MY Neighbourhood

An idea generating game

UN-HABITAT

Before we start...

The "MY Neighborhood" game is based on the eponymous practical guidance developed by the UN-Habitat Urban Lab and is intended to serve as a supplementary brainstorming tool for practitioners engaging with the My Neighborhood matrix, as well as a source for idea generation for anyone interested in urban design.

This activity aims to foster discussions about the multifaceted aspects of urban design interventions and their connections to a broad spectrum of strategic objectives covering a variety of dimensions.

With its focus on building dialogue and brainstorming, the activity aims to highlight a diversity of city visions, concepts, solutions and their entanglement.

How to play?

1. Distinguish between vision and suggestion cards by organizing them into two separate decks.

2. Select the decision-makers and the city-changers. Decision-makers (such as community members, activists, city mayors, etc.) will act as jury. The city-changers (such as urban planners, entrepreneurs, environmental advocates, etc.) will participate in the game as players.

3. If possible, assemble teams of city-changers to enable the opportunity for discussions.

4. The decision-makers discreetly distribute the suggestion cards (up to 7 cards depending on the number of participants, time and rounds) to each team of city-changers, ensuring that other teams cannot see the distributed cards.

More on the other side!

5. Decision-makers can collectively review all the visions and decide which one to prioritise for their city. Decision-makers choose only one vision for each round.

6. Once the distribution is complete and the city vision is chosen, the city-changers start the discussion, selecting the best suggestion from their set that best contributes to achieving the city vision. Important to take your time and ensure a collective discussion.

7. The city-changers should present how their suggestion can help in achieving a city vision.

8. Decision-makers should evaluate the submitted suggestions and ideas and assign scores, with the highest score reserved for the proposal that holds the greatest potential to transform the environment, achieving a significant transformation.

⚙ Tips for a good game

Explain the reference to “MY Neighborhood” and the importance of synergies and the entanglement of scales, principles, and tips.

Encourage the maximum number of people to participate to ensure the formation of teams of players, fostering the collective discussions leading to collective decision-making. There is no restriction on number of players.

Don’t rush the participants while they discuss their ideas, encouraging the conversation. The game is better to last only one round if there is a meaningful discussion.

More on the other side!

Make references to the local context, tailoring the content of the cards so that the players build linkages to their own environment, elaborating on the context-specific proposals.

Promote the use of the cards that suggest sharing one's own ideas! Participants should be encouraged to use their creativity.

Prioritising submitted suggestions and ideas is crucial and should be done to encourage a lively discussion among participants! Evaluating each suggestion and idea, considering its relevance and impact, promotes a deeper understanding of how design principles are interlinked.

If appropriate, allocate the roles (city mayor, developer, architect) to make the game more engaging and fun. Each participant can play a unique role!

CITY VISION

Inclusive city

A city that fosters diversity, equal opportunities, and community cohesion, ensuring that all residents can thrive together!

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CITY VISION

User-Friendly city

A city that prioritizes accessibility, convenience, and the well-being of its residents, making it easy for everyone to navigate and enjoy!

CITY VISION

Convivial city

A city that promotes creativity, and vibrant experiences, ensuring that its residents find joy in every aspect of urban life!

CITY VISION

Healthy city

A healthy city prioritizes the well-being, fitness, and active lifestyles of its residents, ultimately improving public health!

CITY VISION

Economically vibrant city

A city that fosters prosperity, entrepreneurship, and creates opportunities for employment and innovation!

CITY VISION

Beautiful and unique city

A city that captivates with its distinct charm and aesthetic appeal, making it a place like no other!

CITY VISION

Affordable city

A city that prioritizes the accessibility of urban assets, including housing and services for all!

CITY VISION

Safe city

A city that prioritizes the well-being of its residents, implementing measures to ensure safety, reduce crime, and provide a secure environment for all!

CITY VISION

Walkable city

A city that promotes pedestrian-friendly environments, encouraging people to walk, cycle, explore and enjoy the urban landscape!

CITY VISION

Accessible and connected city

A city that ensures that its infrastructure, facilities, and services are easily accessible and usable by all the residents, promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities!

CITY VISION

Eco-city

A city that prioritizes environmental sustainability, promoting high quality of life through its eco-friendly initiatives, operating with a commitment to reduce carbon emissions, embracing sustainable energy sources and practices for a greener future!

What if we...

Translate wayfinding indications into multiple languages!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Create a convenient and nice-looking signage for people to find where they need to go and which route to take!

What if we...

Design a public transport stop together with the community to make sure it is convenient for all!

What if we...

Remove all fences and avoid "fortress" or gated residential developments!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Promote multi-modal transportation and connectivity between these modes!

What if we...

Create a variety of routes to walk and cycle to key destinations!

What if we...

Create a diverse community task force that can test all the design interventions!

What if we...

Introduce a design code for the city that establishes clear guidelines for architectural design, ensuring a visually appealing and cohesive urban landscape!

What if we...

Install a map of public transport routes in all the public transport stations!

What if we...

Create playgrounds for adults and places for sports in front of office buildings!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Install a street mural with permanent markers for the community to share anything they think and feel about!

What if we...

Promote additional
uses for parking lots!
Convert a vast parking area into
a public space, marketplace, or
eventual activities
(yoga, dancing, etc.)
At least once a month!

What if we...

Promote diversity of parcels and plots facilitating the diversity of forms and uses!

What if we...

Create at least 10 activities (not limited to consumption) in the public space!

What if we...

Encourage longer walking experiences by designing interesting routes in combination with natural trails!

What if we...

Plant trees along walking and cycling paths!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Ensure all residents have a walking distance to services!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Work with
local business owners
to engage them in the
maintenance of the
adjacent public space!
Promote an additional
fee!

What if we...

Ensure all residents have a 5-minute walking distance to open and green public space!

What if we...

Make street edges active! Allocate active uses, shops, cafes and other functions!

What if we...

Promote a certain degree of high urban density that is appropriate for the local context!

What if we...

Include a place for informal businesses in a public space design such as kiosks for rent or a dedicated area for street vendors!

What if we...

Regenerate abandoned or unused structures within the neighbourhood transforming them into vibrant places for social gatherings!

What if we...

Replicate a traditional element in urban design, adding a unique cultural touch to the cityscape!

What if we...

Create a competition among local artists to design a public space!

What if we...

Create an activity hotspot - a marketplace!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Encourage cycling by offering incentives like bike-sharing programs, fostering a culture of active mobility!

What if we...

Implement affordable pricing and subsidies for public transport to make it accessible to all the residents!

What if we...

Ensure a diverse range of employment opportunities within the neighborhood!

What if we...

Minimize the use of artificial energy in maintenance to reduce utility costs!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Raise awareness about pollution and air quality. Reward the communities and actors for activities that improve the environment!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Design buildings that support passive heating and cooling!

What if we...

Design to leverage from climatic conditions, the sun, the wind and water! Adapt the urban pattern to climatic conditions!

What if we...

Promote and/or preserve agriculture in the city to reduce "food miles"!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Use materials that are locally supplied! (in terms of their origin and supplier company)

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Introduce restrictive measures regarding the circulation of the most polluting means of transport!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Introduce LED street lighting powered by solar panels!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Build affordable housing for a variety of household types that is accessible to a variety of services!

What if we...

Design public spaces exclusively with the feedback from children!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Incorporate a mix of tenures within the blocks!

What if we...

Create a tenure-blind design to ensure no explicit indicators of tenure type in housing design!

What if we...

Create a barrier-free environment free of any physical obstacles!

What if we...

Enhance ecological connectivity to ensure free movement of animals and other ecological flows! An ecological bridge can be considered to enhance biodiversity.

What if we...

Design small and cozy places separated from the major activities of the street where people can enjoy the quiet!

What if we...

Eventually pedestrianize the streets adjacent to major attraction hotspots to promote outdoor activities, walking and cycling!

What if we...

Promote shared streets within the neighborhood and adjust speeds for cars to max 30 km/h and lower near social facilities!

What if we...

Establish dedicated dog parks within the neighborhood to provide a fun and safe space for pets and their owners to socialize and exercise!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Ensure pedestrian trajectories through the safe parts the city! Address abandoned structures and sites!

What if we...

Improve street lighting along the streets and in the main public spaces!

What if we...

Introduce some enclosed playgrounds specifically for toddlers and infants, 0-6 years old!

What if we...

Allocate a diversity of spaces for playing and learning along the routes to schools and kindergartens!

What if we...

Promote pedestrian oriented spaces or "shared spaces" demarcated with different colors and textured paving!

What if we...

Make sure lower levels of the blocks are reserved for commercial uses, services and a range of public activities!

What if we...

Connect all the public spaces with walking paths and trails!

What if we...

Design smaller plots
to create a fine grain!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Create and promote human-scale urban environment!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Increase the density of buildings and activities and promote mixed land uses near public transit!

What if we...

Where applicable, consider hazard mitigation measures to ensure safety for all!

What if we...

Allocate a dedicated lane for public transport!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Allocate bike parking and biker-friendly amenities next to the transit stations and key services!

What if we...

Create enjoyable and pleasant routes from home to employment!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Ensure universal accessibility, which implies implementing physical elements such as clear paths of travel, curb ramps and tactile surface!

What if we...

Ensure all residents have a walking distance to public transport stops!

What if we...

Preserve urban forests and integrate them into the open public space network!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Create a permeable pavement for parking areas to avoid vast paved surfaces!

What if we...

Create community gardens where people can grow their own food!

What if we...

Protect every good tree and adapt the design to the existing natural features!

What if we...

Create green roofs which community can use as public spaces or to grow their own food!

What if we...

Convert some parking lots into parklets!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Promote "sharing activities" such as street libraries, spaces for team games and sports!

What if we...

Create a local (or regional) market once a week (or once a month) to promote local food and local goods!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Create interest, incentives, and conditions to attract volunteers to support the maintenance of public spaces!

What if we...

Make placemaking activities mandatory while designing public spaces to ensure community-led space transformations!

MY Neighbourhood

What if we...

Install a map
or a board showing
interesting places
to visit in a city!

What if we...

Ensure validation of design ideas with women and girls!

What if we...

Promote width requirements for pedestrian sidewalks along the major streets - minimum 3 meters to allow multiple users to have a conversation while walking and a wheelchair user to turn around and pass other users!

What if we...

Share your own idea!

MY Neighbourhood

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