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By

Aubrie May Christensen

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A Shareable City: An Analysis of Shareable Land Use Approaches in
Austin and San Francisco

APPROVED BY

SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:

Barbara Brown Wilson

Michael Oden

**A Shareable City: An Analysis of Shareable Land Use Approaches in
Austin and San Francisco**

By

Aubrie May Christensen, B.A.

Report

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Abstract

A Shareable City: An Analysis of Shareable Land Use Approaches in Austin and San Francisco

Aubrie May Christensen, MSCRP

The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

Supervisor: Barbara Brown Wilson

Inspired by the recent rise in interest surrounding the Sharing Economy, this report seeks to provide insight into the potential for sharing in cities. I focus my attention on land; as one of the scarcest resources in urban areas land holds some of the greatest potential for sharing. I strive to develop an awareness of the challenges against and opportunities for shareable approaches to land use and development of city-owned land. Through interviews and archival research I explore a variety of projects, programs and initiatives in Austin, TX and San Francisco, CA. Based on my findings I provide suggestions for the City of Austin in developing a more shareable approach to land use and development.

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Part I. Introduction

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges support for making cities more shareable by (1) encouraging a better understanding of the Sharing Economy and its benefits to both the public and private sectors by creating more robust and standardized methods for measuring its impacts in cities; (2) creating local task forces to review and address regulations that may hinder participants in the Sharing Economy and proposing revisions that ensure public protection as well; and (3) playing an active role in making appropriate publicly owned assets available for maximum utilization by the general public through proven sharing mechanisms.(US Conference of Mayors 2013, Resolution 87)

In June of 2013 the U.S. Conference of Mayors adopted a resolution promising to make their cities more shareable. The resolution was co-sponsored by fifteen mayors across the country, including Mayor Lee of San Francisco. Mayor Lee a month before announced the first Sharing Economy Working Group for the City of San Francisco. In September, *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders* was released. The first of its kind, it focuses on specific policy recommendations for cities wanting to become more shareable. The sharing economy has been gaining momentum and attention. NPR ran a week-long series highlighting the sharing economy titled “The Sharing Economy: A Shift Away From Ownership?” It has even garnered attention from popular magazines such as The Economist and Forbes. So what is the sharing economy? And why is it gaining so much attention?

Sharing is certainly not a new idea, but sharing as an approach to urban policy is. Sharing creates a unique lens with which to view certain urban issues. The definition of sharing- “to partake of, use, experience, occupy, or enjoy with others” (Merriam-Webster dictionary online, no date) allows for interpretation. Many urban goods, services, environments and experiences are commonly shared based on the definition above both with and without an exchange of payment. The concept of access over ownership, used in many new sharing based business models,

appropriately fits within this definition. Expanding our perception of what can and should be shared within an urban context has the potential to open up new opportunities and possibilities.

In my hunt for definitions of the sharing economy, I looked at Wikipedia. Wikipedia is a web-based, collaboratively written encyclopedia. It represents one of the largest and most widely used sharing tools in the world, claiming 470 million unique visitors monthly. According to the collective users and editors of Wikipedia “The sharing economy... is a sustainable economic system built around the sharing of human and physical assets. It includes the shared creation, production, distribution, trade and consumption of goods and services by different people and organizations.” (Wikipedia)

The top three online dictionaries, Dictionary.com, Merriam-Webster Online, and The Free Dictionary, have yet to provide a definition of the sharing economy. Despite this, definitions are plentiful and although there are similar threads in each of the definitions cited here, it is clear that it is still in its early development. The following are definitions or descriptions used by some of the primary leaders of the sharing economy.

In an interview with NPR Joe Gebbia, co-founder of Airbnb refers to the sharing economy as a shift in the way we view ownership and status. “In the wake of the recession, there's a slightly different mentality beginning to emerge, which is that access is more powerful than ownership. The last century was predicated around ownership as status. There's an opportunity for this century to be defined by access as status” (NPR). Companies such as Airbnb are finding creative ways to capitalize on this shifting mentality; providing online tools for people to share *access* of privately owned goods in safe and profitable ways which in the past were only accessible via ownership.

Janelle Orsi of the Sustainable Economics Law Center describes the sharing economy as one that “encompasses a broad range of activities... tied together by a common means (harnessing the existing resources of a community) and a common end (growing the wealth of that community). The sharing economy is the response to the legacy economy where we tend to be reliant on resources from outside of our communities, and where the work we do and the purchases we make mostly generate wealth for people outside of our communities”(Orsi). Here, Orsi pushes the conversation towards a more localized movement while at the same time referring to a break from past economic models. Orsi is describing a break from reliance on outside resources and wealth by sharing the existing resources and wealth in localized communities.

In *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders* the focus is placed on actual activities or things being shared. “This is the sharing economy. It is characterized by an explosion of practices such as car sharing, ridesharing, cooperatives, community farms, shared housing, shared workspaces, and a multitude of new micro-enterprises made possible by platforms that connect supply and demand at the peer-to-peer level” (Orsi et al. 2013, 6). There is a suggestion that new platforms are enabling such practices, as opposed to a shift in values.

Rachel Botsman refrains from providing reasoning in her definition, she describes the sharing economy purely as a new economic model and points out that a sharing based model applies to activities for monetary benefits. “An economic model based on sharing underutilized assets from spaces to skills to stuff for monetary or non-monetary benefits” (Botsman).

The variety of definitions are part of what makes the sharing economy so intriguing. It

also allows for multiple interpretations, for everyone to take part in molding and shaping the sharing economy as it finds its place. Many of the definitions focus on the sharing of goods or services, few include land or spaces. It is in this realm that I find most interesting. How can the sharing economy be broadened to incorporate the places we live, work and play? How might cities learn to share spaces? Many definitions refer to a shift from ownership to access. How can cities take this idea and apply it to the physical spaces of our daily lives? Can a shift from access to ownership happen with respect to land? Can cities adapt their regulations and policies to create more shareable spaces, enable better access, and promote innovation and creativity by doing so? This report will explore ways in which urban participants are sharing city-owned land, and consider opportunities for increased shareable approaches to land use.

But why is sharing desirable? What might a city gain by increasing sharing activities? The benefits of sharing vary depending on the type of sharing activity. There are common benefits though, that are shared by most sharing models. These include environmental, economic, social and democratic. Some benefits are tangible and even quantifiable, while others are more abstract, but not necessarily less important.

Environmental benefits, according to Agyeman, may include resource efficiency and energy savings, as well as the potential for maximizing use of otherwise underutilized public spaces. Economically, sharing can reduce service provision costs at an urban scale, and there are “potential system level benefits for creativity and innovation” (Agyeman 2013, 14-16). These benefits can be quantified and are more objective than the following.

The social benefits of sharing are more complex, and certainly open to much more interpretation. Agyeman sites a variety of benefits directly relate to shared spaces including social

interaction, places for physical activity, and improved relationships due to face-to-face interactions among different social, cultural, and ethnic groups. Additionally, increasing access to urban resources through sharing can have significant, positive impacts on more vulnerable populations (Agyeman 2013, 14-16). Finally, Agyeman argues that “the idea that sharing is healthy for democracy is rooted in two related propositions. First, that investment in the extent and quality of the shared public realm, both (physical and virtual) is essential for functioning democracy. Second, that the sharing economy challenges the influence of individualism and consumerism in culture and identity, and can therefore reduce the pernicious effects those cultural trends have had on collective politics.”(Agyeman 2013, 19)

The *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders* is the first attempt to promote policy change to encourage sharing in cities. The report challenges the individualism and consumerism suggested by Agyeman and takes a collective politics approach to promoting urban policy change.

The sharing economy has deep implications for how cities design urban spaces, create jobs, reduce crime, manage transportation, and provide for citizens. As such, the sharing economy also has deep implications for policy making. The sharing economy challenges core assumptions made in 20th century planning and regulatory frameworks – namely, that residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural activities should be physically separated from one another... City governments can increasingly step into the role of facilitators of the sharing economy by designing infrastructure, services, incentives, and regulations that factor in the social exchanges of this game changing movement. (Orsi et al 2013, 6)

The *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders* report focuses on four key areas, transportation, food, housing, and job creation. What it fails to address is land, the scarcest resource in urban areas. In this report I will look at the ways in which land fits under the umbrella of the sharing economy. I conduct an analysis of current shareable

approaches to land use and development in the City of Austin and make recommendations for integrating more sharing and access based land policy into the city. I use San Francisco as my primary case study, as it is not only home to many of the leading sharing focused start-ups and organizations, but it has also been the first to strive to incorporate the sharing economy into its city policy through innovative projects and initiatives.

I chose to focus my research on land due to the following reasons: First, land is one of the scarcest resources in urban areas; Second, traditional land policy in urban areas tends to exacerbate problems of equity; and third, I believe by establishing successful land sharing mechanisms cities can create the foundation for a more equitable, efficient and sustainable city.

The following four questions guide my research:

1. How is land currently being shared in Austin?
2. Why are shareable approaches to land use desirable?
3. How can Austin learn from San Francisco?
4. What opportunities are there to both enhance shareable approaches to land use and overcome barriers to it?

This report does not consider privately owned land or land owned by non-profits; although research into shareable land use approaches for these types of properties should be conducted. I have intentionally focused this research on publically owned, specifically, city-owned land. My purpose for this narrow focus is based on the following reasons: one, city-owned land is the only land the City has complete control over; two, as a public asset, city-owned land should serve the needs of the community, adopting shareable land use practices can help to achieve this goal; and three, according to the Travis County Appraisal District, the City of Austin currently

owns approximately 40,391 acres of land. The purpose of this research is to gain a contextual understanding of existing shareable approaches to land use in Austin and San Francisco and develop an awareness of the challenges against and opportunities for shareable approaches to land use and development of city-owned land. I hope this research will encourage urban leaders and professionals to view public land use through a new lens, and to consider the potential for sharing in cities as a way to improve resource efficiency, reduce inequities, and boost social capital.

In the following section I will present a review of the literature on sharing cities in order to provide a basic understanding of the arguments for and against land sharing in cities. I introduce the case study approach I employed to conduct this research in Part III. In Part IV I present existing conditions in the City of Austin. I will introduce four shareable land use methods being implemented currently in Austin and discuss challenges and opportunities for increased shareable approaches to land use. In Part V I present a case study of San Francisco's land sharing environment. I introduce four different projects that illustrate a diversity of shareable land use methods. In Part VI I discuss the themes and patterns that emerge out of the case studies. I offer insights and recommendations for incorporating shareable land use approaches within the existing context of the City of Austin. Part VII will conclude my report and suggest areas for future research including: specific codes and policies, private and non-profit land use, and follow up analysis of project outcomes.

Part II. Literature Review

A reinvention and revival of sharing in our cities could enhance equity, rebuild community and dramatically cut resource use. With modern technologies the intersection of urban space and cyber-space provides an unsurpassed platform for a more inclusive and environmentally efficient sharing economy. (Agyeman 2013, 1)

Cities have always been hubs of sharing enabled by the sharing of space. Despite this, cities are full of private interests, and conflict between public and private interests are common. Agyeman argues that a “cultural rebalancing is overdue: one that gives much greater recognition and credit to the shared public realm in our cities ...one that supports a revival of ‘conventional’ sharing - namely of the city as a whole as shared space - as well as a blossoming of novel forms of sharing; and one that recognizes and affirms the ways in which the opportunities afforded to individuals in cities are founded on the collective efforts and actions of whole communities” (Agyeman 2013,2). David Harvey, in *The Right to the City*, argues the right to the city is “a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization” (Harvey 2012, 4).

According to Agyeman “cities have always relied on collective and collaborative activities – albeit ones that have underpinned the development of commercial models of market exchange that have largely displaced sharing behavior, both economically and politically”(Agyeman 2013, 6-7). But, he continues, new models of consumption and production that rely heavily on collaboration and cooperation are challenging traditional commercial models and redefining the city as a place for sharing and exchange. Public urban space has played an essential role in defining cities. Cities have historically been places for sharing and exchanging ideas, goods and, services, and as gatherings spaces for shared experiences. It is in public space that much of this

sharing and exchange occurs. Yet, Harvey, asks how is it possible “to encourage political participation in an urban world constructed out of segregated suburbs, gated communities, privatized spaces, and shopping malls under surveillance and downtown streets monitored...with a video camera at every corner”(Harvey 2006, 17). The segregation and privatization Harvey talks of is not a design flaw, according to Agyeman space has been designed and used for very different purposes and continues to be shaped and molded into three primary uses.

Agyeman uses the following themes to describe the different ways spaces is used in cities: space as security, for resistance and for possibility. Space as security is defined by inclusive space- that in which the goal is to “crowd out crime” through maximizing activity through design, and exclusive space- where crime is designed out through enclosure and limiting use, the segregated and privatized space Harvey describes. Urban space can be places for resistance when they are used for political protests and demonstrations. The uprisings in Egypt and Libya and the Occupy Movement have all reclaimed public space as places of resistance. Urban spaces have become places of possibility through creative re-imagining by citizens using methods such as “guerilla, DIY, tactical, pop-up, and open-source.” (Agyeman 2013, 7). According to Agyeman, “Possibility is where the fullest expression of the human spirit lies” (Agyeman 2013, 7). It is within the theme of space as possibility that opportunities for land sharing come to life.

Agyeman argues that land sharing is one of the most essential components of a sharing city. “Getting land-sharing right underlies the idea of the genuinely sharing city. It is not only a means to efficient use of perhaps the scarcest resource in cities, but inflated land and property values can otherwise exclude poorer and disadvantaged groups from the other shared facilities and opportunities of the city.” (Agyeman 2013, 27-28). One does not have to look hard to see the

immense gap between the rich and the poor in cities throughout the world and the resulting patterns of urban isolation and inequity suggested by Agyeman. “The increasing polarization in the distribution of wealth and power are indelibly etched into the spatial forms of our cities, which increasingly become cities of fortified fragments, of gated communities and privatized public spaces kept under constant surveillance.” (Harvey 2012, 15) The domination of speculative interest in land use and development must be replaced with a diversity of land sharing models if we are to break the pattern of fragmentation, privatization and resulting spatial inequity. “Land rights, community ownership, community titling of squatted land, more multiple use, recognition of informal uses, rent control and land value taxation” (Agyeman 2013, 27-28) Agyeman argues are potential sharing based methods for replacing the dominant approach to land use and development. I argue that in order to really create places of possibility we must look further, we must be able to envision models of sharing that address both legal rights to land as well as create opportunities for innovation and experimentation. I use Agyeman’s sharing spectrum to gain an understanding of sharing typologies and how they can apply to land sharing.

In addition to goods and services sharing, Agyeman’s sharing spectrum calls attention to the inputs and outputs of sharing. The table “highlights that a focus on goods and services can miss opportunities to share both inputs to the economy such as materials and water, and the outputs that people really value - the wellbeing obtained from our activities, and the capabilities (or real freedoms) to participate in society that we all seek” (Agyeman 2013, 5). Agyeman uses “Amartya Sen’s term ‘capability’ here to describe the fundamental things we value as humans, and that by sharing, we can best ensure all humans can enjoy” (Agyeman 2013, 6). Using the sharing typologies detailed below this research will be focused in the sharing capabilities realm.

Figure 1: The sharing spectrum

| What is being shared | Concept | Examples | Participants (typically) |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| Material <i>tangible</i> | Recovery and recycling | Glass and paper banks, scrapyards | Many suppliers, few users |
| Product | Redistribution markets | Flea markets, charity shops, freecycle | Single provider to single user |
| Service | Product service systems | Zipcar, Netflix, fashion and toy rental, libraries | Single provider to many users |
| Wellbeing | Collaborative lifestyles | Errand networks, peer to peer travel (eg AirBnB) | Many single providers to many single users (P2P) |
| Capability <i>intangible</i> | Collective commons | The internet, safe streets, participative politics | Collective providers to collective users |

Source: (Agyeman, 2013, 6)

Agyemans sharing spectrum attempts to break down different forms of sharing based on what is being shared. He offers a concept behind the sharing activity, provides sample activities, and indicates typical participants in each sharing activity. The spectrum suggests sharing is more inclusive and comprehensive as what is being shared becomes more intangible. It may be useful here to revisit the definition of sharing. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary sharing means: “to partake of, use, experience, occupy, or enjoy with others” (Merriam-Webster dictionary online, no date). The definition does not mention the exchange of payment, or monetary benefit. The table below illustrates a spectrum of sharing; the more participants or users engaged in or using what is being shared, the more shareable it is. For example, many new sharing services such as Zipcar (used in the table above) and bike shares being implemented in

cities around the country are providing a service to many users. The users are sharing a service they otherwise would have to privately own to use. These services are only able to survive if there are enough users willing to share the service with other users. Access over ownership is the sharing model being used in both service provision and wellbeing. Capability sharing involves collective users, and collective providers, suggesting both providers and users are equally participating in sharing.

The concept behind capabilities sharing, according to Agyeman in this sharing spectrum is the collective commons. According to the oxford dictionary online the commons is defined as “land or resources belonging to or affecting the whole of a community” (Oxford Dictionary), while collective is “taken as a whole; aggregate.” Based on these definitions, the collective commons is defined as the whole or aggregate land or resources belonging to or affecting the whole of a community. Agyeman uses the internet, safe streets and participative politics as examples of capability sharing. This research will use public land as its primary focus, with participants fitting into the category defined in the table, collective providers (stewards of public land) and collective users (the public as a whole).

Hardin’s “Tragedy of the Commons” must be addressed here. “Tragedy of the Commons” has become one of the most cited articles against the concept of commons, therefore cannot be ignored in this discussion. Hardin’s argument that freedom to the commons will result in overuse and abuse of the common resource is well known. Published in 1968, “Tragedy of the Commons” was in fact a response to the “population problem”, an argument for coercive reproductive control to prevent the “tragedy” of overpopulation, hence, overuse and degradation of limited global resources (Hardin 1968). Hardin uses the example of herdsman sharing a common grazing

land in which the tragedy occurs when one herdsman decides to add more cattle to his herd for personal gain. If each herdsman continues to add cattle to their own herd the common grazing land is destroyed by overgrazing and everyone loses. What Hardin was trying to illustrate was that man will continue to breed until all natural resources are used up if left up to him, and that in order to prevent such a tragedy there must be a form of mutually agreed upon coercive control. Despite Hardin's intention in using the above example, this very small excerpt from the article has become a widely cited argument against commons of any kind.

David Harvey quite appropriately argues "it is private property in cattle and individual utility-maximizing behavior that lie at the heart of the problem, rather than the common-property character of the resource" (Harvey 2012, 68) Here he is getting both at the original purpose of Hardin's argument as well as the common interpretation.

I believe Hardin's argument has two major flaws. The first is that he does not consider commons that may be *improved* by increase use or participation. This is where much of the sharing detailed in Agyeman's sharing spectrum fits. Freecycle's, peer to peer travel networks, participative politics, and safe streets are all examples of sharing systems that work better the more people participate. It is within the shared capabilities and wellbeing realms where sharing becomes dependent on *increased* numbers of participants to be successful.

Hardin's second flaw is that he assumes complete freedom from regulation. A well regulated common resource can be used collectively without the threat of destruction or overuse. City parks, public libraries, and community owned utilities are examples of a sort of commons that are regulated to different extents by public or state entities, enabling access but protecting against abuse.

Harvey, in his discussion on urban commons, highlights the way thinking has often “polarized between private property solutions and authoritarian state intervention” (Harvey 2012, 69) as a result of the narrow reliance on Hardin's argument. Smith and Low differentiate private and public space in terms of rules of access and use, the nature and origin of control, and the individual and collective behavior permitted in specific spaces (Smith and Low 2006, 4). Elizabeth Blackmar describes commons as “neither public nor private space. It implies open access and shared participation without the shadow of the state; and it implies a space for community assembly apart from the hard sell of the market” (Blackmar 2006, 49). She goes on to define common property as “an individual's right not to be excluded from the uses or benefits of resources” (Blackmar 2006, 50). Public property owned by government entities, on the other hand, enables states to determine accessibility. It is somewhere in between Blackmar’s commons and public property that creative land sharing lies. It is here where places of possibility can flourish.

Existing research on shareable approaches to land use is limited and has yet to truly address the role cities can play in redefining the way we use land in urban areas. The report, *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders*, is the first report to develop policy recommendations for cities that focuses on sharing (Orsi et al 2013). The report includes recommendations in four key areas; transportation, food, housing and job creation. There is no specific focus on land, although it has limited consideration in both food and housing recommendations. My intention for this report is to provide a starting point for cities like Austin to begin considering the potential for shareable approaches to land use, and basic recommendations for incorporating such approaches into the urban framework.

Part III. Methods

The intent of this research is to gain an understanding of a variety of shareable land use approaches being implemented in cities in order assist the City of Austin in improving shared access to city-owned land. This research is inspired by the rise in new modes of sharing being implemented in cities worldwide, and an increased awareness of the potential to improve cities by enabling diverse forms of sharing.

I conducted a collective case study using qualitative research methods. According to Stake, a collective case study is an instrumental case study extended to several cases (Stake 2005, 446). An instrumental case study is used when “the choice of case is made to advance understanding of [another] interest” (Stake 2005, 445). The case studies were selected based on their potential for application to the City of Austin, availability and accessibility of information, and most importantly, their ability to increase understanding of shareable approaches to land use in cities. I specifically selected cases that each took a different approach to sharing in order to illustrate the diversity of potential methods for enabling shared access to land.

I narrowed my case studies to two cities to illustrate that it is possible to integrate a variety of sharing models into one city. I use the City of Austin in order to provide an understanding of the existing context of shareable land use approaches in the city, so as to provide a foundation for future work and highlight areas of possibility. I chose to use San Francisco as my other case study due to the abundance and variety of land sharing models, and the diversity of methods being used. The Pavement to Parks and Living Innovation Zones programs are both run by the San Francisco Planning Department. The Plazas Program is part of

the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, focusing on land management rather than specific activities or development opportunities. Proxy is a community based projects with unique public and private partnerships. This variety provides insight into different shareable land approaches and how these approaches can simultaneously be integrated into an existing urban fabric.

A triangulated approach to data collection was used. Data was gathered first using archival sources to gain a contextual understanding of the study. Next, personal interviews were conducted over e-mail, telephone, and in-person of formal stakeholders in order to gain a deeper understanding of each study. I conducted three in person interviews: Randy Scott and Meredith Gray, both with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department; and Kit Johnson with City of Austin Public Works Department. I conducted a phone interview with Paul Chasan with the San Francisco Planning Department, former lead of the Parklets program, part of the Pavement to Parks program and current partner on the Living Innovations Zones project. I corresponded via e-mail with Robin Havens of the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development about the Shared Plazas Program. Both Proxy and the Pavement to Parks program have extensive archival resources including in-depth interviews. It was unnecessary for this research to conduct additional interviews for either of these projects therefor existing transcripts from past interviews were used for both Proxy and the Pavement to Parks program. When possible sources were cross checked with other sources available, both for formal stakeholder interviews and archival sources.

Formal stakeholders were determined based on their involvement in the projects or programs. I selected people who were directly involved in the projects or played a leadership or

managerial role. My goal for each interview was to understand how or why the project was initiated, the planning and development process including any obstacles that needed to be overcome, and how the project was or planned to be implemented. The purpose of conducting interviews was to provide direct, experiential knowledge of projects in order to build a deeper understanding of the processes involved in planning and implementing a variety of land sharing projects. This first-hand knowledge can help to guide future community leaders involved in the development of sharing based projects.

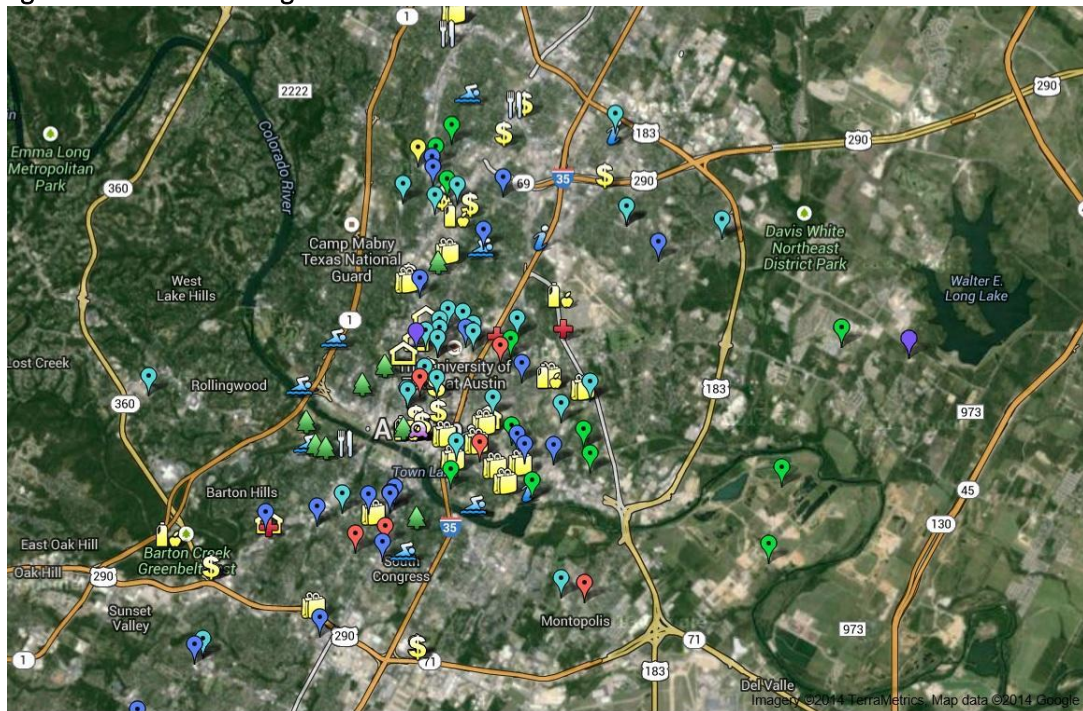
Due to the fact that most of the projects in both the Austin and San Francisco case are either in various planning stages or have only recently been implemented I did not interview informal stakeholders. My goal was to understand the planning and implementation process of the various projects, not to report on the end product. I do not examine the outcome of each project, how successful or not it has been or specific challenges after implementation. Some of these challenges came up in interviews and were used to help navigate future projects- specifically in San Francisco- I do not attempt to provide further insight into these challenges or issues at this point. Because many of the projects in the case studies are pilot projects or are new it is natural they will face many hurdles, I am most concerned with those hurdles that occur in the planning and development process rather than after the project has been implemented. Although that analysis is important, and should be conducted as a follow up to this report.

Part IV. Austin

I like to think Austin is in its adolescence right now. We were this really cool child of a city, if you will, and now we are transitioning into beautiful maturity...we are big and spread out and we need some sort of central vision over all our city owned facilities and land holdings....because there is undoubtedly untapped potential of what we are sitting on...as taxpayers and citizens, we need to determine the best use of our city owned land and how we can share it with all Austinites. (Johnson 2014)

In October, 2013, shareable.net, “a nonprofit news, action and connection hub for the sharing transformation” (shareable.net) launched the Sharing Cities Map Jam, a collaborative effort to map sharing already occurring in cities around the world. Austin was among some of the most “shareable” cities mapped. Below is the map of Austin’s sharing resources, including co-ops, public parks, credit unions, co-working spaces, libraries and more.

Figure 2- Austin’s Sharing Resources



Source: Public - open collaboration, 2013. Accessed online, April 2, 2014.

<https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msid=209506028568659311756.0004e89607c6aa52c5407&msa=0&ll=30.30591,-97.735062&spn=0.345607,0.614548>

Sharing is really a new way to frame many things we already do. Food and housing cooperatives, credit unions, libraries, co-working spaces, hacker-spaces, fab labs, public parks, museums, public transportation, car and bike shares, and community gardens are all examples of sharing in Austin. When I began talking to people about land sharing, no one, including myself, seemed to think Austin was doing very much in the sharing department. But as I dug deeper I realized, along with those people I spoke with, that Austin is indeed employing shareable land use methods.

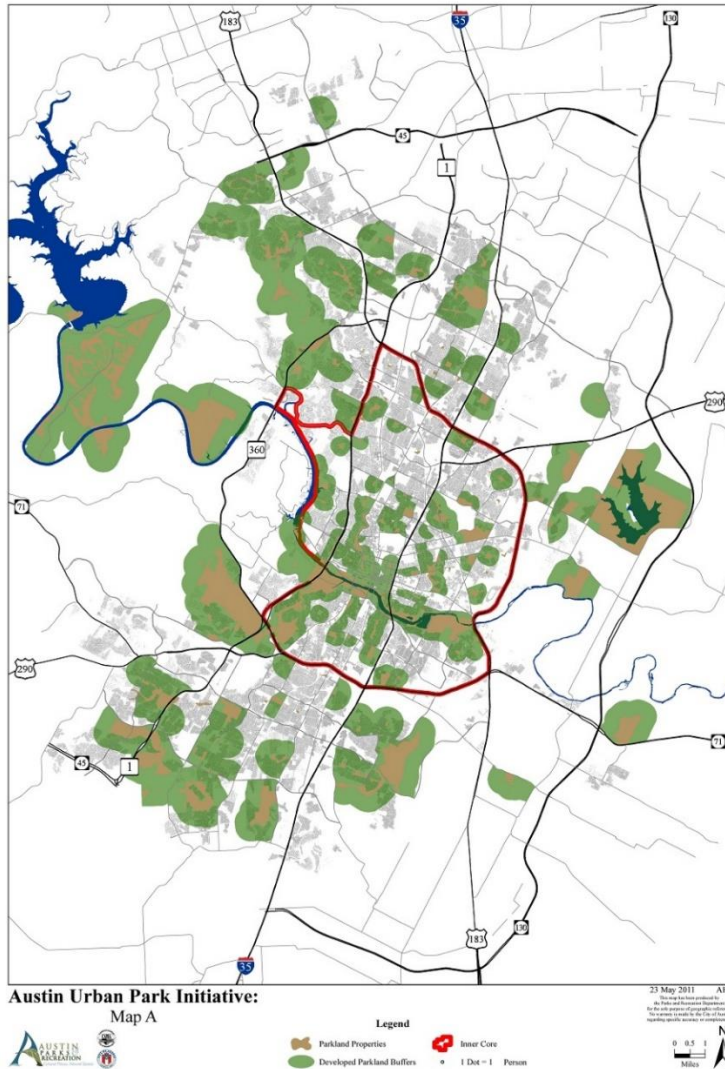
My first interview was with Randy Scott from the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD). He has been involved in increasing access to parks for City residents. One successful strategy has been establishing partnerships with the Austin Independent School District to share land for use as schools and parks. I then met with Meredith Gray, also with PARD. Gray is head of the Cities community garden program. She helps residents establish community gardens on underutilized public land. My third interview was with Kit Johnson, the City Architect with the Public Works Department. Kit was involved in the 20' Wide Alley Activation project in 2013. The project helped bring light to existing barriers to public space activation within the City. Kit also speaks to the lack of land management and organization within the City and the opportunity for increasing affordable housing through community land trusts on public land.

Each project addresses shareable land use approaches through a different lens but each is an essential part of the picture. What you will discover is that Austin is already working towards become a more shareable city, but is in need of organization and direction when it comes to land development and management.

Increasing Access to Parks

Randy Scott, the Park Development Coordinator for the Parks and Recreation Department in the City of Austin, has been working with AISD to expand access to green spaces and parks for Austin residents. The Urban Infill Park Initiative strives to implement the 2009 Council resolution No. 20090514-036 “that all residents live within $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a park” with the vision of “becoming the most family friendly city in the country” (Scott, 2012). A series of maps were produced to identify existing gaps in service areas. The first map examines PARD’s developed parkland, then each consecutive map looks at various development options that would allow PARD to fulfill the Council resolution. These options include the development of undeveloped parkland, existing PARD school parks, other opportunities for PARD school parks, and then non-parkland City-owned land. I was particularly interested in PARD school parks. The following maps represent the areas in Austin lacking access to a park within $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. Figure three show all of the existing developed parkland in Austin with the associated buffer of residents with access within a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

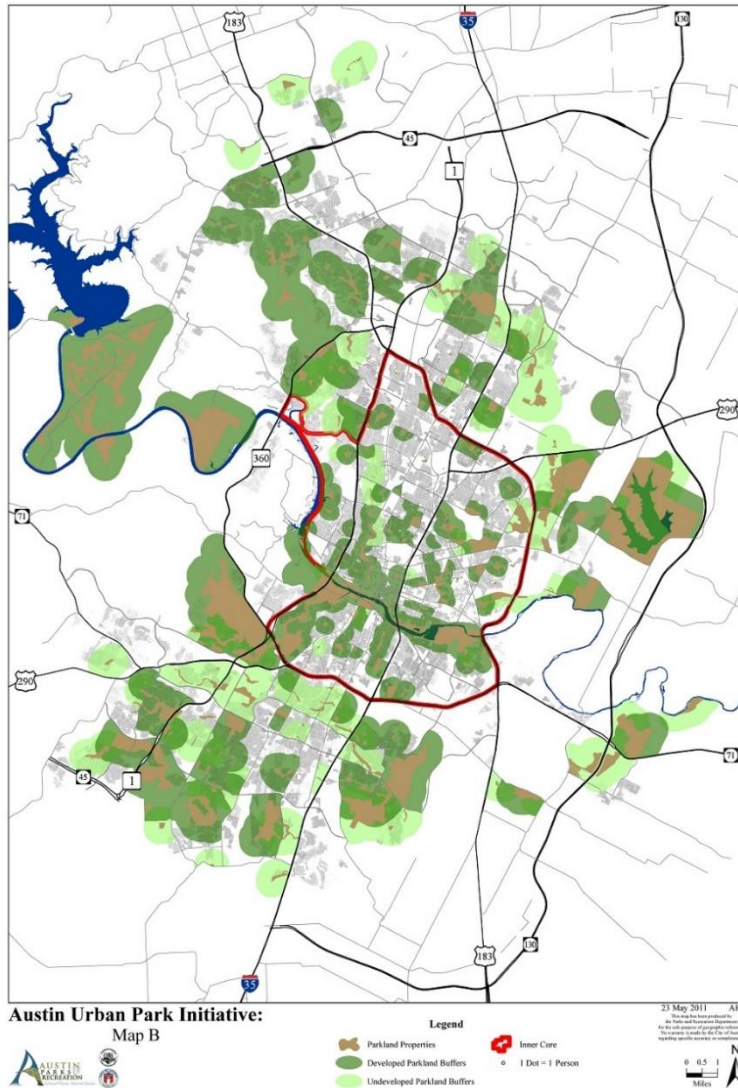
Figure 3 – Urban Park Initiative with Developed Parkland Buffers



Source: Randy Scott, Park Development Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin. April, 2014.

Figure four shows undeveloped parkland and the service area buffer if it were to be developed.

Figure 4 – Urban Park Initiative with Undeveloped Parkland Buffers

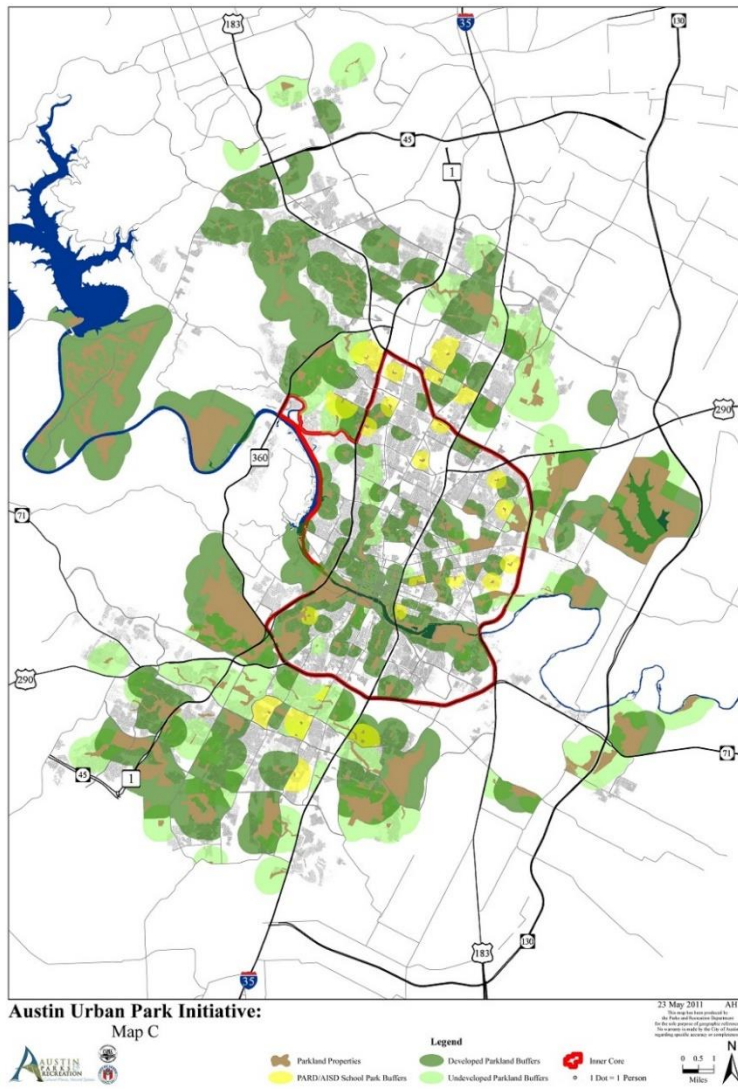


Source: Randy Scott, Park Development Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin. April, 2014.

According to Scott, the city currently shares 23 park sites with Austin’s Independent School District (AISD). “These are parks in which PARD has an undivided real estate interest in the land”. (Scott, 2012) An undivided interest means the property and all rights are shared equally. In the case of PARD and AISD the land is used by both, AISD uses it during school hours and the surrounding community can use it as park facilities after school and on weekends. This type of

sharing brings down cost for both parties by sharing the maintenance and purchase costs, increases accessibility to recreation facilities for the community, and ensures land owned and paid for by the public is available to the public. Figure five shows existing PARD/AISD School Parks and the service area buffers.

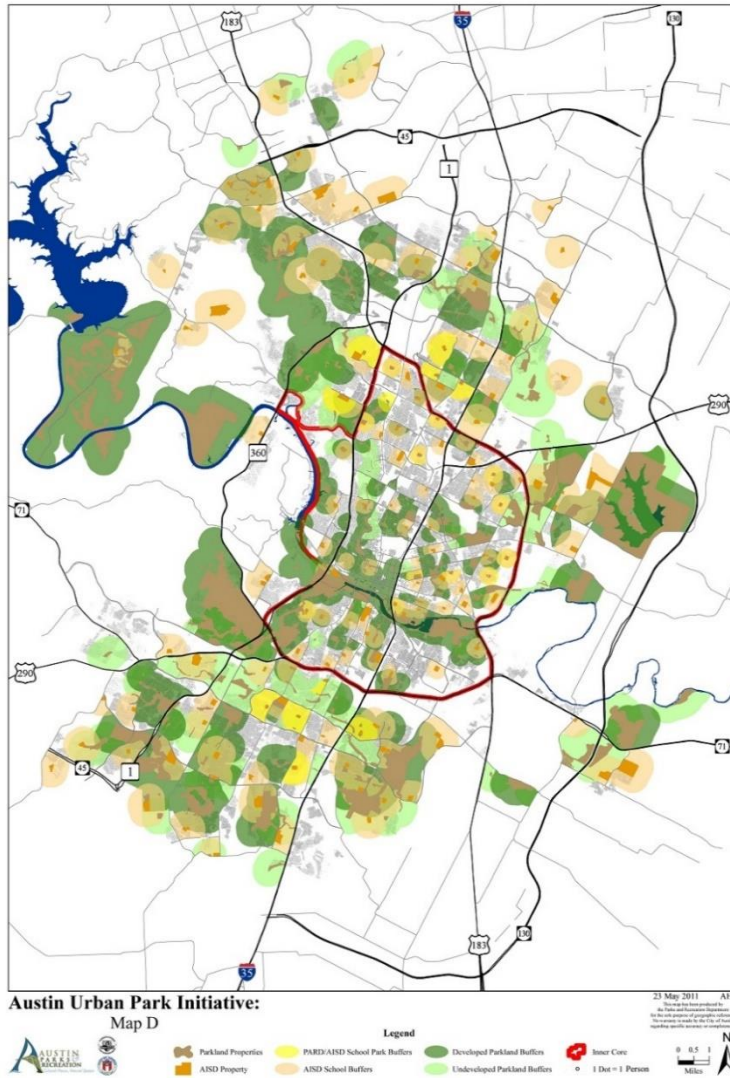
Figure 5 – Urban Park Initiative with PARD/AISD School Park Buffers



Source: Randy Scott, Park Development Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin. April, 2014.

As part of the Urban Infill Park Initiative, PARD has identified dozens of more AISD owned sites that, if shared, could significantly increase city residents' access to parks. Currently, the existing sites are only open to the public when school is not in session. PARD hopes to be able to "section off a ¼ to ½ acre and make it accessible while school is in session." (Scott, 2012) This would allow non-school aged children and adults access to the park during school hours. Figure six shows all AISD school and the service area buffers if they were to be converted to School Parks. As the maps show, park access increases significantly in areas most underserved with the addition of AISD properties. Utilizing a shareable approach such as the School Parks model enables PARD to meet the goals of providing residents access to parks in within the ¼ - ½ mile range. By expanding the number of School Parks in Austin, the City can come much closer to meeting its goal of becoming the most family friendly city in the nation.

Figure 6 – Urban Park Initiative with AISD School Buffer



Source: Randy Scott, Park Development Coordinator, Parks and Recreation Department, City of Austin. April, 2014.

Other opportunities for PARD to share ownership and management of land in the city may exist. City-Owned land has also been identified through gap analysis mapping as potential sites for increasing access to parks, but accessing that land may be a challenge. Unfortunately, a user friendly system for identifying potentially available city-owned land for public use is not currently available. According to Mashell Smith, the Property Agent Senior at the Office of Real

Estate Service Department, the current system for storing land information makes it difficult to gather aggregate data on city-land. Additionally, most land is selected for a specific purpose or intention by the “steward” department so land or facilities are typically not available to be used for other things or converted to other uses.

The system is in the process of being updated which will hopefully make it easier to quickly search for information on existing city-owned land. Meredith Gray, the Conservation Program Coordinator within PARD has been working with various departments within the city to allow public use of city land for community gardens. Her work is a huge step towards a more shareable city.

Sharing Land for Community Gardens

Gray works with PARD as well as across multiple city departments to establish community gardens on city-owned land. Gray’s position came out of the 2009 Resolution on Urban farming and community gardens (no. 20091119-065) the resolution resolves to:

- (1) Streamline the process to establish a qualified community garden and responsible urban farm.
 - (a) Initiate necessary code amendments to define "qualified" community gardens and urban farms as those which will include using water conservation practices, composting, and non-polluting growing practices.
 - (b) Identify and map public lands that would be appropriate for urban agriculture and qualified community gardens.
 - (c) Support efforts to gauge interest and publicize urban agriculture and community gardens through the SFPB.
- (2) Name a single point of contact within the City of Austin to support community members in establishing and sustaining urban farms and qualified community gardens. (Resolution no. 20091119-065, 2009)

Community members wanting to start a community garden on public land contact Gray either

with a parcel already in mind, or looking for a parcel to garden on. Gray, working with Mashell Smith in the Office of Real Estate Services has developed a list of potentially eligible parcels for use as community gardens. The list includes parcels from various land owning departments that are currently not being used and do not have plans for development in the near future. Using this list Gray can more efficiently direct community members to suitable parcels for gardens. Once a parcel has been identified as suitable and permission from the land owning department has been granted Gray helps community members through the process which involves multiple steps. These include a license agreement, utility review, non-profit sponsorship, site plan and permit, and a water TAPS application and installation.

The process is lengthy and there has been a strong demand for community gardens, resulting in a backlog of requests. According to Gray, there are a lot of barriers for getting a community garden up and running. One of the bigger hurdles is the water tap installation, which requires a licensed engineer to do a water tap plan. The cost is approximately \$3,000.00 and the community members must be able to cover that cost and find their own engineer. Although the water tap plan is costly, the installation of the tap, for a city-endorse garden, is waived by Austin Water Utility. Both public and private community gardens can become city-endorsed. An endorsement allows gardeners assistance in the permitting process and the water tap installation waiver. Despite the lengthy process and costly engineer fees, community gardens are beginning to take hold in Austin.

Currently, there are three gardens in the planning and construction state, six already on public land and four senior gardens. Figure seven maps completed community gardens, senior gardens and gardens in the planning/construction state. Senior gardens differ from other

community gardens in that they are “connected to recreation centers, or senior centers...are more programmed gardens, ...[and are]not for the entire community, they are just for seniors.” (Gray, 2014) Some gardens have had easier times than others. Funding from grants and partnerships with other programs such as the Neighborhood Partnering Program (NPP) and Art in Public Places have helped to streamline and bring down the cost for some community gardens. Although the program is only a few years old, it has been successful in not only establishing community gardens, but it has also helped to get land sharing into the discussion about public land and its potential for more accessible and shareable uses.

Figure 7 – Community Garden Sites



City of Austin: Community Garden Sites

Gardens in progress

Completed Gardens

Senior Gardens

Source: Meredith Gray, Conservation Program Coordinator, Sustainable Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens & Wildlife Austin Program, Nature-Based Programs Division, City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department, April 3, 2014.

Sharing Public Space

Community gardens were the first thing that Kit Johnson mentioned when I asked him what he knew about land sharing. Kit Johnson works within the Public Works Department as the City Architect. His role is to provide high level oversight of architectural, design and sustainability issues for all Capital Improvement Projects. Johnson has been involved in a number of projects that have played a significant role in broadening the discussion around land use and public spaces. As we spoke, we both realized that Austin is doing a lot more than just sharing land for community gardens.

One of the projects Johnson recently worked on was the 20 foot wide Alley Activation case study project. In 2012 the “City of Austin Downtown Commission created a workgroup to examine opportunities for activating Austin’s downtown alleys in order to contribute to a more vibrant network of people-oriented public spaces in Downtown Austin.” (Austin Downtown Commission Alley Workgroup, 2013) One of the primary drivers behind the workgroup was the desire to enable a more pedestrian friendly downtown, rich with vibrant public spaces. The current development trends were moving toward more and more alley vacation. The city was losing its historic alleys to large development projects and with it, a significant portion of its public space in the downtown area. When the workgroup was established they asked “How can we make alleys more pedestrian friendly, how can we activate them. How can they be more than just service corridors, or just for vehicles, at least four wheeled vehicles?” (Johnson, 2014) The intent, whether anyone explicitly used the language, was to create a more shareable downtown, one that allowed and encouraged access by multiple users. A downtown that creatively shared the limited space it had available.

Initially the workgroup planned to craft an alley policy and best practices report, but as they proceeded they decided to “speed up the process. Rather than try to craft a policy, document best practices, and spend all our time in theory, let's actually do something” (Johnson, 2014). The 20’ wide project became their case study. Their challenge, “how do we take a utilitarian alley and temporarily shut it down so that we can use it... activate it, for different uses, other than their normal uses. Certainly it should be pedestrian friendly but the idea was how many different activities can we put in this alley. Our case study allowed us to give them a test run” (Johnson, 2014). The result was a week-long Alley Activation. A temporary intervention that turned a desolate alley into a vibrant public space. The project experimented with a variety of both physical improvements and programmed events and activities catered to diverse audiences. Support, planning and design was a collaboration of public and private groups and individuals.

What came out of the Alley Activation project was significant shift towards a more shareable, and adaptable city. According to Johnson, one of the most important results of the project was the surfacing of how complicated the cities special events ordinance was. “Unfortunately at that time the process was not calibrated for a project that small, and it also wasn’t calibrated for more artistic projects.” (Johnson, 2014) Prior to the Alley Activation project, all events had to go through the same process. A process created for large events that require complete street shut downs, collaboration with the fire and transportation departments. A permitting process tailored towards crowd management and safety issue for large numbers of people. Despite the scale and temporary nature of the Alley Activation project, it still had to comply with, and work through the standard special events process. Yet, in doing so, the project

helped fuel the re-crafting of the special events ordinance. According to Johnson, much needed changes were made and the ordinance is now calibrated to fit the size of the event. What is really significant about this is that Austin is making real progress towards a more flexible and open process for enabling creative uses of public land. This is no small feat. It is a very real barrier to a more shareable city.

Additional pilot projects are slowly popping up around the city. Another case study project is underway at the Royal Blue Grocery on Congress Avenue in downtown Austin. The city has allowed the grocery to rent the parking spaces in front of the store which have been turned into outdoor seating. “The cities intent is... to facilitate street life and activate our sidewalk a little bit better by adding some outdoor seating capacity to this very popular grocery/c store.” Private-public partnerships such as this one allow the city to encourage creative use of public space without spending public dollars on installation or upkeep. Sharing stewardship of our public spaces is one of many ways to create opportunities for new and innovative projects that may be difficult to implement using traditional public processes.

Community Land Trust’s and Land Management

Not only is the City of Austin making progress towards a more shareable city by activating and experimenting with alternative ways to create and use public space, but it is also taking steps towards another form of land sharing that address social equity through affordable housing. The first community land trust on public land in the city is currently in the works. A community land trust

is an entity, typically a non-profit organization, that acquires and retains ownership of the real property and, in effect, sells the improvements via a 99-year ground lease to a

homeowner, another non-profit, a cooperative housing corporation, or for-profit entity. This arrangement between the owner and the CLT protects housing affordability in perpetuity by ensuring that the housing is made affordable to low- to moderate income persons upon the sale of a single-family, multi-family, and/or commercial property (Weiss, 2005).

The first CLT was created in the United States in 1969, and, as of 2012 the US is home to 230 CLT's according to Moore and McKee (Moore and McKee, 2012). For the first few decades after their emergence CLT's were primarily funded by individuals, community groups and philanthropy (Greenstein and Sungu-Eryilmaz, 2006). Municipal governments have taken a leading role in the development of CLTs in the past decade, motivated by their ability to provide permanent affordable housing (Greenstein and Sungu-Eryilmaz, 2006).

Johnson believes CLTs on public land are a big step towards a more shareable city. "That truly is sharing, in that the city will continue to own the land forever, but we are allowing developers to build affordable housing on that land." (Johnson, 2014) He sites ever increasing land costs as one of the biggest barriers to achieving affordable housing. By removing land cost from the equation, says Johnson, the city can share unused parcels of land, which would allow developers to deliver truly affordable housing. The challenge in making CLT's or any land sharing endeavor a reality goes back to lack of organization in the management of city land.

Just as the city lacks a user friendly way for finding information on existing land and its availability, it seems to also lacks a clear central vision for all of its land, according to Johnson. Without this clear central vision and a user friendly, accessible land database, the process for finding land to use and then actually putting that land to use becomes a significant barrier. Currently, public land is managed by the stewarding department. For example, Public Works is the steward of all the land it owns as a department, responsible for maintenance and any

development that occurs on the site. There is not currently any overarching department managing land owned by city departments, and no central planning for all city land. The city is working towards a more central vision and management of city facilities and land. The new Strategic Facilities Governance team, although in its infancy according to Johnson, is working hard toward this achieving such goal. The development of a central vision as well as central management and planning of city-owned land, will go a long way towards ensuring land use reflects the wants and needs of the citizens. It has the potential to reveal possibilities that are both hard to see and difficult to pursue in a disorganized system.

Austin Moving Forward

The organization of land and land management will be key to enabling opportunities for land sharing. A strong central vision and long term planning for all city-owned land will help Austin to meet the needs of its citizens, be it public space, parks and recreational spaces, affordable housing, streets or facilities. Along with a reorganization and vision, policies must be in place to deal with new or alternative ideas. As was apparent in the 20' Wide Alley Activation project, trailblazing projects face numerous hurdles. "We just don't have a policy in place, so when somebody comes up to us with a great idea it's like, wow that's great, and then its' got to go through all these processes even to see if its viable. By that point they've perhaps moved on" (Johnson, 2014). By moving towards more flexible policies designed to embrace innovative new ideas Austin can become a model for other cities striving to become more innovative, adaptable, and shareable. Continuing to pursue partnerships with other public agencies such as AISD as PARD is doing, as well as nonprofits and private organizations can help the City to meet the needs

of residents while reducing the burden of management, funding, maintenance and programming. The community garden program is already working towards sharing that responsibility with residents. The program could be enhanced by the formation of more explicit partnerships with other existing City programs such as the Neighborhood Partnering Program within Public Works and partnerships with nonprofit and private organization to help with funding, planning and design. By building on the many existing projects and programs Austin already has in the works, the City has the potential to become a national leader in innovative approaches to land use. San Francisco is a step ahead of Austin, particularly when it comes to sharing public space and may provide valuable insights for Austin moving forward.

Part V. San Francisco

The City of San Francisco seems to be a hub for sharing. It is the home of many well-known sharing organizations including Shareable, Airbnb, TaskRabbit, Getaround, and the Sustainable Economics Law Center co-founded by self-proclaimed “sharing economy lawyer” Janelle Orsi (Johnson, 2013). The first Policies for Shareable Cities report that came out in September of 2013 was co-produced by the Shareable and the Sustainable Economics Law Center, both based in San Francisco. In 2012 the mayor of San Francisco, Mayor Edwin Lee announced the first Sharing Economy Working Group in the nation. The group’s goal was to “take a comprehensive look at the economic benefits, innovative companies and emerging policy issues around the growing “sharing economy,”” (San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development, 2012) with the intent of developing model policies for the sharing economy. Mayor Lee was also a key sponsor of the 2013 U.S. Conference of Mayors resolution no. 87 “In Support for Policies for Shareable Cities.” With all of this sharing energy emanating out of San Francisco, I decided to see if the city lives up to its sharable reputation when it comes to land. Each of the following projects share common themes; public-private and cross-departmental collaboration, fostering innovation and creativity, and providing opportunities for citizens to be actively engaged in the urban design process.

I looked at four different projects, each in different stages of development and implementation. The first project, Proxy, grew out of a number of unique events. Proxy, a temporary urban public space activation, is a collaboration between the Mayor’s office, the Hayes Valley Neighborhood residents, and Oakland design firm, envelope A+D. Pavement to Parks is the second project I researched. Pavement to Parks allows citizens to take responsibility and

ownership of San Francisco streets and plazas and turn them into vibrant, pedestrian friendly public spaces. The third project I looked at is the new Living Innovation Zones (LIZ) program. LIZ allow artists, designers and innovators to turn city-owned plazas into spaces of innovation and exploration. The final project I explore is the proposed Plaza Program, an initiative to coordinate and manage existing public space programs and projects. The Plaza Program will establish partnerships with community organizations, business owners and non-profits to manage, maintain and program existing public spaces. What you will find in the following sections is an example of a city already working towards a more coordinated land-sharing effort.

Proxy

In 1989 the Loma Prieta earthquake damaged the elevated, double decker freeway that ran through the Hayes Valley neighborhood central San Francisco. After a decade of debate over what was to be done with the damaged freeway, voters approved a measure to remove the damaged freeway and replace it with a surface boulevard, Octavia Boulevard (Burnham, 2011). As a result of the new boulevard design, 22 irregularly shaped lots were created and transferred from the county to the City (San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development). The plan was to build both market rate and subsidized housing on the 22 vacant lots but due to the economic downturn in 2008 the proposals for the housing projects were put on hold. As a response to Hayes Valley residents concerned that the vacant lots would bring blight to their neighborhood, in 2009 the Mayor's office sent an official request for proposals for creative, temporary uses for the vacant lots (Krippner and McGinnis, 2012). Temporary meaning 1-4 years, or until the lots could be developed for housing.

Envelope A+D, a design firm located in Oakland that had already been working on designs for multifamily housing on two of the vacant lots took up the challenge. What resulted was Proxy, an experiment in temporary urbanism. “The Primary mechanism of *proxy* is the re- imaging of place: a curated, compelling and opportunistic programming of urban space so that people can start to see possibility where before there was only a void” (Burnham, 2011).

During the design and development phase envelope A+D faced many hurdles. Definitions of temporary ranged from ninety days in the Building Code to less than five years for the utility company. The meant structures had to be designed to the standards of permanent buildings meant to last decades, while at the same time the project was responsible for all up-front utility costs since it was deemed temporary by the utility company. Additionally, the fee structure for Building and Planning did not distinguish between temporary and permanent. “Any temporary project will pay more in fees per year of use than permanent projects within the city.” (Burnham, 2011) Despite these hurdles, the Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) worked alongside envelope A+D, assisting them in navigating the various permitting processes. It was important for the OEWD to work within the existing regulatory framework rather than try to change the code to fit the specific project, arguing the intention would not be to duplicate the same project the next time. Envelope A+D hopes to see some adaptation to the existing regulatory framework. “[O]ur hope is that the ongoing experiment of *proxy* will catalyze a more responsive set of planning, building and economic development initiatives that will simultaneously accommodate short, middle, long and very long term change within the fabric of the city” (Burnham, 2011). Both envelope A+D and OEWD have valid arguments. Changing the code every time a new type of project comes up is unrealistic, yet adapting the regulatory

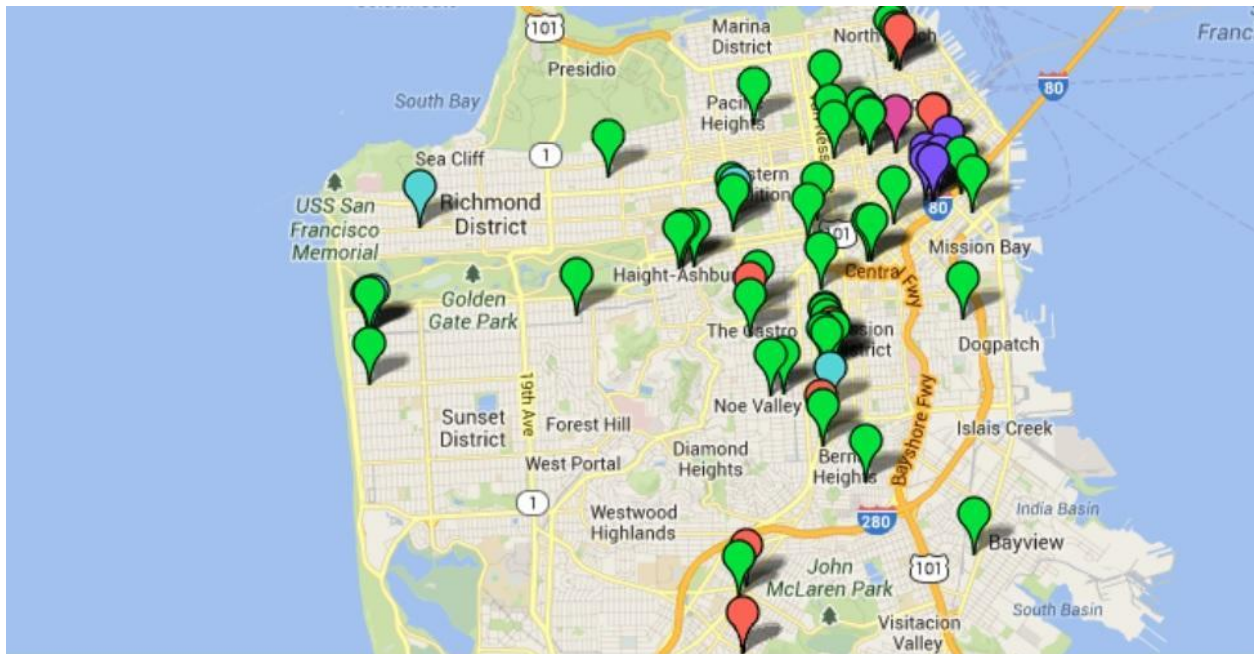
framework to be flexible and allow for experimentation without making the process too daunting or discouraging can open the gates for all sorts of creative solutions. Around the same time Proxy began development, San Francisco launched its Pavement to Parks project which has resulted in adaptations to the permitting process for temporary projects.

Pavement to Parks

Pavement to Parks is a collaborative program supported and managed by the San Francisco Planning Department, the Department of Public Works, the Municipal Transportation Agency and the Mayor's Office. The program allows citizens to reclaim streets and public right-of-ways for use as more pedestrian friendly public spaces. Much like the pilot project in front of the Royal Blue Grocery in Austin, the Pavement to Parks project allows private citizens, business owners and community organizations to actively engage in improving public space.






Inspired by similar projects in New York City, Pavement to Parks was launched in 2009. Projects are intended to repurpose underutilized areas of the city, with an emphasis on streets and public right-of-ways, particularly near intersections. Each project is "intended to be a public laboratory for the City to work with local communities to temporarily test new ideas in the public realm" (pavementtoparks.sfplanning.org). All design interventions are considered temporary and must be easily removable in case design changes are needed or the city needs to reclaim the space for another use. Projects deemed successful may be permanently claimed as open public spaces. Most projects involve seating, landscaping and pavement improvements. All design, funding and maintenance are the responsibility of the sponsoring individual, business or organization.

Figure 8 - Map of Pavement to Parks Parklets and Projects



San Francisco Map of Parklets & Projects

San Francisco Map Key:

-  Parklets completed
-  Parklets permitted and expected to be installed by the end of the year
-  Mobile Parklets
-  Plazas
-  Other Tactical Projects

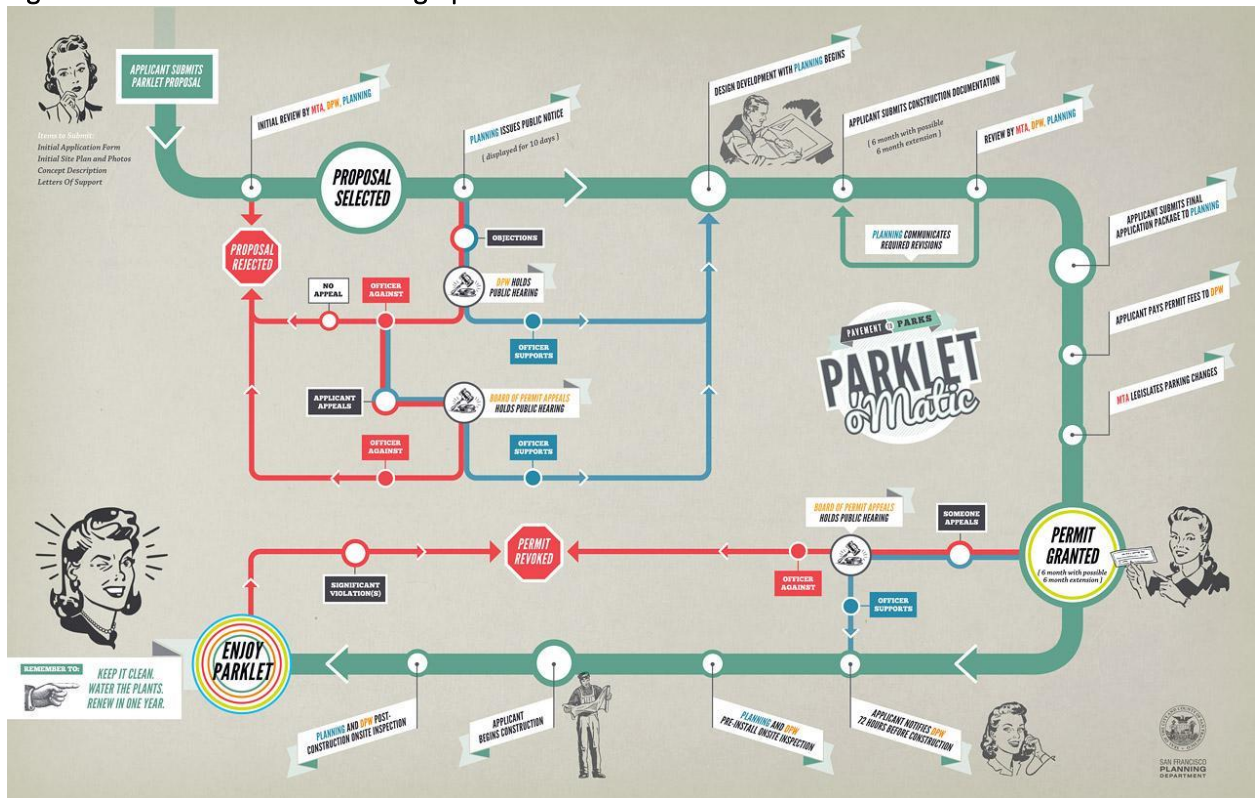
Source: About, Pavement to Parks, Map of Projects in San Francisco. Accessed online, April 2, 2014.
<http://pavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/map.html#local>

As of April 2014 San Francisco was home to forty-three parklets. The program has been successful due to strategic project design, planning and organization by the participating city departments. According to Katie Mays and Gilad Meron, Andres Power took the lead on the Pavement to Parks program and can be credited with bringing it to fruition. One of the key moves made by Powers was sidestepping the “typical drawn out approval processes thus avoiding the

difficulties of typical public realm projects” (Mays and Meron, 2012) by taking the project directly to the mayor for approval. By going directly to the mayor, Powers ensured all department directors within the city were mandated to work with him to make the project happen. This eliminated the question of whether the project should be happening at all from other departments, making the process faster and smoother. According to Mays and Meron, “the rationale for such a radical approach was these projects would be temporary and easily reversible experiments” (Mays and Meron, 2012). If the projects failed, they could be simply removed. After the first few parklets were completed a temporary permit specifically for parklets was created (Mays and Meron, 2012) and in January of 2013 the Department of Public Works Director's Order no. 180921 established guidelines for the approval and installation of parklets and accessibility requirements (San Francisco Planning Department, 2013).

Residents, business owners or community organizations can apply to sponsor a parklet. “Project sponsors are responsible for conducting outreach, designing, funding, and constructing their parklets. They also assume liability for the parklet and ensure the parklet is well-maintained and kept in good repair” (San Francisco Planning Department, 2013). Proposals are reviewed by the Municipal Transportation Agency, Public Works and Planning Departments and if approved proceeds to design, permitting, and then construction. There are multiple checkpoints along the way that ensure all projects are designed to meet code and accessibility requirements. Once a project is completed the sponsor is responsible for upkeep and must renew their permit in one year at which point the design can be modified to better fit the needs of its users if necessary.

Figure 9 - The Parklet-O-Matic Info graphic



Source: Parklets Program Overview. Accessed Online, April 2, 2014
<http://pavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/parklets.html#parkletmanual>

According to Paul Chasan, previously the lead for Pavement to Parks and creator of the Pavement to Parks manual, the first few years experienced many complications. “We were winging it as we went” (Chasan, 2014) the program has evolved over time and many of the challenges have been worked out through trial and error. One of the most difficult parts of the program, according to Chasan, was having non-professionals and people traditionally not involved in planning, design or development of city projects be doing just that. Technical issues were also a hurdle. The Pavement to Parks Manual incorporates the lessons learned through the early stages of the program.

Although the process can be time consuming and still requires approval by various

departments, it has enabled dozens of creative new public spaces in places that were previously under-utilized and catered primarily to vehicular traffic. The city has developed a clear, and successful process for allowing shared use of publicly owned land. By sharing city land with residents, businesses, and community organizations San Francisco has been able to significantly increase public space in areas where there may not be other available land or opportunities.

Living Innovation Zones

LIZ seeks to provide innovators with a real-world setting to test new ideas, evaluate next generation technologies, collect data about impact on street activation and educate the public about innovative solutions. In doing so, LIZ aims to steer San Francisco's tech and creative communities toward advancing sustainable community development, efficient government and a better quality of life for San Franciscans (San Francisco Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation).

The Living Innovation Zones initiative is a partnership between the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Civic Innovation, San Francisco Department of Public Works and San Francisco Planning Department. "The Living Innovation Zone Program (LIZ) seeks to create a flexible framework that harnesses the city's creativity by using City-owned assets, such as public spaces, and partnerships with leading organizations as catalysts for exploration, innovation and play." (liz.innovatesf.com) LIZ aims to bring innovation into the public realm by making it easier for innovators, artists and designers to experiment in public spaces. This is achieved through the designation of special public spaces as LIZ's and simplification of permitting processes. The city allows access to specific publicly owned parcels for partner organizations to design, install, fund and maintain public installations.

Paul Chasan, Urban Planner Designer with the San Francisco Planning Department,

former lead of the Parklets program, part of the Pavement to Parks program, and partner on the LIZ program provided insight into the formation of the LIZ program. LIZ was born out of a desire to create an urban environment that reflected the culture of the city. San Francisco is the innovation capital of the world, yet, according to Chasan, you would never know it by walking down San Francisco's streets. Additionally, innovators had voiced the need for opportunities to do real world testing which required access to assets the city had the ability to provide. At the same time, the city could not provide access to certain public assets without some sort of public benefit. On top of all this, San Francisco's main street, Market Street, was in need of improvement. Originally designed to encourage pedestrian activity, the 30 foot wide sidewalks did not have enough pedestrian activity to warrant their size, and as Chasan describes, had a monotonous and slightly stuffy feel. It was the combination of all of these factors that led the Planning Department, with support from the Mayor's Office to develop the Living Innovation Zone program. The idea was to activate the street, to create a street life zone essentially (Chasan, 2014).

LIZ is a pilot program. The plan is to install 10 LIZ's on Market Street and allow the installations to evolve over time as needed. Each installation will be in place for two years. Community Benefit Districts (CBDs) will be responsible for holding the permits and will be liable for the LIZ's. The San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development CBD "program strives to improve the overall quality of life in targeted commercial districts and mixed-use neighborhoods through a partnership between the City and local communities" (OEWD). Districts must vote to establish a CBD, once a vote has passed, property owners in the district are levied a special assessment to fund improvements in their neighborhood. An established non-profit

organization in the neighborhood is responsible for administering the funds (OEWD). According to Chasan, each new LIZ project is a process of trial and error, requiring different processes and approvals from various departments depending on the project's scope and design. The Planning Department has taken responsibility for navigating through all of the requirements to bring projects to fruition. What has been essential to LIZ's success is the support of the Mayor's Office and the strong relationships between everyone involved, says Chasan. "We like each other, everyone was into it" (Chasan, 2014). The first LIZ only took three months to go from start to finish to plan, design and install.

The first project was an installation by the Exploratorium museum in partnership with the Yerba Buena CBD. The "Whispering Dishes and Singing Bench" on Market Street was a project by The Tinkering Studio, located within the Exploratorium. The Singing Bench was installed in November of 2013 as the first LIZ, located on San Francisco's Market Street. The bench "creates a melody based on the resistance generated when two people hold hands...the notes change depending on how much skin is in contact and the moisture of each person's hands." (Ryan, 2013) The Whispering Dishes are parabolic sound reflectors set apart at a distance of 50 feet. "When visitors sit opposite each other, the sound coming from each reflector is focused, allowing them to clearly hear the other's voice in spite of the distance separating them or noise along the streets" (Lani, 2013).

Although only one project has been installed so far as part of the LIZ program, the initiative shows tremendous potential for future innovations and is a great step towards a more shareable city. Pilot projects such as LIZ enable citizens to engage with each other in public space in ways that inspire collaboration and innovation.

Plaza Program

“The SF Plaza Program is a new collaborative public realm initiative designed to leverage various City, private, nonprofit and stakeholder group efforts to provide long-term activation, management, and/or maintenance for designated City Plazas” (OEWD, 2014). The Office of Economic and Workforce Development has partnered with the Department of Public Works and the Real Estate Division to launch the program which is still awaiting approval from by the Board of Supervisors. The program strives to “[i]mprove the City’s ability to provide more safe, clean and active City-owned open spaces than currently possible with existing City resources” and seeks to reduce barriers for communities wanting to activate City-owned public space by creating “new standardized agreement forms, systemic processes and customized event permitting tools” (OEWD, 2014).

The Plaza Program differs from other projects in that its goal is not to create new plazas, but to establish a “home” for existing plazas currently housed in different programs and departments such as the Pavement to Parks project. It allows community stewards to take over maintenance, programing, marketing, management and event management. Priority is given to non-profit organizations, and applicants must “[b]e able to demonstrate a strong connection to the neighborhood in which the Plaza is located” and have the “capacity for long term management” (OEWD, 2014).

As it is currently proposed, the program will have two different processes, one for city plazas and one for street plazas. The process is initiated when “a plaza emerges from an existing City program that meets criteria” (OEWD, 2014), the Plaza Program then releases an RFP including details regarding eligibility criteria, proposal requirements and operations obligations to

identify potential “City Plaza Stewards” (OEWD, 2014). Once a steward is selected a license agreement must be approved detailing the terms of agreement between the steward and the City. The agreement includes details on communication with the City and the community, programing and maintenance, participation in ongoing Plaza Program workshops and meetings, and insurance requirements. Once approved, the Plaza Program conducts ongoing evaluation throughout the City Plaza Stewardship term. At the end of the stewardship term a new RFP is sent out and the process starts over. There are small technical details distinguishing city plazas from street plazas but both follow the same basic process outlined above.

The proposed ordinance recognizes the need for “systemic” program for managing City-owned plazas. The City, according to the proposed ordinance, “lacks dedicated coordination of activities in City-owned plazas that fall outside of traditional San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department jurisdiction and functions.” Additionally, City staff dedicated to coordinating City-wide efforts for activating and maintaining City-owned plazas and other public spaces currently do not exist, resulting in “a lack of cohesion and policy-level coordination of the various City efforts to foster innovative approaches and partnerships for these public spaces” (OEWD). The Plaza Program will address these needs by dedicating a Plaza Program Coordinator staff position and establishing an “Interagency Plaza Program Working Group” (OEWD). San Francisco has already proved itself as a leader in innovation and public space activation, but establishing the leadership, organization and system wide coordination for managing, maintaining and activating such projects and spaces is an essential next step. San Francisco has the potential to become a national leader in urban space management and activation by approving and implementing the Plaza Program.

Summing up San Francisco

San Francisco has developed a variety of unique programs focused on enabling access to city-owned land. Proxy serves as an example of a successful, temporary, economic and social development on underutilized city-owned land. Its success can be credited to the coordinated efforts of numerous stakeholders ranging from city staff to private citizens. The Pavement to Parks program has, in many ways, formalized temporary public space activations and helped to allow more public ownership over San Francisco streets. Living Innovation Zones seem to be a progression of the Pavement to Parks program although there is no formal link between the two. LIZ's not only allow, but encourage, innovation in public spaces. LIZ's enable a whole new form of experimentation and provide opportunities for citizens to be actively engaged in public design and innovation processes. Finally, the Plaza Program creates a home for all of the above programs and projects, coordinating efforts between various departments and programs. The Plaza Program will enable the City of San Francisco to continue to promote, establish, and maintain innovative public spaces by partnering with community organizations to help fund, manage and maintain public plazas throughout the city. This type of collaborative land management could be used in Austin in conjunction with the formal establishment of innovative land sharing programs.

Part VI. Lessons Learned

Inspired by the rising interest and talk about sharing around the country, I wanted to understand how cities like Austin could share their most valuable asset- land. It is only in the last couple years that sharing has become a topic within planning and urban policy literature, and it is still very limited. Agyeman explicitly argues for cities to develop more shareable policies and further pushes for a focus on sharing based land use methods. Harvey, although he does not use the term sharing, argues for more collective and collaborative processes of urbanization. *Policies for Shareable Cities: A Sharing Economy Policy Primer for Urban Leaders* is the first of its kind, including sharing based policy recommendations for key urban issues including food, housing, transportation and jobs. My goal for this research was to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges against and opportunities for shareable approaches to land use and development of city- owned land. What I discovered was a growing interest in more shareable land use approaches, and evidence of progress towards a more shareable city landscape in both Austin and San Francisco.

Similar patterns emerged in my research on Austin and San Francisco. Both cities have made significant progress in the past few years towards more shareable approaches to land use. San Francisco is a step ahead of Austin, with the Pavement to Parks program well established and matured past the trial and error stage. San Francisco is now working to develop other programs, taking the lessons learned from the Pavement to Parks program and applying them to the Living Innovation Zones initiative and the proposed Plaza Program. Austin has taken a broader approach, developing sharing based land use methods that go beyond public space with the community gardens program, the AISD/PARD school parks program, and the potential of its first

community land trust on public land, while at the same time experimenting with shared public space projects. Despite their progress, both cities faced barriers in the development of various projects and programs.

Common challenges surfaced during my interviews with stakeholders from each of the projects. Almost everyone I spoke with identified a lack of resources to provide funding, programming, maintenance and management as a barrier to expanding existing programs or initiating new ones. Another common barrier was lengthy and complex processes designed for large, traditional development projects and lacking flexibility for smaller, experimental and/or temporary projects. In Austin, there was a clear need for organization, planning and management of city-owned land, it was not as evident from my research whether San Francisco faced the same challenge.

The following prevailing themes emerged out of the two case study cities: (1) a need for alternative land management, funding, and maintenance methods in both cities, (2) increased oversight and organization of city-owned land- particularly in Austin, (3) a more flexible and adaptable policy and process to allow for experimentation with innovative and creative land uses and, (4) a desire by all stakeholders to develop more shareable approaches to land use and development and policies that promote and encourage innovation, experimentation and creativity. Based on these theme and the lessons learned from Austin and San Francisco I have developed recommendations for the City of Austin. Some of the recommendations reflect practices observed in San Francisco projects while others are derived from my research on existing programs and projects in Austin.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Austin is at a point where it needs to take the lessons learned from pilot projects such as the 20' Wide Alley Activation project and the Royal Blue Grocery parking activation to the next level. It is time for Austin to develop a plan moving forward that includes formal programs with appropriately scaled processes for innovative public space activations. San Francisco's Pavement to Parks and Living Innovation Zones are two examples of programs that could be adapted to work in Austin. Learning from the AISD/PARD School Parks program and the community gardens program, it would be wise for Austin to develop a designated land management program as well as a formal land stewardship program for maintaining and funding projects on city-owned land. Such a program should consider the types of projects it wants to encourage; scale, potential locations, longevity (temporary vs permanent), and maintenance, management and programming requirements. Developing clear guidelines and a permitting and approval process flexible enough to accommodate a variety of project types first will help to make project development and implementation smoother and more time and cost effective. Currently in the process of revising the city's Land Development Code, Austin is in a prime position to make the changes needed to develop a shareable land use policy.

In the following section I propose a general structure for developing an intentional land-sharing program in Austin. I have gone broader than San Francisco, incorporating uses beyond just public space. I also include examples of possible projects that could be implemented in a new land sharing program. The following framework is based on the prevailing themes that surfaced during my research.

A Proposed Framework

My first suggestion is a response to the need for increased oversight and organization of city-owned land. I believe the creation of a land coordination, management and planning team is the first step to enabling more shareable approaches to land use in Austin. This could take many forms but should include representatives from all land-owning departments and the planning department. The objectives of the land coordination team should be to develop a comprehensive database of all city-owned land including explicit information on ownership/stewardship and current and proposed uses. Compiling this information into a user friendly, easy to access and edit system will enable quick access to information about property availability and will ensure the city is making the best use of its current land holdings. Once a system is in place, land owning departments along with the planning department can work together to develop short and long term plans for existing land. The plan can be incorporated into the comprehensive land database with up to date maps and information on all available, underutilized, vacant or un-programed land. Once a land coordination team is in place land development processes must be adapted to enable more shareable land use.

Addressing the need for a more flexible and adaptable policy and process to allow for experimentation with innovative and creative land uses is the next step. A separate, more streamlined and flexible process designed to accommodate projects that don't currently fit within existing code will be essential to enabling innovative uses of city-owned land. Possible issues to address include, scale, life cycle - phased projects and temporary versus permanent projects, management, programing, maintenance and funding. The key will be designing a process that encourages exploration and innovation while still ensuring approved projects are feasible and

appropriate for their location.

Finally, establishing a shared land management, funding, and maintenance method will enable the city to allow and encourage access to city-owned land through creative land use methods without using limited city resources. Adopting a shared stewardship model, like the Plaza Program in San Francisco, could be one way to share the burden of funding and maintenance. A shared stewardship model would allow Austin to provide access to city-owned land it otherwise might not have the resources for. A designated shared stewardship coordinator would be essential to ensure such a program ran smoothly. The coordinator should work directly with the land management team and would assist stewards with permitting, development, and legal processes as necessary to ensure a smooth transfer of land management responsibilities. A shared stewardship program would allow the City to experiment with a variety of creative land uses that may otherwise be too costly or risky within the existing City context.

The following are potential land uses that should be considered when creating policies for shared land-use. This list is presented to inspire creative thinking about shareable land use approaches. It does not consider all potential land uses nor does it attempt to.

Land for-

Food production, public space, play, research, design/innovation, temporary housing, camping, events, animal grazing, community land trusts, education

Sharing streets for-

Temporary/impermanent pedestrian uses, multifunctional spaces, mobile interventions, time of day uses - using street and alleys as flexible spaces where uses change throughout the day or week.

Example shared stewardship project:

What- Temporary housing for homeless on city-owned land

Stewarding organization - existing non-profit organization focused on helping homeless people.

How it would work- Stewarding organization conducts planning and design of temporary movable housing on one parcel of city-owned land. City helps find appropriate parcel and assists with planning and permitting process. Stewarding organization finds funding, provides maintenance, management, insurance and programming. City and stewarding organization enter into a license agreement allowing temporary housing on city-owned property for a designated time period as long as all terms of agreement are met by stewarding organization.

This type of model could be adapted to fit many of the suggested shareable land uses. Clear guidelines and processes must be established to make a shared stewardship program work. A model such as this could provide unlimited potential for expanding allowable uses and providing opportunities to become a more equitable city. I advise looking to other cities for precedents of creative and shareable land uses. By expanding the range of permitted uses on city-owned land and providing a solid framework to allow for more shareable land uses, Austin can become a leader in the sharing movement and set an example for other cities looking for alternative land use approaches.

A Review of Lessons Learned

Sharing is on its way to becoming the next buzzword in cities around the nation. The sharing economy has garnered significant attention in the past year. Cities are natural hubs of sharing, places where people go to share ideas, goods, services and experiences. It is within this

context that sharing can and should be incorporated into urban policy, programs and initiatives. Land is increasingly scarce in rapidly urbanizing areas such as Austin. City-owned land provides an opportunity to experiment with shareable approaches to land use and management, and increase equity by enabling access to a valuable public asset. Sharing city-owned land will require adaptations to current land management systems as well as changes to permitting and development processes. The City of Austin is at an ideal moment in its evolution as a city to make the changes necessary to become a national leader of shareable land use approaches. The City should utilize the current work of the Code Next initiative responsible for revising the Land Development Code to help make the changes necessary to succeed as an exemplary shareable city.

Part VII. Conclusion

The US Conference of Mayors has resolved to make cities more shareable. The City of San Francisco has created a Sharing Economy Working Group. Sharing and the Sharing Economy are making headlines across the Nation. Scholars and urban leaders are beginning to take interest in the potential of sharing in cities to “decrease inequality, increase social capital and to cut resource use” (Agyeman, no date). As one of the scarcest resources in urban areas, land holds some of the greatest potential for sharing.

My intent for this research was to develop an awareness of the challenges against and opportunities for shareable approaches to land use and development of city-owned land. Through interviews and archival research I explored a variety of projects, programs and initiatives in Austin and San Francisco. What I discovered in both cities was a growing interest in more shareable land use approaches, and evidence of progress towards a more shareable city landscape.

Austin is using shareable land use approaches through the Cities school park program, community gardens program and is in the process of developing its first Community Land Trust on public land to provide affordable housing. Austin’s 20’ Wide Alley Activation pilot and Royal Blue Grocery seating pilot are experimentations with shareable public space. San Francisco has had success with its Pavement to Parks program- converting parking to vibrant public spaces- and has developed a process tailored to the program. San Francisco is also in the process of developing a program for sharing responsibility of public spaces with community organizations to reduce stress on limited city resources. Both cities faced similar challenges in enabling shareable approaches to land use.

The following prevailing themes emerged out of the two case study cities: (1) a need for alternative land management, funding, and maintenance methods in both cities, (2) increased oversight and organization of city-owned land- particularly in Austin, (3) a more flexible and adaptable policy and process to allow for experimentation with innovative and creative land uses and, (4) a desire by all stakeholders to develop more shareable approaches to land use and development and policies that promote and encourage innovation, experimentation and creativity. I recommend the City of Austin considers these themes in adopting shareable land use policies.

This research provides a contextual understanding of shareable approaches to land use in Austin and San Francisco and offers suggestions for moving forward. There is a need for further research into specific codes and policies as well as follow up research on the projects discusses in this report. There is also a great need for expanding the literature on sharing in cities to incorporate land owned by private and non-profit entities. I hope this report will help to build a deeper understanding and awareness of the potential for sharing in cities and inspire others to continue to expand the literature.

Appendix

(In Support of Policies for Shareable Cities is the resolution passed in June, 2013 by the US Conference of Mayors. Sponsored by fifteen mayors across the country, the resolution strives to encourage cities to embrace the Sharing Economy and find ways to incorporate shareable practices and policies into existing city frameworks.)

IN SUPPORT OF POLICIES FOR SHAREABLE CITIES

WHEREAS, economic instability has led to increased unemployment in U.S. cities, where income and wages have stagnated for most Americans while productivity has surged; over the past thirty years the median US family income has only grown at an annual rate of 0.36%, while the overall economy has grown at a rate of 2.66%; and

WHEREAS, the number of Americans living in isolation has doubled since 1985, particularly amongst the elderly, as the strength of neighborhood community relationships has declined in both urban and suburban areas; and

WHEREAS, an emerging Sharing Economy is redefining the ways that goods and services are exchanged, valued and created amongst citizens by enabling affordable access as an alternative to ownership; and

WHEREAS, the placement and monetization of underutilized assets into Sharing Economy marketplaces empowers citizens to find new ways of providing jobs, housing, transportation, food, and improved lifestyles for themselves; provides additional income for households and local businesses; makes city living more affordable; and generates reinvestment in communities; and

WHEREAS, this access to new economic opportunities promotes greater entrepreneurship and the creation of new small enterprises, two aspects of urban life in which cities have invested significant resources to date; and

WHEREAS, various forms of sharing amongst residents, neighbors and colleagues can strengthen community ties which leads to greater resilience in times of economic and environmental stress; and

WHEREAS, many cities have pioneered the Sharing Economy over the past several decades with great success through models such as car- and bicycle-sharing, ridesharing, co-working, consumer cooperatives, home-swapping and sharing, and tool lending libraries, thus providing access to items and space that previously might have been prohibitively expensive to some citizens; and

WHEREAS, new technology platforms and social tools have enabled even more citizens to connect with each other in order to access new economic opportunities by monetizing and sharing their underutilized assets; and

WHEREAS, Sharing Economy companies have proven to be engines of innovation and job creation, driving economic development in the hearts of American cities, where joblessness is still most pervasive; and

WHEREAS, the Sharing Economy can improve and make more cost-effective traditional approaches for managing overall growth and urbanization, integrating transportation solutions, reducing crime, designing urban spaces, creating jobs, and providing a variety of public services for citizens; and

WHEREAS, in the aftermath of a disaster, Sharing Economy platforms can open up access to untapped supplies of housing, transportation, other goods and skills to aid in response and recovery efforts, addressing the needs of survivors during a critical time; and

WHEREAS, balanced, equitable and clear regulation of the Sharing Economy will ensure greater compliance and benefits to a broader, more diverse population,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that The United States Conference of Mayors urges support for making cities more shareable by (1) encouraging a better understanding of the Sharing Economy and its benefits to both the public and private sectors by creating more robust and standardized methods for measuring its impacts in cities; (2) creating local task forces to review and address regulations that may hinder participants in the Sharing Economy and proposing revisions that ensure public protection as well; and (3) playing an active role in making appropriate publicly owned assets available for maximum utilization by the general public through proven sharing mechanisms.

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