maintenance and to be proud of your building. It's OK that the municipality keep an eye on things. We don't want to have houses Barbie, pink and crazy things everywhere, but I feel like having control over how we can present our houses when you get to be an owner is a privilege, but in reality, you cannot really enjoy your new position make it your own. And yes, the time and the trees really help to make your neighborhood nice. But if you cannot change anything and you don't have space to put a tree and it's all mineral, what can you do to make it great.

01:01:59
Marc Fournier

Yeah, that's a that's a very good point.

01:02:01
Jonathan Jucker

I'd like to speak about what you were saying about the survey of what kind of buildings people liked and the contrast between the modern styles that are favored by a lot of architects and the more traditional ones, and I think

that ties into some of the larger societal divisions that we have in that the very boxy, stark buildings, lots of glass, lots of white concrete are seen as very elitist and there's kind of a division there. I'm thinking about the movie Beetlejuice, where one of the markers that the new owners of the house were bad people was the fact that they took this old, beautiful old home and made all these kind of wild modernistic adjustments to it and renovations. I'm not saying that it's fair to tar people who live in or like those styles of houses as being sort of out of touch and elitist, but I think there is a perception of that and I think that is maybe something that needs to be recognized and understood.

01:03:23
Douglas
McLeod

I just wanted to build on the landscaping one. This is really for Rob. Somebody posted on Facebook that having large grown-up trees on your property increases it by something like \$7000, but living on a street which is tree lined increases the value of your property by \$22 000 and one of the things we forget about quality is that the landscape around the building should be a very important part of that quality. And this is what architects do almost from the first studio to their professional career is they design the building. And then, oh, I've got to think about the landscape. So they draw a bunch of circles with dots in them and place them on the landscape. And that's basically how we do landscaping. Whereas what we really need to do is recognize that if we're going to be sustainable, the landscape is a critical part of that sustainability. Anonymous, who's on our faculty, he's an engineer, but a very green one. He talks about things like the journey of the wind. When the wind comes into a building, it can be used to, of course, flush it out and clean it out. He's doing this at a project at UBCO he does Earth tubes which pull in air. Actually, earth tubes are fabulous. They're just buried enough that they have a constant temperature of air, so they're constantly pulling in air of a constant temperature which can warm in the winter and cool in the summer. But they placed the intakes close to a grove of pine trees. So you get this scented pine air essentially coming in. And this is where we can really start to look at the quality of the environment in terms of its landscape and we should never forget that. But is there anything we've missed in terms of quality, any point of view that we haven't incorporated, you know how our understanding has changed?

01:05:26
Panos
Polyzois

OK, so yes, I totally agree with what you said. It goes beyond the site or the building. I mean it goes even beyond the immediate environment We should be looking at where it is in the broader environment and that's not just a physical environment, but a social one as well. Understanding quality is probably place based, it could have different definitions depending on where it is. If you take a really good quality building from one site and just place it somewhere else, it could be very bad quality all of a sudden. One thing that comes to mind is safety for instance. I'm sure there's areas that are a lot more unsafe than others, and maybe there's some more security precautions that would have to be taken in certain areas and not in other areas. So even a really good quality building, let's say from Halifax may not suffice in Winnipeg, just based on that one example.

Understanding that quality goes beyond the building is very, very important and landscape is a big part of that, and that was a very good point that he made.

01:06:36
Marc
Fournier

Yeah, that's the point. I actually wanted to add, this understanding of quality as multi scaler and not only about the housing or the box as you described it in itself. You could live in this Gray box but still have meaningful connections to your surroundings, to the people who live around you and have agency within your environment, which is very different than having a beautiful aesthetic place to live where you don't have agency and you're not feeling connected to the surroundings and your community.

I think that's something that's really important in our project with these kinds of levels of belonging or levels of alienation from the subjective to the social and the environmental.

01:07:35
Sarah
Huxley

Yeah. I just want to mention how like we have this great vision of what quality is, but how resource intensive it is to get there? You mentioned earlier post occupation studies and how they're almost never really done. For a bit of context with my organization, we built one home that opened three years ago and obviously there's an urgent need for more. The needs are very high, so we have a lot of pressure to build more quickly, but we're like weighing stuff because we know we're not getting this first one 100% right the first time around. We need to evaluate it. We need to learn from this experience. We need to document what happened and we need to build it better for the second, for the third, for the 4th, we're going to build, which we're in the process of doing now three years later. We went through this process of the architects design, the builders build and we use it very quickly, we're like: "oh, we have things to say about these buildings", which neither the architects nor the builders really wanted to hear about because they were sort of done with it. They tied the bow on the building, and we were like, "well, we have things to say" and we need to. We need people to hear it so that we can do it better the second time around. And luckily we were already in a partnership with Nessa, who had funding to do post occupation study with her research. And so we could benefit from her expertise. But it took so much time! The data collection took 18 months, getting the perspectives of the residents of the people who work there, everyone who evolves around that building and then analyzing all that data and then finally getting to the point where we're ready to build something better took years and I don't know how much money. And we're a nonprofit organization. We depend on donations, so we can't fund that type of research anyway. We were very lucky to be able to do that whole process, but it's not a given. In a profit driven world I don't think that the conditions are in place for achieving that.

01:09:59
Douglas
McLeod

But it's so essential as well. There's this an extraordinary book called the great indoors by Emily Anthes and instead of going out and looking at buildings in a subjective way, she goes in, and they've got factual evidence of how the buildings affect people, all sorts of people. She looks at people on the spectrum. She looks at prisons, she looks at hospitals. It's frightening in many aspects because you realize we don't know how buildings actually behave, and we desperately need to. In fact in some places, it can be a matter of life and death. We carry this kind of micro cloud, a cloud of microbes wherever we go. And when we go into a hospital, we bring it with us and it will sometimes stay there for a few days until and the next patient comes in. So looking at things at this level, it's a whole different idea of quality, but it's absolutely essential to take into account moving forward, so yes, there's some interesting overlaps.

01:11:09
Laura
McBride

Quick comment, we often talk about meaningful access. Which means, the building can be accessible, but if you can't get to it by transit or there's no accessible parking or whatever it is, then it's not meaningfully accessible. For instance, sometimes you go into a restaurant, but then the bathroom is not accessible. So it has to be looked at holistically, I think.

The other thought I had was when you talked about the trees and long-term thinking about a place was also the aging in place. As we age our eyesight gets worse and our hearing gets worse, and our mobility gets worse. We want to be able to live there for a long time. We need to make it accessible now and for the future, like future proofing almost.

01:12:12
Jonathan
Jucker

I think that's a really important what you said, and I think you know there are there are codes for accessible buildings and a lot of what's in those could be incorporated into a regular building code like the width of a doorway for instance. Therefore, every building would at least have doorways that a person in a wheelchair could pass through and that is something that future proofs buildings like you said.

Building on the meaningful accessibility. I think there's also the aspect of it being welcoming as well to people with access needs and at the Calgary Conference, we had our final session in the new Central Library, which is also one of the photos that Jean Pierre put up of an award-winning building and it is accessible. But the wheelchair access is kind of around the back next to the loading dock, so it's not welcoming. They put a lot of effort into this staircase going up to the stairs to make it a nice and spectacular entrance, but it's actually not for everybody.

01:13:36
Robert
Wright

One of the issues we face in design is how do we predict the user that's not there yet. I'm working on a project, a research project in Toronto for a new development for 100,000 people and 40,000 new jobs. And the question is how do you then predict a future user and their needs? One of the techniques we're using is called personification, which is used by the medical industry and what they do is, when they're building new medical facilities, they take certain personas of the clients. So, they will take a 16 year old girl undergoing cancer treatment and run the model. Looking at, you know, teenagers and things like that, and run a personification. Say, how are we meeting her needs in this situation? So, a 16 year old girl with cancer could have hair loss. So that's very different than if you're an older adult or something like that who is post puberty. They actually start to work out how the facilities can accommodate those people. So the same thing can be done on accessibility depending on age, depending on abilities, blindness versus wheelchair, things like that. So, there are techniques that people can begin to use now to run models across and see what they're doing. That's what we're doing, we're taking buildings and saying what are the requirements of this building and how is it associated with this external environment, proximity to parks and stuff like that. Older people walk less distance. Are there any young people, how is it associated? So, there are techniques that we're using to try to figure out how that fits into the quality of that building.

What other qualities does it need to have to accommodate that particular population? Single mothers?

Children? As you know, if you have children, education facilities become the core of your life for like 20 years in terms of the schools, high schools, etc.

So I do think there are ways that we can actually model or simulate even in situations where we don't know. Medical facilities are great examples of that because even though you want to restore a hospital, the problem is that their floor-to-floor heights are not adequate now for ventilation and these types of new healthcare systems. And so the irony is that the people that are building new hospitals are the same people that build the old hospitals that are not working because that's a whole market in itself building hospitals. So even at the University of Toronto, we built a parking garage. Hard to believe in the 21st century, but that parking garage was part of a geotechnical ground surface, heating all the buildings around it. Also we built the garage at a different height so it could be occupied by laboratories and classrooms in the future when parking is less needed. So that's the kind of resilience, rehabilitation we're looking for. We now know in many cities.

we're looking at that offices in downtowns areas are not being occupied at the same rate after the pandemic. How can we convert those to housing and finding out what the limitations are about making housing design? That is restrictive because of its type.

Anybody else?

01:16:49
Andrée-Ann
Langevin

A comment on that, it's really great what you do. We do look at that too in our research, what type of building could be converted for what type of use? And it's not every building that can be adapted because of those past consideration, the height is not good, the windows are not placed well for residential etcetera. But if we think ahead and plan for those possibilities in the future and make our base building adaptable for future need, maybe we won't need to just demolish all the time. We maybe just need to maintain and replace some doors or some part to adapt to the new owner or new use. It's very a big point that you mentioned. To prepare for the future of it, not just think about the present need, but for 20-30 years future.

I want to also talk about accessibility and heritage for example. We try to do our best in our categories, but we are in conflict with each other sometimes. So, we try to do code. We try to do aesthetically beautiful building. Yet the heritage conservation is in place and when we try to do accessibility, like adding a slope for better access, heritage blocks that. So, we need to break more of the silo and go in the policies and have more flexibility to adapt code and to go beyond the line and see what logically we can do, that is the best for everyone.

I think planners can be creative architects and designer, but when you go through all the process of policies and get accepted and have the subvention and everything, it creates problems, and you need to cut things because you don't have the money or there's conflict with the planning and it's a lot of trouble.

01:19:01
Douglas
McLeod

It is a fascinating issue. Recently I was in Johannesburg, and I was invited to Clip Town, which is a kind of a what they call unofficially, a settlement within Johannesburg. But there's a heritage aspect to it because many of the anti-apartheid people came out of Cliff Town and there's in some instances, they're saying that because it's heritage, they don't think that people should be allowed to have electricity because it would change the heritage nature. That's at the point where it becomes a little silly, but I do have one controversial aspect of quality that my understanding is evolving on and this is density and I know our cities are being becoming denser and denser and denser and yet every study that I have seen suggests that higher densities are not in the best interests of human beings. They did a study of an

apartment building which was close to an Expressway, and they were actually able to predict a child's learning disabilities by what floor of that apartment building they were on. They did another study of dormitories with low, medium, and high densities, and they found that the lower the density, the greater the socializing between people in that dormitory. I know it's necessary, but I'm also worried that we're being manipulated by development and real estate interests, which love to jam in as many people into a smaller space as possible to maximize profits. When, as we look at housing and we look at quality, is that really what we want to encourage or should we be thinking about Vancouver, Toronto... Those are overheated real estate markets and we're doing a lot of things to cater towards that when we, we might even ask ourselves, could we build new kinds of communities in which it's a live work community where you don't commute, which could be very sustainable and even self-sufficient in terms of food production. Should we be focusing on that, or should we be trying to densify the cities in a manner where it is sometimes detrimental to people? And I know this is controversial, so I certainly think other points of view should be heard.

01:21:37
Leah Perrin

Yeah, I think this comes back to the conversation we were having before the break about zoning because we can absolutely put more housing in our in the yellow belt, in the single-family neighborhoods, that's one option. Another option is that we continually spread out into green spaces, which I don't think anyone thinks is a good idea from a sustainability perspective. Maybe some of the single-family home developers still think it's a great idea, but I think we know that we can't continue to sprawl. A lot of your work is on rural areas. Like we don't really have rural economies anymore like we did. But I think that in Nova Scotia it will really be an interesting discussion moving forward, we have a provincial government who's interested in doubling our population by 2060, and we can put all of that population in Halifax. Does it mean that we're trying to build bigger towns and villages in our rural places, which have kind of emptied out over the years. But how do we make our economies a bit more resilient and robust? it's all coming back to me to sort of the economics of how we live. We almost can't really separate those things.

01:22:57
Robert
Wright

So I'll challenge you. I don't think Canada is any close to density that we actually need. You can talk about a lot of those studies and everything I came back from 2 weeks in Tokyo with my son in Japan and that's a city of the internal core being 13.7 million and the regional core being 39 Million, which is almost the population of Canada. And yes, it has some tall tower buildings in the middle of it, but most of it's like 7 and eight story and nine story buildings, very small, very compact, credible transit in terms of things like that, which is part of the density thing and certainly not a place where anybody would expect to have a single-family home. I grew up in Europe. Unless your family had a house, there's no way you lived in an apartment, but they made apartments for three bedroom and four bedrooms, they were more socially adept at it. They did have better resources and social net systems. I always think of the word of intensity as opposed to density because density is such a trigger word. But what is the intensity of a building and how is it actually serviced and what are the service locations doing, you know, in terms of the interaction? And yes, it's harder for her mother with single children if she's on the 47th floor of a building. She'll never let her kids go down to the park alone, so it drags her. And there is a kind of tension caused by distance. But then the reality is that, we need housing for people, and we're not going to get it without some intensity of development. And that is up for grabs.

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- 01:24:30
Jonathan
Jucker
- I wanted to speak to what you were saying about the concentration of the doubled Nova Scotia population in Halifax and I think we see something similar in Alberta where Calgary and Edmonton continue to grow, but the the smaller cities, left bridge, Medicine Hat, red deer are like a tenth of the population of the large centres and when you go to Europe you don't see, I mean, there are obviously the large metropolises, but then there are like dozens of medium sized cities that are taking in a lot of the population and that are themselves becoming sort of centres and dense places. And I think that we talked about the missing middle in terms of built structures, but I think there's a bit of a missing middle in Canada in terms on the broader scale in terms of cities. You could fit 40 million people in southern Alberta, which is the size of Poland, which has 40 million people. But we currently have 5 million. I think that's because it we don't have the larger small cities.
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- 01:25:47
Sarah
Huxley
- So I'm not a no route planner at all, and I don't have that expertise, but just from a personal point of view, I think there's quality density and there's low quality density as well. I live in a 15 minute neighborhood in Montreal, everything is really close by. It's walkable. I live in a six-Plex it's a human scale size neighborhood and I think my quality of life there is pretty great. But I look at my partner's brother who lives in a town home in a suburb where everywhere it's the same sort of size of condos and the density is there, the number of inhabitants per square kilometers is pretty much the same, but there are no businesses within a 15 minute walk within a 30 minute walk. There's only a corner store 30 minutes away. You need a car to get anywhere meaningful. So I think there's definitely nuance within that.
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- 01:26:54
Leah Perrin
- The road width is probably much lower actually
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- 01:26:58
Sarah
Huxley
- Yeah, probably.
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- 01:27:13
Douglas
McLeod
- So we've got 15 minutes left, so we've got to wrap up. We want to address the issue of summary of the main perceptions exchanged by participants. We've had some good ones. I think all we have to do is sort of collect them. And then you have the unfortunate task of presenting them all.
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- 01:27:33
Maëllanne
Armstrong
- I have, I think, a minute to present.
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- 01:27:37
Douglas
McLeod
- OK, wow, one minute. OK. OK.
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01:27:40 Maëlanne Armstrong	I need 2-3 key points from the workshop.
01:27:44 Douglas McLeod	So just two to three key points, yes.
01:27:48 Douglas McLeod	Does anybody want to take it a stab at summarizing?
01:28:01 Andrée-Ann Langevin	I don't have the precise word, but we talked about a lot of scale. So starting from the house, to the residential to the big city and services workplace and transit and etcetera. So, quality cannot be detached from scale.
01:28:27 Douglas McLeod	How about how my understanding of quality changed since the beginning of the project? If we can bracket everything in terms of that response. I would say as you said, an understanding of the multiple scales of the project
01:28:46 Sarah Huxley	Quality over time as well.
01:28:48 Douglas McLeod	Well, that's a good way to express it quality overtime. So we only need one more point, we've got two good ones.
01:29:06 Marc Fournier	I mean, we touched on the tensions between perspectives, which is important. We all come from our respective backgrounds and have one singular definition of quality, but when you confront them together, you get this complex thing.
01:29:29 Douglas McLeod	So, Maëlanne you've got those three. Are people happy with that? They're broad categories, but they do sort of encapsulate everything that we spoke about.
01:29:38 Maëlanne Armstrong	I have quality cannot be detached from scale, then there is the multiple scales of quality and quality over time, and then we have tensions between perspectives. Everyone has different backgrounds. But when you put all of those backgrounds in one room, they can be confronted and kind of at odds with each other.
01:30:05 Douglas McLeod	Excellent.

01:30:06 Maëlanne Armstrong	It's a good way to make a matter grow when you have different people who talk and, well, argue sometimes, but it's fine. Discussion can be arguing.
01:30:16 Marc Fournier	It's a good thing.
01:30:45 Panos Polyzois	There's also that point of that tension with available resources. It's a challenge to meet the needs of every single resident or every user if they have a unique understanding of quality. How do you meet all their needs, with limited time and limited resources? That's a challenge as well. And how do you hear their voice and incorporate them properly in the process, that's part of the problem as well. I think that was brought up earlier.
01:31:19 Robert Wright	So, we can break the rules and do 4 instead of three.
01:31:22 Maëlanne Armstrong	I added that one because it's true that it was brought up.
01:31:38 Douglas McLeod	Is everybody comfortable with those four points?
01:31:43 Douglas McLeod	Then I think our job is done.
01:31:46 Marc Fournier	Thank you. Very thank you very much everybody. Great job.

ROOM 7

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room7_ Location: Medjuck Architecture Building - Room B102			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Federica	Goffi	Carleton University	Carleton University
William	Morin	Laurentian University	Laurentian University
Virginie	LaSalle	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Shannon	Bassett	McEwen School of Architecture (MSoA)	Laurentian University
Sam	Oboh	Ensignt+ AAA	University of Calgary
Susan	Speigel	Ontario Association of Architects (OAA)	National Partners
Mylène	Gauthier	Ville de Quebec	Ville de Quebec
Victor	Bouguin	Vivre en Ville	Concordia University
Marjorie	Knight	House of Friendship	University of Waterloo
Cara	Chellew	McGill University	McGill University
Cynthia	San	University of British Columbia	University of British Columbia
Brianna	Brown	University of Waterloo	University of Waterloo
Iris	Pintiuta	McGill University	McGill University
Kaiden	Reding	Athabasca University	Athabasca University

Room 7 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-05-01

*Report produced by
Pintiuta, Iris (McGill University)*

7.1. Summary

The workshop began with participants introducing themselves and sharing their affiliations, roles, and cultural backgrounds, emphasizing the diversity of perspectives in the room. Discussions on quality in the built environment revolved around lived experiences, inclusivity, and the balance between sustainability, accessibility, and heritage. Cynthia highlighted the value of lived experiences, while Will stressed the importance of engaging with community members and understanding their needs. Marjorie brought attention to the issues faced by multi-generational families and the lack of quality in social housing. Federica discussed adaptive reuse and the need for adaptability in both new and existing buildings, urging the integration of these concepts into architectural education. Multiple participants highlighted the significance of procurement practices and the inclusion of Indigenous worldviews in architectural projects. The conversation also touched on systemic challenges and the disconnect between architectural standards and real-life experiences, with a consensus on the necessity of policy support and ongoing education. Will's insights from an Indigenous perspective underscored the importance of repairing relationships and respecting different perspectives, advocating for a more holistic approach to quality that includes social, ecological, and subjective elements. The participants agreed on the need for a bottom-up approach, driven by community engagement and lived experiences, to foster a better understanding of quality in the built environment.

Key Ideas:

1. **Holistic Approach to Quality:** Quality in the built environment should encompass social, ecological, and subjective elements, transcending mere physical attributes and integrating diverse lived experiences.
2. **Importance of Community Engagement:** Engaging with community members and understanding their unique needs and perspectives is crucial for ensuring that architectural projects are inclusive and truly beneficial to those they serve. How is quality experienced rather than what is quality? as the guiding question
3. **Importance of Respect and Discomfort:** Emphasizing respect involves recognizing and valuing diverse perspectives and lived experiences, which is crucial for creating inclusive and effective architectural solutions. Furthermore, acknowledging and embracing discomfort is necessary for meaningful change, as it challenges existing power dynamics and compels those with privilege to reconsider and alter their approaches to quality in the built environment.
4. **Role of Policy and Education:** Systemic change and policy support are essential for fostering quality in architectural projects, alongside integrating

adaptive reuse and Indigenous worldviews into architectural education to prepare future generations for evolving challenges.

7.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name	
[00:00:00.00] - Susan	Sorry, everybody. Then we'll get to know each other through our conversation. I'm staring at you, Cynthia. I don't know why. You may still just go first.
[00:00:08.09] - Cynthia	Hello, my name is Cynthia San. I'm from the University of British Columbia. I'm currently an undergraduate student, or I guess graduating right now from the Bachelor of Design and Architecture, Alaska architecture and Urbanism. I think that's all. Thank you.
[00:00:24.64] - Federica	I'm Federica Doffi. I'm a professor at the School of Architecture at Carleton University.
[00:00:31.43] - Brianna	Hi, everyone. My name is Brianna Brown, and I'm currently a graduate student pursuing a master's in architecture at the University of Waterloo.
[00:00:40.65] - Will	I'm feeling out of place for a number of reasons. We usually go in clockwise fashion. In ceremony, it's well, too. My name is Will. I'm at... Well, I'm not at Laurentian University, but I'm a part of the community contingent to support what is being done here from the city of Sudbury's community groups that are there. I also have taught at the University in Sudbury, Laurentian, specifically, in the McKeown School of Architecture. But I'm an artist, academic, and a community leader in the Indigenous community, I'm originally from the community north of Sault Ste. Maria, Ontario, and graduate of NASCET, so I'm happy to be here in Halifax, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. I'll pass that on. I just feel awkward going. I just have to say one thing. Each of you said what university you're at, but we don't know where you're from. If you feel comfortable, where you're from, I think that just adds this other rich layer because we are a country of many people. Cynthia.
[00:02:04.44] - Cynthia	Thank you. I was born and raised in Vancouver, British Columbia, but my family is from Yamar. Great. Thank you.
[00:02:13.44] - Federica	I guess I was born and raised in Italy, Genua. I moved to United States for seven years to work on my research and PhD studies, and then to Canada the last 15 years. To the bright side.
[00:02:26.43] - Brianna	I was born in I'm Texas, just outside of Houston. But I grew up in Branton, Ontario, and for a year, I've been in Cambridge as a result of going to the University of Waterloo.
[00:02:39.26] - Will	I came from my mom. I was born in a hospital. I've just been adding some silliness to it. We're not to take it too seriously. But one of the elements in our introductions, and I thank you, Susan, for that, how important it is, as I indicate, my name is Will. In our traditional indigenous ways, Anishinaab ways, when we do our introductions, ultimately, when we hear each other's sharing, we may find connections with each other. Because that's ultimately one of our goals, is that we have a chance to hear and see and experience through other people's perspectives. So again, I'm Anishinaab of mixed ancestry, and happy to be part of this committee.
[00:03:30.92] - Marjorie	My name is Marjorie Knight. I am here with the University of Waterloo. I am with the House of Friendship, and I work as a social worker, which means I deal with a lot of housing issues and social issues. I was born in Canada by a strange twist of events, but I grew up in Jamaica and only came back to Canada when I was an adult.
[00:04:03.33] - Iris	Hi, everyone. My name is Iris Pintiuta. You could call me Iris. I was born and raised in Romania. When I was 19, I moved to the UK, where I was for the last 10 years. Then recently, I moved to Montreal to pursue a PhD in Film Studies at McGill University. Well, happy to be here with all of you. Awesome.
[00:04:26.77] - Shannon	Hi, I'm Shannon Basset. I'm a professor of architecture I'm Professor of Architecture at the McEwen School of Architecture in Sudbury.
[00:04:36.49] - Mylene	I'm also doing a PhD in decolonizing cities through ecological knowledge. I am from Ottawa, although My name is Mylène. I'm from Quebec City, and I'm working for 20

	years and just fairly recently returned, and I also engage in charge of the Planning Territorial division in India and China a lot. Bonjour, my name is Mylène Gautier.
[00:05:13.770] - Susan	Hi, everybody. My name is Susan Spiegel, and I'm here in this quality and built environment study because I represent the Ontario Association of Architects, which is one of the five terms across Canada, as you know. But I love this project, and so I'm here because I love this project, not because I'm part of the LAA. I'm an architect. I've had a 30-year practice, and most of my work is in nonprofits and housing, and I have a fairly significant indigenous portion of my practice. I have always been mostly interested in social justice and reuse and re-understanding. I consider myself not... I used to call myself an activist, but I think I'm not like a social worker architect, which I'm trying to figure out a way to describe that. I guess I'm not running this, but I'm trying to facilitate this so that we all are heard and get some answers to what we would like to do today. I also teach, by the way. I talk at GBC for a It's been 15 years. George Brown College.
[00:06:35.520] - Kayden	My name is Kayden. I'm with Athabasca University, but I'm from Calgary. I live in Calgary now, and I'm not an architect or an architect. I actually just finished my master's, I think it was in public history. I'm going to grab that back because I didn't do whatever told everybody else to do. I'm from Sudbury, which when you said Sault Ste. Marie, I thought, Oh, right. We need to know where everybody's from. I'm from Northern Ontario, and The reason I like to say that is because it's one of the smaller towns in Canada and Ontario tend to have a more diverse engagement because there's never enough of any one group to hold sway. I think I'm always really grateful for that, even though people think of what's like the art pit of the world, the moon landings and such. I think it's important really to know where people are from. The GDC that I'm talking about is it's a master's program within a college that kept its college roots. It's very Ground-related and hyper academic at the same time with students from all over the world in all different disciplines.
[00:07:36.730] - Susan	It's a feeling a lot like this table, which is great. I want to hear more from Kayden. Okay. Like right now? You have to take the microphone. What do you want to know? History.
[00:07:53.120] - Kayden	Yeah. Broadly, I focus on the history of science, but more specifically, I thought it was particularly science education and museum interpretation in the natural sciences in Canada and United States.
[00:08:06.460] - Susan	Where are you from?
[00:08:07.530] - Kayden	Calgary. I grew up in Calgary. Then I moved around. I actually did what was an archeologist for a while, and then I went back to school and to be a historian by training.
[00:08:19.630] - Virginie	Virginie. I'm a professor at the University of Montreal and interior design. Professor I'm working directly with Jean-Pierre, Carmilla, and other group. That's it. I'm happy to be here with you.
[00:08:43.560] - Susan	Where are you from?
[00:08:44.630] - Virginie	Quebec. Coldest place in the world.
[00:08:50.220] - Victor	Hey, everyone. I'm Victor Bouquin. I work for Vivre en ville, which is a nonprofit in urban planning. I'm from the French Alps, but I've been living in Montreal for the past seven years.
[00:09:04.230] - Victor	Hi, everyone. My name is Cara Chellew. I am also from Sudbury, born and raised, but I lived in Toronto for 20 years about. And now I'm based in Montreal I'm doing my PhD at McGill in urban planning, and I'm part of the nighttime design team.
[00:09:23.210] - Susan	Great. Wow, that's... We have to keep remembering all this. I think I wanted to put it down. This is just a really wonderful array of places and people and backgrounds. I remember looking forward to a great conversation today. This is called Cafe

	Workshop number 1, Changing personal views on Quality. What we're being asked to do is a brief presentation of each participant and their own understanding of positive outputs on the quality after two years in this partnership. Presumably, we all did our homework. You've actually done it once at least, and you've had time to reflect on it. You don't have to abide by exactly what you submitted because maybe you've had further reflections, which I think is always interesting when you're processing. Then how has my understanding of quality changed since the beginning of the project? One thing we didn't ask is how many people have been involved since the beginning. Maybe when you speak about your experience, you could let us know what your experiences with the group. Then a summary of the main perceptions that are exchanged.
[00:10:30.540] - Susan	We're supposed to do that afterwards, but I always love to have insights from everybody. It's not just, I've heard everything now, and I'm into the... It's really important because insights, mining our data for insights is really important. But those are our takeaways and the gifts we offer back to the partnership. So are people okay if we go in that same order? Would you... Okay, Cynthia.. Oh, can they - Maybe we'll go clockwise. Make you feel better. Okay, let's do that. We're going to start with the end. Sure. And go forward and go the other way. All right. How has my understanding of quality changed throughout the partnership? The first question is, What your understanding of positive outputs on quality over... How your understanding of quality has changed, but the first question is your perception has changed.
[00:11:31.770] - Cara	Okay, fair enough. I've been with the project since the fall of last year, so I guess almost two years. For myself, I approach the project with thinking about quality. I was very much interested in inclusive design, accessibility. But through a lot of our conversations that we've been having, especially at the midterm convention, I really came to understand. I come to view quality through a justice lens because I was in a workshop where we were talking about sustainability versus accessibility. I don't think it needs... We're talking about drawbacks and issues with including both, and it doesn't need to be an either or under a justice approach. I guess my positive output is really approaching understanding the built environment through justice lens. Thank you.
[00:12:36.470] - Victor	I've been with this project for approximately two years from the Montreal Convention, and the positive outcome could be just the discussions because we come from very different fields, and so learning about different fields and different cities, different yeah, different environments. It help quickly to understand how it impacts on quality, how different people think and how their field can increase the quality of projects.
[00:13:14.100] - Cara	I'm going to send the microphone back to Cara, if you don't mind. Because maybe you might want to just look at the example that you picked. Put the mic closer to you. The example that you picked to represent quality, because that's going to make things a little more personal. Because I can see that we could all go around and be objective again. I think what we really want to know is what is your personal relationship to a positive output. That might be related to the example that you submitted as being a lived experience positive. An example of something in the built environment? I don't know. Did you do the exercise?
[00:13:57.450] - Cara	Yeah. I wrote about my shifting perspective of quality to embrace an urban justice lens.
[00:14:05.010] - Susan	Okay. Is there an example? Not everybody's an architect here, so is there a way that you could maybe have a little bit of an example? We have an hour here to really unpack back to this. But please, people should take their time. Yeah.
[00:14:17.620] - Cara	For example, as I was talking about, there's a midterm convention we're talking about sustainability versus accessibility. I'm sure architectural professionals here know that especially looking at heritage buildings, looking at the challenges to make it more sustainable, to make them more accessible. There's a lot of money involved. You have clients that want things done within a budget. There often is these trade-offs.

	But I think that Yeah, if we look at things more holistically, it doesn't need to be necessarily trade-offs. I come from this from an urban planning perspective, so I look more at urban policy and that thing and how we plan things rather than seeing through something to the construction of a building. I don't know. Maybe an example of quality for me would be a public space that not only is accessible to all, but provides infrastructures of care to support people who are vulnerable, marginalized. So not only removing barriers to inclusion but putting infrastructures in place to care for people. That makes sense?
[00:16:01.090] - Susan	Yeah. The dilemma between accessibility, heritage, and sustainability is enormous. One of the things that's great about accessibility is there's a law which means you have to do it. It's a stick as opposed to a carrot, whereas heritage has a bit of a stick, but sustainability has very little of a stick. It's really easy to toss one or two out of the window. It's quite a hotly-debated area. I don't know what the urbanist think, but good to know. Now, I'm going to ask you.
[00:16:44.350] - Victor	Yeah. I'm more of an urban planning side than really architecture. But what's been the links I could make is within architecture, architecture, when you speak about a building, it's very different because as an urban planning point of view, we really work on mobility towards places. Sometimes we have to think about maintenance, for example. You wanted an example. I was thinking about snow plowing. When you're working within a building, you don't have necessarily these things in mind. But when you work with walking infrastructure or like biking infrastructures, you need to have that in mind to maintain the quality of it throughout the year. So yeah, this is the discussions we're having that can lead to these reflections and how to work with that in different contexts. So that helped in the reflections.
[00:18:00.480] - Virginie	First, I will read a little text in English. After that, I will talk in French a little bit to explain. The first result, outcomes that we identified in the Our site, it was identification of lived experience as central consideration in the quality of the built environment. The site's work over the past two years has led to the realization that the quality of the built environment cannot be addressed without giving central consideration in lived experience. The word central is different from here. The experience of the people who live in the places in question. We have two results in line with this observation. Two project, I will say in our site. First, a subject on the collection of lived experiences with the city of Montreal. The title is, Vive la qualité The work undertaken is aimed at developing a post-occupancy quality assessment protocol, providing methods for collecting and analyzing testimonials on lived experience in municipal spaces and buildings. The other outcome is educational tools for training in the qualitative accessibility of the built environment workshop, integrated into two programs. The first one is in the Master of Architecture. His name is tactical laboratory for inclusive projects. And the second one is my studio in the Bachelor of Entry and Design. The title is Design and Inclusion Seminar Workshop: Designing for Diversity and Neurodiversity, more specifically. To prepare future architects and designers for a creative approach to inclusive field environment. As you say, it's like we have the norms for inclusivity, accessibility, but we work to have a creative approach to think in an other way with the idea d'inclusivité et d'accessibilité. La question d'un lieu ou d'une expérience positive -
[00:21:14.980] - Virginie	It allows us to better understand how we have to create the space for all, given that we are in a context, a colimit, in fact, of people who have very special needs, who are very sensible to their environment, that it is from a sensory, social, to have a good lisability of the built environment. And that in fact, everyone needs these considerations-là. In the public space, it leads us to have a better understanding of the needs for all. I don't know if someone.
[00:22:07.030] - Susan	If you want to do a translation because you feel people are understanding, you can go ahead. I need to close my eyes when you speak French so I can understand, but I don't know how other people are no have at the table, excuse me. Shortly, it's that to

	understand, have a better understanding of how people in neurodiversity lift their environment help us to have a better approach, better understanding of the space for all. With this particular sensitivity of the autosim, We can understand that everybody have somewhere the same needs in different way.
[00:22:57.480] - Susan	Yeah, I would like to expand that. I When an elder person with any disability is in a public space, whatever you're doing for the neurodiverse, having that information, it can be really, instead of being siloed, it can be expanded.
[00:23:12.630] - Virginie	It can be helpful for everybody. Yeah, that's it.
[00:23:22.160] - Kayden	I started on the project just in September, and I was originally hired to work on a museum exhibit, and then I guess One of the professors liked me and asked me to stay on this project. Initially, I was like, Why the hell do you want me? That's not what I do. But I guess one thing that I realized or one thing we've been working on is looking at how... Well, we've been looking at past national housing policy and looking at how a lot of our standards and norms today are based on sometimes very arbitrary legislation or policies from 100 years ago. I think a historical approach can really invaluable in some ways. Just to explain why we do the things that we do. Sometimes there's not really reason for it, or if there is, we're not consciously aware of it. Then another thing in our specific We're working on rural areas, rural Alberta, and how a lot of... Sometimes people assume that urban standards can be extrapolated to rural settings, and a lot of the time that's not true, and there's not necessarily Up until recently, there's not been a lot of rural-specific research or data gathering. And so that's what we're really trying to emphasize, is that these different contexts have different needs and wants, and they're all unique. I have my own. There we go. I think these are all great. We should just continue to think, like how in the lens of these two years, how has that affected us? I guess for me, I spent a lot of my practice, about 20 years, doing a lot of very real community engagement, not checkmark community engagement. A lot of it experimental with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation as a vendor, as an architect. What I found was as long as I was on site and we were animating and engaging the community and listening to the community, and we did really deeply and engaging all the stakeholders, it all worked really well. We used landscape and all different kinds of wayfinding because we never had the money to do the proper job. So we did what we could with what we had. But I found, and this is where I'm very interested in your point of view. I'm sorry, marjorie. Marjorie. When we left, it's like when you leave the site, it's very hard to build capacity to have it remain. And this has been my biggest sorrow, actually. And working In the situation and looking at the Angus Reids survey that was done, what people feel architecture is in Canada, and they gave us a failing grade of 37%. I thought, I have to quit. How is this possible? That all the good work that we try to do is just not reaching the people who it's supposed to serve. So this lens that I feel like I'm wearing a different set of glasses now to really try and understand, but what is it that I or we or you, any of you do that actually creates quality? Never mind what's the definition of quality. And I don't know the answer, but I'm listening to everybody. And I guess one of the things that I personally feel in the two years that I really understood is the importance of the lived experience, not the journey mapping and not the personal scenarios of an invented person's eyes. This is a single woman with six children who has to take three busses to get her children. There's a lot of that development of personal scenarios that don't work. But listening to real people's struggles, you come up with better solutions because they're real. I have instituted with my students anyway, I don't know if I've been able to extend that to my clients because I don't control the client group. The client group I'm with usually allows people to pick the color of the kitchen in their community room. I'm always pushing for more than that. So that's what I've learned. I think that if we are really listening and we are really creating an opportunity for people to talk about what

	<p>matters, it does matter. I was thinking about this one project I heard about, that there was going to be a cul-de-sac development. An Indigenous group was going to be in the suburban development. The women said they didn't want the houses at the front, they wanted them at the back, which is really anti suburban. Why are anti-suburban? I'm just trying to give an example of listening to lived experiences because when your kids are around and you're working either from home or in home and cooking and doing laundry in it or having to go out and have a neighbor watch your kids, if you're all in the middle circle, which is instead of having this big private lawn box in the back and you have this communal area in the front, it makes a little village. Then it creates the context to have a village raise the children. It was a slight shift. Like, move the house back, leave eyes on the front, and it created a whole different community. That's a small example of one insight from a set of users that just changed up the whole community. That's what I feel the positive outcome is starting to be from having this lens.. It's only been three weeks that I'm in. So, with your permission, I would like to just listening for now. But it's been a long time I'm thinking about quality. And I think the context is very imp</p>
<p>[00:29:26.050] - Mylene</p>	<p>Important because years ago or now, we are built, we are planning with a context, and our context are a lot of influence about our own perspective of quality. And that's why I see a lot of solitude from each perspective because we have our own context, like an organization or people or user or whatever, professional. We have our own idea about quality, and we just want to put our things in the global project or I'm sorry. My English is not the very best. I'm sorry. It's great. We're not all speaking French.</p>
<p>[00:30:22.750] - Mylene</p>	<p>For now, I think the reconciliation of our own idea about quality is a big challenge, and it's a really big challenge for public services because we have all the people, all the organization, and all those idea or concepts of quality are good, but we have to put all that and be able to make a response for that. And I think now we are doing conciliation that are not always the good way to do quality because we make some compromise. That's not always good because we want to give a little A bit of quality for each one in their perspective. I'm sorry. I cannot- No, it's very interesting. Can I say more about the effect of that project, but it's my perspective. Sorry for my English. No, we appreciate.</p>
<p>[00:31:54.710] - Shannon</p>	<p>Okay, thanks. I've been on the project since the beginning in, I guess it was August 2022, and I'm with the Laurentian or the Sudbury cluster. Our initial question was, I believe, material prosperity. We extended that to look at, I guess, buildings or projects which engaged in sustainability. I think to me it was... I know this because I'm trained as an urban designer in our work with communities, but I think it was Naomi from Coalition Reva Sudbury? Yeah, Reva Sudbury. Liberal Sudbury, sorry. I mean, really, really honed as I think our conversations have the importance of un-designers being part of these. I mean, again, I know this, but it's also been heightened being part of these conversations and the myriads of ways that we can look beyond simply esthetics, which as an architect, we I would say, trained to do for quality, especially in design competitions. I think those conversations have been really strong, and I guess, coupled with my own I mentioned, in addition to teaching, I'm also doing a PhD and working with Indigenous colleagues, looking beyond, and I was thinking about this with the research methods, we learn about qualitative and quantitative research. But again, it's going beyond and looking at indigenous ways of knowing in, I guess, meaningful people, reciprocal relationships. I think it was also something Carmela said today, which resonated in terms of the importance of lived experiences. Again, I think that those translate beyond the binaries of the Western world in which we predominantly work in. As we move towards, again, engaging in more sincere indigenous worldviews in terms of the consideration of what we consider quality in living?</p>
<p>[00:34:20.260] - Iris</p>	<p>Thank you. I have quite a few things to throw in there based on what everyone said. I'm just going to try to complicate some of those things. I think to go back to</p>

something you said, Susan, I think quality is an ongoing process. I think in my personal experience, it's the places that genuinely treasure the experiences of the people who use those spaces that tend to invest in that ongoing process of quality. The example that I gave is this cooperative bar in Montreal called Bar Milton Park that is co-owned. And although it's not specifically a queer and trans space, it has been taken up by the queer and trans community because of some very simple things that they did. They got rid of male and female on the bathroom doors, and instead they just said, here you have three urinals and two stalls. Here you have three stalls. They didn't necessarily have to change the architecture of those spaces, but the way that they presented them already made the space more inclusive. They had posters on the walls that specified that no discrimination is allowed in the space. They asked clients for pronouns. It's very small things like that that Although accessibility is enshrined in law, the law is not enough because the law only looks at some very limited ways of accessibility. And Virginie, you talked about neurodivergent, which is another huge part of accessibility that is not in the law. No one's going to force you to build for neurodivergent people in the same way they won't force you to build for a trans community. But thinking about those things is super important. I was also thinking about the idea of who are we designing for and You talked about the suburban house, that nuclear family with a housewife and 2.5 kids. People don't live like that anymore, but that's not really reflected in the way that we design, which is why we have all these stupidly expensive flat sitting empty or that people are speculating articulating on making a profit is because my generation of people younger than me, we can't afford to buy something like that. That's another question that I think is important to think about in relation to quality. The last one is about compromise that you mentioned, Mylène. I was thinking about another... We as people who want to make the change compromise, but also the communities in which we want to make a change need to compromise as well. We've been doing some work with Maison Benoît-Labre in Saint-Henri in Montreal. They are Canada's first safe inhalation site. They not only allow people to inject safely on site, but also to inhale drugs safely. That comes from the fact that in Montreal and across Canada, we've seen a huge increase in smoking overdoses. This center has the potential to become a real example and to provide a framework for the rest of the country to create these spaces. But before it was even opened, it only opened about a week ago, the community around it has created some insane campaigns, not in my backyard, take these people away from our kids, like the St. Henry is not a place for drug users. I think part of the and since the place has opened, the police has been there 24/7. So, it's an incredibly highly policed area now. And I think another thing that we need to think about, and as part of our work as researchers, is to talk with the communities and to explain to them that change doesn't happen overnight. It happens over time and that sometimes you have to be a little uncomfortable and sit with a discomfort for things to change for the better for everyone. And sure, if you start off from a position of great privilege where life is great for you, well, think about other people as well and accept that they need help, too. I think that that should be an important element in our discussion around quality as well.

[00:38:45.29
0] - Will

Well said. Thank you for starting to cross and reference the table. I think that that's great.

[00:38:54.02
0] - Marjorie

I can't talk about two years because I started maybe two months ago, in that I was invited during Black History Month to come and speak to students at the School of Architecture in Waterloo. And truthfully, I was like, What the heck am I going to talk to them about? I don't know anything about architecture. I know what's pretty, but that's about it. But I spoke about things like quality. I spoke about building for my community that has multi-generational families. So, you're living with three, four generations of a family or just really big families, and there is nothing for them. And talking about in my region where literally quality is the problem. They build one way

for regular people. And when it comes to social housing, it's disgusting. Why are we still using asbestos tiles? And if one more person tells me, oh, but they're inert. Well, they're only inert until there's a leak. And I did say something about quality. The way those buildings are built, there is no quality. So there always is leaking. There always is mold. There always is things falling, floors buckling, roofs, having holes, and there's always, always a complete and utter lack of any quality or quality control, not in the materials, not in the way it's been built, not the way the plumbing has been done, the electricians have been done. And people are simply told, well, you have a roof over your head. You're lucky. Or things like, oh, well, I've seen worse. These are the things. But by the same token, I look at another building that we have where there's always this waiting list for people to get into this building, and it is an older building, but it was so well built. People of any accessibility level can live in that building. They have built to ensure that if you are a wheelchair bound and profoundly disabled, there's somewhere in that Building that you can live. If you're like me and you're on the cusp and just old and decrepit these days, there's still somewhere for you that we'll have the bars and the whatever you need to be able to be independent. So and live. But we don't seem to build that way, where we could build purposefully, not just to say I'm building for one equity-seeking group, but I'm building so that everybody has a chance to be able to live there because I'm building and keeping in mind that there are different levels of abilities and different things that you could want. So you could have an apartment that leads to another apartment. They can be joined by a door or a wall or whatever. And so your multi-generational family could end up having two apartments in there that really function as one. And I was so heartened that I was invited by the School of Architecture to view projects that their students were doing. And I was absolutely blown away in the way that they see and understand what I was talking about. So when I look at what they are planning, the environmental issues that they are looking at, and you can see that they're looking at. It's been amazing. So what's coming is very exciting for me. So, coming to something like this and being to say, Yeah, these are the problems that we have now, but hey, this is what's coming. And until that can come, how do we deal with what we have now to make some changes? Because we're building like beast out there, but it isn't for anybody who needs it. Well said, both of you. I think that journey and the points that you raised, I really key to a lot of what's fundamental here, and that is we all got to get uncomfortable.

00:44:37.170
- Will

Every one of us, the drywallers, don't build drywall or the industry makes drywall flat. Our boxes become boxes, become boxes, become boxes, and nothing in nature is a box. The complexity is this is a lot of shifting that needs to be done. Talk about perspective. Where in that perspective, of where is everybody? As I spoke earlier about my degree in Fine Arts, it was after I left the armed forces. I was a medic in the armed forces 30 plus years ago before most of you were born. That reality was what led me to get the hell out of there was there was an event called the Oka Crisis. I don't know if you're familiar with the Oka, for those of you in Montreal, know what I'm talking about. All right. That was a wake-up call to the fact that at that same time, I received in the mail a document from Indian Affairs that had a card on it and said, magically, poof, you're an Indian now. From being a non-Indian to being an Indian. I became an Indigenous person, but I knew I was. My mom spoke the language. Understanding that reality makes sense, actually. But the fact of the matter is that nobody else in this country knew who Indigenous peoples were. That's what led to that dysfunction. There's a lot of learning that's got to be doing. My mom would say, she's going to learn me the real ojibway, the real way of seeing and understanding and that value and that perspective of what it is. As you were saying, your first name again? Marjorie. Marjorie. How important it is that if you go into a reserve, a urban center where it's the poor end of town, you got four or five families living in a single space. You got multi-generations living in the same space. But there are some parts

<p>of Canada where the income of a home where you can have that same equivalent is million dollar homes. But the majority of families that have that as a reality are not living in million-dollar homes. They're living in homes that are soon to be in the dump and the challenge that is key here. So on the dry erase board, I put a couple of symbols. You guys recognize one of them? Which one is it? You recognize that one? It was in the presentation. It was shown. It's in the booklet as well, too. It's that reduce, reuse, and recycle, right? It's missing one. It's missing one. Does anybody know which one it is? It's missing one. It's repair. We have to repair our relationship. We have to repair the poor with the rich. We have to repair those that have power to those that don't have power, those Those that have voice and those that don't have voice. We have to repair. But what that requires is this word right here, respect. Does anybody know what that means? Anybody? Come on. What does it mean?</p>	
<p>00:47:50.900 - Cara</p>	<p>It means seeing someone as a human being and valuable.</p>
<p>00:47:55.170 - Will</p>	<p>The seeing part is right here. That's the spec part. What's this? Because it's in here. It's in there. But what does this mean? What does the re in the respect mean? Repetition. Do it over and over again. Say it again. It's repetition. Do it over and over again. Do it A gain. When you see from another perspective, you gain. But if you keep it to yourself, you're the problem. And there's our divide, those that have and those that don't have. Anybody that has a building. And who's their employee? The architect. The city planner, the organizations and institutions, not the people without money, the people that don't have. That's what's key, is to share. In adding that repair, we got to put that repair in there is we got to repair all our relationships in every segment and aspect of society. Those that have need to start sharing. Does anybody know what a medicine wheel is? Who doesn't know what a medicine will is. Okay. It's an ancient symbol in the Americas that's a circle divided into four. You can see it, Picto forms of the Stones in various parts throughout Saskatchewan, Alberta, down into Montana and the States. You'll see stones all the way around. It's a wheel. It's divided equally into four. It's like our Stonehenge. We can use it for the seasons. We can use it for the stages of life. We talk about it as the four colors that are in there representing that yellow is east, red is summer south, west, which is the color black. We've got white here for North, winter, the Stations of life, child, adolescent, old age. But it also recognizes that there's something key, and that North America is called turtle Island, and with a prophecy that all the colors of humankind would come to live here on turtle Island, going back over 5,000 years.</p>
<p>00:50:22.980 - Will</p>	<p>A prophecy. Does that occur? Did that occur? Has that happened? Are all the colors of humankind here in North America on Turtle Island? If we represent those colors as cultures, we've got Asian cultures, we've got African cultures, European cultures, and Native American cultures. But what color is our education system? What color is our government system? Anybody want to guess? What color is our industry system? Somebody's got to get uncomfortable. There's a lot of people that have power that got to get uncomfortable, and they don't want it. You want to know what the solution to the problem is? We talk about quality. It means people that have it got to start giving it, and they're not ready to. Does that make sense? It's called a medicine wheel. If my wheel looked like that, would I get anywhere? We're not getting anywhere. It only does so when it's balanced. Until all come together equally, that medicine can't do its work. From an indigenous perspective, it echoes that sentiment. But that's the hard part. The people that have don't want to listen. How do I know? We've got homelessness. You got those police roaming around. We have people in neighborhoods falling down, dying of overdose.</p>
<p>00:51:59.380 - Will</p>	<p>We got homelessness Out of the park. It's the reality that we've got a lot of things that got to be getting done, and so we need champions. But that's where the repair comes in. We got to repair people's vision. We got to repair people's vision. Every one of our places of employment, the people that are not getting it, you got to make</p>

	<p>them uncomfortable. It's not my job. It's your job. You don't think it's all of our jobs? That's what I mean. It's your job. I'm already doing it because we're not in Europe. We're not in Africa, we're not in Asia. You're on our land, and this is what you've done to it. That's a It's an old statement from an Indigenous perspective. As our elders said, we've been sitting here sharing, sharing, sharing, sharing, but you haven't learned how to share.</p>
<p>00:53:00.530 - Cynthia</p>	<p>Thank you. Thank you for that. That was amazing. I think like everyone else, I have or share similar sentiments in that I believe that possible forms of quality should be this harmonious confluence of social, ecological, and subjective elements. But also to preface, I've been working on the project for about three months now, so I went to Madrid. But in that, I think the quality of the built environment as an architecture student should very much well transcend the mere tectonic qualities of the space. But rather, I think in a lot of the research that we've been doing thus far, I'm most concerned now that spaces in a built environment best allowing for or addressing the, I guess, the personal agency or the true autonomy of the individual. Because I find that in a lot of my research, it seems like all of these issues begin to stem back from the role of property speculation, particularly in the residential sector and the manner in which the home in which you are able to live in, depending on its quality, has such an intimate relationship with all other facets of your life. Being that the value of your home then leads into the quality of your education or your children's education, and subsequently affects your job opportunities and in such, leads in this this inevitable cycle. I think now doing this research, more than anything, we want to leverage, as we've been speaking about, personal accounts and lived experience of individuals in order to create this positive experience of the built environment.</p>
<p>00:54:48.680 - Susan</p>	<p>The last bunch of people have been talking about awareness. There are all these things to be done, but it's almost the bigger umbrella is changing awareness. A lot of people talk about, I can't own, I can't own, I can't own. Maybe we also have to change that awareness. Maybe it's okay to rent. Maybe we need a different culture where people don't own things. In Europe, most people around this table, all of my friends, they all rent. They've got a secure tenure. They can renovate their homes. They get a deduction from their rent, not their homes, their apartments. I'm going to just use that as an example, but there's an awareness phenomenon that I think that a lot of people are talking about. Maybe after we take a little bit of a break when we go around the table and just have a moment to reflect, we should come back and maybe think a bit about the awareness phenomena of quality and how each of us has a thing maybe you want us to correct or do, but there is this bigger picture of awareness.</p>
<p>00:55:54.160 - Iris</p>	<p>Sorry. I'm sorry. I'm going to complicate a little bit that reading of what rent in Europe looks like. As someone who grew up there. I grew up in a post-communist country. I was born three years after the revolution, still very much living in a very communist society. The reason why I don't have to worry about my mother retiring right now is because she owns the house that she lives in. My grandma owns the house that she lives in because they were given houses to live in and own during communism. That is not the case anymore. I rented in London for 10 years, and that's just not the case. In London, there's a thing called Section 21, your landlord has the right to evict you with no reason within a month. Different parts of Europe have different laws, but being okay with renting doesn't take ownership away. It just puts it in the hands of very few people who are getting richer and richer, while the rest of us are getting poorer poorer with no ability to fend for ourselves or pay for ourselves once we are no longer productive for capitalism. So yes, I'm okay with getting rid of ownership if we get rid of all ownership. Otherwise, I want ownership to be distributed to every single person because everyone should be in charge of where they live, and everyone should have the safety of their own.</p>

00:57:21.930 - Cara	Well, should ownership be individual or collective ownership? In Vienna, where a lot of people have very a secure tenure because they live in... I don't know what the percentage is, but it's a really high percentage of public housing stock. People have the security of tenure. They rent. So, yeah, it's absolutely... There's something about who owns it? Is it a landlord or is it collectively owned by everyone? Sure. Right? Yeah. Obviously, there's issues with collective ownership of a state where that power can be corrupted as well. So, yeah, I think that it is important to have security, but we can have better security, I think, altogether.
00:58:12.210 - Will	Oh, 100 %. Ownership problem on First Nation communities is the land, the majority of the land that you call a reserve is actually communal land. The houses that are built on it, HMS, whatever the household financing, CMHC, has issues or difficulty in helping indigenous peoples build houses on communal land because it's federal land, they can't take it if they don't pay the mortgage. And so a house built on communal land can't be owned. You see? Problem. That there is so much that we are unaware of, and so we need to have many different solutions. If we're going to talk about quality, it's not generic. It needs to be very unique. I use that as an expression. If you want to understand a people, you need to know their geography and then their history. If you don't know that, you're not qualified to have a statement.
00:59:22.060 - Susan	The microphone's me, too. Okay. Yes. Well, thank you. I don't need to have it. No, please. Thank you, William. I have to say William. I guess thank you all for your reflections. Our group has been looking at the question of adaptive reuse, but we're really trying to shift from adaptive reuse to just the broader notion of adaptability in architecture.
00:59:49.510 - Federica	I teach in an architecture school, and we also have a conservation program. I always felt that we are moving... In our school, we are really doing the effort, but I feel like when we When we talk about conservation architecture, we are moving between two silos. For architecture, something is born, new, it's born, finished. When you look at conservation, you might have a concept of heritage that sometimes prevents certain kinds of change. We are working in the middle. The idea of adaptive reuse really looks at the idea of an existing building and some adaptations for different kinds of questions and issues. We're trying to shift from that idea that adaptive reuse is only about historic buildings, whether heritage or not. We're also interested in the adaptability of heritage, but really looking at that adaptability as something that should be more at the core of architecture education across the spectrum. Even when you build a new house, how are you thinking about the future adaptability of that house? Society changes. You have spoken about this, right? Society is no longer the same. It's not necessarily 2.5, the family with the 2.5 kids. Can these apartments adapt over time? Can you go from two apartments to one or from one to two? Where is the adaptability factor in new construction and also in existing buildings? I feel that as a concept, it's very useful. I think our adaptability, if we start to I think, through architecture in that way. Potentially, architecture can address all of the issues from being more inclusive, more accessible, more equitable. I feel like it links all of these things, more plural. I feel like but we need to be adaptable to do that. I do find that sometimes when you find a good case study, the one that works, is the exception. It's the people that work within the but also manage a way to go beyond the policies, beyond the minimum standards, the minimum requirements. I find that those case studies are hard to repeat because they're really based on the initiative of some people. We're trying to understand from the case studies what can be taken, what were the obstacles for this project, and how can that be turned into a policy? Because it really depends on personal initiative. Just to give an example, this is actually outside our research right now, but it was an adaptive reuse existing building in Ottawa, and it was the Congress Center. It was a big project that produced a lot of money for, I guess everyone that was involved. Somehow, they had this idea of giving back to the city. Somehow there has to be something beyond the Congress

Center. They had this idea of creating, it was very small, but six social housing units in a very nice neighborhood and everyone put something. The city put the land; they owned this building which was not used. The company put the work. The companies that were producing the materials, they put the materials. We were invited as a school of architecture with the students to participate in the project. The students did a competition of projects, and the architect of the Congress Center was going to be hosting the student to win the competition to then complete this project. There was no monetary exchange in this project, and six units of social housing were put. It was just an act of goodwill where well, you came together with this idea and said, We're going to do it. But when we talk to other developers who are converting offices, for example, we're looking at that, offices into housing, there is no particular incentive to include, let's say, a certain number of social housing or affordable housing in those projects. They're all market housing. I guess that's where the policies need to be more bold, I feel. They need to really embrace some of these cases and really take change to consider some of these opportunities so that we are not just relying on individuals here and there with a really good will to do something and we really empower people. I mean, I've seen the students in education. I feel seeing the students work gives you a lot of hope because their projects are often ahead of what you see out in the practice.

- 01:04:45.480
- Federica
- I guess the fear is that when they get out there in the practice, they can't do this project because the policies are not quite there to actually empower them to realize those ideas. I guess that's I guess a start of the response. So everything is all tight. Th
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- 01:05:10.140
- Cynthia
- ank you, everybody, for speaking about your experiences. I feel like I've already learned so much as a student and only being in this project for about a few months since maybe October. As you guys may know that Vancouver is very overpriced. There's a lot of unhoused citizens along very specific areas like the downtown East Side. That's where our project resides. The downtown East Side, it's a park called Crab Park. I'm not sure if you guys know where there's currently an encampment for the unhoused people. They used to be in this park called Oppenheimer Park, and they got shifted over there because Oppenheimer Park closed down. They didn't want them in that area. It's totally secluded the rest of the city. It's like you have to go. There's only one access point where there's a ramp, you go up, and it's barricaded hostile infrastructure of a whole bunch of trains around it, and then it's along the water. But our project looks at and critiques the design guidelines currently in place for people in these encampments and how the city is dealing with right now because at the minute, they are constantly shifting within this specific park to do these cleanups when they're actually in turn just trying to get rid of them in general. All these cleanups happen unnoticed, even though there is this community engagement speaks. There's a lot of uncertainty and unclarity between these people, I guess later on, you guys will see it later upstairs in the exhibition. But yeah, it's definitely a very persistent issue in Vancouver. Since I've been living there for my entire life, I've seen the vague progression of what's been going on. Growing up also in the East Side of Vancouver and growing up not as well healthy and having to rent parents being immigrants. I think the idea of quality is very subjective to the societal viewpoints. To me, quality, I don't really see quality as much in housing. In Vancouver, from where I was living, I saw quality in landscape architecture, seeing parks, having these open spaces where we have these are separate relationships between the environment with the people around us, the different communities that came to these specific parks. There's a park called Trout Lake. I think it's one of the only freshwater lakes in Vancouver. They did a really great job of creating accessibility, socially, having Indigenous stays, I was supposed to sit there, having also a medicine wheel also placed nearby the water. I think growing up, going to that park really allowed me to enjoy the idea of quality. But unfortunately, it's very hard to
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	think about what quality really is, generally, because I'm still learning a lot and need to learn more and experience it. Hopefully, I get that clarity eventually, but I think it's a big process. You're good. Yeah. Wow.
01:08:39.990 - Susan	This was a really good start. I think maybe what we should do is take a few minute break, jump around, I don't know, do something so we're not sitting all day and give us a moment of reflection. Because we have to answer a very specific question next is, how has your understanding of quality Can we change since the beginning of the project? What is your lens? We're always talking about, Let's you change, you change, you change, but all of that to William's point, it's not going to happen until we have a changed perspective.
01:09:12.200 - Susan	Maybe we should look at from the positive outpicks and some were negative, and that's fine. How can we use this lens of having the privilege of thinking about quality in this way for these years? How can we lend our voice and our thoughts to to change something. I think we'd like to record that given that we have had this great opportunity. It could be simple. It doesn't have to be a big theoretical proposition. It could just be something from your heart and from your experience. I think that would be the most useful to all of our table's discussion, if that's okay with everybody.
01:09:53.600 - Iris	Just to add to that, because it's my responsibility to to do the report writing for this session. We are supposed to, by the end of the session, to come up with two, three key takeaways from our discussion that we all agree on that will be presented in the plenary meeting later. Let's make sure that we have time to do that. I have a question which I was unable to ask. So that 15 minutes at the end, is it a few of us or we're going to come up with the insights? It should be all of us. It should be basically a summary of our discussion that we all are happy with. It's not supposed to be just two of us. It's not us.
01:10:32.530 - Susan	Here's the timing. We have seven minutes for a little break. That takes us to 11:30. Then we have 15 minutes more to throw in our personal notions of this two years of, or however, two weeks, three weeks. Then we have 15 minutes where we're going to come up with insights. Sounds great. Okay. Great. I'd love to We don't have to feel all the time just about coming up with the answers today. But I think I'm just developing an ability to talk things through from our individual perspectives, because this is the point of today, of this morning, what each of us really feels and things about our lived experience and our lived experience in the project. So that's really the point. If people feel uncomfortable going around in a circle, if you get anxious thinking, Oh, I'm the last one or I'm the first one, or, I'm the first one. We could just ricochet.
01:11:31.640 - Susan	I could just call people out so you don't have to wait. We have a show hands. Who likes going around the table in one direction or other? Who would just like to speak out on your own? Anybody have a problem with either? I don't prefer going around. You would. I think it's everybody gets a chance to be safe. Yeah, it's really important. Inclusive. Okay. Then why don't we start with you? There you go. So the focus of this. Don't I talk?. Thank you. It's your digital talking. Sorry, what? It's your digital talking.
01:12:11.960 - Susan	Just let's just try and focus on how our understandings of quality, given, as I just said, this privileged position, because we're tasked with this, has changed since we started the project. It doesn't matter if it's three weeks since the beginning of the project, since the middle. I think the lens of having the quality glasses on has got to have changed. I think it'd be really interesting to hear about that. You We're going to start.
01:12:46.520 - Kayden	I think for me, I guess my understanding has just become a lot more holistic, and not just based on the physical properties of a building or whatever. There are all these other social aspects, and I guess to that point, I think one of the issues or challenges that we have is that we can come up all these great ideas and plans and whatever, but at the end of the day, a lot of the barrier is cultural. Our culture is very individualistic, and the way things are set up is to benefit or to support a particular type of relationship. If you want to get a mortgage, it's for a nuclear family with two incomes, a couple, then It's not everyone lives that anymore, but there's not really

	support for alternative arrangements. I think also there's a lot of pushbacks against, culturally pushback against new things. It's certainly to turn out the L word anyways, that there's resistance sometimes to the idea of cooperative ownership because it's seen as this like, socialist. Oh, God, we don't want that. But yeah, it doesn't... I'm not supposed to say it It only benefits people who already have power and money.
01:14:03.360 - Susan	Those are really good insights, but I'm going to be really pushy here. How has your understanding of quality? Because what you're saying is important, and it will come out in the second session more. But is that what's changed your understanding went from not understanding that to understanding the whole politics?
01:14:21.590 - Kayden	Yeah, I think that's part of it. My view of architecture was just very like, Oh, make a blueprint, put it on a piece of paper, build a building. That's it. Now, it's just the politics. Now, I see that there's all these people that are interested in all these other problems and finding ways to integrate them. That's a really good point. I think another thing to keep in mind is that in terms of this accessibility, disability, it's a social category, and every social category, it's constructed by the context in which you live, and the society and the environment in which you live. That's another way of connecting the physical and the social because... That's right.
01:15:07.280 - Susan	We thought that architecture just happened, and now we're seeing that there's this whole undercurrent of thought and policy and politics and economics. It's a very complex picture.
01:15:18.260 - Kayden	Yeah. Being part of a marginal group tends to mean that you live in a worse environment. You live in somewhere that's not healthy or it's closer to a train station with fumes, whatever the case may be. The physical environment and the social environment are very closely related. I certainly didn't realize that that was a core part, I guess, of this project when I first started. That's great.
01:15:49.660 - Virginie	Okay, so we're going to pass to Virginie. Okay. Thank you. I think I will talk about the process, the quality as process, not only as result. From my own experience of the last two years. It's not what I write, but I'm thinking, and I wish to say something about that. My discipline is interior design. It's like the little brother or little sister of our architecture. It's not recognized by architects, habitually. We are not invited in this events or partnership. For the last two years, I'm happy to have the opportunity to participate and to think with architect, but sure all the others the other members of the partnership. For an interior designer, working with people who live in the environment is the base of our work. The practice is really... This is the way we conceive an environment by working with people, for people, trying to integrate, interpret what people want, how they live, how they perceive, what are their challenge, their wellbeing, seeing in the environment. So integrate all these perspectives. And so for me, what's changed in my idea of quality is that It is in big part first in the process before in the result. I think I'm already at this level of comprehension of the quality. I'm not able at this time to say for the result what can be. I'm really thinking how to change, how to do better about the process.
01:18:28.940 - Susan	That's a really good point I mean, how it's not just the processes. How do we make the process important? Really, interior designers are much better about that than architects, I can tell you. If you feel like a little sister or brother, maybe it's the wrong percentage for this project anyway. Thank you.
01:18:47.590 - Victor	I guess the starting point was the first convention in Montreal. We talked a lot about awards in architecture. I wasn't really I'm not familiar with all of the award world in architecture, but it was really interesting. It led to interesting discussion. One of them was, how do we know it's a good building if we haven't evaluated? If we don't know how people lived in it, how would they use them, how they can appropriate the building? One of the things that really evolved is the lived experience that we talked about today as well. One thing that we did in our work was to do a lot of commuted walks with elderly people. We went on the field with a group of elderly people of different conditions, with physical limitations or hearing limitations. We just did a path,

	and they could pinpoint to us what were the obstacles, what were the good designs that really helped them. And so we could transpose them. But I know we said that we cannot take a good design and just use it at another place. We always used to do another of this activity idea in another context to make sure that design would apply there. The thing that could help in the process was to use temporary designs. When you were making a public space or a street, you can have different steps, different designs before doing a permanent one. You can test, you can go back to the ground with the users. You're going to make sure that you all have a design that meets the needs of the people who are going to use them in the end. It's like a mock-up. Yeah, exactly. A mock-up, like real-life mock-up. Make the mistake once. Yeah, exactly. Or twice. You can have several before having the last That's the last one. That's how the quality process is.
01:21:20.460 - Susan	That's good. We have to not to crush people, and these are great comments, but if we could just try and shorten a little bit so we could get to helping Iris get to what you need. We all need to do with Iris. No problem.
01:21:38.730 - Cara	I guess for myself, I came into the project thinking that I had a pretty firm grasp on what qualified as quality. I've taught an inclusive design course for a couple of years, so I had this understanding. But my experience really switched when I came I've been involved with folks in my community in Milton Park in Montreal, folks that are supporting the homeless people, Indigenous homeless people that are on the corner. I learned being in that environment. I took something to heart from a crew gentleman that I became friends with, and it just had really stuck with me that you have to to learn to listen and listen to learn. I'll just leave it there.
01:22:36.300 - Cynthia	Great. For me in my journey, I think, initially, I never really questioned the standards of what is supposed to happen in these spaces, like to build an environment. I I don't really questioned anything. I always accepted like, oh, government is doing this for a reason. But growing up with that like, censorship and not being able to understand like, lived experiences of the people in this space was a big thing I learned Which is like very late in my life, unfortunately. But I think that was just the main thing I read last week. I feel like the idea of defining quality feels like it's very difficult. I feel like quality is a moving target. In fact, listening to everybody around the table, there are so many issues that need to be tackled.
01:23:41.490 - Federica	To me, more the defining is poster and It's like, how do we foster quality? More than measuring is what are the tools to achieve quality? I feel like what I've learned in this last few years, often as an architect and working at a school and with students, we Often, we run a project. It's about the project and how the project, often being in a school, you exceed the policy and you do what you believe in. Often we feel like we don't have that agency on the policy. But I feel like I'm really happy that what we are trying to do is actually collect all of these recommendations through an idea of roadmaps in an idea of potential recommendations for policies. In general, I think also in teaching, we need to be more critical policies. I feel like often students want to be in. We also have the responsibility to say, you're a professional because you know the standard, but we also have to be very critical of that.
01:24:50.690 - Brianna	I think coming into this project as a result of my undergraduate degree, I was already of the mind that quality should transcend the physical built form or the criteria that we find in the way that we dole out the wards. But I think in coming and working on this project in particular, a part of our research is looking to develop a survey resident in the Waterloo region. As a part of that, we've developed a set of principles and I guess a list of criteria that we're then cross-referencing with a variety of government documents, be it municipal or federal, that create housing standards across Canada.
01:25:33.210 - Brianna	What I'm finding is that in doing this research, I've become more aware of the cultural dimension or the regional dimension as it pertains to quality, so what certain government or levels of government are willing to accept as a minimum for quality, as I think. Maybe not quality.

01:25:53.050 - Will	Equality as a abstract concept is based on, from my perspective and the growing understanding beyond what we've grown from this event and these sessions that we've attended so far in the past two previous, was recognizing not everyone that has the same sense of quality. The quality of grass on a golf course for a country club lacks any moral quality. And the quality of their lack of disconnection to the need of the community they're in. Same would be for a building, the same for a government institution where it's top-heavy. It's disconnecting the user. We're controlled by those that have the power or those industries that are out there who here has had a cell phone for less than six months. And then six months later, they get another cell phone, and then they get another cell phone. You buy a car or a truck, Oh, you got to add the tires. You got to pay extra for the tires, and then you got to pay extra for that. The business model that is out there in the same way building architectural structures is they're creating those that don't have to aim for something They'll never be able to afford. So we're never really in ownership of land. From a tribal sense, and other cultures get it as well, too. True quality comes from a shared use of space. If there is a space there that I can't access, you're the asshole. You lack quality. That's where my journey is, is seeing more and more assholes out there. I'm being blunt for the purposes of... That's the discomfort that I was saying.
01:28:06.530 - Susan	I'm going to summarize what you said, which I think is really quite interesting. The quality is definable, but we're defining it wrong. It's the wrong definition. In all those examples, that's the concept of what I see that you're saying.
01:28:19.750 - Will	So Murray Sinclair was the Chief Justice of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission put out 94 calls to action What I was saying earlier that those 94 calls to action that recount and speak about the atrocities and the attempts of genocide on indigenous peoples, that these are steps that are there to help make sure we don't do it again. So there's quality right there. However, those 94 calls to actions aren't for indigenous peoples to do. And guess who's leading in the implementing of those 94 calls to action? Indigenous peoples. And so these are the challenges. But the one message he says, If you're not uncomfortable, doing it wrong. Good. Thank you.
01:29:16.990 - Marjorie	I think when I look at quality, what I'm reminded of is building for someone who lives in a wheelchair, and we're building accessible housing. And what it has meant from a quality standard, excuse me, said they can get the wheelchair inside the apartment; therefore it is accessible. But it is not, because if you can take a wheelchair and get into a bathroom and have a shower, if you can't take a wheelchair into the kitchen and cook to sustain yourself, then it is not truly accessible. Right now, our quality standards is a door that It lets you in. It says it's accessible because you can get in. But our quality needs to grow past that, to encompass, live the experience to know. Not that you should know anyway. That if a person lives somewhere, they must cook, they must go to the bathroom, and they must sleep somewhere. So we're stuck in our quality, in how we experience quality.
01:30:30.700 - Will	If I could add to that because it's really key. Everybody knows the term when someone gets married, the typical class, male, female, and the bride gets carried over. Threshold. What's the threshold? The doorway. So the doorway that you spoke about, if that's all we think about, the threshold, what is that? It was actually a board that was put in front of the doorway because they would put thrash, which was the straw that would be put on the slate floor, that in winter would be slippery. So why the straw? And so if you got carried over the threshold, you were moving up in the world into a more quality foam from a dirt floor to a slate floor. So quality, we got to re-educate ourselves. Exactly. I'll pass it on because I've already said quite a lot just because we have five minutes left.
01:31:30.470 - Shannon	I guess one of the things I was thinking of, we particularly talked about it last time, or I guess at the Montreal as well. I'm sorry. Procurement. I know that people have been working on in Canada that this is, again, more, I mean, what we've been talking

	<p>about, like design quality, that it's not automatically done. It made me think of the housing crisis, that it's fueled by... I mean, capitalism, essentially. I guess I was wondering with that, just as an example, with Scandinavian countries, there's embedded a sense of design quality in architecture. Then I was also thinking about, as I was talking about earlier, for architecture, one of the calls of the TRC or the Truth and Reconciliation My second question was that I believe every public project in Canada has to now have an Indigenous architect. I guess moving beyond that, to me, what is that next step or stage? That it's not forced if you will, by procurement practices, but that in fact, the example of just everyone seeking design quality, what would the next step be in that that just automatically being, I guess the expectation that we would be engaging in Indigenous worldviews within quality in the built environment. I don't know if that makes sense. I just feel like everything here is you have to be forced through procurement or policy. But what is that groundswell? In fact, I guess that was what we're talking about, that people will be demanding a better quality, I guess. Thanks.</p>
01:33:58.080 - Mylene	<p>I can't find a word in French. Even in French, I'm not asking my word. But the needs are multiple. So it makes us think about how we can reach this quality. And what is maybe interesting now in our world is that more and more voices can express their needs. It's not perfect. We know there are still great iniquities, but we hear them. While we have been, maybe for many, for thousands of years, not hearing the iniquities. Because there was no porteboîts for the iniquities. There was not that sensitivity that each can be different, not their place. It's more intellectualized now, I think, versus before. I will need help to say that in English.</p>
01:35:07.540 - Susan	<p>But you're saying that the more the need is, and the more you need to listen, and that's where the quality comes from. It's not like your bottom up is supposed to top down is what I think you're saying. I think what's really interesting about what everybody said, I'm not going to say what I think of Sam. I think you've heard enough from me, is that we mind saying our thoughts about what happened across the last two years with some summaries.</p>
01:35:36.000 - Susan	<p>I think I got a lot of summaries from people. I don't know if you did, Iris, and you wanted. So I saw that we need to change our point of view on quality. We need to have that as a constant lens. We need, I guess a lot of people talk about awareness, like their own evolving awareness, or you're saying everybody's got to be aware. So there's a big awareness quality How does that happen? A lot of people have talked about listening, listen, listen, listen. Who said, I don't know who said it. Was it you? Learn to listen, listen to learn? You. Okay, sorry, I knew it was that corner. That summed up a lot of things that I think people were saying. I think a lot of us are also saying that this is a moving target, that this is an evolutionary process. It's hard to pin down, this is quality. It's much more evolutionary, fostering, stewardship as opposed to. I think a lot of people are saying, bottom up as opposed to top down. But then there's people who talked about there needing to be a lot of top down. Once we have that understanding, then we need to find a way I like to beat people up with it, but maybe there have to be regulations to make people do what they don't want to do.</p>
01:36:51.100 - Shannon	<p>I meant to say this, too. Also, maybe we go beyond and start to think about integrating it into curriculum. That's the point. The example of going out in Sudbury and planting trees, that is exactly, yeah, at lower levels. This whole partnership, I mean, one of the reasons I'm on the alternative funding is to double the funding to be able to bring more and more and more youth, whether they're students or not, youth, because they're the future generation and we need to change architectural education. So that's a mission.</p>
01:37:25.040 - Will	<p>Two things I want to add in that point is, how do you change a bureaucrat's mind? You educate their children. Well, that's what happened with recycling. Because you're not going to change. Yeah, exactly. It was the kids in kindergarten that would say to their parents, How come you're not recycling? The city of Toronto, many He said he's</p>

	got that message loud and clear, and they taught it in the schools, and then the kids taught their parents. Exactly. The second thing I want to finish with is, throw me a microphone. Oh, I got. You got them both. She's stereo. In the O'Gibbey language, there are four words that I use to echo that message that you were saying about that, listen to learn, and how that is important.
01:38:14.070 - Will	We say Beca means that we have to be quiet, we have to be calm. If we're noisy and busy with paying bills, putting up a building, dealing with contractors, we're not calm. We're cut up with bureaucracy, we're not calm. Until you're calm, you can't begin to listen. If you're not calm, you're not listening. If you're not listening, you're not hearing. That's the next level. So is that listening part. Then non-dwa is to hear. Once you can hear, then you know what direction you need to go. That's the bijou. If the person isn't calm, you know they're not listening, don't waste your time. Move on. You can't change a rock from being anything other than a rock. All you need to do is plant a seed, and that seed will grow to crush that rock. Just give it time.
01:39:12.690 - Susan	So, Iris, how are you doing on what you think your Where are you at? You have a different lens than we all do, actually, because you're summarizing and extracting.
01:39:24.050 - Iris	I'm trying not to extract. Yeah, so basically, Obviously, it's very hard to summarize all of this in three key points. But I think the important things that we should talk about is this idea of quality being definable, but we're defining it wrong and that we just need to start the process of educating and re-educating people about quality.
01:39:47.930 - Iris	Respect is another big one, and our ability to respect that quality means different things to different people and not assume that we know better. We want to talk about, obviously, quality being an ongoing evolutionary process that involves a bottom-up system that doesn't have to stay like that. You mentioned the idea of having an Indigenous architect on a team. I don't think having one Indigenous architect is enough or even necessary if you have an Indigenous point of view or an Indigenous framework. I think that is the big difference. Visibility mobility or representation is absolutely not enough. We've seen that in so many different. What makes that shift? Maybe it's integration of curriculum at the lower level. Yeah, absolutely. It's not... I think that there's so many different things that we can do. It shouldn't just be on Indigenous people to teach Indigenous ways of being. It shouldn't be on trans people to teach trans way of beings. We should all participate in all of these projects. Finally, I think we need to talk about discomfort and the fact that changing quality standards takes time and it makes those with privilege feel very uncomfortable. You know what?
01:41:09.840 - Iris	We need to tell them that they need to be okay with that. I think when we listen to the lived experiences, we tend to listen to the lived experiences of the people who will use the spaces or the minoritized communities, but we forget about the work that we need to do with everyone around them. Because if we want something to be sustainable and last, we need to tell everyone around that, This is happening, deal with it. Maybe it's more like what I was hearing is we're talking about quality of built environment. It was really quality of life. It's quality of life that then gets represented in a built environment, and it's a quality of life for everyone. If I were to create the umbrella that would carry all of our ideas, and how do we do that? Well, under capitalism, it's very hard to do, but we can try to make it at least somewhat better.
01:42:07.340 - Susan	There was a guy in England who was now the Bank of Kennedy guy. He wrote this thing called Compassionate Capitalism, which is interesting. What a thought. What an oxymoron. It's worth to read because previously I would have thought, That's never going to be possible. But anyway, it is the system we operated, so that might be a worthwhile quick read to inspire on conversations. William's notion of repair. I feel like that's the first layer. Being where we are. It's like we really need to think. I mean, any site, any place where we start, the first question is, I think repair as a layer of quality. Maybe it's respect because you have to look first to know what needs to be repaired. I really like that. I really like that. Respect. Yeah. Adding that- Look again.

	Then prepare. Sorry. Yeah, that's a nice way. Yeah. Okay, so- Just in that part. Wait, wait. No, it's not for that.
01:43:14.770 - Mylene	I want to jump in things that I just listened. I'm reading now a book. It's against the resilience. It's very interesting because resilience is a buzzword now. We have to be resilient. I hate that word. Yeah, I told you. That point of view is against the resilience. If we have to be resilient, it's because before there's something worse. There's something great or that happened. We have to make our energy not to be resilient, just to be able that the worst thing does not happen.
01:44:03.750 - Marjorie	Yeah. Exactly. Because I would say the best thing that ever happened in terms of population in Jamaica came when we were embracing socialism because education changed. People had access to education. People had access to money. People were able to build. They built the National Housing Trust, which is like how you pay into your pension. You paid into housing. So, when I hire you, I have to pay NHT costs, and you can pay NHT costs, and you use NHT to buy a house. And if I decide, I know I'm never having a house, But I have a cousin who wants to buy a house, and I can give them my NHT points to him, and he can buy his house. But it became a normalized thing that everybody paid into housing so that people were able to get housing. Entire generations that were laborers, for instance, became doctors, and lawyers, and teachers because they leveled the playing field. And those who didn't like it ran away. But establishment of Canada and the US made sure it failed. Because they don't want a level playing field. But there was incredible movement and change in the lives of people all the way. And it wasn't to say that it was going Communists. It has brought in a level of socialism that allowed people access. People helping people became a boogie man.
01:46:09.260 - Kayden	It's interesting because up until the 1950s, there You have Carnegie and Rockefeller and all these people who... It was very strongly thought that people who were in these positions... If you were wealthy, you were supposed to give it back to your society or your community. It was an obligation. It was Then the Cold War started, and then anything with a whiff of communism on it was shot down. That's what really changed that idea. Yeah, but philanthropists. No, philanthropists. But even the housing project- Yeah, which is not to say there were many, many other problems, but it was definitely a mainstream thing at the time.
01:46:51.740 - Iris	I was just going to say that the housing projects that Cara mentioned in Vienna, those are socialist projects that started in the '20s. They haven't really built many since. So that stock of housing has been there because of these policies that were there for a short period of time, and then they were replaced by other things. Anyway, that's all I had to say.
01:47:13.940 - Susan	This is a great first morning. I hope everybody enjoyed it and feels comfortable. We're back here at 2:00, and you all have this, so you know what the topic is for the afternoon. Let's just read it so we have it on our mind Working in the background. You may have time off, but not really. We will be working on... What can I find this? Watch out. Presentation and comparison of notable outputs between research sites so far. One per research site. We need to really pay attention in the room. Please have a good look after your lunch or during your lunch of all the projects and compare those with the original objectives and outputs of the research partnership as a whole. Are there emerging convergences between sites? I think this is really interesting. So tough work this afternoon. Thank you. Go team.

ROOM 8

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room8_ Location: Medjuck Architecture Building - Room 1005			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Derek	Reilly	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Leila	Farah	Toronto Metropolitan University	Toronto Metropolitan University
Carmela	Cucuzzella	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Adrian	Blackwell	University of Waterloo	University of Waterloo
Jonathan	Monfries	AAA Representative - Stantec	University of Calgary
Jeanne	Leblanc-Trudeau	Ville de Montréal	National Partners
Michelle	Gagnon-Creeley	CRAB Park Tent City / Ay'x Village	University of British Columbia
Michael	Otchie	BAIDA - ERA Architects	Athabasca University
Sarah	Danhay	BEA-Calgary	University of Calgary
Zen	Thompson	University of Winnipeg	University of Manitoba
Belle	Gutierrez-Kellam	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Achraf	Alaoui Mdaghri	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Benjamin	Dunn	University of Toronto	University of Toronto
Kayleigh	Hutt-Taylor	Concordia University	Concordia University

Room 8 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-06-10

*Report produced by
Gutierrez-Kellam, Belle (University of Calgary)*

8.1. Summary

The workshop on day one focused on the question: how has my understanding of quality changed since the beginning of the project? The ultimate goal of the session was to uncover whether there was a consensus amongst the group as to what is or defines quality. Participants reflected on evolving perceptions of quality, critiquing its historical association with expert-driven ideologies. Instead, there was a call to prioritize lived experiences over award-winning attributes, advocating for designs that integrate accessibility seamlessly rather than as an afterthought.

Central to the discussion was the shift towards understanding quality through the lens of human experience. This approach emphasized the importance of shared resources, breaking down industry isolation, and questioning the power differentials inherent in consultation processes versus active participation. However, engaging the public effectively was noted as challenging, expensive, and often excluding marginalized voices, highlighting a need for more inclusive practices.

A recurring theme was translating community needs into tangible built qualities. This required addressing who participates in decision-making processes and how priorities are determined. Quality, participants argued, should be both tangible and understandable, transcending mere aesthetic or market-driven considerations to embrace broader concepts of social significance and equity. The group also explored the role of insecurity in analyzing quality and advocated for raising minimum standards rather than focusing solely on exceptional achievements. Participants emphasized the need for systemic changes in our current market processes and societal norms to address social disparities effectively.

Looking towards the outcome of the session, the group came up with two statements around the consensus of quality:

- There is a dissensus in quality, our project's goal is to understand these divergences.
- Priorities to quality must start with basic human needs for all who reside in Canada's built environment.

These two statements embodied the lived experience and stories shared within the group. Experience in the far northern, and rural, communities uncovered a stark absence of basic human needs prompting an important conversation on the relevance of quality and taste when need isn't being met. Ultimately the workshop underscored and advocated for a more inclusive and holistic approach that prioritizes

accessibility, human experience, and social equity over traditional markers of success. Moving forward, participants emphasized the importance of reevaluating power dynamics, engaging marginalized voices, and redefining standards to foster environments that truly enhance quality of life for all.

8.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion:

Time + name

[00:05:09] Adrian Blackwell So I think we can start anytime. Our first question is reflection on changes to your understanding of quality in the last couple years of research. Or if you haven't been involved for a couple of years, what are your priorities, interests, thoughts, lived experiences of quality in the built environment? What do you think needs to change and what are the problems with our understanding of quality in the built environment? Then, what do you see as lack of quality in the built environment?

[00:06:03] Carmela Cucuzzella I'll start since I've been in the project from the beginning and this way maybe we can break the ice, so I maybe I could talk a little bit about how the project started and how it failed at the very beginning and then we got on track and really figured it out because the idea of this project. Before, when we were applying for the Shared partnership grant, we wanted to address the question of quality from a broader perspective, and we wanted to include all of these social values. But the way that we described the project was so wrong, and I'm telling you this because it's important because we learned from our mistakes, and we failed the first time that we applied for the SSHRC partner grant. The reason why what we learned from that is that we were still embedded in the ideology that experts and disciplinary expertise is enough for us to understand quality in the built environment and we were destroyed in the evaluations by saying that's such a one-sided point of view lacking diversity and inclusivity. So, I would say that this shared partnership grant is exactly like a design project because you start with a certain set of assumptions and a certain set of objectives that change as you go along. Essentially, the idea of lived experience became kind of a turning point in our reflection. And I'm going to leave it at that.

[00:8:08] Adrian Blackwell I'm with the University of Waterloo and I feel like we volunteered very late to be a part of this project. I always feel like I don't really know what the overall project is about exactly. The overall project started with this idea of analyzing exemplary projects in a way through awards yet this didn't seem right to us so we thought we would look at everyday housing in the Waterloo region. We started off with the title: The long-term cost of low-quality buildings in the Waterloo Region. We realized quickly the title was not very inclusive because people don't want to feel as though they are living in a building of low quality and people don't want to feel as though they are producing low quality buildings. We now have a much better title: The long-term environmental and social costs of multi-unit residential buildings in the Waterloo region. We wanted to understand the long-term quality, so we are looking at buildings built in the last 20-40 years ago. The other thing that we found in our study is that we're interested in, in looking at public policy and we're interested in the relationship between standards for public housing and standards for private housing. We ended up integrating case studies that were publicly funded and case studies privately funded.

[00:11:03] I will go with a bit of a testimony of something I observed at the University Of Montreal as a guest critic, one of the many, many positive outcomes I observed is the creation of a workshop and inclusivity at the University Of Montreal for architecture students at the master's degree. I had the chance to be there for students reviews and I really saw genuine interest in a human centered approach in architecture and it's probably sounds really basic, but it wasn't the way we were taught architecture at all in the 2000's. I also observed how inclusivity and accessibility can become opportunities and also design creative challenges rather than obstacles or things that we as architects have to do to appease a jury in a competition. Adding accessibility as an afterthought is not design informed by accessibility. I am optimistic but I believe that if students are now approaching design and architecture with this human centered approach, it will transform the practice and also cities. I work for the City of Montreal and a big question is how can our good intentions at the beginning of a project really be seen and be lived after the building in constructed?

[00:15:19] How do you valorize those initial intentions, right? If we're new, like, Carmela what is it for us quality? Because it's kind of like an inner idea of quality. Cucuzzella But we would also like to know those people that have been here from the beginning, how has your idea of quality shifted, if you can articulate that?

[00:15:58] I haven't been in the project since the beginning, but I have been here Kayleigh Hutt- for a few years now. I think it's interesting coming from the perspective Taylor of Concordia's project. We're looking at how to improve the quality of life for all aging adults in Montreal, and we were brought on to the project from a biodiversity perspective. The human connection to nature. How are people engaging with either the on-site green space or the surrounding green areas? And how is that impacting their quality of life? I think it's brought up for me a lot of interesting questions of quality within my own silo of understanding of ecology and this interesting interaction between a human experiencing the green space around them and how they interact with it. Also, the context of nature for nature, how are we managing these green spaces for the ecosystem itself, and how are those things in harmony? But also, sometimes at odds with each other? I think that's been a learning point for our project. Some interesting outcomes from integrating some biodiversity questions into the focus groups where we go to residences and ask a series of questions about their experiences of their own built environment of their surrounding neighborhood of the nature around them and in reality. We see such big differences in how they engage with both they're on site and like the parks around them and what they consider to be their way of connecting or not connecting with nature. An interesting thing that changed my perception is that and it is quite obvious, but a lot of the time these ideas around at least biodiversity don't come out if the needs. The basic needs aren't met. So, we saw a lot of residences that perhaps didn't have access to proper public transit. They can't go grocery shopping or they couldn't go to the pharmacy very easily. And so those things come out importantly. So however, that means that we're not even at the point to ask. It makes me wonder whether we're at the point to ask the question of quality for the environment because these other

needs need to be met before we can start asking that question. I don't necessarily have an answer. We don't have an answer for it yet, but I think it has changed my perception of how we go about asking these questions and what takes priority.

[00:18:56]
Sarah Danahy

So I've been part of the project since the first conference, I guess, and I think the interesting thing as a Community partner in this is I don't think necessarily, our perspective of what quality is has changed, but bridging it's almost like the academic world is sort of catching up to what we've all been saying for a long time, right? Or just sort of the disconnect between the silos as you were speaking to earlier. So, the opportunity in all of this, that's like coming to fruition now, I think in the process is finding those convergence points or whatever you want to call it, to actually change the processes and part of it's going to change. To what you were speaking to, what students are learning in school and changing what our actual design processes are but tying it into the existing processes, like for public engagement, for example. It's not as common in architecture projects, but any public space project that where a municipal, municipalities or client has multiple rounds of public engagement, not always done well. But it's the opportunity that exists to actually change. As a consultant where you are doing a park design, let's just take that example, you can then craft what that engagement process looks like, but you have to have your own design process figured out within that, ensuring everyone is on the same page. Getting everyone on the same page is where opportunity exists.

[00:21:09]
Belle Gutierrez-
Kellam

I'm also from the Calgary research site. I've been to all of our round tables through the project and as a as a student, I've been involved in a lot of kind of the background of the of the listening through and re recording all these conversations. And hearing how each group, whether it be community, government, academic or industry professionals, how the values and the priorities may be different, but how we can all still come together and work towards this. This common goal of redefining quality without giving up what our own organizations maybe believe in.

If it differs one from the other, how can we bridge the gap and facilitate these conversations. In Calgary's third round table, we really looked at how can we take our different perspectives and still come together to a common goal and kind of what we came out of that with was it's OK to not agree on something and it's OK to have a difference of opinion as long as we're still willing to listen to what those opinions are and work towards kind of bridging the gaps between all these different groups.

[00:22:09]
Benjamin Dunn

I have not been involved in the project very long. I'm kind of picking up on some amazing research that my fellow teammates have been doing for the last 2-3 years since I've been involved for a year in a very small capacity. My perspective is informed by the work that they've been doing and then also my background in psychology and anthropology actually coming into this. So really thinking about the human experience and really interested in connecting people to nature, like really understanding how connectedness to nature has measurable impacts on well-being, and then all of just the, you know, the cascaded benefits that come from that economically perform better at work or less stress or better in a family dynamic. One of the positive outcomes that have come from the work is that the City of Toronto parks, recreation and forestry department have become very active

participants. They are interested in the research and want to know how they can improve quality in their parks by actively sharing data and resources with us. It is very exciting that this research has led to a stronger relationship with the City of Toronto Parks and recreation. For us it's interesting to hear all of you guys talking about quality because we're all looking at quality in such different ways and then how do we, you know, make sure that whatever conclusions we come to aren't isolated. You know, we're looking at quality in Toronto's open spaces, so parks in particular, which is like one of the few public spaces that we have in Toronto, it's very limited. And every park is a different size. It serves different community members with different demographics and cultural and religious backgrounds and they're various distances to parks and so quality is going to be very different from park to park, community to community, and the size of the park. So, It's really hard to just say this is quality in a park environment and so we're really looking at these like different push and pull factors. And you know the way that we chose our site in itself, the Black Creek Sub watershed was kind of based prioritizing need. OK, well, if we're going to improve quality in the built environment where actually deserves that, that intervention first. And so that's kind of how we're thinking about it and really trying to prioritize sort of localized needs that we've identified through like sort of various mapping and spatial exercises. What we really need to do next is speak to community members, that's really important.

[00:25:30] Kevin
Kramer

I'm glad you went first, because I'm going to leverage everything you just said. I mean, Carmella, you were mentioning before you kind of connecting the differences between the IDP, the integrated design process and Arnstein's ladder and how those two differ and how the IDP focuses on professionals and how they are making decisions for the larger body of stakeholders, which leaves a lot of things out, missing a lot of the needs that we all have. So this is where going to draw on each of your connections to the natural environment and how that is more of a shared experience and a shared benefit and how that's common between all of us regardless of who we are or where we come from and why that is not to contradict what you're saying, Kayleigh, but if your basic needs aren't cared for then then then how do we go on to green spaces. But I would argue that our green spaces are basic need and it's one that is largely ignored if it's only professionals in an office that are making decisions for stakeholders at large. I think the fact that we're having these discussions and talking about this type of thing and the integration and stakeholders at all levels and recognition of them as stakeholders and and the needs of people rather than the people that are making the decisions for them. I think that is what defines quality for me.

[00:26:54]
Michelle
Gagnon-
Creeley

Thank you all for sharing it's been interesting to listening to all of you. Something I've been thinking a lot about is just this idea of expertise and defining an expert, and in the case of the encampment I work at, like the folks who live there every day like their lived experience like they are the experts on how to best survive and exist in a public space. And we've been seeing the city of Vancouver come in and try and do these consultations that I, at this point, would argue that there are sham consultations. They come in and say that they're asking people how they feel about the space and then they come in and listen and

they come every Thursday and I've been present to many of those meeting. And then they've turned around. I don't know if anybody has been following the news on what's been happening in Vancouver, but, they forcibly removed everyone from 1 space and tried to bring them back in. It's a very long story that I don't want to like get into right now, but basically like they kept saying that they consulted with folks and redesigned the space for them. That is turning out to not be what action is actually needed. For instance, people who live outdoors will live in tents where they raise them from the ground, and I had to repeatedly tell the city we need to raise tents from the ground. This is really important when you're going to move them back in, like there's ways to design this that's going to actually work for them, and we are already seeing situations where peoples tents are getting flooded. Their tents are being ripped because they put gravel on the ground. I guess it's frustrating being somebody who's like worked in city processes for a couple of years and being a landscape designer to like hear what my neighbors are saying from their lived experience that this is what they need in order to survive outside. For the city to then do the opposite is very disheartening and it creates a lack of trust in city processes and in engagement processes and to the point that now the residents of crab park Are not interested in communicating with the city or with other people because it's like they keep repeatedly saying what they need, and nobody's listening to them. When it comes to thinking about quality, it's so important to consider the lived experience. I think that really is like crucial in all of this.

[00:29:14]
Carmela
Cucuzzella

What you just said is really interesting. So, you already had this collection of lived experiences, you understood what people needed for this tent city, yet it was all given to the city and the city ignored it and did their own thing. So obviously the partner approach didn't happen. In other words, people were not at the same table arguing and debating and having deliberations and even diverging in points of view. I'm fascinated by how a city [can ignore the lived experience] and I want you [speaking to Jeanne] to say something because you're from the city of Montreal...and is there any other city representation here? Ok, because its interesting how that could even happen. How does it? Because by the way, and I'm going to say this, but you're not going to like it, maybe because we had the Saint Catherine St. renovation project and there was a lot of consultation that took place. Consultation, tokenism, right, that took place at the city in the city. To understand the needs of the, you know, all of the local merchants. St. Catherine is our commercial St. in Montreal. Yet what was built was not what the merchants needed. I don't understand how that happens, they know what needs to be done so why do they do something else? But you don't answer that question, Jeanne. I'm just saying that like, what is going on? Why is it because we're stuck to the old definitions of quality?. And so we want things to be like, you know, geometric or whatever. What is it that holds back the city from doing things that are, at least in the right direction, if not entirely what is being asked, you know?

[00:31:15]
Jeanne
Lebclan-Trudeai

You mean what is being asked or needed by the concerned population?

[00:31:46] Carmela Cucuzzella	Exactly. Why don't we see it following through?
[00:31:51] Jeanne Leblanc- Trudeau	I used to work for private architecture firms and then its been around 8 years that I've worked for the city of Montreal. I have participated in a lot of public consultation and every time that was my worry. Ok, we listen [to the needs of citizens], but how do we implement the commentaries. When I. was working on the future neighborhoods we were not doing full consultation, we were bringing a representative of community groups and marginalized groups and its more like there adding information to the project. It's a 15 year span project but I felt like it would be eventually more integrated than the public consultation. Also, the problem with public consultation when I'm thinking of it is that its always the same people that show up, it's not an inclusive activity. When it starts, only the people who know about it and are used to participating show up to those activities but the others that we want to hear from don't. The City of Montreal adopted a more inclusive approach to address the blind spots in consultation by holding sessions with more flexible and accessible hours.
[00:34:44] Benjamin Dunn	So I just wanted to jump in and to like as a researcher, I've been involved in a lot of different research projects and I'm sure some of you may have heard the kind of funny bias with psychology research that all, you know, participants in psychology research surveys these days are psychology students because it's actually really hard to engage the public. It's expensive. It's a lot more time consuming, like you had mentioned. Like, where do you find the people? How do people find the research? The fact that we're having a conversation right now and it's being transcribed like, think about all of those words that someone has to read and then extract significant meaning from as opposed to something quantitative where there's a question and you answer this is very bad or it's very good. You know, it's a lot more convenient. There is technology that we can use, there's automated software that we could use. I think that was just like a quick sort of like two cents on the difficulty of that and why like focus groups are preferred, where it's like one person representing 2000 as opposed to like going and listening. And then maybe they've had these conversations and then things are lost in translation. Obviously, I don't know. I don't know a lot about the specific situation at all.
[00:35:59] Terry Peters	I just wanted to say something slightly related, but not to what our project is doing. I took my daughter on a walking tour of the Toronto waterfront, and they talked about how they did consultation with everybody for this situation, and Cora put her little hand up and said how did you choose which kids to consult with? Because in her mind, she's thinking, why wasn't I a part of this? And they were like, oh no, we don't ask children. She, first of all, is 13, so she's not considering herself a child, but she was outraged that she might grow up and be left out. She considered it valuable feedback she had for them.
[00:36:58] Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri	So this project is 2 years old now, which is also how much time I've spent in my PhD as well and I've seen how they both kind of mirror each other. We're basically having an experience of what it's like to be in a PhD, trying to find direction in the 2 years. I'm really pleased that what got presented this morning was a kind of eureka moment honestly, where everything is coalescing towards something and it's pleasing to see how we get there with the roadmaps to quality. There still a tug of was between different agendas between different priorities and also there is

a new actor in town that that's been technology which is also like becoming this, like looming shadow over everything. How in this partnership can we adapt to this unknown addition to the equation. Now we are between humans discussing quality but what happens when it's a machine that takes all the consultations and is tone deaf and doesn't realize the actual need. Some are working on tools to translates peoples need into actual building elements, but is that the right way? These tools are not professionals in the built environment so there are some dangers.

[00:39:33] Twyla
Indigenous
Representative

OK, with our project, the Athabasca University we had, I guess a positive as we outlined 2 main things was like housing and food because a lot of communities, there's lack of housing or the housing, especially on indigenous reserves and stuff like that, they're really not up to up to par. Over COVID I realized that a lot more too, because all of our family had to move back into one house and there was like 16 to 18 of us, all living in one house. So even just realizing the lack of good services for the reserve, you know we have, we had to ship in water because we don't have clean water and I guess that was a good positive from the project realizing some of the needs of the communities. We also saw the aging community we have the sundry in Alberta that we have a project going with them and it was more of the aging community that stood out upon us. Oh, and I was just going to say that we weren't here from the beginning as well, but we did. We were part of the Calgary Conference and before that we were at the project where we were interviewing 5 communities and my community, Sampson, which is central Alberta between Alberta, Calgary and Edmonton. But there was northern Athabasca, where we're from. We also had the town of Athabasca, but that's how we all came together and outlined all the specific needs. And I guess that was a good positive for the second one. The understanding of quality, how it changed was we understood that their specific needs and what can we concentrate on right now. So that's all we thought of...food. Food sovereignty is a good one because in communities where they don't have a lot of money, the food sovereignty is one big thing. One big issue that we thought and with housing was another one. So that's basically what the two things that we are focusing on.

[00:41:59]
Sarah Danahy

Yeah. I just wanted to wrap up a thought of your question of sort of like why things don't happen, because I think like we all every everyone here like, you know, lived experience is important. Like, that's good that we're at the at the same point. But I think there's probably three parts of the process that we need to think about as discrete things. One is who is at the table? How are we reaching people? How are we building trust? How are relationships managed? How are we rebuilding broken trust like that? It's a huge, huge part of it. We could talk about how engagement is broken for hours and hours, but that's one piece. Then there's the how do how is what we're learning and hopefully co-creating together, but how is that getting implemented into the design that gets proposed? Which is a design process piece like that designers need to work through. But then, even once that's done, the piece that it can still fall apart in is how different prioritize priorities get put up against each other inside of decision-making processes, and so that might be construction costs of something. It might be, oh, that wasn't as high on a Council priority. It might be just someone decided

	to go in a different direction, like it could be the best proposal ever, and it still falls apart in the end.
<p>[00:44:16] Zen Thompson</p>	<p>I'm an environmental science student with the University of Winnipeg, but I'm here with the University of Manitoba. For me, a big part of quality is safety and availability. A big focus with the University of Manitoba is indigenous communities up north remote communities. Specifically, we're working right now with York factory, which is very remote. You need to take a plane and then a boat and the ferry never works. So you usually have to take two planes and it's a very long drive to get to the plane because you have to go all the way to Thompson. So it's a very long trip to get there. Getting resources up there to build buildings is very expensive. Getting professionals to come up there is very expensive, which is just to say that quality is something that's very real. Its not this imaginary concept that has to be pondered upon endlessly, because to certain extents I think lots of people are feeling a lack of quality. Right not the houses up North are in complete disrepair, they're not livable. There is a lawsuit up north by a community called Saint Theresa. Lots of communities in their band have signed on to this I can't think of the word, but they're suing the government right now for to give them proper housing because reserve land is not their land technically like it is their land, but it's government land. It's crown land. They don't own it. They don't own the buildings on it. So, they can't build because they don't own the land to build on. This creates a problem because even if you do build on the land, you don't own it, you can't profit off it. Housing is the best way to I guess have an economy and that's been taken away from them. There's no, there's no real infrastructure. There are no places for people to go. 18 people live in a House of four, four-bedroom houses, four bedroom doesn't actually mean 4 rooms with beds. It means 4 rooms in a house. If you look at the government website, there's a breakdown of basically infrastructures in all different places in all of Canada with different groups of people, First Nations, people of color, people in cities, people on reserve. If you look at reserve housing, you can see that there is no air quality. Everything is deemed unlivable because threes nothing to live in. Lots of kids get diseases really young like asthma because of those problems. So I think quality is just having basic housing and basic resources available</p>
<p>[00:47:59] Michael Otchie</p>	<p>Thank you. I'm Michael, I'm an architect but I'm very much in the field of heritage and I guess for me the last couple of years what ive seen my is my understanding of quality has this kind of paralleled a greater understanding or awareness of how concepts of significance within heritage are changing to be broader, more inclusive and to tell more stories. You know, looking at different social groups, looking at disability, these are bigger issues within heritage and they kind of mirror a lot of the discussion that we're seeing with quality. Another thing that's really interesting is this sort of convergence of heritage significance and quality and these discussions around affordability and environmental issues as well. I've actually been working with the Athabasca group and looking at regenerative communities and its very much about this convergence of issues and tangible, intangible heritage and these social issues around affordability and what these rural landscapes are. I think the common theme with these explorations is, looking at insecurity as a starting point for understanding quality. You know that it's very easy to look at quality, to create and secure environments from a top down perspective, say looking at, you know the creation of say mining communities as a</p>

starting point for security. And I think what we're finding is it's really important to look at insecurity, look at situations where food, housing, healthcare, and community is precarious and using that as a starting point for creating road maps or toolkits as a starting point for understanding quality goals. With my heritage background, I'm very interested in this whole idea of what are we preserving? And more importantly why? What stories are we able to tell? Obviously, we inherit a lot of our academic background but I think what's really been important the last couple of years is having these opportunities to listen to different groups that I wouldn't naturally sort of come into contact with in my professional work.

[00:51:30] Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri What I hear in these meetings is that we have some pinpointed problems. What can we do about that? How can we before thinking about raising the ceiling, raise the floor?

[00:51:57] Adrian Blackwell Great question. I wanted to jump in. I think following a little bit on what you just said Michael, I was thinking about the primary conflicts of quality that you were talking about, Carmella, and I wanted to think about another one which is the conflict between the conservation of the social order and the dismantling of the social order. I feel like this concept of preservation is important around that. Like I think one of you know, if you ask the question why is the new homeless encampment worse than the old one or why aren't resident needs being heard? A related part of the tension is not that people aren't listening, but that there are certain things that are that need to be preserved in the new version. Something about the economic order, something about the social order needs to be preserved, and so it's not that people aren't listening, it's that there is a very powerful other agenda that maintains things, and so it makes me wonder a little bit about, like this morning, Jean Pierre was saying, you know, we have a new approach here where we're not trying to create revolution. We're not trying to transform the social order. We're trying to bring together these different versions of quality to create real change. But I think we need to confront the problem that we can make a lot of changes to quality, but can we change the social order? Can we or do we need to? I mean I would say we need to if we want to change quality somehow, but how does a project like this address that problem? How can it? Is there a way that through this kind of collaboration we can make demands which aren't just about the details in a sense, but are ambitious enough that they're transformative and disruptive and actually do change not just all of the variables that can be changed, but the more fundamental questions of distribution within society, which are the ones that are much more difficult to change. So like one of the things I was thinking about in relation to our own projects, one of the things that we learned or positive outcomes of the first two years was focusing a little bit more on thinking about the uniqueness of our project is to think about architecture as a commodity. Like when we think about the research projects in general, they focus a lot on public space. That's a high priority in the research project as a whole. And I think our is because we're looking at residential buildings, we're focused on a type of architecture which is commodified. So it sits at the center of a market process. And so I think for us that's important. How do we change the nature of market processes in in round housing and society? And that's something that everything in society is marshalled against that change

in a way towards the kind of maintenance of a certain system of market housing. So we can say, you know, all that. Where is the best place to gain value or financial security through housing? But that's not necessarily what we want housing to be. You know, there are other ways that we can be secure and have financial security that don't need to be having extreme profits through our housing somehow. I think its important to think about what are the real barriers that we're talking about? They're fundamental ideas about social order.

[00:56:02] Kevin
Kramer

You brought up a good thing and I think a lot of people are bringing up similar points. There's this difference between, you know, the economic disparity that exists and the social disparity that exists and how we view each other as a social currency rather than, you know, what each other has. A lot of what we're talking about, the development of the built environment in the cities and how were changing them to be more inclusive and all that's addressing the economic disparity but that doesn't address the other side and the social disparity. It also doesn't do anything about the generative norms that drove the difference in the 1st place and what we need to do is change our perspectives on each other and then really start to relay those messages and reflect. We can't be talking about green space and parks while there are people that can't live in housing, can't breathe in their own homes because they're sharing that air with 20 other people, and because there's mold on the walls and because the air is going through the water that doesn't get repelled the way it should be. That is a massive disparity that exists not just economically but socially. Until we view each other on equal grounds only then can we actually see any real change.

[00:57:19]
Michael Otchie

Just great comments all around in terms of the social order. I mean I I think often about how you know when the sort of current paradigm that we're in like there's a, there's a metric of the amount of housing that needs to be made and it's like could that be framed differently like I think of? Like if we were told, I don't know, there needs to be 50,000 villages that needs to be built in a certain time period, it kind of suggests a kind of social dynamic along with development. And I wonder if there's almost like or like we're talking about regenerative communities with, with the Athabasca research. And I wonder if there's a sort of a larger kind of framework or a a larger unit that needs to be measured rather. One that encompasses social and spatial rather than just, you know, housing units because it's very vague, you know, could be a 300 square foot apartment or it could be you know a mega mansion out in the suburbs. It's, you know, I think the overall goal needs to be more defined.

[00:58:39]
Michelle
Gagnon-
Creeley

Yeah, I 100% agree with you. I think we're seeing; I would imagine it's happening all over. But in Vancouver like we are in a housing crisis and there's like this need to build things very quickly to reach a certain target. But I think that in trying to build housing so quickly, we're negating like this whole aspect of quality and responding to the needs of the Community. For instance, we saw some temporary shelters get built this year In the downtown east side, and I was actually working on it as the as the landscape designer and I saw the architecture plans and I was like, you guys definitely didn't consult with community. You've built these very small units that are not going to accommodate the needs of those that you're supposedly going to be housing, for instance, there is no storage in any of these spaces. Anyone who lives in any encampment,

the reason that they're living there is usually because they have a household worth of items that they need to put somewhere. Sure enough, we had people at Crab Park who were housed into these temporary shelters only to move back to Crab Park because the housing wasn't sufficient for them. So, I think that that's really crucial and just kind of trying to redefine this idea of housing outside of it just being a number like, what does that look like and how do you build community around that and how do you respond to all of the other important needs and pieces to the puzzle that, like kind of accommodate comprehensive housing.

[01:00:06]
Achraf Alaoui
Mdaghri

If I may, when you think of quality and what you're trying to achieve, I'm pretty sure everyone here can name exactly what or who is standing between them and this goal of achieving quality. For instance, for Montreal, one big not so well kept secret of who is standing in the way of quality in the built environment is the mafia. What can we do about that? As soon as you get in Canada [in Montreal] and you ask why is everything under construction? You hear back "oh it's the mafia". Okay so if it's this particular rule or person or agenda, how can we compile that and do something about it that's decisive. What power do we have against this?

[01:01:25]
Carmela
Cucuzzella

Thank you, Achraf, but if we say what you're saying, you are simplifying the actual problem because mafia is not running the construction business in Montreal as it's not running it anywhere. Yes, I agree with you that there is mafia in some of these processes, but the city and there is lots of developers that are trying to do the right thing. I know for a fact cause I in contact with many of the developers in the City Of Montreal and they're very far from the mafia. OK, well, so to say that is a generalization and that is not fair to Montreal first of all. And it's not fair to the developers in Montreal who are trying to do the right thing because believe me, the majority of developers understand the housing crisis, they know that they have to build. The problem is, is that there are so many bottlenecks all along the way. Developers are losing millions and millions of dollars a year, so of course we I think that the social order is important, and understanding how the social order could be modified is important. But let's not kill the all of the developers because we have all kinds of levels of developers we have developed, we have, we do have a lot of developers in Montreal who are social organizations, nonprofits. Of course, we also have the very big developers, who I cannot name, that are only there for you know the big buck. But in between you have all kinds of developers that do want to do the right thing that are hiring the good architects that are hiring the good engineers but are not getting as far as they want to because there are so many different bottle bottleneck and I'm not sure if if you ask the question to all of us, do you know what's blocking you? No, we don't know. We wouldn't be here if we knew everything that's blocking us. Yes. I just want to put it out there that it's important to say that you know that we do need to have a difference in the social order in terms of how housing is, especially housing, which is kind of commodified, unlike public house public projects which is very commodified, but to say that it's the mafia that's stopping everything. That's a generalization that doesn't fly, doesn't fly, because saying that, OK, that that's our problem. Let's get rid of them that first of all, if that was the problem we wouldn't be able to survive in any of our city or

	urban environment. So. So let's be careful that we are not just throwing out assumptions that are not verified, either.
[01:04:54] Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri	I'm just saying...[is cut off from speaking]
[01:04:55] Carmela Cucuzzella	Im saying no Achraf. All I'm saying is I understand where you're coming from. I understand, but you can't just say that the mafia is running the construction business in Montreal either.
[01:05:05] Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri	Yeah, that's right. Just to be clear that's not what I'm saying. That was one of the first things I heard when I came to Montreal as an outsider. It is a lived experience.
[01:05:20] Carmela Cucuzzella	But you can't say it without verification. That's all I'm saying Achraf, you cant come to a round table and propagate stuff that has been said to you. All I'm saying is that we're here with an experience and we have to come in with our lived experience. I mean, have you personally been involved with the mafia? I'm just saying, be careful that you don't come into a conversation like this bringing in a kind of argument that is likely unfounded. And then we build on that likely unfounded assumption. That's all I'm saying. Hearing something is not first of all, personal experience or a professional experience or an academic experience, or a civic experience. Do you understand that?
[01:06:50] Adrian Blakcwell	I mean, I think hearing is an experience. I would like to hear Achraf's response, because I think you've made an intervention in the discourse.
[01:07:03] Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri	I would say that there is a social production of space that also paints an image of the space. The space is projecting to you. So, if you arrive in a community and this may be wrong and unfounded but its how the space is perceived by the community that lives in it and this perception [the mafia being involved in construction] is one of the first things any newcomer is exposed to. So, I'm relating to that point of view and experience, I'm not defending or propagating.
[01:07:48] Carmela Cucuzzella	I also want to respond to Adrienne. If we propagate, ok, lets think of whats happening with American politics, everyone is propagating what everybody is hearing. We can't get there. I mean, what's happening in the American politics is horrific. Ok, yes, hearing is a lived experience. I totally get that. But being critical of what we hear is a lived experience as well. Don't forget being critical means that you have to have real experience, personal experience, or studied enough stuff that you can be come critical. You don't become critical without a basis of some kind, I don't want to say knowledge, but you know. All of the sudden were becoming responsible and becoming accountable to some of the trnings that can be very harmful to many stakeholders that are really trying to do the right thing. That's all I'm saying.
[01:09:47] Adrian Blackwell	I just want to say that Achraf your suggestion about listing the barriers I think is very important. I think we should be thinking about what the things in the way are of moving forward and making good gains. There are real barriers and listing them is a very important thing. I'm sure many teams are already thinking in those regards but it's a great reminder to us.

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- [01:10:24]
Michael Otchie
- I was just going to say, you know, something that comes up with with heritage and particularly with naming places and using peoples name associated with like streets and you know when there's difficult pasts associated with an individual and you've named a place. It's this sort of idea of reducing an individual or a concept down to like a singular thing like so often the language we use is problematic. I mean I think like whenever I see kind of like Tent city, I think homeless, but I know like homeless is one of these contested terms now and you know I guess it's.
- one of the things that where we have real agencies, just that the language that we use and choose to use and educate people on using is an important thing. And it's I think it's going to be an important part of this process, is interrogating the language. I know is it was an issue that came up last year when one of the speakers used a controversial term when they talked about an anti-land acknowledgement, and that was a huge ting. I think in his mind it meant something else, but the implications of that specific term were really negative. I think Mafia has sort of, people define it as one thing and maybe others as another, but it also can be problematic and I wonder what the alternative is. Especially in heritage, there's a growing movement to rename places and people often focus on what's being removed or whether individuals meet some sort of moral threshold but sometimes there's an alternative way of naming something that demonstrates our agency to add something thats of real value. There's a two-part process, we're removing terms from our lexicon as we move through this process. You know, we have to think about what; really assists us moving forward and understanding our subject matter better.
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- [01:13:08]
Kayleigh Hutt-Taylor
- I feel like I'm not following every flow in this kind of comment, but I think as I'm kind of listening to what people are saying, I'm trying to think about kind of the shared things that I'm hearing amongst very different projects and different issues. It makes me ask the question of are we saying, I don't know if we're saying, that the quality of the built environment is determined by those who use it? I think we're facing somewhat of a of a clash between is it the users? Is it those people experiencing that place, whether it be of that place or whether it be visiting that place? Or is the experts? What we define as experts, I think right now we're saying it's the experts, a lot of the structures that we have mean that the experts are defining what quality is and we're saying that there's something wrong with that I don't think I'm bringing forward solutions. I think I'm just trying to synthesize some of what I'm hearing, but it seems like within that, if we're saying that the quality of the built environment is in some way determined by those who use it, I think I've also heard from everyone that there are unique barriers that those people will face, regardless of what the built environment is, regardless of what the building is, regardless of where they're standing that are touched on regardless of the questions that we're asking, I think we're all having to face those ask questions about what those barriers are in each of our unique projects. But, I think that there's also smaller things to kind of, I think I'm losing the train, but I think we're kind of hitting these like larger societal barriers, which is the social order, which I think is always going to underpin and will exist without the built environment. However, they need to be a part of the
-

conversation because they are in some aspect integrated in our built environment, but it makes me ask the question is, are we trying to answer those questions? Are we trying to understand better how the social order is underpinning the built environment or are we trying to say within this social order that has its problems? How can we in what we have control to, in our own expertise, minimize or make those things better, I guess.

[01:15:51]
Benjamin Dunn

Just quick, I was kind of similarly thinking to Kaylee trying to find the threads amongst everything. When you ask the question of barriers I was like, ok, well specifically to Toronto parks a lot of people could blame the city of Toronto and all the bureaucracy there. But, you know, of all the people that I've spoken to within the City, they feel powerless as well. They're facing the same bureaucracy and bottlenecks as we are. It's easy to point fingers and villainize and say well, it's your fault or it's their fault. In some cases, there is very clear blame, but to me it begs the question of who's in charge? Who has power to instantiate quality or to say at the beginning like this is what quality looks like and we've been talking about this definition and that's kind of step one. It's like OK, now go forward and the new things that we do will meet this definition of quality. But then how do we improve quality in, you know, indigenous communities that don't have access to water or get housing or clean air. How do we know when it's time to improve quality, whose responsibility is that? OK, well, it's the government or it's the municipality or it's this, this large organization. But then how do we kind of bring power to the people and how do we help them to care about improving quality? And to me, it kind of begs the question of, like, actually feeling a connection to place. And to me, green space is a really important thing with that is, like, actually having a connection to nature. It's something we all care about. It's something we all depend on. It's something we get our livelihood from. I don't know. I guess I'm just, like kind of playing with these questions of kind of like place making connection to place. Not just that initial definition of quality, but the ongoing maintenance and improvement of quality and ensuring that like the people who live in these places have the power to do so when they want to build a structure, they can go and cut down a few trees and build it the way that they want to or they can like stack some dry stones in a very traditional way and like build a house like this rather than the stupid bureaucratic standards. If it needs to have insulation and drywall and all these like toxic materials that actually aren't quality housing in the first place.

[01:18:09] Zen
Thompson

I totally agree with that. It feels really hopeless sometimes, because it's like, oh my god, these barriers are literally institutional. They're in everything we do or is it ever going to get better. But I mean, we're here to try to make things better, right? So what are ways we can do this? Maybe housing. It is obviously the first step. Everyone needs a house, you pay rent before you pay the food bill so kids go to school hungry and they can't learn. It's a whole cycle. The House bill comes first. Rent comes first. OK, so how do we how do we integrate food into our model? How do we integrate education, right, like a huge part of the indigenous communities is they are remote some only go to middle school. They don't even have high schools in their communities, so to go to high school you have to go to a different community, which means you're away from your parents. You're what, 14 or 15, you don't make great

decisions when you're 14 and 15 away from your parents. So OK, let's see. Can we build high schools? If we can't build high schools, can we build portable schools? Can we build online sources or online education? You know, there's no universities. Winnipeg is horribly racist, the education system is horribly racist. OK, can we make universities in these indigenous communities? Can we? There are institutional blocks for sure. But you know, we're part of the institution. So either we have to not be a part of it or we have to try to change it.

[01:20:08]
Carmela
Cucuzzella

Thank you. I really like the question when you said you know who blocks, which was asked by Achraf, and I'll give you a very concrete example in the province of Quebec of who blocks quality. So we have this project called Label. It's trying to improve the quality of school, elementary schools specifically. What did our government and our provincial government decide? They decided that they were going to give us a workbook where he was going to give us templates of architectural plans of schools. Then we can cut and paste a palette of colors that we can choose from that represent the provincial government, the CAC and telling everybody this is how you're going to build quality in educational institutions now. OK, so who is blocking? Well, that's clear who's blocking in that case? OK. And why are we here? Because policy doesn't always work. I totally agree with you that policy and politics are racist. I mean, we see it. You know what happened in the Quebec government regarding the schooling, you know how universities are now being divided in half anglophone and francophone in terms of how they accept and charge international and Canadian students. It's racist. It's like why are you doing that? But first of all, politics is everywhere, and that's why we're here. Because that's why Jean Pierre at the end of his speech said this is a political project. It's definitely a political project. We're trying to change the way politics thinks about all of these different questions that have that are unlike what I think the Vice Director or the Vice President of research said. The intangibles of quality and the tangibles, obviously. But the intangibles, you know, so which goes beyond the measurable and the unmeasurable. So I like the idea. I mean, I'd like the question: Who blocks? It's not always the government. It's always at different levels. But when it is, when it is the government, like in our case in Quebec, for certain very, very important qualities of schooling for children. You say to yourself, how do we stop this machine? So maybe it's a kind of this kind of project can help stop. Maybe that machine. You know? I'm just saying because this is a very concrete this. This Label project is a very concrete project. What happened with the universities in Quebec is a very concrete example of political racism that happened at the level of Canadian government. We have to move and nudge the politics to make sure that they're going in the right directions, maybe just kicking them out.

[01:23:30]
Michael Otchie

So one of the things I was thinking about is just kind of like the inception of the project and awards. And I was thinking of your rant, and I guess one of the things that I was kind of thinking about maybe even hearing is sometimes you almost want to just know what the agenda is behind certain developments. Was it a big payout for a developer like was that the reason this was built in a certain way and then I was also thinking about awards and just sort of the image saturated world that we live in. And I think sometimes, you know, architects want the great images in

the magazine that that look comparable to what's happening, you know, in another country just to show that they compete in and that drives almost like a superficial understanding of what quality looks like. So it is built and therefore it is quality. It got me thinking about the fact that yes, there's been an ascent of awards, but there's also there's also more standards now, I think than ever, you know we've got lead, we've got Rick Hanson, etc. You know, these buildings do win awards, but in themselves there is a structure that defines quality and I wonder if you know part of this process of dealing with these bigger topics is maybe we need more standards, you know maybe there needs to be a tent city standard or regenerative community standard. You know, these projects may not win awards, but at least you know there's maybe more clarity about the objective, the agenda. You know, meeting certain criteria that say, you know, a project that in Canadian architect wouldn't give recognition to, but at least you know that certain criteria has been fulfilled and and in doing so quality is being achieved from this particular perspective.

[01:25:47]
Jeanne
Leblanc-
Trudeau

I'm just collecting my thoughts and words. Not only the awards are too often evaluated on the basis of photographs, it's also that architecture firms that have the budget to apply on the award pay the photographer. I think it's the same with certifications sometimes. So we have to also be careful to not only give the chance to big firms who have the structure to lead. Lead is a hard thing to follow and it takes a lot of budget and sometimes it's a but hypocritical because some other projects that are not certified can be as good as the ones that are certified. Maybe I have a lot of ideas on my mind but for us at the design office we have this awards designer directory and for a long time, designers would apply and still can apply to be our directory. So lets say, I can't say to a colleague or someone to go with this particular firm because it wouldn't be fair for the other ones, I would say go in the directory. Its not based on a word or pictures, so we're trying to figure a new way of integrating new architecture firms that maybe don't have pictures but are successful in the community, so, yeah.

[01:28:36]
Achraf Alaoui
Mdaghri

So, we can agree that the problems or barriers against quality is a behemoth and sometimes not a visible one but, there are some snippets. Some tangible and actionable things we can begin until we can deconstruct this problem and just like, start by the edges and slowly but surely kind of unfurl the whole thing. So, I do believe in erosion at some points, and I also believe we have the means to be the agent of that erosion, at least for some of these barriers. Our very first mission in Montreal was like barriers against quality, so we did identify some barriers and maybe we could go through those and just check the ones that we can actually do something about and start there. If we're always afraid on this problem as a whole, we can't tackle it from any points.

[01:30:01]
Michelle
Gagnon-
Creeley

I'm still thinking about your comment about social order and I feel like it's really critical to acknowledge that like our current social order is built on the basis of like colonization and white supremacy and capitalism. And all of those systems are only a couple of 100 years old, and we created them like we decided one day that we are going to build those things. And I think that it's, I mean, we make it sound like it's unchangeable, but I do think that it that it is, it might not be like tomorrow,

but I do think that there are ways that we can kind of push back at the system that isn't doesn't seem to be working for a lot of people, I guess, yeah, in the instance of crab park like half of the residents are urban, indigenous and they have said time and time again that like we are operating under colonial law when like that goes against their own systems of law and governance and and I had another thought but now I can't think of it. Oh, go ahead.

[01:31:04] Adrian Blackwell Yeah, I just wanted to give Terry and Naya a chance to speak. I'd love to hear more.

[01:31:13] Terry Peters So I've been involved in this project since the first convention, but not involved in sort of like organizing the project at the beginning before the application. My role in the TMU team is I teach in building science and in architecture, so I thought that I would be. Talking about the difference in like building performance and like people performance, which is sort of what my research area is and it's totally gone in a different direction, which I'm like, it's been really exciting for me to learn about that. I still am doing kind of case studies and work in that kind of understanding of how the spaces that we're in and the indoor Environmental Quality impact how we behave and how we feel well in in those spaces. But increasingly I'm leaning more towards an understanding of quality. Given that I did my PhD in Denmark and exactly half of my housing research has been in the Danish context and half now has been in the Canadian context, and so it gives me, I think a different perspective. Seeing both systems, as kind of not what I would have done, like they're both quite different and boy they are, we would be having a completely different conversation if this was held in the Danish context because a lot of the barriers, we have are different there. So, I'm learning a lot. I'm not sure if it's really showing that in the road map like I it's still coming to terms with even understanding housing quality that we have here and how it relates to building performance and people performance. But what I wanted to say of how my understanding has changed is I'm thinking more about teaching and how we teach quality. I teach a design studio where we design long term care. There's a lot of complexity in designing long term care, and we don't often consider it as capital A architecture we consider it to be something quite different and when students come to me and we talk about quality in their specific context, it's very challenging for me to help define quality and long term care for so many reasons. Anyway, that's what I'm thinking about while we're talking as I'm thinking about how we include everything since it's very project specific and site specific and moment specific. How we define quality, but all of these conversations are really interesting to me and I'm hoping in the last couple of years of this project to try to, I don't know if I can come to some conclusions but try to provide something that's useful for our partnership. But I think that teaching and how we teach and educate architects is really critical. Who are we teaching? How are we teaching them? What spaces? I also went to the school 20 years ago and this is one of my first times back and so I'm like also feeling like a student being in this space which did not used to look like this. Anyway, that's from me.

[01:34:12] Naya Hi, I'm a bit shy so I won't probably talk that much but I do have a lot to say. I don't even know where to start. I've been thinking throughout all of your conversations, and I feel like quality is very subjective. Like I have the opportunity that my parents, well, my father left the community,

and you know, we live a very wealthy life. But when we go back home it is horrible, so my quality, my comfort is very different from the rest of my family. It's just so horrible and I don't even know where to start. I've informed myself enough about where the source of the problem is in our communities. Everything is mold. All the houses are filled with mold. We get the poor, not the poorest contractors that we pay the least money to come and build the houses and they cut corners. Within two years of the new homes being built there's mold. Right away, black mold everywhere. All the corners, all the windows. Sometimes I go to my family homes and I just start cleaning. But even then the problem is not fixed. Within two weeks it just grows back and there's no air circulation. We also don't have drinking water. It's also contaminated. So you can't take long showers, it will give you cancer. And it's like, yeah, where do you start from there? And I feel like we talk about a lot of the housing prices in cities, but communities have been living through a housing crisis for [decades]. My father grew up with ten other siblings in a four bedroom or a three bedroom home. So there were 12 in one house. And that's nothing new like I mean it hasn't changed. I have many families that are, like at least fourteen in a three bedroom home. That's very, very, very common. It is not uncommon. Yeah, I feel like we often talk so much about how we're going to change society and it's normal because that's where we live. I live in Montreal and I do talk with my teammates and classmates like how we're going to change so it becomes more accessible for everybody that we see every day. We don't think about these [northern] communities and there's so much money right now that's going towards it. I mean, someone talked about, I think it was you or whoever we will take on, like architectural firms will take where there's more money because sometimes it's hard. We don't necessarily have all the funding or enough money to take on big projects. But I am wondering and I really don't know, maybe some of you do know, like there's we talk so much about there's so much money right now involved in communities and helping yet nobody's taken on the project. We don't even get specialists. We're talking about electricians, specialists, you know, like basic needs, plumbing, you know. I don't even know where I was going with that but oh yeah, so for the money. Firms do want to look good. So why not just go ahead and go get that money that is offered from the government? Take it and do a nice project and be on site. Make sure that the contractors are doing it properly or installing [properly]. You just need one architect on site to make sure that the construction has been done properly and the transportation because most communities like there's no roads going to my home, we build ice roads in the winter and that's the only way we can access any construction material or any basic needs. So why are our architectural firms not going and taking those advantages. Generally, I do not know the answer I am asking.

[01:39:13]
Jonathan
Monfries

So, my perspective just from a practitioner perspective, I've been synthesizing a lot and haven't been talking. I think it's difficult, like in terms of like an actual barrier to practice, in terms of how we evaluate quality is because of that discrepancy and a definition just within our own practice. There are people who I'll admit, even in our practice being a big firm like Stantec, like, obviously there are people who have a certain definition of quality which just get the building built and get the paycheck. And then there are also people who like all of us, have those, you know, other definitions that are a bit more inclusive and kind of holistic views

of quality. So what do we do about the people who obviously have not seen how we can define quality in a more inclusive way, especially when you look at the academic setting and you know when we go to, you know, schools and do you know critiques or lectures. Whoever is being invited to give those lectures and critiques may not have that specific definition of quality, and they're now influencing the students. And then the students will graduate and continue and, you know, grow into an architect with that kind of potentially closed minded perspective. I find that to be a significant barrier because especially when we do, you know, have this typical kind of bureaucratic system of, you know, the principal in charge is the primary decision maker, signing everything off, the intern will help detail a toilet, you know. Those decision makers are the ones that are influencing how quality is being represented in the environment until they retire and move on. So it's kind of like an inevitable issue that we kind of deal with. If we don't engage kind of the broader industry and how do we do that and how do we ensure that we kind of lift up those voices of those who are unheard and those who, you know have that more inclusive definition of quality that isn't so limited to the kind of the bare minimum?

[01:41:45] Naya I like that you say that. Maybe we can try to find a way to raise voices. So one of the classes I worked for Jean Pierre and he was saying that most people who are starting to work within Indigenous communities are trying to understand and its difficult because we don't talk that much. Well we talk a lot between each other, we talk too much between each other but once we get into a group with different faces well kind of be quiet. And I guess that's a really difficult part as to where and how do you start working with Aboriginal communities. We'll keep all that inside and I don't even know the answer because we don't talk so much, though you'll have the odd native that talks a lot, but that's not [common]. Doesn't really represent most of us, I think in a white table, sorry for saying it that way, but, how do we get in touch and how do we start changing if? Like, I don't even know how to put natives first. At a table where they'll keep everything for themselves and they might not even talk at the. Also, I think it's cultural usually, we'll leave the elders to speak first. The young people like you're here to learn. But I believe that varies from community to community, I don't know. But for my community it's it's more like that.

[01:43:35]
Michael Otchie I'm really fascinated by your perspectives, and I guess I'm really curious when it comes to like why it seems as if again and again, the wrong things are being built. When you talk about the molds, like the poor air flow, why is this happening? Maybe there's obvious answers to it that you'll fill me in on, but I wonder. I wonder if there's almost like confusion around taste and quality. Although something like the image of a building might represent good taste to a community, the appropriateness isn't there like it doesn't reflect quality in terms of what's appropriate for the for the environment that it's situated in. I guess I'm really interested in like the idea of, you know, just the pathway of quality needs to encompass more. More a journey of reclaiming traditions and reclaiming what works for certain environments or if there's another solution that you know like....I'll clarify. So, when a housing proposal is offered or the plans are completed, whether people are making decisions based on perceptions of what is good taste versus quality?

[01:45:23] Naya	Yeah that's what I thought but it's not even a question of taste because we're not even talking about architecture. We're talking about a roof overhead. That's it, I mean so many people I know, they live in shacks. It's not even a home, it's plywood on two by fours with a plywood floor. We have -55 degree winters and that's what we live in. We're not even in the lines of architecture, we're talking about just basic quality of life. For human needs. Homeless people like we could get into that, but also we're not even homeless. I'm not saying that correctly. That's not how I meant it. Anyhow, it's not even about taste. It's just about like we just want a house that's not going to mold within two years. A house that's not going to move that much, and that's just going to start molding within few months, yeah, we're really not at this step where we're looking into beautiful [architecture]...yeah. Not at all. So far from that.
[01:46:51] Adrian Blackwell	I'm just thinking we have 5 minutes left. We have a wrap up question. Is there a strong consensus about what quality is? So if anyone has any last thoughts after you speak.
[01:47:23] Jeanne Leblanc- Trudeau	It's just about what you said and the general conversation this morning. We're talking about future projects, but also the existence of new ones. And I'm just wondering how we can think about the future projects before taking care of what is existing. That will be the same question even more in a few years when the cities will be saturated and there will be no spaces to build anymore, we will have to take care of the existing the existing build environment. Maybe it's a good start to think about the lived experience. It's a good way to evaluate the existing projects. So maybe we can think about budgeting some improvements for the existing [projects] before already building new ones with the basis of the examples that that you are you just gave so.
[01:48:48] Achraf Alaoui Mdaghri	It kind of saddens me that because, like there's a sentence you said, "we're not even in architecture yet", but for me this should be architecture. That need like it came from just yearning for a roof over your head and that's architecture. Like even the like, the origin of the word, how did we stray so far away from that for architecture to be this kind snobbish thing that comes after this initial thinking for consensus on quality. Maybe we have some punches as to where to start it and I would have to disagree like on starting with retro adaptation because like what we learned from the new is what we can claim back and put in the old some way. And I do believe technology has a role to play in that eventually we'll get to figure this out.
[01:49:57] Adrian Blackwell	There were so many strands here. I don't know how to combine them at all. But we do have lunch in a couple minutes. I don't know who's is going to do the report back.
[01:50:12] Belle Gutierrez- Kellam	I have to send a short email with our consensus.
[01:50:24] Carmela Cucuzzella	I was just wondering, you know, I'm not sure who said that quality is also so context driven. Every singular project is so individual because it addresses a different society, a different group of people, etcetera. So maybe our consensus and I'm just putting it out there and then maybe

our consensus is that there is a dissensus in quality through the idea that every single project has to be looked at [differently]. There's no copy and paste anymore. We can't do that thing anymore and we can't judge through pictures like you said, Jen. It's and in situations like what you, Naya and Twyla said, those two stories were like disturbing. And so those are individual experiences that the majority of us don't even see because they're so far like geographically so far away. So I would say, but anyways I'm just putting it out there as a first on that the consensus is that there is a, you know, dissensus in quality and that our project I think is to understand what that, that those divergences are. and is there. Is it possible even to build bridges across these different points of view? And is it always necessary to build bridges as projects are already singular? I'm just saying there's so many questions that come out of this conversation for me.

[01:51:56]
Benjamin Dunn

I just happen to have a microphone in my hand, but I wanted to say too there's also, like a prioritization of quality as well. Like if we think about Canada, the built environment across Canada is like a gradient of averages of well, we can agree without being lofty about what good quality or bad quality is like. That is like horrible quality like everything that you just said and that like that should take priority before we try to improve green standards and lead certifications. So maybe another form of census should be that not all avenues toward improving quality are kind of equal priority like there are things that should take more priority than others.

[01:52:43] Belle
Gutierrez-
Kellam

So, what I'm synthesizing here is that there's not only this dissensus to quality and these divergencies of what we understand of quality, but there needs to be a priority of just basic human necessity within quality before we look at these awards and these certifications, we have to make sure that every single individual has access to this basic housing. The basic food, just all these basic needs that we should all have as individuals who reside here in Canada.

[01:53:20]
Carmela
Cucuzzella

That makes sense. Ok. Well, we can't disagree with what you just said.

[01:53:23]
Adrian
Blackwell

I think we're at time. Yeah, thanks everyone.

ROOM 9

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room9_ Location: IDEA Building - Room 1003			14 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Veronica	Madonna	Athabasca University Mino Bimaadiziwin	Athabasca University
Shirley	Thompson	University of Manitoba	University of Manitoba
Darryl	Garcia Wastesicot	York Factory First Nation	University of Manitoba
Fadi	Masoud	University of Toronto	University of Toronto
Michel	de Blois	Université Laval	Université Laval
Lyne	Parent	Association des architectes en pratique privée du Québec	National Partners
Grant	Clarke	City of Calgary	University of Calgary
Dawn	Clarke	City of Calgary	University of Calgary
Marveh	Farhoodi	Open Architecture Collaborative Canada(OACC)	Toronto Metropolitan University
Chris	Wiebe	National Trust for Canada	Carleton University
Paniz	Mousavi Samimi	University of Calgary	University of Calgary
Firdous	Nizar	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Sarah	Jervis	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Nicole	Yu	Concordia University	Concordia University

Room 9 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2024-06-14

Report produced by

Mousavi Samimi, Paniz (*University of Calgary*)

9.1. Summary

What are each participants' own understanding of positive outputs on quality after 2 years of partnership research and how has their understanding of quality changed since the beginning of the project?

- Defining a common quality principle is not feasible, indicating the complexity of capturing quality from different stakeholders. Despite efforts, reaching a consensus on what constitutes quality is challenging due to diverse perspectives.
- Evaluating quality solely on paper does not reflect lived experiences. Traditional metrics often overlook qualitative aspects of quality, emphasizing the need to incorporate firsthand experiences for a comprehensive understanding.
- Recognizing the influence of regulatory bodies like the Bank of Canada on urban development decisions highlights the broader socio-economic factors shaping quality in the built environment.
- Emphasizing the importance of everyday environments, not just iconic buildings, in creating a quality environment underscores the significance of inclusive design principles.
- Shifting perspective from aesthetic value to holistic values, prioritizing people at the core, reflects a paradigm shift in conceptualizing quality.
- Acknowledging challenges for singular bodies to define quality in diverse communities underscores the importance of inclusive decision-making processes.
- Breaking barriers in understanding terminology surrounding quality fosters clearer communication and collaboration among stakeholders.
- Advocating for buildings to accommodate future growth emphasizes the need for adaptive and resilient design strategies.
- Engaging with regulators and policymakers to prioritize quality in urban development promotes positive outcomes for communities.
- Recognizing the absence of certain voices, particularly from communities, underscores the importance of inclusivity and representation.
- Highlighting quality as longevity and legacy underscores the importance of considering the long-term impacts of design and development decisions.

- Establishing the nexus between social and environmental factors as intertwined recognizes the interconnectedness of human and ecological well-being.
- Understanding the impact of natural elements on mental health and everyday experiences in cities highlights the importance of biophilic design principles.
- Considering small details like grass mowing and street crossings as significant contributors to quality underscores the importance of attention to detail in design and maintenance.
- Recognizing the perpetual need to work on conscientious quality in architecture and design reflects a commitment to continuous improvement and excellence.
- Broadening the scope of quality to include the people who work in spaces, not just users, acknowledges the importance of occupant well-being and satisfaction.
- Acknowledging the role of policy and culture in shaping quality and inclusivity underscores the importance of systemic approaches to quality improvement.
- Understanding quality as multifaceted and context-dependent emphasizes the need for flexible and adaptive approaches to quality assessment and improvement.
- Emphasizing the importance of understanding community needs and conditions highlights the value of participatory approaches to quality planning and decision-making.
- Highlighting the necessity of providing context and themes to define quality in specific projects underscores the importance of specificity and relevance in quality assessments.
- Building a workforce capable of maintaining and preserving quality in buildings emphasizes the importance of investing in education, training, and professional development.
- Exploring connections between quality, heritage conservation, and cultural values highlights the intrinsic link between built heritage and quality of life.
- Considering the future adaptability and social impact of new constructions underscores the importance of forward-thinking and sustainable design practices.
- Recognizing the importance of language in articulating shared understandings of quality and future-proofing construction underscores the power of communication and discourse in shaping perceptions and priorities.

9.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name

00:00:03 Fadi Masoud Good morning everybody. I'm Fadi Masoud. I'm an associate professor of landscape architecture and urbanism at the University of Toronto, and I will be Co moderating this room with Shirley. So I'm happy it's not just me and just a couple of really quick reminder housekeeping things that I think are just important, relevant for each of the work sessions.

There'll be one or two questions posed and everybody's going to have a chance to respond to the question. We'll go in a circle. It will be recorded, but no names will be attributed to responses. So the comments will be recorded by the students and then transcribed. But There will be no direct quotation by person per name associated with your responses, so you should feel free to respond with your heart without stressing on how and what will be attributed to and, we have a long time. We have about two hours per session, so it's pretty fluid. I think. No rush with time and I think we should be able to hopefully get through with a lot of feedback and ideas and comments and involve the work throughout the next two days.

So that's the main things that are from a housekeeping perspective that we need to put on the table for you guys. And the first question that is asked for the first workshop session Cafe workshop session is if each of us could share our main positive research outcome of the project after two years, So what is the one of the first main positive things that has come to your foray as you've worked on this project for the last two years? And please, when you answer just to introduce yourself and your name. Where you come from again won't be transcribed. And I don't know if we want to go.

00:02:30 Michel de Blois Michel de Blois The most positive thing we've noticed basically, and you will be able to see it on our road map actually is we've been working. We're on the track #4 which is processes and policies.

So, the objective main objective of our research is to figure out how to capture quality from different stakeholders and how to feed this perception of quality from different stakeholders within different processes. So, what Carmilla spoke about this morning it's pretty much in line in within what we do.

So the positive outcome that came from observing different workshops from the City of Quebec, which are conducting a lot of projects, we've been following a lot of these consultation public consultations or the different views from actors, mainly from people from different group was that for sure that the professional quality depending on the actor is very different from every actor. So it's pretty obvious.

On top of that is we think that it's not possible to make common description of the same quality principle to come up with a singular common co-created one perception for one criterion.

And we can try, but in the end, there's always going to be some confusion, so the outcome is, you have to recognize that one stakeholder for the same criteria will have a different perception and a different description, and to accept that, I think it's the basis to start proper co-creation, so it makes it more complex. There's more discussions involve. But the same principle can be described differently, and sometimes different words will mean the same thing for multiple stakeholders, so it makes it very, very complex process to be able to figure that out.

And when we see the different processes we've seen this morning, you have the design process and the management process. We've exploded these processes into four processes, so there's the design process. There's the

construction process, in between these two processes, is the management process. For sure, but in order to better understand how quality is produced through these all processes, we've added the 4th process, which is the quality production process.

So we're now with four different processes and how the quality is produced with consultation is fed into the design and how the design is fed, also in the construction and how management can cope with in these two contradictory sometimes objectives.

So the positive outcome is that we know that to define a common quality principle is not possible. So it's the negative result is a positive result.

00:06:04
Dawn Clarke

I'm Dawn Clarke at the city of Calgary. I don't remember what I wrote for my document. So I don't have a lot of eloquent things to say. I've been thinking about. OK, so at the City of Calgary about 7 years ago, we started trying to define and measure quality for each project that we review and see coming in. And it's been an incredibly difficult process as we all know, trying to define the terms and then have a rating system that means something to people other than us and evaluating quality on a piece of paper doesn't really get to the lived experience, and I mean, we all know that, and we've known that for a long time. That's been a long-term goal of our project is how do we get to the lived experience of it.

And there's been a lot of barriers along the way around. You know what is our role as regulators at the City of Calgary, looking at development applications? Do we have like where is our box that we can we step out of it? Can we not step out of it? What's our role in social engineering, equity diversion, all of these things that we know are very important and how can we influence that? And we're really seeing the conversations starting to change at the city. So even within our team of urban designers-Five people. There is being more kind of willingness and capacity to have a conversation about some of these things beyond, you know, the set back and St. Wall and how all of these various pieces converge to create a quality of life and not just on the big projects, the flashy projects that you know, government funded Central Library, but on every house or every kind of row house kind of development and creating the environment, quality of environment, for various users at various scales.

And our project this summer is going to be defining those stakeholders and how we identify their stakeholder, each stakeholders needs, so that we can talk more, so we can see if we're getting to the nub of it, I guess. And not just that it works for the bottom line of, you know, the financier, which is a very, very salient point, I think made this morning that they have a seat of privilege at the table.

But that means that the Bank of Canada is like running our cities or you know various rates because they make the decisions about what you know ultimately where your boxes where you can, you know what, you can design a building or a project within.

So I think identifying all of those pieces and how they can all work together and where the common goals will be, I think it's really important. I think it's really encouraging to see the evolution of the project so far with our project at the City of Calgary in that we started in 2017.

I actually started looking at awards systems and seeing, you know, how many of the national awards for architecture were given in the city in in Calgary and there are very few. And does that mean that we don't have a quality-built environment? Well, maybe, maybe not. And it's only a kind of a certain flashy

scale of things that doesn't necessarily ever get built. And so, you know we had to create our own criteria there and I think it's really fantastic that this project is evolving to recognize that awards are nice and it's 1% of, you know, the project. It's 1% of our built environment. And their impact on us really in the everyday, it's pretty minimal.

It's this stuff every day that's where we live, right? And how do we how do we create the quality environment here in the everyday not just you know the sexy showcase buildings that we all like to talk about and look at. I think that's all I need to say.

00:10:09
Veronica
Madonna

Thank you. My name is Veronica Madonna. I'm an assistant professor at Athabasca University. And it's really interesting. Just kind of the last two comments as well about shifting the perspective from an aesthetic and superficial value of the built environment to one that is about holistic values and considering people at the core of that.

A lot of things that we've been kind of looking at the root of our research themes, which is in the realm of decommodifying housing and food in rural and regional communities, is looking at how do we shift the perspective from kind of you know defining how to define quality in the built environment from allowing communities to actually empower them to define their own aspects of quality.

One of the things that we're doing is we're doing a systems' mapping of housing within rural and regional communities in Alberta. We're recognizing that we can't kind of lump them into one category that each community has very specific needs, have very specific value systems that have to be expressed in each. So how do we define or provide a set of toolkits or Road maps, or how do we give them the tools in order to help them find their own version of quality.

So we're looking at a number of different prototypes to kind of look at that and we're planning to engage in a number of community engagement workshops over the next two years with various rural communities, ones that are in northern communities, ones that are in kind of rural communities that are just outside of big municipalities because each of them have very specific differences. And from there we're moving our ideas from kind of dictating how to provide quality in the built environment to how to empower a process so communities can implement quality on their own because it's I think it's very challenging for singular bodies to come in to communities and say this is what quality means when each has very specific aspects. So again, it's shifting that point from, you know, many years of us thinking about sustainability, which is about neutrality moving to kind of concepts of regeneration, which is about holistic views and impacts.

That any system has a built environment, or you know any kind of system. So, thinking about aspects of health and Wellness, ecological, social justice, cultural justice. So, these are kind of some of the things that we've been thinking about is what does it actually mean to understand. So, it was great to hear some of the perspectives, especially in the conversation this morning that the perspective of quality from flashy, award-winning buildings, which we all love to look at and design, you know, if you get the chance, to aspects of what does it truly mean? And I started to think about the question about how you define. How do you, you know, kind of capture lived experiences?

And I started to question whether the built environment should actually be a place to foster live experiences. Because then again, I don't know if we can actually capture lived experiences. You know, it's more about providing places

that people can Foster and create their lived experiences. So. These are just some of the questions I've been thinking about. Thank you.

00:13:23
Nicole Yu

Hi. I'm Nicole from the Concordia University and our research site's topic is about increasing quality for elderly in Montreal, and we were focusing on elderly homes, and we've broke down our research into three different aspects, livability, decarbonization and diversity.

And so about diversity side with the background in urban ecology, I think... I also only joined the project like eight months ago. So I think one of the positive results that I've been involved in was that within the team, it's pretty interdisciplinary and due to change in leadership we're trying to do a bit more about diversity stuff recently and so discussing within the team, we decide, we realize that we have different understandings. Even though livability has green space included as its definition for being important to have a good quality, livable environment, it's not really understood in the same way as when we're looking at urban ecology, like what do we want in a good green space that is both beneficial for ecosystems that bring benefits to humans, and so we had a lot of discussions revolving around that.

And we're trying to, even within the team, break some of the barriers of understanding of the terminology. Like when we're talking about increasing livability, how is that related to anything in like increasing births like how does that create sense of place and really diving deep into that kind of aspect. and in our focus groups, we're trying to also we added more questions about biodiversity and even in designing the questions we were like, why, if we ask this, people may not give any valid or not valid concrete examples of how they're experienced in green space, but then when we finally asked them to the elderly, they were giving really interesting results about how they observed groundhogs, or they really like the chickadees and naming all of these species that they observe in their spaces.

And so we're trying, we're really expanding kind of what the importance of the green space and the outdoor space is to the lived experience to elderly and adding that to what currently I guess in architecture and design it's not usually thought of how the outdoor space is contributing to biodiversity and how that loops back into people's lived experience. So, I think that's one of the positive outcomes of that we've been working on so far that it's coming out now at this stage of our research, yeah.

00:16:08
Paniz
Mousavi
Samimi

My name is Paniz. I'm from University of Calgary. I just joined this program about a month ago, so I think I'm supposed to answer to a different question.

00:16:18 Fadi
Masoud

Yeah, sorry I forgot to mention that if you recently joined the project and you know you have a much newer perspective to the project, you're allowed to answer a couple of other questions including for the first one if is, if you can share a positive experience, a positive lived experience in the built environment.

00:16:39
Paniz
Mousavi
Samimi

So I have an example. It's like I I'm totally amused by indoor gardens, but in Calgary we have this particular one named Devonian Garden in the centre of the downtown Calgary.

I think it's specifically nice to have indoor gardens in urban environments and also in cold climates like Calgary and Canada as a whole, because for

two reasons. For instance, in downtown where it's like filled with concrete buildings and dense urban environment. It's really good to have some place to go and experience nature as we don't usually have that experience in downtown. And it's also important in cold climates like Calgary. It's not really affordable and available to spend time in nature, but having an indoor garden at these cold climates that we can't enjoy nature for most of the year.

It's good to have indoor gardens that we can go and experience nature and be connected with natural environment. So because of these two reasons, I think it's really important to have these and it really helps to improve the mental health and quality of life in the urban environment.

00:18:13
Sarah Jervis

Hi, I'm Sarah Jervis. I'm from Dalhousie and I am pretty new to the research site. I've been working for about two months and my arm of the project is also pretty new. We've only just visited our first research site, so we're examining high schools that have won architecture awards and kind of assessing the opinions of the place from the people that use it every day, so like teachers, students, and of course, we've just visited our first of three research sites, so we don't have necessarily outcomes yet, but our hope is to with this lived experience. And our examination of the provincial design document, the DC-350, which kind of It has regulations for how schools are to be built. We hope that based on this evaluation of how the people who use the space every day are perceiving it and using it, that we might augment that document to better meet the needs of the people that are using the schools.

So, one example that we've encountered is that the DC-350 document requires that schools be built for the existing population in an area, and they cannot be built to accommodate future growth. So, because the school takes three plus years to build, when these schools are built, they are already overpopulated. And so, one of the hopes after we visit these research sites is that we'd be able to adjust that document so that we can prepare for growth so that these schools aren't so overpopulated.

00:20:13
Lyne Parent

Hi, my name is Lynn Parent. I work for the association of architect and private practice in Quebec. For the last 10 years I've been meeting a lot of regulators, policymakers try to convince them that what they do has to be done favoring quality in the built environment and It's difficult to explain all that to do that that work and most of the time the architects are the only professionals saying, hey, wait a minute? Here we have to... And I'm not. I don't want to criticize the other association of builders and engineers, and they do say it, but they're not. They they don't take their leadership in that.

And a few years ago, I realized that we didn't have any data. Every time we had to, we wanted to explain what quality of the built environment is, we had a lot of empty formulas, but we didn't have anything about the lived experience and the data

So, I approached Jean Pierre and I remember meeting Jean Pierre and Caroline, saying what do we have? What? What do you do to help us do this work? And so we exchange and we continue to exchange and then the partnership came along and we started participating.

And it's really interesting for me to observe, to understand, to see what the research sites are doing because I knew it, but it helps me realize how it takes so many different stakeholders to define quality and that most of the time they're not around the table at the beginning of the design process, and it's so important and there are integrated process like I'm sorry I forgot what conception degree, IDP, Yeah, taking place for many, many projects, but. It's for instance, when you built a hospital for big projects like a hospital or

schools, you'll have different stakeholders around the table at the beginning of the designing process. But is it enough? Is it? Do we have the time to do it properly and to go deep into defining the quality, it's complex, but it starts with the process. As far as my angle is in my work for me.

And so, it's exciting to see the work coming out of the different sites and of course it's going to help us do our work. But I realize that most of the time when we're around the table with policymakers and regulators, there are a lot of people missing and that's it for now.

00:23:33
Firdous
Nizar

So, hi everyone. My name is Firdaus Nazar. I'm a PhD student at the University of Montreal, so I can start by telling a positive lived experience for me would be passes out in Marial, I feel like it has so much vibrancy it speaks to the spirit of the city, so to speak. There's a lot of cultural activity going on and that's something that's very unique to the place you see a lot of diversity in there as well. When the festivities happen, there are a lot of people coming together at different times of the day. There's a lot of animation of the public space, which is something that I believe is necessary for quality in the built environment. So not only do we build infrastructure that is well, I would say aesthetic or functional, but there's something in between, that's the social activity, the coming together.

More specifically for me, something what a built environment is, makes it positive, is a sense of belonging, especially in Canada. So as an immigrant, as a woman of colour coming in here, I feel like the positive lived experience. The built environment has a big role to play in it. Whether we want to admit it or not, it's something that we don't really talk often about it, and it's also something that I'm trying to research in my own work, is trying to understand and who are the groups of people that are sort of openly welcome? Welcome in some spaces compared to others. There is this very palpable atmosphere. Whenever you enter certain spaces where, oh, I don't know my supposed to be here. What's the code of conduct here in this space? What is my lived experience here? Like what is and who dictates that. Right. That's something that I've always thought about. So, for example, if I had to take the metro to get the plazas off and I would walk inside all the connecting tunnels would finally come out.

But then there are also these spaces of performing arts. And so for me personally also with the background in architecture, I'm very exploratory in my in my behavior in the built environment, right, my interaction everyday interaction is to, OK, I'm curious like, OK, what are these bases, right. I want to go into the resources that transition spaces that like in between that people never really go to, but sometimes the time of the day, there are other personal barriers to get to it, like for example, I feel unsafe, or maybe there's a lot of there's like, signs over there. Do not enter. Of course. Then you need to move away from that.

But yeah, all that to say there are, I would say at this point, yeah, I'm talking about barriers, but they are very much important in defining, redefining positive lived experience. And these are some of the things that are missing in the, in the norms and guidelines that we have for better lived experience. So, like for example in my research of trying to improve the reliability of public spaces, we're trying to do more, gather more information from women. "Women" I know it's a very broad term, but even within that we have we have mothers with strollers, like, there's so much diversity and the needs of just that one category of women. And then we have queer community members, we have our 2SLGBTQ+ community members who have been continuously being not part of the discussion, not at the table, whenever a built environment like a project comes to being.

And then visible minorities. And that is something to speak specifically to Canada given that we have the intention for equity diversity and inclusion, the intention of multiculturalism in Canada. So with all that said, even though it's we talked about it. That's not necessarily reflected in our guidelines as architects, designers, built environment professionals, but also, people just involved in making, improving the quality of the built environment. So I'll stop there.

00:28:57
Chris Wiebe

So interesting, I mean, just this morning being like thinking about the welcoming nature of buildings, thinking about this building. The one you're in this morning around that kind of monumental kind of, it's about this institutional grandeur, whereas this, I think the welcoming nature at least the vocabulary now is about transparency and seeing inside. But is that really welcoming, I don't know. Just seeing people in here. Does that equal welcome? Anyway, it's interesting. Just thinking about these two places. OK. My name is Chris Wiebe. I'm I work for the management of heritage policy. And I organized the annual conference at the National Trust for Canada in Ottawa. And that is a membership based charity that was created about 50 years ago to promote the preservation of historic places and cultural landscapes and also to really promote the wise use, I think, and that's the intersection with this kind of project is like promote the wise use of the built environment in so many ways and you know when we initially came onto this, I was wondering you know what does heritage conservation do?

Which is stereotypically thought of as kind of freezing places in time. What does that have to do with this whole kind of conversation around quality, which is typically associated with new creation of new things and, like, in bestowing the, you know, this kind of idea of quality on it?

But I think there's lots of there's incredible overlaps. And I guess as the as the as the whole kind of research project has gone along, it's become more and more apparent. I work with Mariana Esponda and others at Carleton University and in the cluster of hub that's really looking at adaptive reuse. And around why adaptive reuse is happening and trying to understand what some of the drivers in it are and what are some of the barriers and really one of the interesting things I would say is I don't know, I wrote this quite a while ago, but I put it I included like the picture of my old, the Humanity Centre. I studied English, I came from a completely different universe and at the University of Alberta and Edmonton.

And a really cool space. I was just back there recently and, you know, built in the 1970s, kind of like one of those kind of reverse ziggurat brutalist buildings from the early 70s.

And just thinking about it now, as we were going around the table, it was built with input from, you know, faculty members and from staff to make it a really inviting space. Have these kind of tailor built seminar rooms for, you know, creative writing classes and philosophy seminars, etcetera. You know, and really has this kind of open kind of atrium that's very kind of even had a smoking room. It was kind of interesting. So obviously their response to people who wanted to, you know, smoke in the 1970s in a glass room, which is interesting to think about. But and now the building is set for demolition because actually it was built to reflect a certain kind of quality or the qualities that were valued at that time.

And now it's doesn't fit within the, it has deferred maintenance. So the city the university wants to, you know, take it down and do something else with that piece of land.

But it speaks to that kind of larger question of, what about quality and like that idea of, you know that that needs to probably be involved in that idea of

quality is about this idea of longevity and of legacy that when you're creating something there, needs to be able to adapt. And that should be a part of the quality discussion. Can it be financially viable? Are the materials you know? Can they work?

It's interesting to see in the 1970s, that kind of utopian, modernist kind of 1960s, they would have buildings that could learn. And there's a really interesting book by Stuart Brand that a lot of you probably know, like how buildings learn. But you are thinking about the evolution of buildings over time as they adapt to different programs. But it's interesting, like, I think that's one of the clusters works is like looking at whether buildings are allowed to learn, whether the economics allows them to learn. For instance. I mean obviously the land across out the window here from us has become a parking lot. And I'm sure there were houses there, but the houses were worthless. The land was worth more in the in the terms of like real estate economics and so now they can make more money by putting cars on top of it than they could buy or rents. So we kind of have the devaluation of the built environment that way.

So where am I going with this? Well, I guess it's just that I think that whole idea, it's really interesting, around with that cluster to explore what I think we all kind of understand that adaptive reuse of older places is happening. But how is it happening? What are the factors? And I think that's one of the interesting things is to look at, you know, the Ottawa contacts particularly and across Canada as well, to really see what the push pulls of adaptive reuse are and how do we scale it up. Because I think one of the things that you see in Canada is, we've got a problem with the take-make-waste economy. We're I think we're one of the worst producers of per capita waste in the world. I think we're number #1 or #2. It's pretty embarrassing and a big part of it is actually construction and building and construction waste.

We have a weird relationship with resources because we have a lot of them, we think, but we do. And so I think like they're kind of a more intentional, a more thoughtful approach to thinking about longevity and the thinking about longevity and willingness to, you know, think about the adaptation of buildings is also a part of it as well.

00:35:13

Maria Farfan

I'm not in this room, but I'm going to be moving in the different workshops. I'm Maria Farfan. I'm a postdoc at UTM, helping Jean Pierre with this wonderful project. And now, well answering the question about living experience. I'm from Colombia. I'm from Bogota and I've been moving back and forth during like probably 7 years during doing my doctoral studies at McGill University, and now this year in Montreal.

But for my point of view, as an immigrant also, and I can say that Canada really received me and my family in with open arms, so my experience of living experience here has been a positive one, and when we talk about the built environment, the built environment that I was in Merse when I was doing my studies at McGill and now at UDM. They really give me some kind of support and give me somehow a family abroad.

So, I will have to say that a building, it has to be like as an architect when we design or we're in the process of developing buildings. I just recalled what Carmella said to us this morning that it has to be designed for the persons who are going to inhabit it, and I believe that my experience at both universities give me somehow the spaces for community spaces to share with other people. Of course, there's a lot of things that has to be improved, but I think with this project also, I think we're going in a in a good direction. And I'm so glad to be part of this. So thank you.

00:38:10
Shirley
Thompson

Thank you. So, Shirley Thompson, I'm at the University of Manitoba. I'm not an architect yet. My background is a PhD in adult education and Environmental Engineering masters, so I'm working on Mino Bimaadziwin partnership, so I was the PI of a partnership grant It's now finishing. I'm running out of money holding on to bits and pieces of it to because I can actually pay for tuition for First Nation students out of it and admissions. So it's really almost a magic wand that's allowed people to enter the university system and access funds like my tax, which would never happen.

This has been kind of a roller coaster year, and it has helped you know our partnership. The Mino Bimaadziwin partnership help. But this partnership as well with Shauna Mallory Hill and this network of architects helped to secure a grant of 8.4 million for York Factory First Nation. It didn't go to the university. It went to the First Nation and that's to build, OK, I know this isn't the budgets of normal architecture a trades workshop. And school, a dormitory and three prototypes for houses. But you have to do that all within a year. So it's added another dimension to it. Yes.

It's a remote community that you can only take things by playing or on winter road or a ferry that doesn't start till June. So there's a three month gap where on both ends where you can't get materials in. And if we don't spend the money, if we don't have the roofs up, then we have to give the money back, and this is a poor community where they have a policy of no homelessness, so they put people up in elders. The chief actually is living in the motel, he doesn't have a place and he's a very good chief.

It's really about creating a change system, so it's been a very interesting roller coaster ride. I was a grant maker. I don't have an architecture background, but I do write grants really well. So I made-up a lot of stuff and I included this group as part of it, so I'm hoping that, you know, we can build into some of your skills and you can be part of this and so and now I'm project managing it, you know largely with the community, so we have a meeting.

Every week and there's. I guess 8 youth working with us that are part of the university system in York Landing and more that are part of the university. So there are undergrad, first year we're taking course by course one course at a time at distance which actually is very challenging. Because their school only goes up to grade 10, so they have to fly out for going to their education up to grade 12. They get horrible grades, they do grade and then their grades just sink for 11/12. They're not at the acceptable, especially during COVID. Universities do not have any tolerance for anyone, even though they passed, if you don't get a certain grade, they won't let you in. Then suddenly you mature students at 21, they let everyone in, right? So.

You know, I would love to get these kids right out of high school to get them into this trade school, to give them funding. I'm able to pay them my tax, which is a decent wage, and they go to school, but they also build. So they're building the workshop, they're building, they're designing with us. They're here, some of them. And so it's kind of a really different process I think of it and not as building, you know, an architecture building a project. I think of it as a process of inclusion where these this group has been so excluded from education and is excluded from housing, this Community York landing, just to say the importance of housing and we're trying to build and do prototypes with stone, because it's quite far north, so the trees are very, very small. We want to use local materials. We want it to be sustainable. And as you all know, when you look around, the only buildings that look beautiful 200 years later, 100 years later, no repair needed are the big stone buildings right? That's the legislature, the old churches. And they do have stone up there.

You know, if anybody knows any experts there, please we need some training to cut the rocks and you know we can do better than gravel. What else was I saying? Oh, so the importance of housing was your planning as a community. That's from your factory First Nation, which is right on the coast on Hudson Bay. And the story is that they were sent down the river and said you have to leave. Their houses were burnt and they were sent to a community, you know, all the other land had taken, so they were told York Landing, which is just a marshy little area that's between all the dams now, so they canoed all the kids, all the adults, everyone except the pregnant people, were forced out of their community and had to canoe up and they were promised housing in school and everything. They got their nothing was there and it was September and they had to build really, really quickly. So this is a story of housing in this community that continues today. Thanks.

00:44:45
Fadi
Masoud

That's great. Thank you so much. So, from my end, I've been on this project kind of leading the question on how public spaces and parks in the City of Toronto, but in cities in general, if they reflect the heterogeneity and diversity of the people they serve. Many parks in Toronto were built, you know, in neighborhood parks were built in the 60s, 70s, 80s, with a very different population around them, and they're still public assets that are held, you know the city spends money upkeeping them. You know managing them, changing them.

The simplest version I could talk about is, you know, a single purpose, sports field, baseball diamond. But everybody around is 65 plus, never touch the base not for play baseball or that the population around it never learned to play baseball and the city still upholds it in perpetuity as a baseball diamond. So it's a shared public asset. It's a public space, but as the city becomes more and more diverse and the population around it and demographic shift, are these parks serving the population that they are meant to serve?

And are they performing ecologically? We know that they are great places for urban heat island effect, for mitigating air pollution, for storing water. So there's all of this added environmental benefits that parks were never really thought of initially, when they were built and designed, but overtime we're understanding them as public assets.

So then our quality question was very much you know how do we assess the environmental benefit, the quality of those parks from an environmental point of view and overtime, the question also changed to ask, how do they perform socially and is there a Nexus between the two? How do we measure the relationship of, let's say canopy cover tree and shade for, you know, the elderly that live nearby? Is there just some way to begin to understand and assess the correlation between the environmental benefits and the social benefits of these parks. They were not even designed by designers. There's no landscape architect team or a designer team. There were kind of like city bureaucratic management offices, usually leftover parcels from development or Road engineering, but they're important public assets.

And so over time and I'm sort of dovetailing to the second question as how do your understanding of quality change since joining the project? And I think almost every single person answered the second question already. So these are the nature of these sessions where the first question actually is prompting the answer for the second question. So we'll keep it a little fluid and maybe do a second round to understand that.

But one of the main positive research outcomes that came this from this process was to really solidify that Nexus between the social and the environmental as not separate threads, but highly, highly intertwined.

Air quality, you know, mitigation of floods, mitigation of climate stress and social aspects are not two separate design challenges. They're actually really, really integrated and design solutions are not rocket science. I mean that's the other thing that we're talking about, you know, creating topography like water still follows gravity. It hasn't changed, you know, the relationship of living beings, of land, of trees, of the birds, of all the things that you mentioned, have a huge impact on the social and mental health of people who live around them and their everyday experiences of the cities that they live in. So those things just became much more crystallized as a positive outcome for us.

And also it started to push us to think about and I'm now dovetailing to the second question, so hopefully it'll give you some kind of ideas of how to start to think about that answer is it really started to push us with our city partners in this case, parks, forestry and recreation to talk about things that are really mundane. Like management, Park management, the metrics and standards that are put in place.

Things that are the city never thinks about as quality, relevant quality questions, just because different silo managements deal with them, like Toronto parks have the ugliest garbage cans. You know, they're like these black and blue, massive, like little things that are not necessarily designed, but they take up, you know, a quarter of a play area or they start think ing about mowing grass, right. If a wild Meadow we have this, you know, attitude towards successional meadows, you know, wildflowers that might be sprouting in a certain area and for a long time, the mentality was we need pure green lawn grass that needs to be chopped at the same height. It needs to be maintained in another place, and if it's not, it becomes these really ugly, patchy dirt, you know, muddy, awful looking things right in our parks.

But instead of thinking, hey, maybe this patch can become a wildflower Meadow that's just naturally growing, and we can support it. It's supporting all other kinds of species, living animals. It's increasing biodiversity. It actually has all of these Co benefits that are not designed into the system or manual of our cities managements because for a really long time perfect green lawn is the standard of how a park should look like.

So, that idea of standards management, you know who's in charge of the upkeep, what is the aesthetic? There's a very colonial English pastoral aesthetic that drives our park designs, you know, especially these neighborhood parks that are super dated. But there's no other precedents. You know, you have either really exceptional well-designed parks and plazas that are in urban centres, or you have these neighborhood parks that often end up having, you know, these like blue, red and yellow playgrounds bunched in and then some other kind of standardized metric of how to upkeep them and put them together. So a lot of the questions around metrics and standards and what does it mean to just change and tweak something very small like how we mow grass and how do we think about that in relation to everyday things like our garbage cans and our location of vegetation and trees and access points, crossings of the street, you know, like how long does it take to cross to change a light so that the kids or seniors can go into the park, is something that you know, we often don't think about because we're in different silos that have a huge impact on quality.

And lastly, I had just come here from Boston. I was on reviews there and it was really fascinating seeing students occupy campuses at in the USA. I think we have a different idea of how people use space for dissent, for demonstration. For voicing, you know, their need to express political change and we have to think about how our parks and open spaces are literally some

of these few places that are Commons and only surface when there are, you know, real frictions. So the students there are occupying campuses, and we now know Miguel is having some of that too and other universities across Canada, but the quad this open space, the value of open space and shared space as a place for expression and dissent is something we take for granted, because otherwise it's in the streets and there's a huge issue with publicly owned private pops as we call them now because cities don't have enough money to create new parks. So they force the developer to give up some land. The developer builds a pop. It's privately owned public space. So it changes the political dimension of the values of parks from a social dimension and open space in a world where there's, you know, a lot of difficulty. So what does design and quality mean for that as well?

So these are things that are now in our next phase in two years that we're starting to think about as we move forward and maybe we'll do another round starting to think what are the next? How has your ideas of understanding of quality changed since joining the project? Like I said, almost every single one of you answered that in some way, but maybe some more tangible, little things that you might want to measure, assess, change, study, fixate on that. Have opened up as a result of the last two years exploration and for people who are new to the project, maybe what comes to mind when you think and experience quality in the built environment. Also, something that you've all hit upon, but maybe based on the discussion and hearing from others, you might have some new thoughts.

So, I answered two questions. So now maybe if you want to maybe go around the opposite way.

00:54:20
Lyne Parent

Yeah, my understanding of quality changes a lot. There's a lot of intangible items and that defining quality and that's there's a lot of tension in between those intangibles, depending on your background or your experience or social background. Maybe I'll give an example of what I've learned a few years ago during the campaign election, campaign for premier in Quebec, we had a lot of talk about national quality policy and politic national architecture in Quebec and the order of architects worked really hard to achieve that.

And during the campaign, the premier to be said, yeah, we'll do the best architecture in Quebec that will ever have done and we'll have the best schools in Quebec and it's going to be wonderful and everybody was excited. Until we figured that his vision of architecture is what we have now and what we have to deal with, and that was we achieve something we achieve conscientious about quality and architecture, but it's never enough. We have to work on it. So now the best looking the best schools have to have wood, aluminum and the blue colour it's related to in a way identity. And we have to deal with that now we have to undo this. So my understanding has changed because now I understand that a clear program when you start is very dangerous and that's what we have right now and the intention was really good, really, really good because we want to have schools that are quality schools. So we have to be very careful about how we communicate with this quality. Basically in the debate it's important to have the debate, the public debate about quality, but it's important that many stakeholders are part of it and maybe we have to, because we have this, this view of prescribing what is quality now in public buildings at the very beginning of the planification of the building, and that's dangerous so.

My understanding is that we need designers to involve evolve over the years. So, because we want to sustainability, we want to build something that will

	<p>last, but if we are to if we prescribe too much, what quality is today doesn't mean that the baseball diamond is not what you need tomorrow. So maybe you need something more open space freer than deciding today is football or soccer or baseball and tomorrow will be cricket or something.</p> <p>So my understanding has evolved in thinking that it has to be more in the way we define quality, otherwise it can be very dangerous.</p>
00:57:51 Sarah Jervis	<p>So, I have no background in architecture whatsoever. I'm a sociologist. I have a bit of a background in human geography, so I have sort of an understanding of place based like experiences like a sense of belonging, like the lived experience, part comes naturally to me, whereas in the in the presentation this morning they were like you guys might not understand this lived experience part like that's my that's my whole area. So I sort of had taken like the building itself for granted like. Examining schools, my understanding was in a school, if it has air conditioning, it's good. If it does not have air conditioning, it's bad.</p> <p>And so going to this first research site in the school and interviewing several teachers, several students. It's kind of influenced the way that I understand quality in the built environment. It's kind of been the foundation of my understanding and something that's interesting is like the contradictions in like between students and teachers or between teachers, whereas some teachers rate a certain space very highly. Students may not like that space and vice versa. But something I've realized at this first research site is that a lot of the staff at the school felt like the school was not made for them.</p> <p>It seems that a lot of buildings are made for like the consumer. So in that case it would be the students, rather than like the person that will be using the space every day for years and years and years, so I think an important part of quality is thinking about the people who work there and not just the people that use the services or consume the resources there.</p>
01:00:02 Paniz Mousavi Samimi	<p>For me, design quality in the built environment is environments that not only provides shelter for us, but the ones that connect us to both nature and other people as well.</p> <p>For instance, like having natural elements in our built environment, not only in huge scales like the indoor gardens that I mentioned, but also we can have it like very discrete elements of natural environment in our daily lives, such as our homes like many studies, shows that even using green colour in our environment can improve our mental health as it represent nature. So we can consider even these small scale design features in our everyday environments. So that we can feel connected to nature. Also we need like communal spaces because we are not like singular people; we need to connect to others and feel social. So having communal spaces in urban and public spaces, I think really improves the quality in the built environment.</p>
01:01:24 Nicole Yu	<p>So I'm from Hong Kong and that's where I spent most of my life before coming here only last year and I have a bit of a I don't understand why the parks here look this way. Exactly what you said. Like it's so hard even to get people to mow less low and it's nice because people can picnic on it, whatever.</p> <p>Here, but back home, the parks aren't like that. I'm not saying it's the better design, but there's a sense of community where the elderly is spending their days there. They're sit, they play chess together. The surfaces are mostly impervious, which it's concrete and paved. But that means that they can walk around and move people who are in wheelchairs, they can go and it's accessible to them. They're planting beds, always have a little edge where</p>

they can sit on it, and if you just have grass, that's not great because for the elderly, they can't get down to the ground like they need seating.

And so I feel like the parks back home I felt where I took for granted because I didn't know the sense of community that they fostered until I came here and just saw, like grass and trees, which the planting of the trees is great because there was more shade and that's something in Hong Kong they didn't have so much. But it also, I never really see the same kinds of activities being held there and it could also be the difference in the culture of having a sense of community that I've gotten that it here it's much less, but back home, even in public housing like the way that they're designing the space, I see how it's fostering these relationships.

And so coming here and really studying, like looking at all of these terminology about livability, sense of place and like how lighting affects safety like there are papers out there that actually say that parks are dangerous. And I was like, why? Turns out it's because there was specifically talking about parks in America, USA that aren't well lit and there's illicit activity there like drug dealing and whatnot, which I wouldn't expect in Hong Kong cause they're paved, they're policed or they're well lit. So I think noticing these changes in how the policy or people are using the spaces or the culture have like broaden my perspective on what contributes to quality or feeling that you have a space that you can do activities and go about your day feeling safe? They're accessible to you and having an inclusive environment of people with different backgrounds? Yep.

01:03:53
Veronica
Madonna

Great. Thank you. It's been a lot of great conversation. It's been making me think a lot just in terms of understanding of quality and how it's changed and you know, start to think just even by the examples that everyone shared today that you know often and trying to define quality, it's really challenging because it's not a singular consideration, and I think that the consideration is different depending on who you are and where you live and what your needs are? But I also start to think that perhaps all too often in the past, quality was a definition of privilege, and we think of quality in terms of materials and having expensive materials, or we think about having luxury of space.

But I think we need to kind of think about quality as a circular component and I was kind of really taken aback by Shirley, your example in terms of your project. Because you're looking not only at providing, you know, work and places to study, you know, elements of materials that are, you know, sound of the region, but you you've added an economic model which makes it real and tangible for many communities. And I think that's very important. So when we add in education, which is empowerment. You give them the ability to have economics, which is a necessity. And you add in social, cultural and environmental considerations, you start to have a holistic and circular consideration of what quality is. So, I think we have to keep remembering that quality maybe is not a singular definition, but something that is perhaps more about circularity, and more specifically not something that we can definitely define as a group. It's really going to be something that is defined by each other and individually and community wise so. Just some thoughts from today's discussion. So thank you.

01:06:01
Dawn
Clarke

Trying to think about where I'm going to start. One of the things that I think is coming out of this project is kind of a shared language around, like building a language about how we can describe quality in a way that captures so many of these things. And I think it's very easy to say there's this group and their needs and there's this group and their needs. And there's this group and their needs. And there's so many needs and there's so many groups.

How do we possibly begin to tackle this problem? Because it's this huge complex thing with all these tangents and arms and where do you start? And I've been thinking just very recently about, is there a way to distill it to something that is actually simple, and I might be wrong about this. This is something I'm just kind of thinking about in the last two days, literally.

If we put you know we all want to put people at the beginning of this at the centre of this whole project. What if we put the needs of moms and babies. At the beginning of this and what if everything was designed, our spaces, our buildings, our neighborhoods, our communities to support and build structures around the needs, the real authentic needs of moms. Because when you capture those, you capture everything. Now babies are going to sit on the ground more than seniors, it's true. But can you know can we build a place, a park at a neighborhood that is very supportive and inclusive and welcoming.

Because you know, if you have to work four jobs and take the bus for an hour and a half every way, how are you supporting your family? How are you being? How are you nurturing the next generation? What are the social outcomes? And I think we're all kind of seeing that whether we realize it or not in you know, a capitalist society which you know, that's where we live. This is what we know. But I really think we might be able to simplify this in a way that captures like that's a common denominator in every culture in, you know, every experience you know, we all were a baby. We all had a mom and a dad who were supported or not supported. How could we?

Like you carry that through to, you know, joy and delight, you know, is the building, is the neighborhood, a place that's safe for our kids and babies to be. Is it delightful? Are there the acoustic pleasures, the birdsong are the, you know, the animals though wildflowers. Is there a close place to work? Is it a, you know, satisfying kind of job so that our parents are coming home happy. You know something left to give to the children at the end of the day and to the other people that you know that you're required to care for. So I've been, you know, thinking about this. And in terms of epigenetics, too, I started reading a book by Gabor Matte, which, you know, everyone knows. Gabor Mattei, I'm sure. And in the few chapters lead so far, mostly on the plane on the way here, It really sort of, you know how we just think mind and body, you know, two things and over time and now we're thinking they're a connected thing. They're not two separate things. They're not even connected. They're just one right.

And all of this stuff thinking about the built environment and then the social environment, I think we're starting to see and understand how it's not even a bridge. It's one, it's one thing and, you know what is our role and our impact in that? I think there's something really exciting that is going to come out of this project that you really smart people are going to articulate that some of us just aren't able to get there yet. But I think something really great is going to come out of all of this as we figure out the language and articulate it together and figure out where those common denominators. Because I think there might be something there that can really help us kind of move this along.

01:10:32
Fadi
Masoud

Like just looking at everything with radical empathy, like the spatial physical social, where the kind of you know, the moms and babies are a lens or a way to look at things with empathy in a way that you care about that their everyday lived experience, even if you're not a mom or a baby. So if you start thinking about that, that means you're building a physical world that is empathetic versus hostile.

01:11:06
Firdous
Nizar

Sorry to break the line again just to directly respond to that, because I also think that yes, it's important to design environments with moms and babies in mind because yeah, definitely their lived experience is so vital for the growth of communities and places and spaces, right?

The interesting thing is that there are statistics and evidence that shows that women, especially working moms, they take the most public transport, and so they're very dependent on these services and often more and more, like with this growth, like rapid urbanization and like suburban, you know, like living in the suburbs, it's so much more complicated to commute than, especially if you're a single mother, because most of the suburban households are built for heteronormative families.

So imagine the social responsibilities of a single mother raising children for them to do this commute. This kind of dance back and forth with all of these. as you mentioned hostile environments, right, it's very complex so, but the thing is that even if statistics shows that they are the consumers of these services, they don't necessarily we don't necessarily collect their lived experience despite of all that so and another thing, as an architect, I wasn't trained to look into their lived experience either, right?

It was like we were given a brief of, OK we if let's say we're going to design A playground, we're always thinking about, well, at the most. OK, how can we make this look colorful or, you know, very like low hanging fruits. We would say just to try to make it very beautiful in the eyes of the clients who are funding it mostly. But also we have like our building codes that we need to follow, right so we're always just like, very stressed out. Just like looking into that. All the materials that we're trying to use to build it, you know, make it everything according to budget, all of that.

Maybe we have some consultations with the parents, but not really. If the school management doesn't want to. So we have all that complexity and even in there I feel like education systems play a big role there to instill the sense of, ok lived experience is at the centre of the whole thing that we need to be able to start from there, not from a design brief or like from a like a fix program from the get go, but to really sit with the communities that we're building for and get their feedback and start the design process from there, which is going to be tedious, so there is the time factor there. There's the resources factor there. It's going to be tedious, but I think we can try to in that sense also designed for adaptability, for flexibility, for longevity, all these terms that we heard so far.

Try to incorporate that more, even if the process is going to be tedious, so where am I going with this? I think here what's key is the data collection, because I think we were talking about how there's not enough data lived experience needs to be somehow articulated in a way that we are then able to translate that into our built and unbuilt, cause like parks, I'm just thinking, the design of parks like are we, as architects always trained to do that? Because like we always think that. Yeah. Yeah. So there's like a very disciplinary kind of pieces of clothes that were cut cutting across the room, and we're like, OK, that's not my job as a structural engineer, for example. It's not my job to design that or you know we tried to take one problematic and we just think about it from our own without necessarily working together with other people so interdisciplinarity is also for me key to achieving quality in the built environment, so I'll stop there.

01:16:13
Maria Farfan

As I said before, I'm new into this project and also new into the whole concept of quality as fair to say I was trained as an architect without taking into consideration quality or without asking people what they need. And I get this

approach until like very recently in my work as an architect and also as students to get in touch with communities, I had the opportunity to work with the community indigenous people, community in Colombia.

And since that moment I understand that it's so important to listen to other people, because we cannot just arrive and do what we think is best for other people. So my point is that it's very important to, this process of Co creation and I really believe and I also agree with you, what you just said about the integration of Academy with the community. There's steps that are working in that direction, but I really think that it's important to train new generations in that specific point, that to create we need also to hear or the other people, we need to understand, and that is going to be a process of inclusivity.

So for me this is the main point how we, with our ideas that we're developing somehow in this project how we can help in to make our all our ideas in some somehow real, and I believe it has to be with the hand of the education of, I don't like the word training students because, It's not training, but I will say that it's more like open eyes open. Try to open peoples' eyes of what is to live in community and what is to serve a community and what is to produce for a community. So I think this is our main challenge in this project, how to incorporate how to just not just to follow codes or instructions about how to, for me the important point is how to listen, how to open our eyes of what's going on around us and how we need to, how we can approach those necessities, and how to resolve it in co creation process.

01:20:00

Michel de Blois

Michel de Blois. Sarah I think stated just I think the most important paradox that we face and we'll start with that, because you said I have absolutely no experience in architecture. And at the same time, you said lived experience is my thing. So it's very paradoxical because architecture is about experience and what I think is we deal with most people who have absolutely no experience in architecture. So we think we're experts in architecture, in the building stuff.

But at the same time, we have very, very low experience and understanding how people live those spaces, so I think we have to understand that and there's a huge challenge in doing so because we're focused on the material stuff and we're not focused on the community and the mother, the elders, different conditions that we that we must enable and it takes a village to raise a kid. So it starts from there. So maybe thinking about the mother and the kid is a good thing, but also everybody else. So where we go from there, how we move forward. I think we have a challenge of decoding to do from people or stakeholders, and when we started to look at what is quality in our projects to define quality, it's like very elusive. What can you where do you start? So we try to look in literature in different magazines and stuff. You know how people do talk about body and there's nothing. You know, there's absolutely nothing to. There's no pillars. There are no foundations. So, we were very lucky in Quebec, the government produced a little pamphlet, It's called guiding principle to quality. It's based on 11 principles that should be included in defining or building or conducting construction projects. So, we looked at that and we said, well, that that might be a good base to start with. So, we actually started with that. Then you'll see it on our map. It's over there in our in our road map.

And what we realized is that when we ask, there's 11 principle and they're very the definitions of each of those principle is very, very vague. So we said, OK, it doesn't mean anything experience like life cycle, security, accessibility. So all these 11 mega or meta principles are not properly defined, so we asked in round tables you know, how would you define that principle for each participant, and this is when we realized that every participant had a different

perception of that core principle. But what we also noticed is that every participant used one core principle. That's a lived experience or accessibility, and to define that quality principle, they use others around.

So if I want to define quality experience, let's say I'll include accessibility and landscape environment. If I want to define life cycle, I'll include accessibility, security and stuff as well like this so. It makes it very complicated to understand how people define it, but if you start by identifying these core principles, it's a bit easier.

Anyway, this is what we're doing, and we think it helps a lot for people to articulate these principle by giving them different qualifying attributes so on and so forth. So, it's starting to become a tool that allows different stakeholders to express how they perceive quality in a certain environment for a certain project.

The other thing is that you cannot define quality like. These are the guiding principle you always have to put them into a specific context. And the context is the context of the project and every project has themes. So if you're not able to provide context and themes, it's impossible to define quality. And everybody has a different perception of quality, and you have to accept that. So moving from there. And I'll finish on that. What we also realize, besides having these four different processes, is that actors also have varying and sometimes very big Lambda variation into their influence in the process. So at certain stage of the process different actors will have a lot of inference on the specific quality principle. And this is how would I say it's a trigger or a sign of potential risks. If some actors say, well for me, this quality principle accessibility for elderly people in parks, let's say or lighting or whatever is very, very important and it at one point in the process it's going to get lost.

Because other people have more influence on that principle. That's in money. If the management process takes over the construction process, or if the construction process takes over the design process, how these processes interinfluence each other? Will diffuse and dilute quality principle and it goes back to that degree of influence of actors and, It's worrying a little bit. So how are we able to preserve?

The impact of an actor throughout the process I think it's one of the big challenges and if you're not able to define properly those principles and that everybody understands that that person means this by that principle it's difficult to carry it on so. Yeah, different perspectives and varying degree of influence I think the future challenge for us.

01:26:42
Shirley
Thompson

Interesting. So, I do have an example of that before my work in York Landing, I worked with other remote communities, Garden Hill and with Segamat and we had accessibility, we built housing, we trained youth and I'll use the word trained because they built housing, right. And so we have the now chief of York Landing, who was teaching them how to build and they built hands on, and they got lots of certificates, so we got, you know, experiential.

But you know, everything was way more expensive than what was dropped, was the access, even though these communities, because they're the most remote, they were described as the most, as remote as the North Pole and the road didn't, the winter road didn't freeze so they didn't get the materials in. So that was a huge... So what went was the access, so the ramps, all those things that were defining it.

Yeah. So I'll, I'll just go back. I'm going to be all over the place. I'll just jump from place to place, if you don't mind. So the lived experience and you know, I've attended a lots of housing conferences more as an activist than, you know, definitely not as an architect, and UM, it's the lived experience has always included homeless people.

And so here, including First Nations people living in remote communities, where this is a housing crisis in indigenous communities brought on by the Indian Act, Manitoba is the worst in terms of housing and there is now a 6,000,000, and more, it's a requirement court challenge for housing and it's out of Saint Theresa Point, which is one of the island gate communities. So I did brief as an expert witness and crazy like of all the places in Canada, you know, even the First Nations, they have the worst adequate, you know, if you use the stats Canada data inadequacy and which is major repairs, so they needed major repairs and it was at 50%, right for some of these houses. And when you added in the fact of overcrowding and you know many of these three bedrooms had 24 people in them right then it was up to 80% combined inadequate and overcrowded. So there is hope that this class action will result in the worst houses, the worst communities for First Nations to get some funding and get some action.

And you know, it's not every community, but it's most communities in Manitoba and northern Saskatoon and like the north is really badly hit and part of it too. You know, when I looked at the data and I mapped the data because, like, where are these worst housing for inadequate. And where are they for? For overcrowded, but inadequate major repairs the worst ones were in, you know, these areas that had had fire and after fire comes flood because there's no vegetation to hold the water, and so you know these communities for years are without housing as a result. And you know, I had worked with Lake St. Martin, which had been flooded out eight years, they were living in hotels.

And more than that, some of them are back, right. And so many murdered and missing women as a result. So because they have to go through the courts, you know, the Indian act, which nobody knows. But I really do ask that you look at it and consider it even just Wikipedia or any of my articles or any I did with Craig Blacksmith? We did a webinar every week for the last probably two or three years on the Indian Act. So there some are better than others one too.

And because the land on reserves, is federal land, so you can't get mortgages? CMHC then is the only source for most reserves of funding. They give a few houses per year, If, like Garden Hill and Wasagaming and all these island lake communities, they're not allowed to go into debt. Of course, if the winter road something comes up and you know. So they're all they're in debt for 10-12 years. They didn't have a house built because they were in debt. This is populations that, you know, we cycle back. It's crazy. It's. So we had one student there who was 32 and he was a grandfather of two. But you know we have a student in York Landing who's a father of six at 32, right. So the demographics, you know, people are expanding really quickly. And so I charted all this, you know, and it's one to 2% building right versus as much as 21%, but way, way higher for demographic growth.

So yes, it's really a consideration of, you know, this is a hidden like, you know, reserves were put far away from urban centres for a reason to keep settlers unaware and stupid and it really worked. But it's really kept these First Nations down, and it's something maybe you know, that we have to, like this group, to addresses it, or even considers it, because it's not your world probably right. But it's part of Canada. So just thinking how we look a little farther afield and you know I no, no matter what my research is, I've always looked at the communities that need it the most, the biggest need, and I think it's there it is there like all the stats prove it. OK. Thanks.

01:33:53
Chris Wiebe

So interesting, I realize we're kind of coming up short on time, so I'll keep it tight. But I guess like just thinking about that whole situation in those communities and just thinking about like you know indigenous peoples they knew how to house themselves. They knew how to live for millennia. I mean and. And so it's in this particular instance where those kind of skills around those kind of technologies and that's what's so interesting around. And thinking about like building up that workforce, that that knows how to maintain, that's built them, that knows how to maintain those buildings that has, that feels and affinity with them that where you don't have to sort of parachute in that knowledge or that kind of expertise or trade skills from elsewhere.

It's an interesting. Maybe we can learn something there, around quality, that kind of like that kind of investment, that kind of inherent connection to place. Very tangible connection and I think what was also really interesting was just to listening like Michelle was talking about like that kind of intersections and like collision of processes and around and I keep thinking about the economics around how do you make your high blown principles connect with like the real estate economic kind of like world, where these people invest in places and they get out after 5, 6, 7, 8 years, don't care how long it lasts. They don't really sort of, you know, like the longevity. It's about kind of like, well, it's about investment cycles and getting return on investment so that investors can recoup there, see some impact, but it's interesting you think about.

I'm thinking about Winnipeg, Shirley, and I'm thinking about like a building that was like. Just as an example of the public safety building, that was a part of this kind of like complex, right where they knocked down the Old City Hall, there was a kind of a brutalist, again, a kind of a reverse ziggurat building. Why am I obsessed with these buildings anyway? It was a brutalist building built with Tindal stones. So beautiful, beautiful material. And I had these kind of things. And you can look it up online.

Anyway, the metal anchors that held the Tyndall stone panels to the concrete failed because it rusted out. And it was determined that it was too expensive to replace. So they had, like, a building that was beautiful, that was a showcase for its time. That said, something became kind of obsolete and or at least in the economic sense, it was not worth fixing up. So they've demolished it. Or they were thinking of keeping the skeleton. Maybe for something else I'm not sure where it landed, but it was. It was an example where the kind of an Achilles heel.

I'm also about with Don saying around like language and around getting the language right. And I'm also thinking like, you know, around if the Heritage Conservation Universe, just thinking, you know, out of the place that I know like this whole idea, what's the connection and maybe I didn't think about it until you started talking about it between quality and qualities and the whole kind of idea of value based heritage conservation kind of thinking around looking at existing places and thinking about, you know, their aesthetic qualities, their historical associational, the values associated with those places, the historical associative kind of ideas around them, the cultural things that are inherent in place

Maybe there's that language there that we can pull things out of that can help us in finding this kind of kind of shared language and also the other idea I have and it's a bit of a stray one but it comes back to what I was saying around existing buildings and how they figure like whether quality is inherent in places or whether we ascribe it to places. And it's probably a mix of both. But I mean the thing is, I like thinking about where we're at in terms of the

climate emergency, do we have the luxury of thinking about quality and thinking, OK, this time we're going to take that building down and we're going to replace it with something that we think is going to last forever. Well, I think previous generations had the same ideas, and we're left with a kind of a legacy of buildings that we need to deal with. So I think it's sort of, with older buildings, I don't think we have a choice. We have to find the qualities we have to find. We have to bring quality out of out of really banal and sometimes wrongheaded and bad buildings that you know that love gas and have like huge HVAC systems that are inefficient. We need to figure out how to work with them. Because they're this embodied, their embodied carbon, they're embodied environmental impact that we can't afford to create more of so we need to be we need to think in two ways about quality, how we find quality in existing places, but also how we make sure that new construction we're going to have new construction, but how we make sure that that's future proofed, how we make sure that it's not kind of maladapted in this new kind of space both socially and climate wise. So anyway, I think that language part is going to be really interesting.

01:39:01
Fadi
Masoud

We're right at noon. There's an important wrap up question that we just need to put on the table and maybe this is a way for everybody whoever has extra remarks to add to. Maybe just think about it in the context of this question is if the group think there's a consensus on what we mean by quality.

01:39:34
Lyne Parent

Yeah, I'm not sure can I answer the question. I'm going to try everything that was said was so inspiring and so many things and interesting, but I'm going to be very down to Earth because I work every day with architects, realize doing projects and public procurements projects. So basically I said that we needed data to define quality through lived experience because we have to explain what quality is and it's very important. But at the end of the day, we always have budget constraint, time constraint. You have to do your project within a year, how do you do that without losing the money? Because you need to do that project, but you need to listen to people. So I think we need data to define quality to live experience. But we also need processes to achieve this. This quality in in projects, in real projects. So we rely on these academics and people in universities to give us these this process that will help us to achieve this quality because we have a process. Today we wait our turn to speak, we use the microphone, we will have we need processes because this is what we will use basically to achieve this quality, so it's integrated project delivery plus plus plus better. But we need we need processes, so we need definition, we need data, but we need processes, tools that would be great if we end this partnership with tools.

01:41:21
Michel de
Blois

I don't think we can agree on deficient definition of quality. I don't think it's possible to agree to have a common definition or knowledge. But I think we can agree on how we can define it and with who? So we know we need a lot of different perspectives. We need the different actors who we need to do Co creation, etcetera, etcetera. So again, I pray for my camp, but on our poster, we've split this these processes and we've added the quality process production process. So on top of construction design and management, we said how can we produce that quality, so working on the tools or the mechanisms on the philosophy behind what, how we build this quality and how we can transmit it into the project, I think we can agree on that. I think we will eventually because every project depending on the context will have different definition of quality concepts and criteria. But how do we get there? I think we should work on those tools.

01:42:46
Shirley
Thompson

I'm going to have a very different definition of how of quality, which is that everyone is housed and can get to go to school in their community, and then the rest will come, you know? And I would go out to build in. That's my little Shorty one but. That we build with local people and local materials, so very site driven. Very community driven and community includes relations with materials.

01:43:28
Nicole Yu

Yeah, I actually think we have a general consensus for what we feel like quality is here in this room. It's definitely context dependent, but we've mentioned accessibility like equity for whoever is involved and also sustainability. Like one thing we always say in urban forestry is the best time to have planted a tree was 30 years ago, and so the like. Same with buildings. I guess they're more permanent, so being able to adapt to that and fix them to the use of the current users is something I think and we generally agree on to whether how that manifest into an actual definition. They need a bit more work, but yeah.

01:44:03
Fadi
Masoud

I think one thing I agree the problem, or the difficulty is in the translation into physical and space things right, like equity, sustainability, accessibility, are goals and frameworks are goals, but when it becomes physical and spatial and material and inhabited, it's there's a loss in that. And I think maybe that's one thing that we are sort of in charge of thinking of. And I think the consensus is difficult to reach in that translation versus in the goal. So maybe that's two different things. Yeah.

Well, so if anyone has anything, will we have all afternoon and then all day tomorrow too. So I think really great that we have this time.

ROOM 10

Workshop 1- Changing Personal Views on Quality

Room10_ Location: IDEA Building - Room 1004			13 Participants
First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Research Site
Trevor	Butler	Athabasca University	Athabasca University
Samantha	Biglieri	Toronto Metropolitan University	Toronto Metropolitan University
Mercedes	Garcia Holguera	University of Manitoba	University of Manitoba
Bechara	Helal	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Catherine	Riddell	ERA Architects	Carleton University
Darrell	MacDonald	Nova Scotia Department of Public Works	Dalhousie University
Meaghon	Reid	Vibrant Communities Calgary	University of Calgary
Kevin	Ng	Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF)	National Partners
William	Straw	Montreal 24/24	McGill University
Paloma	Castonguay-Rufino	Université de Montréal	Université de Montréal
Brendan	Roworth	Dalhousie University	Dalhousie University
Alexandre	Néron	McGill University	McGill University
Paula	Rodrigues Affonso Alves	University of Manitoba	University of Manitoba

Room 10 - Workshop 1 - Changing Personal Views on Quality

Wednesday, May 1, 2024, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Date of report: 2026-06-17

Report produced by

Castonguay-Rufino, Paloma (*Université de Montréal*)

10.1. Summary

As part of the first workshop of the convention, participants were invited to discuss their personal views on quality of the built environment after two years of research on the subject. In the form of a round-table discussion, each participant shared their perspective on the issue, related to the activities of their research site as well as their own individual views.

The structure of the discussion was planned in accordance with the following guidelines: First, a brief presentation of each participant and their own understanding of quality in the built environment after two years of partnership research. Then, answering the following question: How has my understanding of quality changed since the start of the project? Finally, a wrap-up of the discussion in the form of a summary of the main ideas shared by the participants, which can be summed up as follows:

- Rethinking quality from the perspectives of various rightsholders and stakeholders.
- Quality is a complex process that involves listening to diverse, and sometimes conflicting needs, within various contexts.
- Quality is a changing notion that must be grounded in action: Some participants expressed it was important to also identify actions in the context of partnership research.
- The user is a notion to explore:
 - Be more precise when talking about including the user: how far do we want to go with that?
 - The users are not looking at quality from a building perspective, they rather notice the friction points that they find when they're in a space themselves.
 - Can the user also be an active part of producing quality in the built environment? Through their use and their feedback about space, for example.
- Some participants stressed that they had overcome certain preconceived notions of quality in the built environment thanks to the work carried out within the partnership.
- Some participants observed a shift in definitions of quality from material form, qualities, aesthetics of architecture to specific user needs and users see quality;
- Interdisciplinarity in thinking about quality in the built environment is very important. For example, if you're working on neurodiversity, you need to

invite health professionals to the table.

- Focus on a broader understanding of accessibility, not limited to physical disabilities.

Quality as a notion can evolve over time: how can architects support these changes over time?

10.2. Detailed Transcription of the Workshop Discussion

Time + name

[00:08:06] Carly Ziter	In terms of the main positive outcomes, one of the really positive outcomes that has come out of our work, so our group at Concordia is working on integrative approach towards understanding quality for aging in the built environment and particularly lengthening the lengths of mobility, decarbonization, diversity, and something that's been really powerful for us, is really listening to the lived experiences of participants. And so we have done a series of focus groups from a number of residences for older adults in the city of Montreal. Both residents in these spaces and also management at these spaces and just really hearing the stories and what comes to the forefront and what the positive and negative aspects of quality are for people living in these spaces has been shaping kind of the questions that we asked and our understanding of the process. So it's really getting into that qualitative data and working directly with people and learning from them has been a really important outcome for us.
[00:11:27] Catherine Riddell	I think one of the great positive experiences has been the interdisciplinary approach that this research project has taken and the opportunity to expand our conversations and maybe our preconceived notions about what different groups might value and how they might go about determining quality. One of the things that was flashed on the screen this morning was about sort of the incompatibility of heritage buildings and existing fabric with change and being inclusive spaces and I think that working with the different teams and the different groups here I think we have a real opportunity to talk about priorities in terms of community needs, sustainability, accessibility, architectural excellence and sort of our shared stories together. So I think it's a really amazing opportunity and I'm really excited to continue that conversation.
[00:12:31] Darrell MacDonald	I've been in charge of the public procurement standards for schools for several years now. I've had some meetings where I've received some feedback and the key thing is, you give it over to the users and how they use it isn't necessarily always the way you thought they would. So that feedback is going to be really valuable to me, because I'm currently rewriting the standards for school design.
[00:14:16] Anonymous	I've been researching the impact on neurodiversity and the built environment and how are we as designers understand different sensory needs of different people in society, especially in the workplace. That's an area where I hope we can explore further. How the impact of our diverse people is accommodated and understood by us as designers. How do we think about spaces in education as well, anything from washrooms to corridors, to not just the classrooms, just general in buildings in our built environment, how do we embrace that? And I think as engineers, architects around other multidisciplinary people around the table, working with sort of healthcare practitioners like occupational therapists, psychologists, bring that into briefing on the built environment and accommodating those needs. And what does that look like? And then what does that look like from an energy and an

environmental perspective from my background, where I'm coming from as an engineer. But to sort of break those down into more of a collaborative approach, something which I'm really interested thinking over the next few days and learning more about it to the future. We've really focused on the rural community rather than the cities. We've focused on housing and agriculture in rural communities and that to me has been a real learning experience from. Everyone's moving to the city. Rural communities is where a majority of the food is produced and the food is sort of being devalued by major supermarkets and growers and big farms. So how do we support rural communities? How do we make those places that are attractive for farmers, workers, all kinds of the whole community? So that's been a that's been a real learning experience for me as well. It's not just about cities, it's about the rural as well.

[00:19:56]
Kevin Ng

Actually, I want to also echo some of the things that have already been said. Like I think this is my second convention and just like seeing the level of collaboration that has happened is really bringing different stakeholders together which is key. I work in accessibility and like even when I was in university and in school like these are things that are not taught, and architects and design professionals look at accessibility solely from a building perspective and that's how they view accessibility as, so bringing without like really understanding how what the users' needs are. So I think really bringing visibility to that is something. And bringing students as well, so that they can learn about inclusion from a different lens, as opposed to like what code and standards are requiring them to do. I think you can read all these different documents and have an understanding of what accessibility and inclusion is, but like without putting the user at the center of everything. And I think that's what this group is also trying to do.

[00:31:10]
Paula
Rodrigues
Affonso Alves

Regarding quality in house building like there are several problems. I'm an engineer and I understand the qualities of a wood stove in the house. But how are you going to get an engineer to sign the wood stove project in an isolated region? One you leave the community to go to school for example, you don't come back. So how do you keep engineers there? So I really like the research and the study and academic imagination but at the third year of this research project, I'd like us to to keep ourselves grounded and ourselves grounded in actions like, how do these questions that come in our mind will actually come back out? Checking the hidden systems in the reserve, are we going to study the ground and understand the biomaterials that they have there? So like what are the real action? How are we going to get around the Internet to give quality up in-house building? That's are that these are things that I expect to talk through these next two days.

[00:36:47]
Paloma
Castonguay-
Rufino

I wanted to share another thought about how my definition of quality has become less conceptual over the last two years as a result of the work within the research partnership. When we had to think of an example of quality in built environment, at first I thought quality is when you are in a building and you can read the intentions of the architectural concept. So that was where I saw quality as an architect. But now I realize that in order to do that, one has to be able to read the technical documentation of a building. So now I don't think that that's where quality lies anymore, because that means that it's just the people who can read technical drawings who could experience quality in the built environmental. It has shifted from a conceptual place to a lived place.

[00:38:20]
Bechara
Helal

I understand that we are all having this moment where quality went from a very conceptual thing grounded in our own approach, so we have quality for architects, for engineers, etc. Depending of where you are, you kind of see quality in a very specific way. We've had a few round tables at University of Montreal, and that made us reconsider our initial subject, from material innovations to spaces for special needs. We were focusing at one point on material form, qualities, aesthetics of architecture and after a few discussions and round tables we went back to why are we doing this? Who are we doing this for? It's not for the object itself, it's for people. And we wanted the building to answer specific needs. So we realized we shouldn't focus so much on form of the building but rather on how users see quality. So, it becomes more complex because it can't be just a one sided approach of quality. As architects, this is a good project. That's not a good project, and there's a difference in quality, and this is how we judge them as objects. What we're doing now when we're doing this in our teaching is we're trying to go back to the users and say, OK, how do the users live through the building and what are their needs? And the only way to do this is to listen. You have to listen. Every condition is different. So I think the whole change of approach is about deconstructing the way we understand quality and trying to complexify instead of having the one very specific direction.

[00:42:26]
Paula
Rodrigues
Affonso Alves

I grew up in an apartment close to the beach. I always thought like I wanted to have nice quality of living and I've always thought about enhancing my quality because I had all my needs. I never had to question my needs. But then recently, I heard a story about one of the houses that One House Many Nations delivered, that the person that was going to live there was staying the chicken coop instead of staying in the house, because of the acceptance of the space, because of understanding that need that you, as a human being have that you deserve that need to be accomplished. So I think sometimes as a family we talk of quality, but sometimes we need to lower ourselves to means, because sometimes it's just something that we did not experience, like needs and other people they have many different needs. Like I have never thought of the grounding of my building apartment is going to sink or something, so I could go to university without that in my mind and my mom would pack me lunches every day. I did not think where the food came from. You should think of like getting people's needs. And maybe like enhancing from there.

[00:44:42]
Kevin Ng

When we think about accessibility, I think a lot of people really think of accessibility as from a mobility perspective and not so much from other types of disabilities. There is something about like building codes and standards like when people think about accessibility, what they think about is the accessible symbol, like somebody in a wheelchair, not so much thinking about the other types of disabilities as well. I think it's important to understand how like it's it shouldn't be siloed as well, because people also have multiple disabilities and we are also in an aging population, there's a lot like there's a lot more conversation right now happening on neurodiversity too. So, one example that I also wanted to share is I work in an office building, it's a large office tower I walk in that building every single day, but two weeks ago I actually did a walkthrough with a group of researchers that are neurodiverse, and I experienced that space very differently. For example, how the lobby was set up and how we typically tend to like buildings that have like lots of natural light, large spaces without really thinking how the acoustics and a lot of those

design elements can impact them from a sensory perspective. So really thinking and making sure that when we're talking about accessibility we're not just going to people with physical disabilities, but really bringing all these different perspectives. I think it's great that we're having those conversations, because I'm also doing some work in the States and the conversation is very different there when it comes to accessibility, it's very compliance and legal, it's very litigious there. So I think that's why here at least in Canada, we're more open to have those types of discussions.

[00:47:15]
Dener
François

Thinking about quality I understand we could consider two main processes. On one side the process of prediction in the project and the intervention, and on the other side the process of pursuing quality in itself. Sometimes we can see that quality is a source of conflict amongst actors because of the multiple perceptions and understandings, and the possibility to measure the weight of each actor. The final actor for the most time, the most important one, the citizen, which is the final user, but the citizen was originally integrated in the process. And for that, the result could not be received correctly, the sustainability of this project could be in danger. Is for that when we consider this process like that, actors are very important to understand, and at one time they can express themselves in the process of production for this quality and the project. Design indicators, quality indicators, to help better insure what we expect and this idea of the process of producing quality.

[00:49:34]
Catherine
Riddell

Confession time I think when we started this project and participating with this project I think my ideas for quality were round aesthetics, materiality, workmanship, craftsmanship, and the quality of the building in terms of its sort of final form and this experience has really broadened my understanding to see that it's about, it's not about those things, but it has to be about those things in balance with other priorities and you know, especially accessibility, community needs, its use generally, and its sustainability. So I think adaptive reuse, which is the area of focus for the Carlton group, I feel very privileged to be a part of that conversation because I think that that's an opportunity to look at how we can make compromises and put forward new ideas into existing forms to meet a bunch of those really important I think priorities that are often held in tension, and opportunities to find where we can compromise and how we can do that in a way that's respectful to different points of views and experiences.

[00:51:08]
Darrell
MacDonald

I can't say that my understanding or beliefs about quality have changed as a result of the process here, but it has brought things up that it may that may not have been in the forefront. The biggest thing actually is how important context is, and you know, we all come to the table with our own contexts and understandings, and mine, of course, is from the public, provision of public buildings side of things. In my work, I am very focused on the quality aspects that are in my daily activities.

[00:56:24]
Mercedes
Garcia
Holguera

So in my case, what I think the beginning of the project like I think I did have also a very fixed idea of what I thought quality in architecture would be. And my case my bias was towards sustainability, performative and also the technical aspects like the building as a machine like OK, it doesn't function well. And now I think it's a much more open definition where, for example, where I was mentioning earlier Indigenous voices have very important place and also going back to some of the slides that were presented this morning

with they were showing us this middle point where the participant, the user voice becomes big. I think I've been hearing that again and again. And the way I think about this definition of quality right now is very mingled, mess, it's not clear at all, which I think it's a great place to be right now because it's I think where we should be in order to reorganize things. But at the same time, and I want to play the devil's advocate here, I think there are some potential ramifications that we should also explore. So for example, when we were talking about including the user and I was thinking, OK, how far do we want to go with that? And we just most of us finished doing reviews, academic reviews, portfolio reviews, how far do we want to go in that process so we bring also users to review our students work and grade the work and say how good or bad or how prepared they are to be professionals in the world. So I think this conversation of quality has many ramifications, and I think it's going to be very fascinating to work with those in the next few years.

[00:58:41]
Brendan
Roworth

The idea of quality I had previous to this last year was very much based around reading buildings from a design point of view like thinking about how like window placements and your finishes and all of that stuff is kind of going towards what I thought a good definition of quality would be. It's like a document or a checklist of what makes a good space. But then like after listening to users of the spaces talk about it's from a completely different point of view, right? So they're not looking at it from what the building is, they only kind of notice the friction points that they find when they're in a space themselves. And so that's not to say that having good lighting, good materials, good finishes and good air quality systems isn't important because if they're not there, you're obviously going to notice it. But the things that really come out are the small bits that are super specific to what somebody is doing within the space. Like if a room layout doesn't work for one teacher's teaching style like that becomes a major friction point with how they use the classroom. And so trying to understand ways to document those things that aren't necessarily standardized across everything, like creating ways of constructing a dialogue between future users and current users and designers and policymakers and planners, that's kind of effective of an effective way of sharing those different perspectives in a way that everybody is able to participate in and understand and share their own viewpoints with each other. I think this where my future definition of quality will be as it's not so much in what the building is, it's in the process of how, how that conversation happens and how we document what quality means to different people and having different ways of defining that because obviously as an architecture student my definition of quality and how I think about it is very different than anybody who's been using that building once it's actually constructed so I think this documentation is very important.

[01:03:04]
William Straw

I'm not an architect. But to hear so many people say that it's because of this project over two years that there's been a turn towards thinking about the user in architecture I mean that debate is much longer than that at least I know that in urban planning it is. So the question for me would be, so what's maybe new about it, and maybe it is a kind of social justice term which isn't the same as being concerned with user sometimes, maybe as what has been suggested involves not only listening to users and so on. So I'm just questioning this idea of a big revolution where the architect is thinking about the user I mean, like the little I know of the history of architecture that has come up in that history.

[01:03:52]
Samantha
Biglieri

Theory planners have been grappling with this idea of the public interest, and how do we engage with folks like that's like all of our theory. So it's really interesting to hear that but then to add that element of the quality piece. For me being at this conference, it's an honor. It's been really interesting to sort of hear about how these convergences. And then for me in terms of how quality has changed, I wouldn't say it's changed explicitly, but what we've been doing has been adding to like my knowledge base and so for a couple of things, number one for me is seeing how broader sociocultural political structures like ableism, for instance, show up in official narratives. So, for instance, in our work on like the Toronto Urban Design Awards, folks were in the room when they were deciding these urban design awards and people literally said, like, you know this place isn't accessible, but we're still going to give it an award because it's beautiful. It's literally showing up on how people talk about it. I'm also doing a project where we're looking at the accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and there's been these four evaluations of the act since its inception in 2005, we've been looking at the discourse. How are people talking about it? What did they say? Is it the same problem over and over and over again? Yes, it is. How does it get talked about in the news media? One or two articles for release of evaluation and all across Ontario, Canada. That's what people are reading about, right. And so seeing how these things show up in our official narratives, I think has also impacted how I think about quality. And then just to build on this conversation around talking to users and people who are going to use this space, we've been doing this project called Feeling Better, where we've been working with a consultancy called Steps Public Art and they do all these different cultural events. And so we've been working with them to think about how to make their events more accessible. And so what's been really cool is that we sit in a room, we have these conversations about like, you know, we're going to have a food tour, did we visit every single restaurant to see if there's an accessible washroom and no step access? Did we also check about allergies? Did we, you know, we're doing like a walking tour, have we made sure that the person doing a walking tour is giving a visual description of what we're looking at? Because that's not usually what you do on a walking tour. And then we interview folks, interview different disabilities feedback and then Steps Public Art would implement those new ideas. And so I really think like how do we create these iterative conversations around access? And it's really hard because we build infrastructure that's really permanent. And so trying to think about how do we build things that can be flexible and can be moved and being open to change. We also I talk to like planners, it's like, OK, so what's the checklist? What's the checklist? And so, like, we have to have not only a checklist, but also that propensity for having that conversation, like a checklist can't that be all? It has to be with this like iterative conversation as well.

[01:07:31]
Kevin Ng

I also wanted to add something to this conversation as well too, because we think of quality in a building now, but how are we going to see it like 10 years, 20 years from now? And as architects, we can build and design the most successful building but if it's not maintained and operated properly, if the people that are maintaining operating it properly or doing what needs to be done to it, then it can easily become not accessible as well too. So I think it's, it's not just looking at what the architect is doing and also what the users' needs are, but also looking at the in between as well, like how people's knowledge of like accessibility is too. At least for us, what we do like we raise

awareness about it and this is something that we think is should be foundational to everyone, not just like people designing spaces.

[01:09:32]
Alexandre
Néron

Just to build on what a lot of people already said it makes me wonder about the role of designers and architects. Should maybe designers and architects also remain active part in their designs after they've been completed? Could architects also contribute to this change and to the way quality evolves over the years? That's something that I found inspiring with our research group at McGill is that we're looking also at how marginalized communities are using night spaces. So we've been talking about temporal years, but also temporal use through the day is something that happens quite a lot, and these marginalized communities find ways of using spaces that most of us use during the day time and completely mold it to their use so that they can make qualities for themselves. I think this is the portion where it's very inspiring for architects is to see how users are actually doing this in a very ephemeral way.

[01:24:24]
Mercedes
Garcia
Holguera

On this same idea of the user, it seems to me, but correct me if I'm wrong, but we all agree that yeah, like including or giving more agency to the users is one of these missing pieces in how we redefine quality so I think that's great. But to me, what I'm very interested in is like, what are the needy, greedy and the areas that are a little bit grayer. So I would like to know how far can we go in this inclusion of the user voices and at some point we will have to be very clear and very specific and how do we define that process? How do we measure that process? How do we put a line because we will have to put a line because even if the user says like, I don't know, I will love to have this type of role if it's not working, if it's not responding to the physics or the building science there will have to be a line. So, where and how do we define those lines in the interaction or integration of these participatory processes.