

The case study “Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050”

A collaborative case study of participation between the 3C project
and Trondheim municipality’s planning office

Report written by 3C//Co-Constructing City Futures

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1 Summary

This report is a summary of the case study in Trondheim in the research project Co-Constructing City Futures (3C) and the collaboration between the research project and Trondheim municipality's planning office. The main aims of the report are to present the project case study and to communicate the lessons learned from working with stakeholders in research projects.

The lessons learned are mainly focused on communication between the parties. Based on the experiences of the 3C and Trondheim case study, the most important recommendations for research projects and stakeholders looking to collaborate in a similar case study are listed below:

1. Allow for risk and be open to the possibility that the process, product and outcome can change along the way.
2. Reserve enough time to get to know each other and each other's professional languages.
3. Be aware of each other's strengths, priorities, limitations and context.
4. Understand the given interdependency between the parties and how to reach the goals of the collaboration.
5. Make sure to clarify expectations, roles and task divisions early on, and revisit this topic regularly.
6. A formal collaboration agreement is recommended to clarify responsibilities and ownership of the work for future purposes.

A secondary aim of the report is to reflect on the impact and usability of the participation methods and tools that were developed and used in the case study. The case study represents some innovative ideas to the participation process, where the public is involved both in the making of the plan as well as in the public hearing of the proposed plan. However, the methods of this study do not represent quick fixes to tackle the central challenges of participation, in particular the question of the outreach and representativeness of participation.

2 Introduction

2.1 About Co-Constructing City Futures

Co-constructing city futures (3C) is an interdisciplinary project with members from both planning practice and research. The project team consists of five people from five different institutions or companies: University of Oslo, Norconsult, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and Norwegian Institute for Air Research (NILU).

The project addresses participation in the construction of ideas and visions for city futures. The project was initiated in a 'sandpit process' with the theme "Cities that work" in January 2016 and is funded by the Norwegian Research Council. As a part of the research, 3C has worked closely with stakeholders in order to learn from, influence, and collaborate with them in ongoing planning processes and civic participation in real life settings.

More about the project can be found on [the University of Oslo's website](#).

2.2 The aim of the report

This report is a summary of a case study conducted in Trondheim in the research project 3C, and about the collaboration between the research project and Trondheim municipality's planning office. The main aims of the report are to present the project case study and communicate the lessons learned from working with stakeholders in research projects. This can contribute to the ongoing focus and knowledge field concerning working in the intersection between academia and practice. The report can be useful for both research projects looking to collaborate with public stakeholders, and for public stakeholders looking to collaborate with research projects.

A secondary aim is to reflect on the topic of participation in the context of the case study. Further reflections and links to existing theories and literature can be found in the academic articles from the 3C project.

The report is written by the 3C project and based on inputs and interviews with the planning office and reflections in the research group.

3 The case and context: Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050

3C collaborated with the planning office of Trondheim municipality ("Byplankontoret"). This collaboration took place from spring 2018 until autumn 2019. 3C's aim was to learn from real life experiences with participation, and to enable joint development and testing of different approaches to co-creation between the municipality and the public in a specific planning project. The context and the specific project, called "Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050", will be presented below.



Figure 1: Overview of Trondheim's extended city centre. The map is from the tender documents for the competition on "Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050". Source: Trondheim municipality.

3.1 Trondheim's strategic plans for urban development

Trondheim is a medium sized city in Norway of 200.000 inhabitants. The heart of the city centre, called Midtbyen, mainly consists of shops, businesses and office space. In the light of Norway's environmental goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Trondheim municipality intends to reduce the use of private cars and stop urban sprawl by densifying the central areas of the city with a mixed-use development of for example housing, workspaces, education and social services.

As a part of this transition, the planning office started a strategic work process in order to find the best solutions to questions about local urban development. Their aim was also to include interest groups and stakeholders, and to map out the development of the city by looking at the whole area holistically.

3C became aware of these strategic work processes through an [article](#) in the municipality's web magazine on urban planning. Due to the Trondheim planning office's interest and focus on technological tools in participation, as well as the use of visualisation and imagery, their project fit well with the interests in the 3C project. 3C therefore got in touch for a possible collaboration and to find a suitable case for testing new methods which could be beneficial to both parties.



Figure 2: From the start-up workshop at DIGS in Trondheim: from the left Tonje Rønneberg Devik (Trondheim municipality), Ida Nilstad Pettersen (3C), Susana Lopez-Aparicio (3C), Kristina Ebbing Wensaas (3C), Marte Nordhus (Trondheim municipality), Grete Kristin Hennissen (Trondheim municipality), Ole Smørdal (3C) and Vidar Vollan (Trondheim municipality). Photo: Trondheim municipality.

3.2 The case study and experiment of Framtidsbilder

After several meetings and workshops on the topic of participation and on the specific strategies, 3C and the planning office agreed on using the municipality's architecture and planning competition *Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050* (*Future imageries Trondheim city centre 2050*) as a case study for 3C's research and involvement.

Through a public tendering process the planning office picked four interdisciplinary teams for this architecture and planning competition. The teams' task involved creating plans and images for Midtbyen in the year 2050, in addition to four other central parts of the city (see figure 1). The planning office also wanted the citizens of

Trondheim to take part in this process, but had limited resources and capacity within their project.

3C and the planning office agreed for 3C to create a fifth contribution to the competition, made from the ideas and wishes of the public. The aim of this was two-fold for both the planning office's and 3C's perspective: improving the process and the outcome of participation.

By creating a fifth contribution, the competition became open to a wider audience and part of a more comprehensive plan to involve Trondheim's citizens in the process. For 3C, the process allowed the research project to experiment with tools in a real-life setting, and to observe how a participation process could be affected by technology.

The municipality also wanted ideas from the public in order to enrich the plans and find new, innovative and useful suggestions to existing problems and challenges faced in urban planning. This expected outcome would at the same time allow 3C to explore different questions concerning the value of the inputs, the legibility of them, the differences in professional and non-professional inputs, and the practical use of them in the further planning process.

Figure 3 shows a timeline of the collaborative case study.

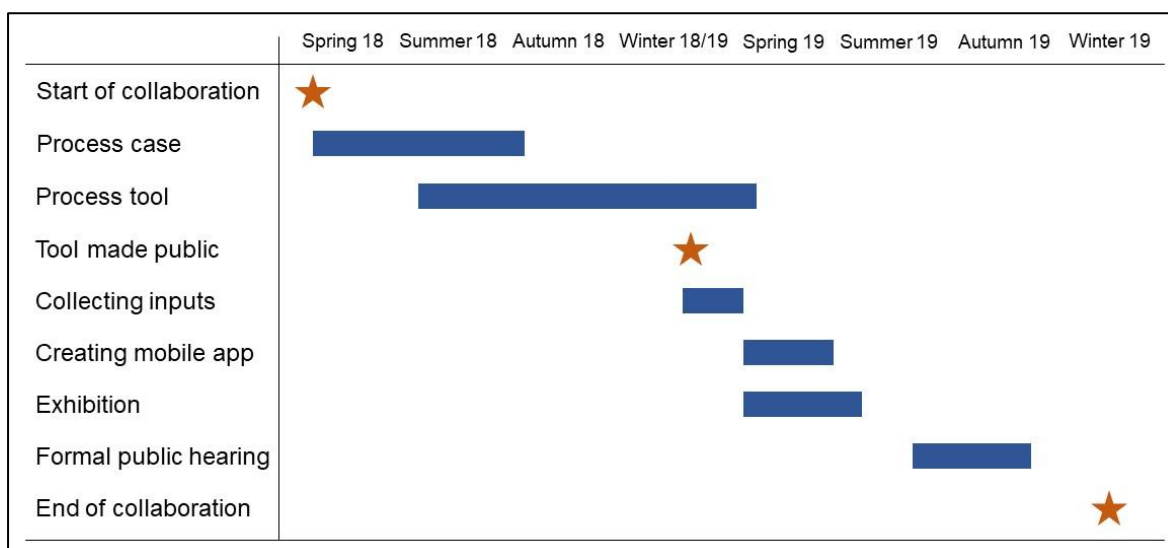


Figure 3: Timeline of the collaborative case study.

3.3 Home based “charettes” as the arena for participation

Earlier in their strategic work, Trondheim municipality had asked for volunteers among the public to be hosts for planning “charettes” in their homes (in Norwegian called “gjestebud”). This participation method entails a host inviting friends, family and/or neighbours to their home for a meeting on a specific plan or questions related to urban planning. By the time the collaboration with 3C kicked off, the planning office had already initiated a round of charettes and received the results in [written format](#) from the participants.

The approach of home based charettes was already an established method in the municipality. It focused on discussion in a group setting, therefore lowering the barrier of participation compared to larger public meetings (“folkemøte”). These aspects made the charette a suited arena for 3C to test a tool for a more holistic and challenging task concerning urban planning. The planning office therefore announced another round of charettes and asked for new volunteer hosts in the context of “Framtidsbilder” (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Facebook post from the municipality inviting people to host home based “charettes”.

3.4 The digital platform

The method of participation 3C created for the charettes consisted of a digital platform with three parts: an introduction of the context and task, a timeline of the planning process in question, and the tool for creating and adding inputs (Figure 5).




Figure 5: The landing page of the digital platform.

The “context and task”-page was made for participants to understand what they were invited into, and what was expected of them in the process. The intention behind this was to reduce the amount of information people needed in order to understand what was at stake, how to contribute in the process, and to limit the sources for this information. The goal was to have all necessary information in one single platform.


The timeline allowed participants to understand where they were in the process, what had already been decided, and what was to come next. In other words: what was at stake at that point in time, and how they could contribute and affect this. The timeline consisted of short explanations of past and future decisions and processes, with links to political decisions, other strategies and web pages. This was to make it easy to get an overview of the process, as well as making it possible to dig deeper into the material if needed.

The tool for creating and sending inputs was built around photos, visualisations, and maps, but also had text – in order to broaden the possibility of inputs by depicting concrete ideas and built features in the urban environment, or simply showing existing examples from other places (Figure 6). Participants could also choose general images of plants, animals, people, cities and so on, from suggested open source image databases, to represent a feeling or idea. This was to overcome the barrier of professional language, as well as giving the planners a quicker intuition of what the inputs would contain.

Lag ditt framtidsbilde! ✕



Legg til bilde fra nåtid



Legg til framtidsbilde

Tittel:

For eksempel: Nytt Trondheim torg

Beskriv framtidsbildet:

Bruk inntil fire avsnitt for å beskrive framtidsbildet

Område:

For eksempel: Trondheim Torg

AVBRYT SEND INN

Figure 6: The third component of the platform (the tool), where people could upload their own images for future Trondheim.

3.5 From public inputs to the competition contribution

The images and text received through the charettes varied, both in their level of detail and themes. Some chose to draw and illustrate themselves, either on blank paper or on existing images, whereas others chose to illustrate their input with an image from an open source image database, representing their wishes for the future city centre of Trondheim.

Ny bruk av bryggeområdet



Område: Baklandet
author:
Date: 2019-2-6



Vises i galleri

Beskriv framtidsbildet:

Bygge på utsiden av bryggerekke. Bygge en "plattning" med busker, benker, boder, spisesteder etc. Bygge den så lang som mulig, med litt bredde slik at folk kan ferdes og det er plass bord og stoler. Beholde den "gamle" bryggestilen, men fokus på sikkerhet og robust konstruksjon. Mulig å utnytte stømmen i elva for å lage strøm??

Figure 7: Example of a future image sent from one of the charettes.

In order to make the inputs legible and easily accessible for the rest of the public, 3C grouped the inputs into categories and presented measures that reflected what the charettes had come up with. The main categories were structures, mobility, urban spaces and visions.

The contribution from the 3C team in the competition therefore consisted of both the images and text in their raw format, as well as adapted and summarised illustrations of the inputs.

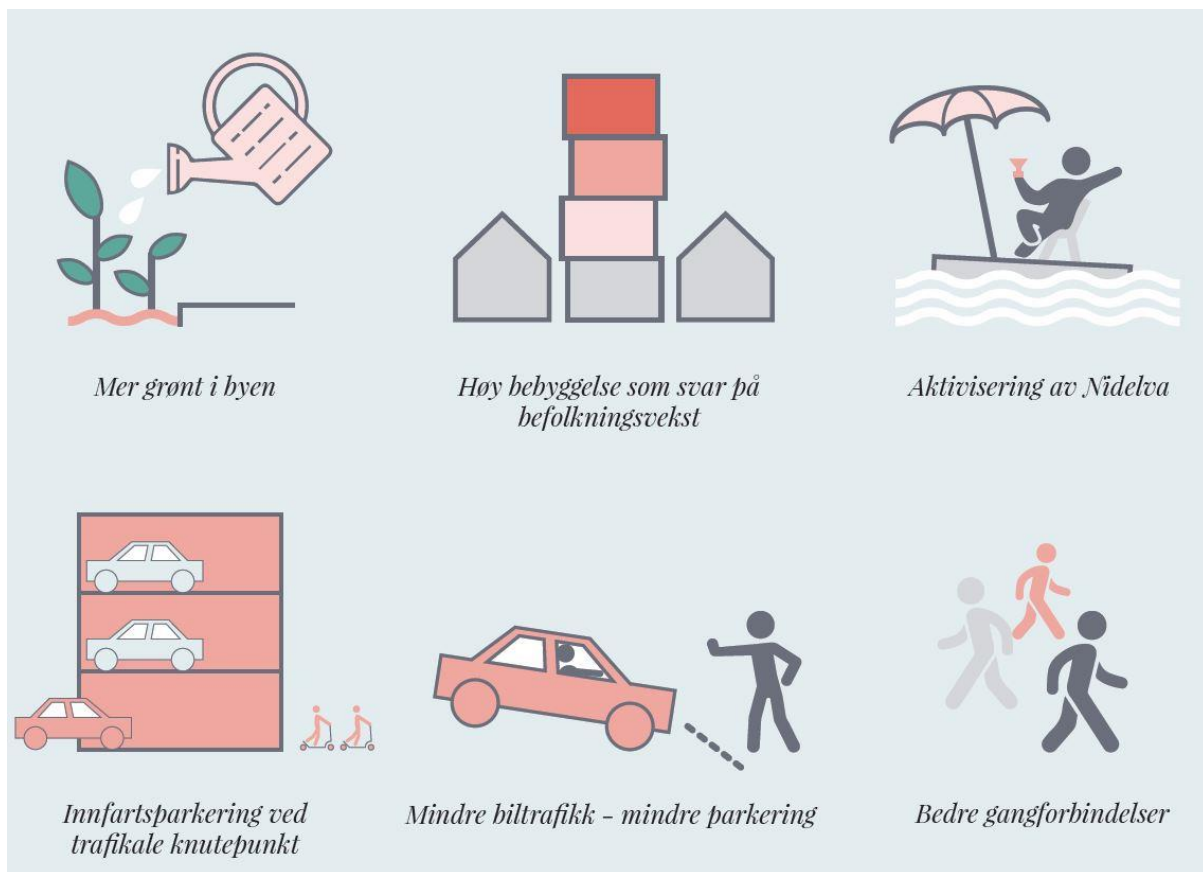


Figure 8: Some of the principles that came out from the charettes' inputs. Illustrations made by Mads Djurhuus, Norconsult.

3.6 The exhibition and mobile app

The results from the competition were displayed in both a physical exhibition in the library, as well as digitally on Trondheim's project website: framtidstrondheim.no. For the physical exhibition, all the teams (including 3C) had to create posters. In addition to posters, 3C created a simple video looping the inputs that were received, both in text and pictures, on a screen next to the posters (figure 9).



Figure 9: Pictures from the exhibition of Framtidbilder Trondheim sentrum. Photos: Ida Nilstad Pettersen, 3C.

3C's posters and the video also encouraged people to visit the participation platform to comment on the inputs and to add images and inputs of their own. By this time, the platform had been adapted into mobile format, and the contributions from the four professional teams had been added in order to gather inputs on their suggested visions for Trondheim.

The adaption of the platform also included a division between comments on agreeing to the proposal and disagreeing ("good idea" and "not good idea"), see figure 10. This was inspired by the work of [Citizens Foundation](#) in Iceland, in order to avoid unconstructive arguments between those who disagreed with each other, which is usually the experience when using social media. Rather, the focus would be on the idea and how it could be made better, or why it was not a good idea. If someone felt their view had already been expressed or they agreed with the additional comments, the app also made it possible to "like" the comments.

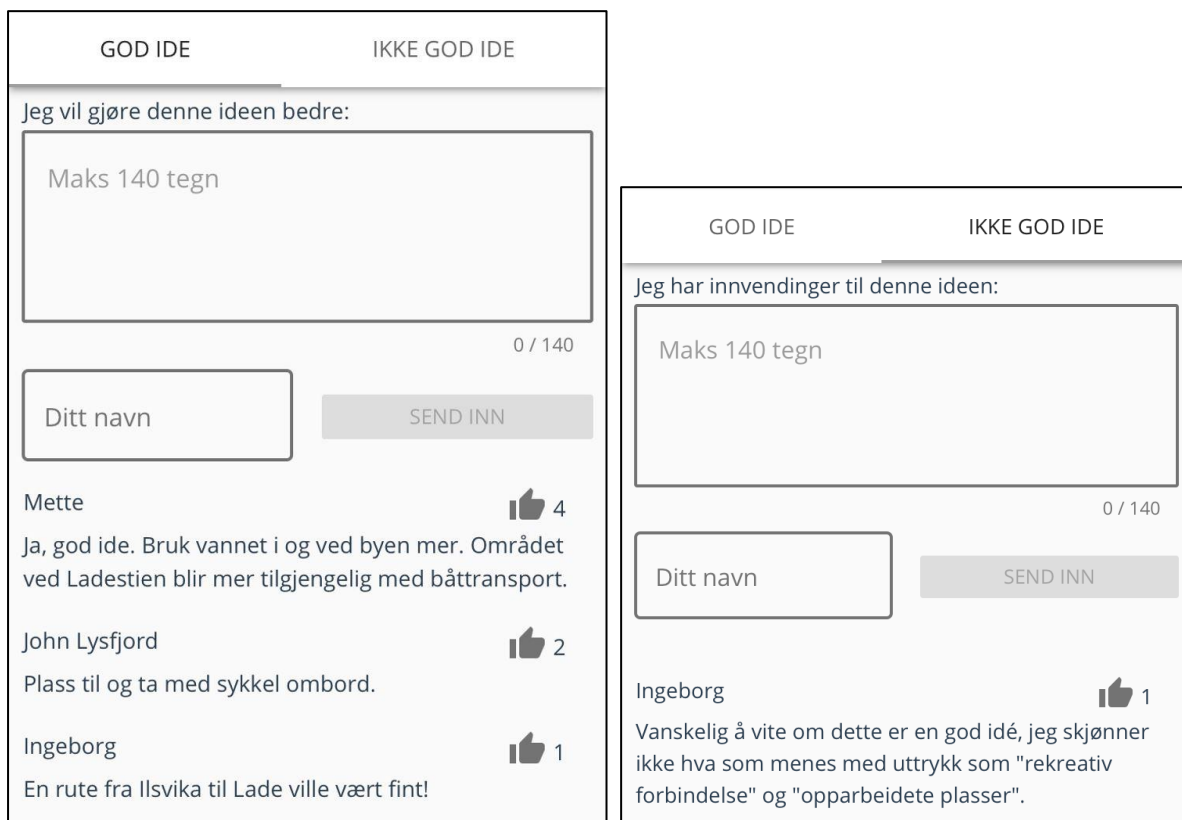


Figure 10: Example of columns for "good idea" and "not good idea" on the platform.

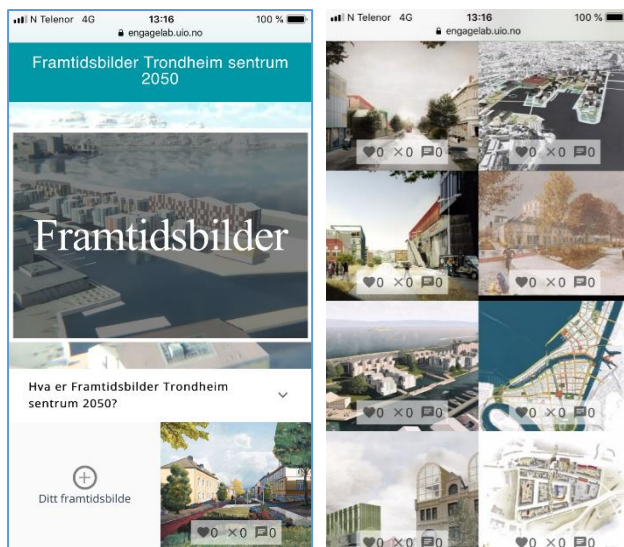


Figure 11: The platform in mobile format.

3.7 Public hearing of the strategy

A jury consisting of planners and architects made an [evaluation report](#) based on the five contributions to the competition. In this evaluation, they also suggested what parts of the contributions should be implemented in the municipality's strategy for the city centre.

Although the Planning and Building Act does not require a public hearing, the municipality politicians decided to make the report public and a part of the public hearing process, following the administrative director's advice. In the recommendation to do this the municipal director stated that "the expert report from the competition of Future Images Trondheim city centre 2050 as well as the inputs from the citizens, is a good example of co-creation and civic involvement" (translated from Norwegian).

During the public hearing, suggestions from the report and from the population (through not only the 3C contribution, but also several participation methods carried out by the planning office) were shown in the same digital tool, with the same possibility to comment, agree or disagree with the proposals. The municipality received over 350 comments on the proposals, most of them agreeing to and building on what was being proposed. At this stage in the case study, the planning office managed the web application and added the content themselves. In addition,

they created awareness of the application by posting on Facebook, and through a public stand during city events.

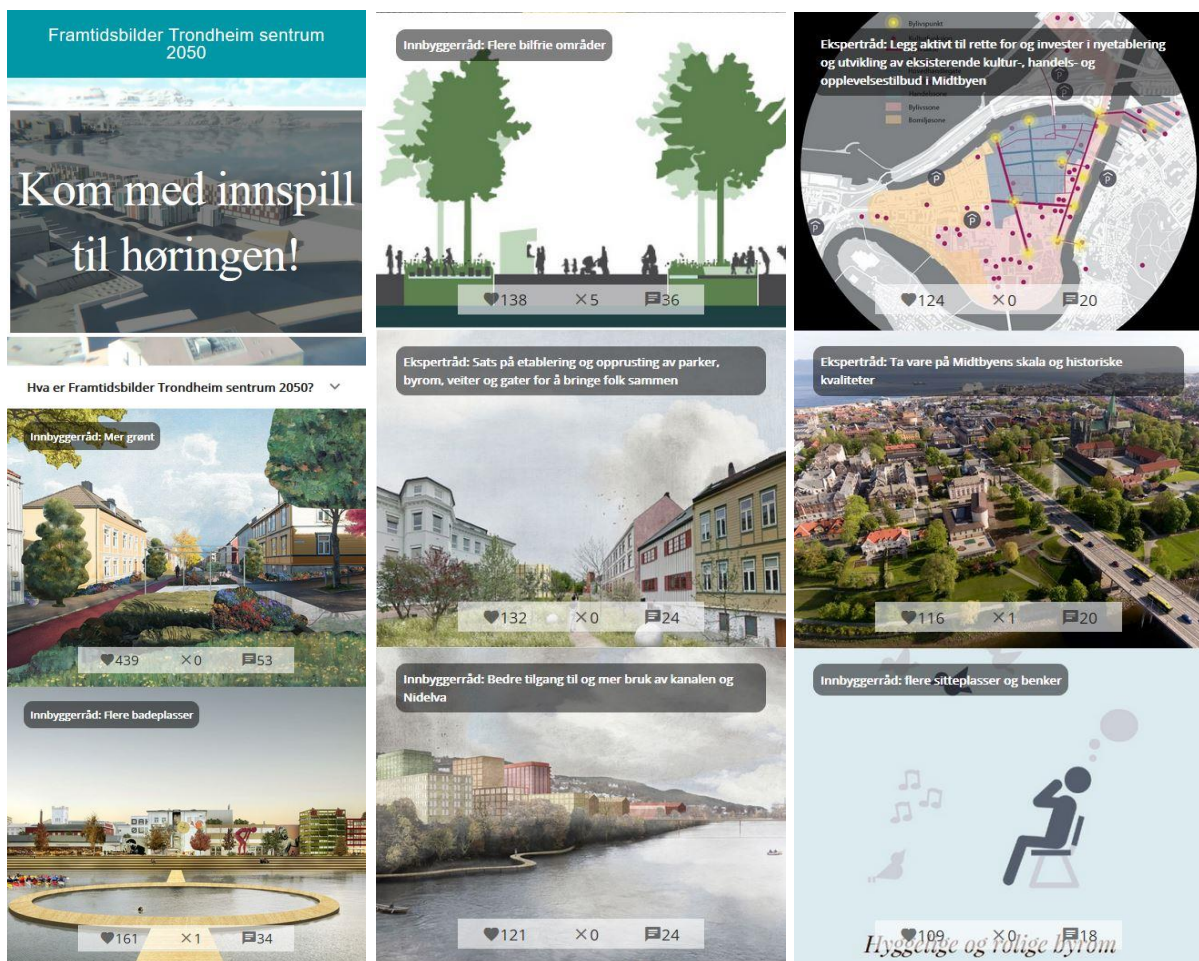


Figure 12: Images from the mobile app after the hearing period.

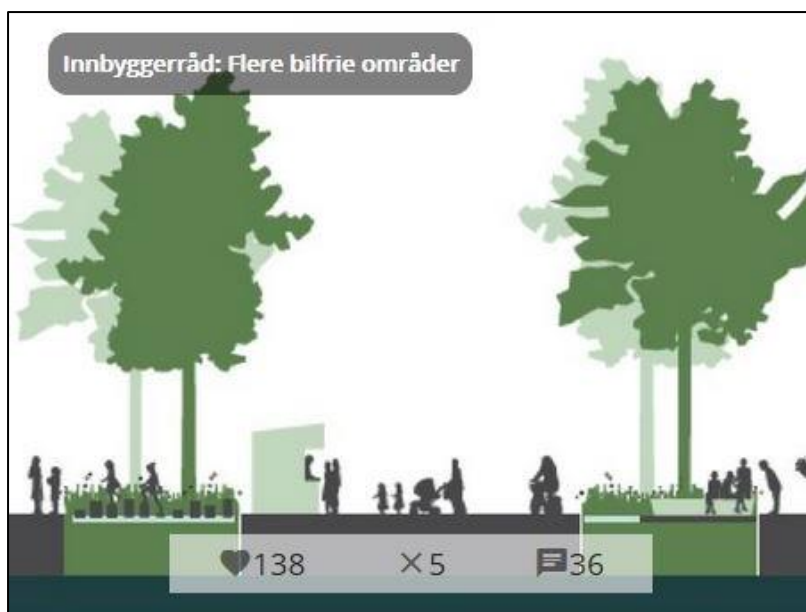


Figure 13: Example of advice from the citizens, being commented and voted on during the hearing period.

4 Co-creating a method for participation

4.1 Challenges of participation

Throughout the life span of the 3C project, with interviews, focus groups, participatory observation meetings with stakeholders and literature reviews, several challenges in the field of participation were brought up. The main challenges would vary according to stakeholders' perspectives and interests in the planning process, what stage in a planning project they were concerned with, and to what detail and size the plan was. 3C acknowledged early on that the many perspectives and barriers to participation would not be tackled in one single case study and by using one specific tool alone. However, the project wanted to test a tool/method that could tackle several challenges, and to have several user groups in mind.

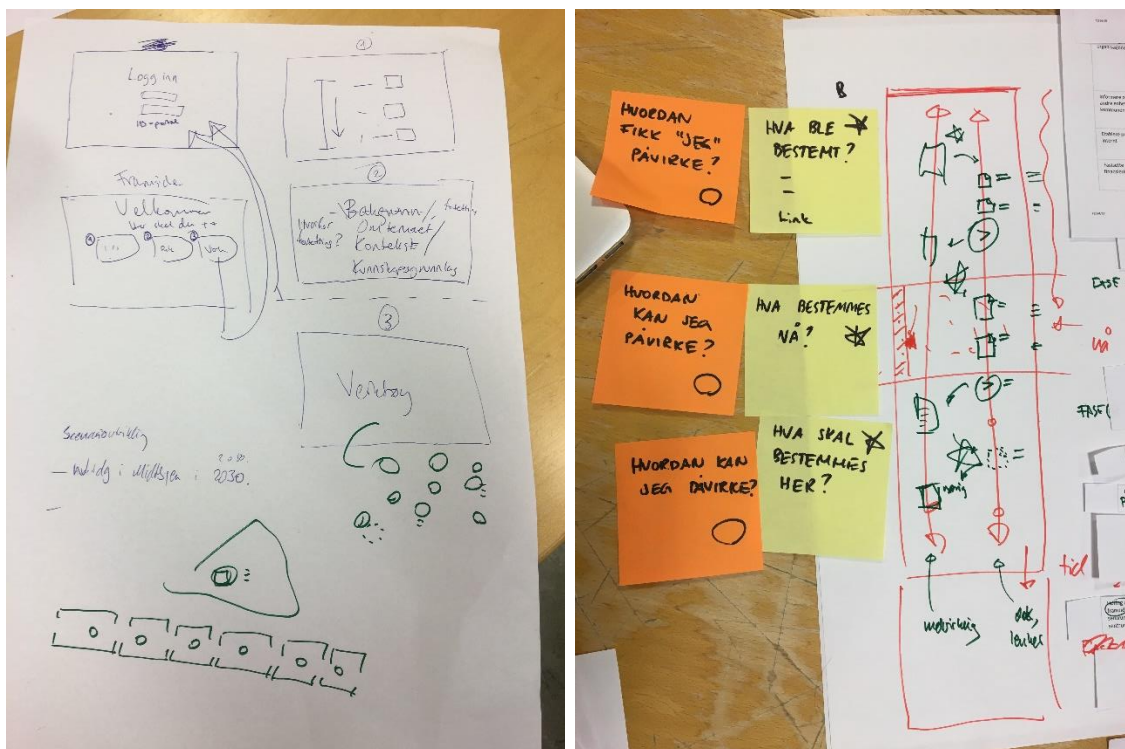


Figure 14: Notes from workshops on the tool for participation in Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050. Photos: 3C.

4.2 Creating the method/tool

The concepts for a new tool were created in collaboration with the planning office of Trondheim municipality, through brainstorming meetings and workshops. The planning office provided valuable experiences and communicated their needs in the

process. Discussions around barriers to participation, as well as the usability of inputs, lead to many different ideas. Some main criteria were early established implicitly through the conversations:

- The tool should be different from the conventional opportunity to send in written comments to an e-mail address or by mail
- Visualisation and images would be a central part of the tool
- The tool should combine some digital as well as physical face-to-face dimensions.

The making-process of the tool was to a large extent an internal one in the 3C project, supported by UiO's EngageLab for the technical solutions. As will be discussed in the chapters below, the municipality were less involved in the making of the tool itself.

In the time leading up to the planned charettes, the planning office received both the text for the platform and a draft of design and layout for inputs, improvements and approval. Minor feedbacks were possible to change and adjust within the time frame, whereas suggestions for other applications to the platform had to be postponed to the exhibition stage.

4.3 Focus group meeting

3C arranged a focus group meeting in November 2018 with the existing volunteer hosts from the charettes program. The aim was to get feedback on the ideas of the participation platform by showing mock-ups.

Some main concerns about the platform were the lack of something concrete to discuss or give feedback to, as well as many confusing expressions and too much text. Focusing on the city centre was also too narrow, as they believed people would be more engaged if they could talk about their own neighbourhood and local centres.

Positive feedback included the idea of a timeline to understand the process. In addition, the group suggested other measures to improve participation, such as an explanation video and "open office"-days where they could talk to the planners directly.



Figure 15: Focus group meeting in November 2018. Photo: Mari Basberg, Trondheim municipality.

4.4 Lowering the threshold

Throughout the design and concept phase of the tool and participation methods in general, the planning office stressed that the tool should be a low threshold opportunity for people to participate. In the initial version of the platform used in the charettes, there was a log in page and a lot of text, which made it challenging for people to participate.

As a result of feedback from the planning office, as well as reactions from citizens and insights from interviews and observation of people using the platform, 3C worked on making the platform easier to access by removing the need to log in and reducing text. The new version was ready in time for the exhibition, with an adaption to smart phone format (as mentioned in chapter 3.6).

5 Reflections on the methods and tools

This chapter reflects on participation in the context of the case study and is based on interviews and conversations with the planning office and discussions in the 3C group.

5.1 Different methods for different purposes

Participation processes can take a lot of time and resources. The planning office therefore expressed the importance of finding the right tools for the right purpose, and that this may vary from plan to plan.

Evaluating the process as a whole, including the process with 3C, the planning office stated that they have become very aware of what they can achieve through physical participation methods, and what the digital ones can do, as well as what cannot be achieved with the used methods. This appreciation has also been important for the research results of 3C.

There are positive and negative sides to both digital and analogue/physical methods in participation. The planning office has frequently used social media and other digital channels to advertise meetings and invite people to participate in the process. However, they have tried to limit discussions on Facebook.

The large number of digital inputs they received in the project made it challenging to quantify and pick out the essence of inputs. An important lesson for the planning office was that their map solution (where people could add comments to specific areas on a digital map, see figure 17 below) made it easier to summarize and use the inputs later. However, they were also concerned with the danger of summarizing inputs, as some people react if they cannot find their specific suggestions treated in the final planning documents.

Due to the many methods the planning office tried out, and the many reflections they made, their focus in the future processes will be on tools they have already used and to improve these, rather than starting something completely different. As will be mentioned in chapters 6 and 7, the platform presented in this report will be one of the methods they wish to try again in other ongoing plans.

5.2 The response to, and usage of, the platform

During the exhibition of the posters of all five competition contributions, the mobile app was available and advertised for use. However, the app received few visits and inputs during this period. There can be many reasons for this. Was it not marketed sufficiently? Was there still too much of a threshold to use it? Were the images not accessible enough? Was the year 2050 too far in the future? Was there not enough concrete material to comment on? These questions will be discussed more in the following chapters, but some general feedback will be presented here.

The planning office expressed that they liked the application 3C made, and that it was legible and easy to read. They therefore imagined that the problem must have been the task participants were asked to perform. They worried the tool component of the platform was too complex and created too much of a barrier to participate, and that the task that was given was too much of an effort for people. Most people do not know how to sketch “future images”, and what this expression entailed.

The contributions were of good quality and seemed reflected. Although the amount of inputs (29 in the charettes period) was not very high, the planning office was surprised of the number. The charettes as the arena for using the platform was probably the reason behind this relatively high number. This is also reflected in the fact that no new inputs were received at the exhibition stage, as this did not include a group activity.

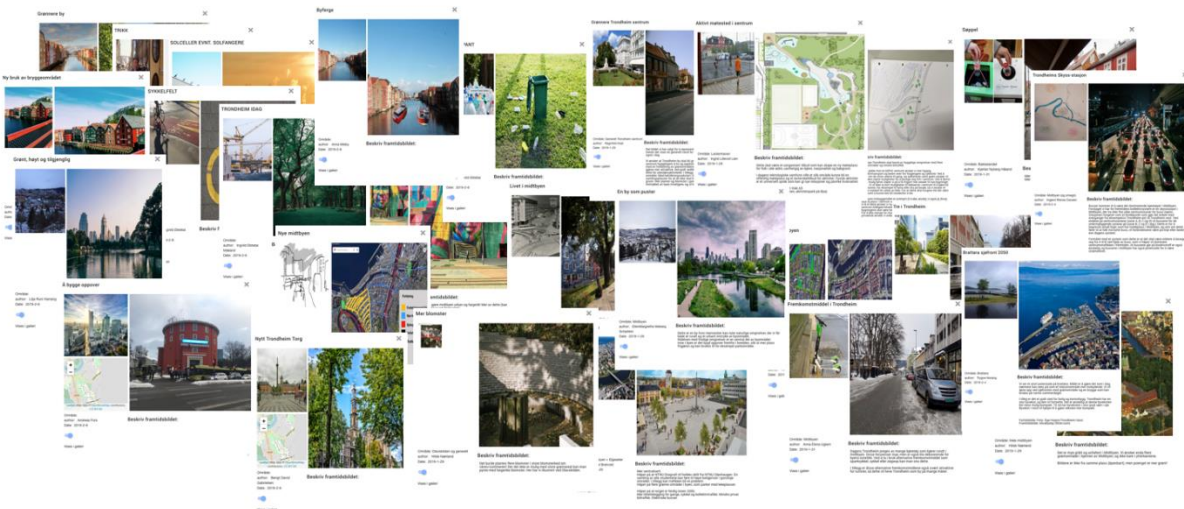


Figure 16: The 29 images received through the charettes.

The planning office and 3C also discussed the marketing of the platform. In the hearing period, the planning office made more effort in marketing the tool on e.g. Facebook, and received a much higher number of contributions. In the early stages of the process (during the charettes and the exhibition) there was not as much advertising of the platform.

As mentioned, there were probably a mix of reasons why they received few inputs in the form of images from the citizens. Another contributing factor could be the fact that the platform was not the only channel where people could get involved – the planning office also facilitated for participation through a physical “wish tree” in the exhibition space, a map-based input solution online, and so on.



Figure 17: Picture of the map-based input channel made by Trondheim municipality.

5.3 Challenges of representativeness

After the modifications to the platform (see chapter 4.4), it was no longer necessary to log in to the site. This lowered the threshold for participating, but it made information such as the participants' age, gender and education level inaccessible to 3C and the planning office. It is therefore not possible to state how broad the engagement had been in terms of representing all groups of society.

The invitation to host a home-based charette was published on the municipality's website, as well as promoted on the planning office's Facebook page. This probably did not reach a broad group of people in Trondheim.

Later in the process, the exhibition and the strategic work was given more attention by the local news media, Adresseavisen. The exhibition in the public library also drew a lot of attention to regular visitors of the library. In total, the library exhibition, the exhibition at "Bytorget" (an exhibition zone by the municipality's front desk) and the online exhibition at framtidstrondheim.no had around 15 000 visitors. The planning office made a solid effort to reach out to as many people as possible at the exhibition stage and the public hearing stage of the process. However, as mentioned it is difficult to draw any conclusions as to what degree the participants were representative of the whole population or not.

5.4 Communicating complexity

A central challenge in participation is the process of making the material comprehensible to non-planners. However, by oversimplifying the questions related to planning, you lose the complex relations between different aspects, interests and disciplines. The challenge lies in communicating this complexity and interdependency that exists in the city, but still make it accessible for a broad spectre of interest groups.

The planning office reflected that "Framtidsbilder" created value by inspiring all actors to see what the future city can be. The 3D-aspect and the focus on images made the ideas more accessible to people and reduced the time it took for someone to understand the proposals. However, many of the contributions in the competition were not realistic in the light of current laws, property structures and special interests such as cultural heritage. This was true of both the professionals' and the public's proposals.

As a result of this, the planning office further reflected that the participation with the public in plans such as this should focus on what people want and wish for the future, and not so much on how to get there. Following this, it will be the professionals' job to figure out how the needs can be met, how to achieve the best

balance between different interests, and how to reach the main goals through concrete measures. In other words, it would be a collaboration and task division between the planners and the public that ultimately will lead to a better outcome.

5.5 Challenges of the strategic level

As mentioned in chapter 5.2, the number of inputs during the charettes and exhibition stages were few compared to the comments received during the hearing strategy. The explanation to this is probably a combination of many aspects, but it seems clear that commenting on something concrete is easier and creates more debate than asking openly for inputs with few restrictions and guidelines.

Both the planning office and the focus group (see chapter 4.3) reflected on the time frame of the task. 2050 is 30 years ahead, and this may distort the focus from the task as it becomes too vague to discuss.

According to the planning office, the long timeframe may also have been a central reason why it was challenging to engage a broad spectre of the population in a process of a strategic plan. Strategies tend to be vague and talk about the broad perspectives and overarching goals of a topic. The end product of a process like this is often just a paper document, rather than an actual building, a park or a transport system. It may be easier to engage people when there is a concrete and physical proposal at stake.

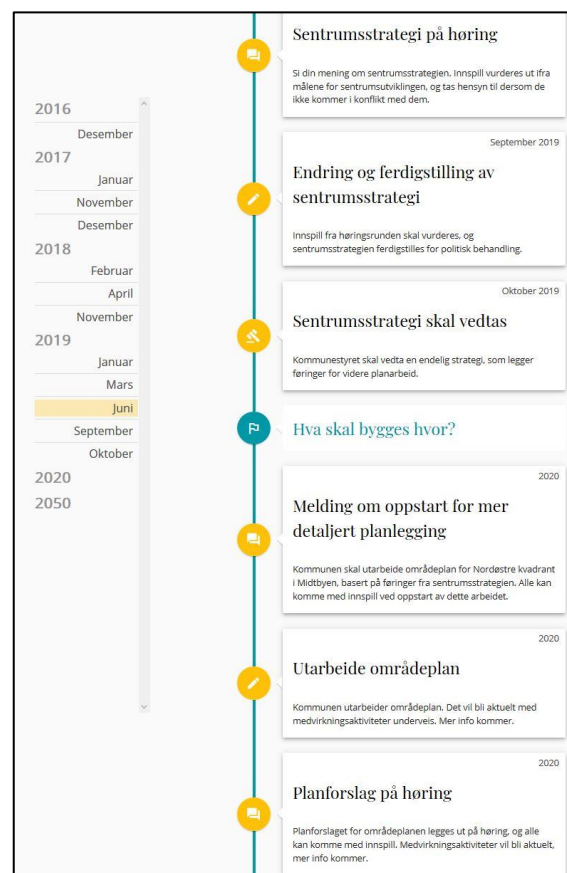


Figure 18: The timeline of the process from the platform.

However, a criticism in many zoning plan processes is that people are involved too late, as the scope for change has been reduced. This is part of the reason why both the municipality's politicians and planners want more involvement at an earlier stage

– and the strategic level is perhaps one of the earliest stages before a concrete measure is proposed. In addition, larger changes in a city may take 20-30 years from the idea has been born to actual physical manifestation. The timeline on the platform (figure 18) was an attempt to communicate these connections.

5.6 The stages of participation

The planning office’s strategy process, including the contribution from 3C, represents an original approach to co-creation in planning. It involved several stages, methods and levels of participation. Through the use of the platform, the process of participation became layered on top of each other, in the sense that citizens got to be a part of both the creation and the hearing of the planning proposal, as well as given the opportunity to react to each other’s contributions and inputs.

The process can be summarized in six stages (figure 19). First, citizens were asked to create proposals and future images through group work in charettes based on a description of the politically endorsed goals for the city. Then a wider audience of citizens were asked to agree, disagree or improve the incoming proposals from the charettes, as well as adding their own future images. At a third stage, the planning office created a strategy based on the inputs, with more concretized proposals (although still at a strategic level). The citizens were then again asked to comment and vote on these measures. Based on this round of inputs, the planning office modified the final strategy, in preparation for political endorsement.

The stages of the strategy process:

1. Co-create the images in charettes
2. Comment and vote on the images – broaden to wider audience and allow for more images
3. Create a strategy based on the inputs, with concrete proposals
4. Comment and vote on the concrete proposals
5. Modify strategy based on comments and voting
6. Politically endorse the strategy

Figure 19: The stages of the strategy process.

Normally in traditional processes, the participation would not focus on the two first stages. Rather, it would start at stage 4. Therefore, this process was more co-creational than merely participatory. However, there is still more work to be done in achieving a truly inclusive, representative and co-created planning process.

6 The collaboration – lessons learned

The general feedback in the case study is that both 3C and the planning office in Trondheim are pleased with the collaboration and that it has been valuable for both parties. Based on both successful and less successful outcomes, this chapter summarizes some of the lessons learned. These might be useful for both research projects and stakeholders going into a similar collaboration.

6.1 Allowing for risk on both ends

A central prerequisite for a collaboration of this kind to work is the possibility for both parties to try, fail and take risks.

The 3C project is an unusual research project in the Norwegian Research Council context. The project was encouraged to take high risks and place less emphasis on academic publishing and reporting. This allowed for an open approach when meeting the planning office, and a willingness to adjust research experiments and contributions according to the planning office's needs.

At the same time the planning office had recently been given resources and a broad scope from the head of the department and the politicians, as participation became an important goal in the strategic plans. They were given freedom to experiment with events and tools. Participation had been a hot topic in academia, the media and in planning practice. As such the timing was good for a collaboration with a research project concerned with this field.

Allowing risk and giving space to experiment in the process created an opportunity to try and fail in the collaboration. This was beneficial to both 3C and the planning office. 3C could carry out several experiments to test different angles of participation, whereas the planning office could test methods and tools in at a smaller scale before implementing them in larger projects. This allowed for failing and learning along the way, which was also in line with the urban lab projects which the municipality had carried out in other settings.

6.2 Taking the time to talk and discuss

3C is an interdisciplinary project and consists mainly of researchers in fields that are not directly connected to urban planning. The contacts from the planning office in Trondheim consists mainly of planners and architects who have worked in the planning practice for some time. This meant that members of the collaboration had different perspectives, understandings, vocabularies and priorities when talking about participation and co-creation.

Throughout the collaborative case study, 3C and the planning office conducted several workshops and meetings where challenges and opportunities of participation were discussed. Brainstorming ideas and considering different approaches for involving citizens were often at the centre of meetings, especially in the first months.

3C believes this has created a mutual understanding that improved with time. Taking the time to meet and reflect made it possible for both parties to increase their understanding of each other's perspectives, priorities and limits, also when it comes to practical matters such as time constraints and deadlines, availability of resources, and political landscape and processes.

Another contributing factor was that the 3C group also included a planner from the practice field. This created a connection between the practice and research in within the 3C project itself and in the collaboration with the Trondheim municipality. This is an important lesson for future research projects that wish to conduct studies with stakeholders.

6.3 Co-dependence and risk

At the start of the collaboration in spring 2018, the planning office was still in a process of mapping out the process for the strategies and what participatory methods to use. In that sense they had time for the discussions and brainstorming mentioned above.

When the case study was set, and the contribution from 3C had been agreed on, time started to become a scarce resource for both 3C and the municipality.

The agreed collaboration and contribution expected something from both parties. As the planning office is a public body, they are expected to inform the public of their work – and be clear about 3C’s role in communications with the four teams in the “Framtidsbilder” competition.

It was important for the municipality to create trust and a positive public opinion of the process. A part of their responsibility as a public body is to take people seriously when involving them into a participation process. If the process turned out unsuccessful or would deviate negatively from what had been broadcasted, this could also create consequences for future planning processes. This meant the planning office became dependent on what 3C would deliver, and on the quality of the deliverables.

At the same time, 3C was fully dependent on input from the process in order to evaluate the methods and tools used. 3C needed to use the planning office’s existing channels for communicating this to the public, encouraging people to participate in charettes, and for marketing the digital platform: delta.framtidstrondheim.no.

This co-dependence and the consequences of failing, created a risk in the collaboration that was not necessarily fully comprehended or talked about when the case study started. Being aware of and discussing such risks is an important lesson for future collaborations of this kind.

The co-dependence in the tight time frame, and the possibility of public scrutiny, made the communication and close contact between 3C and the planning office even more essential. A series of regular 30-minutes status meetings were set up in order to keep each other informed, but most communication happened via email. During busy periods the status meetings became redundant if there was not a specific topic on the agenda. However, sticking to these meetings could have improved the understanding of each other’s expectations to the design process and creation of the platform and tool – as will be discussed further in chapter 6.4 and 6.5.

6.4 Expectations, roles and dividing tasks

Although the planning office was included in the discussions around the platform and the idea behind the tool, they were to a lesser extent invited into the creation of the

digital platform, when decisions about details, designs, formats and fonts were made. The reasons behind this were mainly practical ones. The platform was created with help from UiO's EngageLab, which added another group of practitioners into the process. There was also little time to create the digital platform. However, the degree of involvement from the municipality had not been clarified beforehand, thus the expectations were unclear. Whatever the reasons, this created some consequences that can be important lessons.

As an example, the initial versions of the digital platform showed the municipality's logo. However, the fonts and colours of the site did not resemble the municipality's or the project's websites. The planning office was therefore worried that visitors of the site would dismiss this as something fake or "on the side" of the official participatory process, rather than an integral part of the planning office's work. The feedback from the planning office was clear: it is important that people understand what they are invited into, and who owns the material that is received through the platform. Logos, fonts and colours are central parts that create an intuitive understanding of what kind of platform this is, and by whom the inputs would be used.

As a result, changes had to be made to the platform with little time left before the launch, which could have easily been avoided with more communication during the design stage. Neither 3C nor the planning office saw this as a potential "problem" in the start, but a better communication and discussion on task divisions and roles in the process could have addressed this. An important lesson to take from this is therefore that taking time to clarify expectations to a greater degree of detail can unveil unforeseen issues.

6.5 Ownership and future use

The inputs received through the platform were not sent directly to the planning office, but data were collected by the app and stored at UiO. This created an issue in terms of perceived ownership for the planning office.

In addition, it was not clear for participants that they were sending inputs to the municipality's process. The URL showed "engagelab.uio.no", which added to this confusion of ownership to the outside world. At times it was also unclear for the

planning office how they could use the material, and whether they had the right of ownership to the images and inputs that came in through the platform.

As mentioned, part of this could have been solved with more involvement in the design process of the platform. Another solution could have been to grant the planning office edit access from the start and thus create ownership to the platform in the process. Redirecting the URL was also possible, but formalities within the municipality got in the way of making this happen on short notice. This is a lesson for future projects.

In any case, a formal collaboration agreement could have been a good way of making sure such challenges were on the agenda early on, and on clarifying some of these issues.

The planning office made it clear at the end of the case study that in order for them to use the platform in future participation processes, the content must be easy to edit in terms of adding new symbols, texts and images, and to some degree be able to develop the platform further according to their needs.

At the closing stages of the collaborative case study, the platform became an open access application, meaning it can be used by anyone with no charge. The municipality is credited as a creator of the platform and application, together with 3C.

7 Making an impact

In the 3C project, an important research aim has been to make an impact on the work of practitioners in the field, by collaborating and jointly learning and developing new thinking and practice around participation and the use of technology.

This chapter reflects on some of the main impacts the collaboration has had on participation as a topic, on participation processes in the case study, and for possible further processes in the municipality. It also summarizes in what ways the collaboration has benefitted both the research project and the planning office. This is based on interviews with the planning office and reflections in the research project group.

7.1 Increased reflections on participation

According to the key people from the planning office, they believe that the collaboration with 3C has made it possible for them to reflect on the topic of participation to a higher degree than in other projects. The meetings and workshops with 3C, and 3C's request for feedback and input from the planning office "forced" them to talk about and consider what they were doing as they went along. According to the planners, this is a privilege in an otherwise hectic work week. They also found it useful to reflect and discuss the themes with a third party, to get some external and different perspectives on the subject.

The discussion with the planning office also broadened 3C's perspectives on participation, and what participation means in a real-life setting. Having the opportunity to stay close to an actual process and see what this entails increased 3C's knowledge on both the formal and informal systems and interests that come into play in a participatory or co-creational process. This has created value for further projects related to urban planning research.

7.2 Continued use of the co-created method

The planning office has stated that they wish to use the digital application in mobile format in another plan in early 2020, and they have been given access to use the

tool and adapt to their needs. This is a clear sign that the planning office has found the application useful and wishes to continue using it.

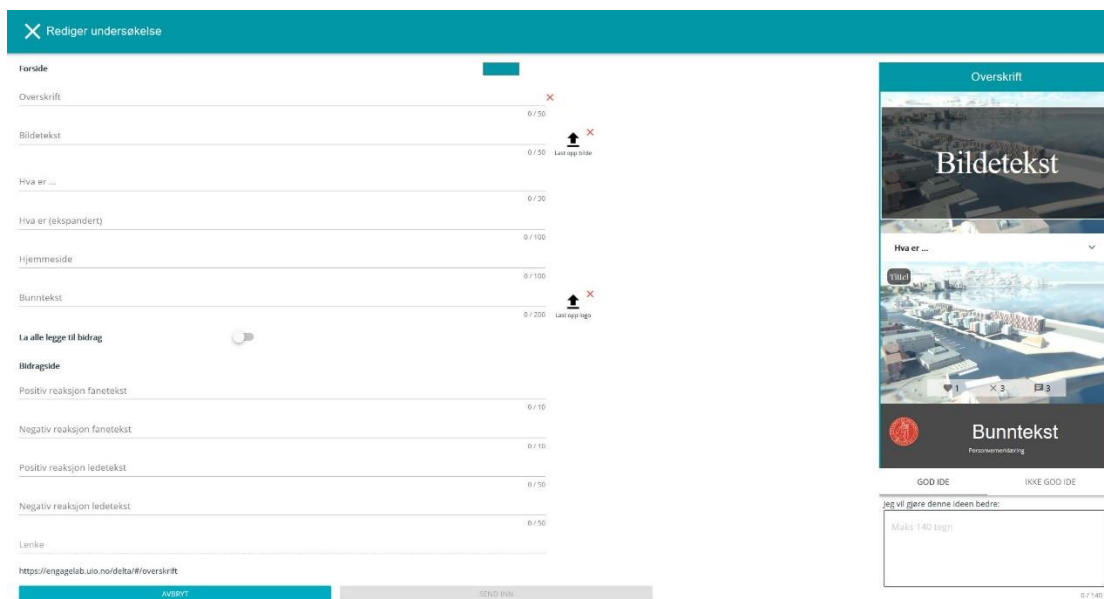


Figure 20: The user interface of the platform, to be used in future planning projects.

Central documents and websites from the case study

Oslo University's website about the 3C project:

<https://www.uv.uio.no/iped/english/research/projects/3c/>

Article on participation in Trondheim municipality's planning magazine:

<https://trondheim2030.no/2018/01/25/onsker-a-komme-dialog-engasjerte-innbyggere/>

Report from the charettes: Rapport gjestebud, Trondheim kommune.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F-tpndFes1RdfXrsGnFEudrCvn_XB_VE/view

Digital exhibition on the planning office's project website:

<https://sites.google.com/trondheim.kommune.no/framtidstrondheim/medvirkning/framtidsbilder/utstilling-framtidsbilder-trondheim-sentrum-2050>

Evaluation report from the competition: Evalueringsrapport Framtidbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/18BQsISBMZCM2Np8oDdIHJLh7w_DgPm9P/view

Tender document describing the competition and task for the interdisciplinary teams: Parallelloppdrag Framtidbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jmUJyR8_sR77vhoFQpv1EqNvCcPSs-hm/view

The municipal director's conclusion in the political process: Rådmannens konklusjon i saksprotokoll 28.6.2019:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1enY5VUhEt5Iziom9yCiMtWYhfiiTGrHx/view>

Citizens foundation, Iceland: <https://www.citizens.is/>