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# PREFACE

The International Seminar on Livable Space (IS-LiVaS) is an ongoing academic seminar series. Organized by the Department of Architecture at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Planning at Universitas Trisaki, it is held in collaboration with various academic and professional partners. Since its launch in 2012, the series has become a forum for scholarly discussion about livable space and the built environment. The first seminar took place on February 16–17, 2012, with the theme "Creating Space for a Better Life." Since then, the seminar has been a regular event, addressing new challenges related to livability, sustainability, and spatial development from multiple perspectives.

The fourth International Seminar on Livable Space (IS-LiVaS 2025) took place on August 8–9, 2025, at the Mercure Hotel in BSD City, Tangerang, Indonesia. IS-LiVaS 2025 embraced the theme "Regenerative Livable Built Environment," emphasizing the need to advance livable space research beyond traditional sustainability methods and toward regenerative and integrative paradigms. The seminar featured keynote and invited speakers from academic institutions, professional practices, and government entities. Representatives from Monash University, Thammasat University, the University of Seoul, UCSI University, Universität Stuttgart, the University of New South Wales, and Swinburne University of Technology were present, as well as practitioners and policy stakeholders from Indonesia.

The articles included in these proceedings were chosen via a review process and are categorized into four subject areas: The Concept of Livable Space; Appearance and Shape of Livable Space; Various Dimensions of Livable Space; and Creation Procedure of Livable Space. These contributions include theoretical discussions, empirical findings, design-based studies, and applied research on the built environment. Contributors to this undertaking represent diverse academic fields, icluding architecture, civil engineering, urban and regional planning, landscape architecture, and environmental studies. Many investigations address the complexities inherent in tropical and rapidly changing urban settings while incorporating broader international perspectives.

As part of the IS-Livas seminar series, this publication aims to document current research trajectories and foster sustained academic dialogue and cooperation within the realm of livable and regenerative built environments. The editors extend their appreciation to the keynote and invited speakers, authors, reviewers, and organizing committee members for their invaluable contributions to IS-LiVaS 2025.

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International Seminar on Livable Space

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Seminar, Exhibition, and Excursion*

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REGENERATIVE LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
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| 07 August 2025 | Deadline for Payment of Seminar and Excursion |
| 08 August 2025 | Seminar and Exhibition |
| 09 August 2025 | Excursion |
| 18 August 2025 | Deadline for Full Papers Submission (batch-2) |

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Ir. Diana Kusumastuti, M.T.**
(Vice Minister of Public Works)

## INVITED SPEAKERS

**Adrian Lo, Ph.D.**
(Thammasat University, Thailand)

**Bertram Wong, B.Arch.**
(Architect, California - USA)

**Dr. Deprizon Syamsunur**
(UCSI University, Malaysia)

**Dr. Kefeng Zhang**
(UNSW, Australia)

**Prof. Sung Hong Kim**
(University of Seoul, South Korea)

**Prof. Alex Lechner**
(Monash University, Australia - Indonesia)

**Prof. Dipl.-Ing. Markus Vogl.**
(Universität Stuttgart, Germany)

**Markus Jung ARB AKH**
(Swinburne University of Technology, Australia)

**Ir. Ignesjz Kemalawarta, MBA**
(Advisor President Office Sinarmas Land & GBCI Chairperson)

## TARGETS

**Individuals from Universities**
**Research Institutions**
**Government**
**Practitioners/Professionals**
**Developers**

and all disciplines from various fields as well as stakeholders related with the creation of space such as Architecture, Civil Engineering, Urban Design, City Planning, Landscape, Environmental Engineering, Technology, Culture, Economics, Art and Design, Real Estate

## REGISTRATION FEE

| Participants | | Fees | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | **(Early Bird) By 9 June 2025** | **After 9 June 2025** |
| Local | **Presenter (Scopus)** | IDR 2.700.000,- | IDR 3.000.000,- |
| | **Participant** | IDR 1.350.000,- | IDR 1.500.000,- |
| International | **Presenter (Scopus)** | IDR 3.600.000,- | IDR 4.000.000,- |
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## SECRETARIAT

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Jl. Kyai Tapa no 1 Grogol, Jakarta 11440 – Indonesia
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Contact Person: Dr. Retna Ayu Puspatarini., S.T., M.T. (Mobile Phone: +62-81991020680)

This seminar has been conducted twice before and will continue to be held every four years with similar topic and several themes related to current issues. Department of Civil Engineering and Department of Architecture, Faculty of Civil Engineering and Planning (FTSP), Universitas Trisakti is the organizer of this event in collaboration with some universities as Co-Host, which have the same main research approach as Universitas Trisakti.

## BACKGROUND

Regenerative Livable Built Environment (RLBE) is a holistic approach to designing and managing human-made environments, focusing on regeneration, livability, and sustainability. It aims to enhance natural systems, foster inclusive and resilient communities, and minimize environmental impact through efficient resource use. RLBE requires an integrative design approach that considers social, ecological, economical, and technological factors.

Benefits of RLBE include improved air and water quality, enhanced biodiversity, increased community engagement, reduced waste and emissions, economic growth through sustainable practices, and improved public health. RLBE prioritizes the balance between human well-being, ecological health, and economical viability, shifting from traditional built environment practices.

The forum encourages stakeholders to rethink livable spaces, moving towards creating better environments for the prosperity of all living beings. This forum aims to build understanding and creative capacity to create livable spaces for humans and other living beings, while also serving as an initial step in establishing milestones for the study of livable space in educational and research institutions in Indonesia, by gathering ideas and experiences from diverse groups as a collective foundation to raise awareness of the importance of quality living environments for all.

## TOPICS

The topic of this international seminar is Livable-Space with the theme "REGENERATIVE LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT". The sub themes will be chosen from the following areas:
- The Concept of Livable-space
- Appearance/Shape of Livable Space
- Various Dimensions of Livable-space
- Creation Process of Livable-space

## POTENTIAL PUBLICATION

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Title, date and place of the conference

**IS LIVAS 2025 - International Seminar on Livable Space**
**Mercure Hotel, BSD City, 08 - 09 August 2025**

Proceedings editor(s):

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**Adrian Lo, Ph.D. - Thammasat University, Thailand**

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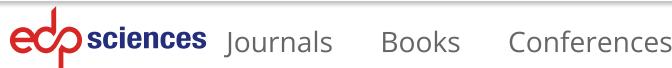
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# Placemaking for urban livability: A Systematic Literature Review based on the place diagram framework

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## Abstract

In response to the intensifying challenges of urbanization, the discourse on urban livability has gained renewed prominence in planning and policy agendas. Livability, broadly understood as the quality and desirability of life in urban environments, intersects with multiple dimensions of physical, social, and cultural space. Within this evolving framework, placemaking has emerged as a strategic and human-centered approach to designing inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable public spaces. This study critically examines placemaking strategies through the lens of the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Spaces, which conceptualizes placemaking across four interrelated dimensions: sociability, access and linkages, comfort and image, lastly uses and activities. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, this study synthesizes several academic contributions that address the social dimensions of placemaking and their relevance to enhancing urban livability. The review identifies a growing scholarly emphasis on sociability, access and linkages as the most frequently and thoroughly explored components. These include themes such as community interaction, neighborhood identity, accessibility, and walkability, the elements that are repeatedly affirmed as essential for fostering inclusive and socially resilient public spaces. Conversely, comfort, image, uses and activities remain underdeveloped in selected literatures, particularly about sensory, emotional, and experiential aspects of place, as well as the temporal and adaptive qualities of space-based activities. The findings reveal that placemaking is more than a design intervention, it is a participatory and governance-oriented process that relies on the interplay of policy, civic engagement, and cultural practice. As such, it is increasingly recognized as a critical strategy for achieving urban livability, contributing to healthier, safer, and more socially connected urban environments.

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# Placemaking for urban livability: A Systematic Literature Review based on the place diagram framework

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**Abstract.** In response to the intensifying challenges of urbanization, the discourse on urban livability has gained renewed prominence in planning and policy agendas. Livability, broadly understood as the quality and desirability of life in urban environments, intersects with multiple dimensions of physical, social, and cultural space. Within this evolving framework, placemaking has emerged as a strategic and human-centered approach to designing inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable public spaces. This study critically examines placemaking strategies through the lens of the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Spaces, which conceptualizes placemaking across four interrelated dimensions: sociability, access and linkages, comfort and image, lastly uses and activities. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, this study synthesizes several academic contributions that address the social dimensions of placemaking and their relevance to enhancing urban livability. The review identifies a growing scholarly emphasis on sociability, access and linkages as the most frequently and thoroughly explored components. These include themes such as community interaction, neighborhood identity, accessibility, and walkability, the elements that are repeatedly affirmed as essential for fostering inclusive and socially resilient public spaces. Conversely, comfort, image, uses and activities remain underdeveloped in selected literatures, particularly about sensory, emotional, and experiential aspects of place, as well as the temporal and adaptive qualities of space-based activities. The findings reveal that placemaking is more than a design intervention, it is a participatory and governance-oriented process that relies on the interplay of policy, civic engagement, and cultural practice. As such, it is increasingly recognized as a critical strategy for achieving urban livability, contributing to healthier, safer, and more socially connected urban environments.

## 1 Introduction

In the early 21st century, urbanization reached a significant milestone, with half of the world's population residing in cities, a figure that continues to grow. This rapid urban

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expansion has elevated urban planning and management to the forefront of global development agendas. Among the central objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; a comprehensive international framework aimed at fostering human well-being, planetary health, and shared prosperity, is the commitment to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable [1]. Cities today are intricate mosaics of communities and neighborhoods that serve as places for living, working, and recreation. Over time, they have evolved into hubs of opportunity, offering access to employment, education, social engagement, and cultural enrichment. As La Rosa et al. observed, this transformation has made cities increasingly attractive places to reside [2]. The demographic shift toward urban living reflects a broader human pursuit: the search for improved life chances and better living standards. In turn, this migration has drawn attention to the concept of livability, which has become central to debates on urban development and residents' overall well-being.

The livability discourse gained prominence during the final decade of the 20th century [3–5], shaped by a growing awareness that urban environments must cater not only to economic efficiency but also to human experience. Researchers have associated livability with a diverse set of indicators, including quality of life, safety, health, access to services, cost of living, comfort, air quality, transportation and mobility, living standards, and social participation [6,7]. Jacobs et al. particularly emphasized livability as a fundamental goal for creating high-quality urban environments; spaces that are not only functional but deeply human-centered [5]. In this regard, the Competition and Commission provided a broad yet compelling definition of livability as the well-being of a community and the characteristics that make it a desirable place to live, both in the present and for future generations [8].

Within this evolving framework, placemaking has emerged as a vital strategy in contemporary urban planning. It focuses on designing and shaping public spaces that reflect and support the values, needs, and aspirations of local communities. Placemaking is rooted in the recognition that spaces are not merely physical entities; they carry cultural, emotional, and social meaning. This approach seeks to enhance the character and significance of various locales within a neighborhood, generating positive ripple effects for the wider community and region [9]. The trajectory of placemaking has gradually shifted from an exclusive focus on physical infrastructure toward a more integrated concern with the dynamic relationship between people and their environments [10]. It is now widely understood as a collaborative process aimed at crafting public spaces that maximize collective value. Rather than simply promoting aesthetic or functional improvements, placemaking fosters creative imagination of how spaces are used, prioritizing the physical, cultural, and social dimensions that define a place and guide its ongoing evolution [11]. Moreover, academic discussions increasingly emphasize the centrality of social activities within placemaking, recognizing their deep interconnection with community participation and civic life. These social dimensions are indispensable for nurturing social sustainability and strengthening urban resilience [12–14]. Stakeholder collaboration is a fundamental component in ensuring the success of placemaking efforts. Effective governance and supportive policy frameworks that encourage active citizen participation [15,16] can provide the structural basis or serve as exemplary models [17,18] for implementing placemaking strategies. Current approaches to placemaking increasingly highlight the importance of integrating events and recreational activities as catalysts for community engagement and drivers of sustainable urban development. The growing role of events as a strategic tool in shaping public spaces has prompted a more integrated and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between events and the places they influence. Gaining support for placemaking initiatives now requires the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, including policymakers, business leaders, and, importantly, members of the local community [19]. This inclusive and

participatory approach aligns closely with the goals of sustainable development, particularly in promoting urban areas that are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

In light of these dynamics, this study intends to critically examine placemaking as strategies to achieve livability, recognizing it as a core dimension in shaping meaningful and inclusive public spaces. By employing the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Spaces, which emphasizes the interplay of sociability, access, comfort, and uses, this review seeks to explore how social activities and community engagement contribute to the success and sustainability of placemaking initiatives. The analysis aims to deepen understanding of how fostering social connection within public spaces can enhance livability and support broader goals of urban sustainability.

## 2 Methods

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine placemaking strategies that support urban livability, using the Place Diagram by the Project for Public Spaces as an analytical lens. The methodological choice is grounded in the need for a rigorous and transparent process that can trace conceptual patterns, theoretical evolutions, and empirical insights surrounding placemaking, particularly its social dimension. The SLR is therefore designed not only to map existing knowledge, but also to reveal where and how social interaction contributes to the formation of inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable urban environments. The review followed established SLR protocols and was structured into several stages. The process began by formulating a precise research objective: to investigate how social interaction, as a core dimension of placemaking, influences livability through sociability, uses and activities, comfort and image, and access and linkages. This objective guided the subsequent development of a search strategy and screening framework.

### 2.1 Search strategy and data sources

A systematic search was conducted across major academic databases—such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar—to ensure breadth and reliability of sources. The search strings combined keywords related to placemaking and social interaction using Boolean operators. These search strings were iteratively refined to capture interdisciplinary contributions from urban design, planning, architecture, and environmental psychology.

### 2.2 Eligibility criteria

To ensure consistency and analytical clarity, the inclusion criteria were defined prior to screening:

1. Publication type: peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and institutional reports.
2. Time range: studies published within the last 5–10 years to capture contemporary approaches.
3. Conceptual relevance: studies discussing placemaking with explicit reference to social interaction or related constructs (sociability, social engagement, community participation).
4. Spatial scope: urban public spaces, including plazas, streets, parks, and neighborhood-scale environments.
5. Language: publications in English

Exclusion criteria were likewise specified, including studies that only addressed physical design without social context, non-urban case studies, conceptual essays without empirical grounding.

## 3 Results and discussion

Project for Public Spaces developed place diagram four-fold framework, reveals distinct patterns in how social dimensions contribute to successful urban environments (Figure 1). First, access and linkages consistently emerged as essential; spaces that are visually and physically connected to their surroundings, through walkable paths, visible edges, and links to transit, tended to foster higher levels of daily use and interaction. Second, comfort and image influenced user engagement profoundly: amenities such as clean, well-maintained seating, shade variation, and a strong sense of safety impacted both first impressions and longer-term attachments to place. Third, uses and activities acted as magnets for diverse groups; active programming from cultural events to informal gatherings encouraged people of all ages to use spaces throughout the day. Lastly, sociability turned out to be a powerful outcome measure: spaces where people naturally met other people, encountered neighbors, and felt at ease engaging with strangers showcased higher levels of communal attachment and place stewardship. Together, these findings underscore how well-activated social functions are crucial for transforming public spaces into vibrant, inclusive urban assets.



**Fig. 1.** Place diagram by Project for Public Spaces.

From the reviewed literature on placemaking that focuses on the social dimension, a variety of criteria and elements have been identified (table 1). The social dimension of placemaking in the reviewed literature encompasses a broad and multifaceted set of criteria. These include aspects related to health, wellbeing, and safety; place attachment and identity; social activities, sustainability, and community engagement; as well as social attributes and identity. Additionally, the physical and spatial qualities of public spaces, such as design, urban form, and environment, are closely linked to social dynamics. Governance and stakeholders' involvement also emerge as key components, emphasizing citizen participation, community-based decision- making, and supportive policy mechanisms. Furthermore, mobility-related factors like walkability, accessibility, and connectivity are integral to enhancing social inclusivity. Lastly, urban revitalization, regeneration, and

development processes are highlighted as essential to fostering resilient and vibrant communities. These diverse yet interconnected criteria underscore the central role of social considerations in shaping effective, inclusive, and sustainable placemaking strategies.

**Table 1.** The social dimensions and its criteria.

| Dimensions | Criteria | References |
|---|---|---|
| Social | Health, Wellbeing, Safety | Monteiro et al, 2023; Sepe, 2017; Al-Issawi et al, 2021 |
| | Place attachment, Place Identity | Monteiro et al, 2023; Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Social Activities, Social Sustainability, Community Engagement, Social Attributes, Social Identity | Khemri et al, 2020; Guttormsen et al, 2023; Ramli et al, 2020; Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Public Spaces, Physical Design, Urban Spaces, Urban Environment, Urban Form | Khemri et al, 2020; Rahman et al, 2018; Sepe, 2017; Gawad et al, 2019; Strydom et al, 2024; Sadeghi et al, 2022; Al-Issawi et al, 2021; Abusaada et al, 2021; Marthya et al, 2021; Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Stakeholders, Citizen Participation and Governance, Community Engagement, Policy Mechanism | Kumar et al, 2023; Mya et al, 2024; Bagiouk et al, 2024; Keleg, 2020; Hansasooksin et al, 2021; Amin et al, 2022; Buldeo, 2024; Fingerhut et al, 2023; Marthya et al, 2021 |
| | Walkability, Accessibility, | Chidambara, 2019; Mohamed et al, 2020; Hansasooksin et al, |

## 3.1 Health, wellbeing, safety

The studies offer valuable insights into how placemaking strategies support the health, wellbeing, and safety criteria of the social dimension in placemaking. Monteiro et al highlight on biophilic design illustrates how natural elements, when embedded into the identity of a place, contribute to both emotional attachment and long-term sustainability [20]. This directly supports the comfort and image element of the Place diagram, as well as psychological wellbeing, suggesting that environments designed with nature in mind can foster a sense of calm, safety, and rootedness within communities. Sepe's case study in Hafen City reinforces the importance of public space as a medium for expressing happiness and livability, linking strongly with the uses and activities and sociability aspects components [21]. Spaces that enable joyful, inclusive, and meaningful interactions contribute not only to individual wellbeing but also to collective social health. The manifestation of happiness in such spaces signals their success in fostering safe, vibrant, and emotionally supportive environments. Meanwhile, Al-Issawi et al emphasize the adaptive and sustainable nature of placemaking [22]. These research focus on the importance of designing urban spaces that respond to current challenges, maintain ecological compatibility,

and uphold long-term continuity. This reflects the access and linkages, comfort and image components of the Place diagram.

## 3.2 Place attachment, place identity

As mentioned before, Monteiro et al emphasis on biophilic design demonstrates how integrating natural elements into a place's identity [21]. Rosenbluth et al offers a complementary perspective by examining how public parks act as contested yet unifying spaces [14]. The transformation of the park from a local refuge for marginalized groups into a highly frequented metropolitan destination reflects a tension between memory, belonging, and urban change. The sense of nostalgia and symbolic importance attributed to the space by its early users underscores the emotional depth of place attachment, while the ongoing negotiations over the park's identity point to the fluid and dynamic nature of place identity in pluralistic societies. These findings support the sociability, access and linkages components of the Place diagram, illustrating how inclusive access, symbolic resonance, and collective memory contribute to the success and sustainability of public spaces.

## 3.3 Social activities

The studies converge on the significance of social activities, attributes, identity, and community engagement as critical social dimensions in placemaking, each reinforcing the sociability component of the Place Diagram. Khemri et al [12] analysis of el Houma illustrates how the spatial distribution of everyday social activities animates public spaces, enhancing their liveliness and reinforcing their role as communal hubs. Guttormsen et al [13] deepens this discourse by explaining placemaking as a dynamic process where heritage-based social practices either stabilize or transform space through assemblage and disassembly. This reflects how collective social memory and interaction patterns co-create or renegotiate place meanings over time, closely tied to social identity and continuity. Ramli et al emphasizes the social attributes of place as enablers of community- led creative placemaking, identifying them as catalysts for social sustainability and inclusive urban regeneration [23]. Meanwhile, the evolving park captures tensions around public versus private space and highlights how contested social use reveals deeper identity politics and struggles for recognition and belonging [14]. These findings all reflect how social activities are not only central to how people use public spaces, but also to how they experience identity, negotiate inclusion, and sustain long-term community ties.

## 3.4 Public and urban spaces, urban environment

The spatial distribution of social activities in el Houma illustrates how localized interactions and informal gatherings shape the liveliness of a neighborhood [12]. This supports the diagram of sociability, showing that everyday human behaviors are deeply entwined with how space is used and perceived. Rahman et al study the significance of architectural character as a medium for rejuvenating cities through tourism [24]. It links the aesthetic and historical aspects of the built environment to place identity. It is key to comfort and image within the Place Diagram. HafenCity is presented as an emblematic case where design enables happiness and emotional well-being [21]. These intangibles yet impactful outcomes underscore the comfort, uses and activities in creating emotionally resonant spaces. Gawad et al research on NUOS (Neglected and Underused Open Spaces) highlights their latent potential through placemaking, especially when activated strategically [25]. This directly emphasis on access and linkages, as well as uses and activities, by transforming voids into connective and vibrant urban nodes. Strydom et al illustrate a context-sensitive approach

combining environmental, social, and economic dimensions [26]. The integrated strategy reinforces the intersection between uses and activities, sociability, necessary for equitable and inclusive urban transformation. Sadeghi et al demonstrate that a synthesis of form, function, meaning, and ecosystem, when guided by behavioral data, enhances placemaking efforts [27]. These findings align closely with comfort and image as well as uses and activities by rooting design in lived experience. The notion that sustainable placemaking is dynamic and evolves over time underscores the need for urban forms to be adaptable and responsive [22]. This echoes the sociability, particularly in creating spaces that are welcoming and enduring. It highlights how perception and emotional responses are as important as physical features in public space design, especially post-COVID. Marthya et al proposes design interventions that facilitate accessibility, mixed-use functions, and architectural coherence, directly echoing dimensions of access and linkages, uses and activities, comfort and image. It emphasizes how intentional street design catalyzes pedestrian engagement and local vitality [28]. Finally, Rosenbluth et al states that the transformation of a metropolitan park into a symbol of both conflict and belonging demonstrates the sociability aspect [12]. It reveals how public spaces become arenas of negotiation, identity, and collective memory, especially in socioeconomically diverse contexts. Across the reviewed studies, a central theme emerges: placemaking is not only about physical design, but also about enabling meaningful social interactions, fostering emotional engagement, and accommodating evolving urban functions. These findings reinforce the Place Diagram, validating its relevance across diverse geographical and cultural contexts. Whether addressing underused spaces, tourism-led regeneration, or post-pandemic adaptations, the studies collectively advocate for a people- centered design ethos, one that values the social, physical, and symbolic dimensions of place as integral to creating vibrant, inclusive, and livable urban environments.

### 3.5 Stakeholders, citizen participation and governance, community engagement

The literatures consistently emphasize the critical role of stakeholders, citizen and governance participation, community engagement, and policy mechanisms in shaping socially sustainable and inclusive placemaking. These elements align closely with all the components in the Place Diagram, which stresses the importance of collaborative, engaged communities and responsive institutional frameworks in creating thriving public spaces. Kumar et al [16] and Mya et al [15] both highlight participation challenges, pointing to the need for collaborative governance and stakeholder alignment amidst socio-political and bureaucratic constraints. Despite strong willingness among communities to engage, institutional barriers like lack of resources, rigid governance, and bureaucratic red tape hinder meaningful involvement. Keleg [29] and Fingerhut et al [17] further critique centralized systems that limit inclusive placemaking, particularly in the Arab region, and advocate for restructuring administrative and power relationships to enable broader community engagement.

These concerns underscore the emphasis on community-based, bottom-up processes as a foundation for placemaking success. Similarly, Bagiouk et al [30] and Buldeo [31] illustrate how placemaking, when grounded in heritage, local identity, and community-specific needs, fosters collective ownership and spatial equity. Their findings reveal how creative, inclusive strategies can reconnect people with place, serving both symbolic and functional roles in urban transformation. Other literatures point to the essential integration of placemaking with broader urban policy and infrastructure planning, such as transit-oriented development and innovation districts [28]. These studies reveal how policy alignment and spatial planning can support vibrant, accessible, and multifunctional public spaces. Finally, the incorporation of

technology and innovation, the exploration of augmented reality, represents an evolving governance tool that can enhance participatory design and transparency, contributing to more inclusive, adaptive placemaking processes [32]. Together, these insights affirm that placemaking is not just a design endeavor, but a governance and policy challenge. For the Place Diagram framework to be fully realized, cities must foster inclusive partnerships, reduce institutional barriers, and embrace context-specific strategies that allow communities to shape, use, and sustain their shared spaces effectively.

## 3.6 Walkability, accessibility, mobility

The studies collectively underscore the essential role of walkability, accessibility, and mobility in supporting socially sustainable placemaking, as conceptualized in the Place Diagram particularly under the access and linkages component. These dimensions are not merely functional aspects of spatial design but are deeply tied to how people interact with, move through, and derive meaning from a place. Chidambara highlights the multidisciplinary consensus that walkability features, such as pedestrian safety, clean and aesthetic environments, tree cover, and engaging architectural details, are vital in encouraging physical activity and improving public health [33]. This aligns with comfortable and safe pathways are foundational for attracting people to and through public spaces. A walkable environment not only promotes everyday usage but also enhances social vitality by fostering spontaneous interactions and a sense of comfort and belonging. The attention to how accessibility and linkages within heritage contexts can significantly revitalize underutilized or fragmented areas, enhancing both visitor experience and place cohesion. Strengthening physical connections between historically significant zones reinforces the narrative continuity of a site, thus deepening both place attachment and the legibility of urban identity [34]. Finally, Hansasooksin et al illustrates how mobility infrastructure intersects with policy and spatial planning, suggesting that integrated mobility systems and regional accessibility can foster innovation hubs that balance economic activity with residential life [35]. This perspective adds a macro-urban layer to placemaking by showing how walkability and mobility extend beyond the immediate site, influencing urban patterns and usage on a broader scale. These findings advocate for walkable, accessible, and well-connected urban environments as critical enablers of active, inclusive, and meaningful places. Enhancing these aspects not only improves functional movement but also contributes to the social and experiential richness of the public realm.

## 3.7 Urban revitalization, urban regeneration, urban development

The literatures demonstrate how urban revitalization, regeneration, and development processes serve as critical strategies in achieving socially sustainable placemaking, particularly when aligned with the Place Diagram notably through the components of sociability, uses and activities, access and linkages. These interventions reflect the layered complexities of renewing urban spaces not only through physical transformation, but through the restoration of cultural meaning, accessibility, and community function. Gawad et al [25] emphasize the importance of contextually responsive revitalization, stating how the type of non-utilized open space (Neglected and Underused Open Spaces) dictates the appropriate placemaking approach. When addressed sensitively, such leftover spaces can be reimagined as productive community assets, supporting the principle that successful public spaces must be flexibly adapted to their local context and community needs. Other studies articulate the role of urban regeneration as a socio-spatial practice, especially in historically layered environments [30,36]. Through a careful blend of conservation and contemporary interventions, these efforts create a renewed sense of authenticity and character, which is

essential to the identity and sociability. These projects not only preserve heritage but invite ongoing relevance, drawing communities into active relationships with their surroundings. There are studies that underscore the social and connective dimensions of urban revitalization. Ramli et al focus on community-led creative placemaking showcases regeneration as a bottom-up catalyst for sustainable change [23], while Mohamed et al illustrate how access and linkage strategies enhance the legibility and functionality of heritage districts [34], improving both movement and experience, key principles of access and linkages component. Finally, Hansasooksin et al case broadens the view to regional-scale urban development, where the transformation of underutilized zones into innovation districts integrates mobility, jobs, and housing in a way that fosters work-life balance and spatial inclusivity [35]. Finally, the integration of placemaking into urban regeneration and development strategies, as these studies demonstrate, not only rejuvenates physical infrastructure but reinstates human-centered values into the urban fabric. When guided by community needs, historical awareness, and access to opportunity, revitalized places can become anchors of social cohesion, and identity.

**Table 2.** The Place Diagram components align with existing literatures.

| Place Diagram | Elements | References |
|---|---|---|
| Sociability | Welcoming, Interactive | Sepe, 2017 |
| | Diverse | Rosenbluth et al, 2024; Khemri et al, 2020 |
| | Stewardship | Guttormsen et al, 2023; Strydom et al, 2024 |
| | Cooperative | Ramli et al, 2020; Rosenbluth et al, 2024; Kumar et al, 2023; Mya et al, 2024; Keleg, 2020; Fingerhut et al, 2023; Bagiouk et al, 2024; Buldeo, 2024; Amin et al, 2022; Furlan, 2019 |
| | Friendly, Welcoming | Khemri et al, 2020 |
| | Welcoming | Al-Issawi et al, 2021 |
| | Neighborly | Hansasooksin et all 2021 |
| Access & Linkages | Continuity | Al-Issawi et al , 2021 |
| | Accessible | Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Connected | Gawad et al, 2019; Marthya et al, 2021 |
| | Walkable | Marthya et al, 2021; Chidambara, 2019; Hansasooksin et all 2021 |
| Comfort & Images | Safe, Green | Monteiro et al, 2023 |
| | Green | Al-Issawi et al , 2021 |

| Place Diagram | Elements | References |
|---|---|---|
| | Attractive, Historic | Rahman et al, 2018 |
| | Attractive | Sadeghi et al, 2022 |
| | Walkable | Marthya et al, 2021; Mohamed et al, 2020 |
| | Historic | Bagiouk et al, 2024; Buldeo, 2024; Mohamed et al, 2020; Furlan, 2019 |
| Uses & Activities | Fun | Sepe, 2017 |
| | Active | Gawad et al, 2019; Marthya et al, 2021 |
| | Sustainable | Strydom et al, 2024; Ramli et al, 2020 |
| | Useful | Sadeghi et al, 2022 |

The literature review undertaken in this study underscores the growing scholarly engagement with the concept of placemaking, particularly through the lens of the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Space. By categorizing the findings across the diagram's four quadrants or components; sociability, access and linkages, comfort and image, and uses and activities, the analysis offers a nuanced understanding of how placemaking principles are being interpreted, applied, and operationalized in contemporary urban research and practice. Among all the dimensions, Sociability emerges as the most comprehensively discussed and most frequently cited domain in the reviewed literature. Elements such as welcoming, interactive, diverse, cooperative, friendly, and neighborly are strongly represented, with multiple studies affirming the centrality of social dynamics in shaping place identity and meaning. The emphasis on stewardship and community engagement, as articulated by Guttormsen et al. [13], Strydom et al. [26], and Ramli et al. [23], illustrates a growing recognition of bottom-up, citizen-led initiatives as crucial mechanisms for sustainable and inclusive urban transformation. These findings also reflect a broader movement toward a more participatory and collaborative approach to urban development, which aligns with international trends advocating for democratic governance in public space design and management. The dimension of access and linkages also features prominently in the reviewed studies. Concepts like connectivity, walkability, accessibility, and continuity are consistently highlighted as prerequisites for creating inclusive and integrated public spaces. Authors such as Al-Issawi et al. [22] and Marthya et al. [28] demonstrate how effective linkages between different urban zones can significantly enhance the usability and inclusivity of heritage sites, commercial areas, and mobility corridors. These findings affirm that physical and visual connectivity is not merely a matter of infrastructure, but also a facilitator of social exchange, cultural engagement, and economic vitality within the urban fabric.

In contrast, the comfort and image component, while represented, is less thoroughly explored. Although some studies address visual aesthetics, safety, greening, and historical character, there remains a noticeable gap in the detailed analysis of comfort-related attributes, such as safety, seating arrangements, and tactile experience of place [20,24]. Moreover, the relationship between perceived safety and social trust is not as extensively elaborated upon in the selected literatures. Likewise, the uses and activities component are present but

underdeveloped in comparison to the other categories. The reviewed literatures touch on aspects such as fun, useful, active spaces, and sustainability, yet there is limited engagement with how these activities are curated, managed, or adapted over time to respond to evolving user needs. The temporal dynamics of use, how activities vary by time of day, season, or cultural calendar, are also largely absent, suggesting that while researchers acknowledge activity as an essential component of placemaking, it remains a less theorized and less measured aspect in observed studies.

# 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature affirms the relevance and utility of the Place Diagram by Project for Public Spaces as a conceptual platform for analyzing placemaking practices. However, while the social and spatial dimensions, especially sociability, access and linkages, are well-articulated in the selected literatures, there remains considerable room to deepen the understanding of comfort and image, uses and activities. Specifically, more research is needed on the sensory, emotional, and experiential qualities of place, as well as on the design and governance of activities that animate space over time. Placemaking strategies, as reflected through these dimensions, are increasingly recognized as critical tools for enhancing urban livability. By fostering inclusive public spaces that are safe, accessible, meaningful, and socially vibrant, placemaking directly contributes to the quality of everyday life in cities. Whether through community-driven initiatives, heritage-based regeneration, or improved walkability and connectivity, placemaking reinforces the spatial and social conditions that make urban environments not only functional, but also enjoyable and equitable. Future studies should also aim to bridge the gap between physical design and socio-political processes, paying closer attention to how policy, regulation, and civic participation interact to shape the lived experience of place. This includes addressing systemic challenges such as governance fragmentation, bureaucratic inertia, and socio-spatial inequality. By doing so, the field of placemaking can move toward a more holistic, inclusive, and adaptive model, one that honors both the physical and human dimensions of urban life, and one that ultimately supports the broader goal of creating more livable cities for all.

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# Placemaking for urban livability: A Systematic Literature Review based on the place diagram framework

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**Abstract.** In response to the intensifying challenges of urbanization, the discourse on urban livability has gained renewed prominence in planning and policy agendas. Livability, broadly understood as the quality and desirability of life in urban environments, intersects with multiple dimensions of physical, social, and cultural space. Within this evolving framework, placemaking has emerged as a strategic and human-centered approach to designing inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable public spaces. This study critically examines placemaking strategies through the lens of the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Spaces, which conceptualizes placemaking across four interrelated dimensions: sociability, access and linkages, comfort and image, lastly uses and activities. Employing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, this study synthesizes several academic contributions that address the social dimensions of placemaking and their relevance to enhancing urban livability. The review identifies a growing scholarly emphasis on sociability, access and linkages as the most frequently and thoroughly explored components. These include themes such as community interaction, neighborhood identity, accessibility, and walkability, the elements that are repeatedly affirmed as essential for fostering inclusive and socially resilient public spaces. Conversely, comfort, image, uses and activities remain underdeveloped in selected literatures, particularly about sensory, emotional, and experiential aspects of place, as well as the temporal and adaptive qualities of space-based activities. The findings reveal that placemaking is more than a design intervention, it is a participatory and governance-oriented process that relies on the interplay of policy, civic engagement, and cultural practice. As such, it is increasingly recognized as a critical strategy for achieving urban livability, contributing to healthier, safer, and more socially connected urban environments.

## 1 Introduction

In the early 21st century, urbanization reached a significant milestone, with half of the world's population residing in cities, a figure that continues to grow. This rapid urban

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expansion has elevated urban planning and management to the forefront of global development agendas. Among the central objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; a comprehensive international framework aimed at fostering human well-being, planetary health, and shared prosperity, is the commitment to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable [1]. Cities today are intricate mosaics of communities and neighborhoods that serve as places for living, working, and recreation. Over time, they have evolved into hubs of opportunity, offering access to employment, education, social engagement, and cultural enrichment. As La Rosa et al. observed, this transformation has made cities increasingly attractive places to reside [2]. The demographic shift toward urban living reflects a broader human pursuit: the search for improved life chances and better living standards. In turn, this migration has drawn attention to the concept of livability, which has become central to debates on urban development and residents' overall well-being.

The livability discourse gained prominence during the final decade of the 20th century [3–5], shaped by a growing awareness that urban environments must cater not only to economic efficiency but also to human experience. Researchers have associated livability with a diverse set of indicators, including quality of life, safety, health, access to services, cost of living, comfort, air quality, transportation and mobility, living standards, and social participation [6,7]. Jacobs et al. particularly emphasized livability as a fundamental goal for creating high-quality urban environments; spaces that are not only functional but deeply human-centered [5]. In this regard, the Competition and Commission provided a broad yet compelling definition of livability as the well-being of a community and the characteristics that make it a desirable place to live, both in the present and for future generations [8].

Within this evolving framework, placemaking has emerged as a vital strategy in contemporary urban planning. It focuses on designing and shaping public spaces that reflect and support the values, needs, and aspirations of local communities. Placemaking is rooted in the recognition that spaces are not merely physical entities; they carry cultural, emotional, and social meaning. This approach seeks to enhance the character and significance of various locales within a neighborhood, generating positive ripple effects for the wider community and region [9]. The trajectory of placemaking has gradually shifted from an exclusive focus on physical infrastructure toward a more integrated concern with the dynamic relationship between people and their environments [10]. It is now widely understood as a collaborative process aimed at crafting public spaces that maximize collective value. Rather than simply promoting aesthetic or functional improvements, placemaking fosters creative imagination of how spaces are used, prioritizing the physical, cultural, and social dimensions that define a place and guide its ongoing evolution [11]. Moreover, academic discussions increasingly emphasize the centrality of social activities within placemaking, recognizing their deep interconnection with community participation and civic life. These social dimensions are indispensable for nurturing social sustainability and strengthening urban resilience [12–14]. Stakeholder collaboration is a fundamental component in ensuring the success of placemaking efforts. Effective governance and supportive policy frameworks that encourage active citizen participation [15,16] can provide the structural basis or serve as exemplary models [17,18] for implementing placemaking strategies. Current approaches to placemaking increasingly highlight the importance of integrating events and recreational activities as catalysts for community engagement and drivers of sustainable urban development. The growing role of events as a strategic tool in shaping public spaces has prompted a more integrated and comprehensive understanding of the relationship between events and the places they influence. Gaining support for placemaking initiatives now requires the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders, including policymakers, business leaders, and, importantly, members of the local community [19]. This inclusive and

participatory approach aligns closely with the goals of sustainable development, particularly in promoting urban areas that are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

In light of these dynamics, this study intends to critically examine placemaking as strategies to achieve livability, recognizing it as a core dimension in shaping meaningful and inclusive public spaces. By employing the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Spaces, which emphasizes the interplay of sociability, access, comfort, and uses, this review seeks to explore how social activities and community engagement contribute to the success and sustainability of placemaking initiatives. The analysis aims to deepen understanding of how fostering social connection within public spaces can enhance livability and support broader goals of urban sustainability.

## 2 Methods

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to examine placemaking strategies that support urban livability, using the Place Diagram by the Project for Public Spaces as an analytical lens. The methodological choice is grounded in the need for a rigorous and transparent process that can trace conceptual patterns, theoretical evolutions, and empirical insights surrounding placemaking, particularly its social dimension. The SLR is therefore designed not only to map existing knowledge, but also to reveal where and how social interaction contributes to the formation of inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable urban environments. The review followed established SLR protocols and was structured into several stages. The process began by formulating a precise research objective: to investigate how social interaction, as a core dimension of placemaking, influences livability through sociability, uses and activities, comfort and image, and access and linkages. This objective guided the subsequent development of a search strategy and screening framework.

### 2.1 Search strategy and data sources

A systematic search was conducted across major academic databases—such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar—to ensure breadth and reliability of sources. The search strings combined keywords related to placemaking and social interaction using Boolean operators. These search strings were iteratively refined to capture interdisciplinary contributions from urban design, planning, architecture, and environmental psychology.

### 2.2 Eligibility criteria

To ensure consistency and analytical clarity, the inclusion criteria were defined prior to screening:
1. Publication type: peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and institutional reports.
2. Time range: studies published within the last 5–10 years to capture contemporary approaches.
3. Conceptual relevance: studies discussing placemaking with explicit reference to social interaction or related constructs (sociability, social engagement, community participation).
4. Spatial scope: urban public spaces, including plazas, streets, parks, and neighborhood-scale environments.
5. Language: publications in English

Exclusion criteria were likewise specified, including studies that only addressed physical design without social context, non-urban case studies, conceptual essays without empirical grounding.

## 3 Results and discussion

Project for Public Spaces developed place diagram four-fold framework, reveals distinct patterns in how social dimensions contribute to successful urban environments (Figure 1). First, access and linkages consistently emerged as essential; spaces that are visually and physically connected to their surroundings, through walkable paths, visible edges, and links to transit, tended to foster higher levels of daily use and interaction. Second, comfort and image influenced user engagement profoundly: amenities such as clean, well-maintained seating, shade variation, and a strong sense of safety impacted both first impressions and longer-term attachments to place. Third, uses and activities acted as magnets for diverse groups; active programming from cultural events to informal gatherings encouraged people of all ages to use spaces throughout the day. Lastly, sociability turned out to be a powerful outcome measure: spaces where people naturally met other people, encountered neighbors, and felt at ease engaging with strangers showcased higher levels of communal attachment and place stewardship. Together, these findings underscore how well-activated social functions are crucial for transforming public spaces into vibrant, inclusive urban assets.



**Fig. 1.** Place diagram by Project for Public Spaces.

From the reviewed literature on placemaking that focuses on the social dimension, a variety of criteria and elements have been identified (table 1). The social dimension of placemaking in the reviewed literature encompasses a broad and multifaceted set of criteria. These include aspects related to health, wellbeing, and safety; place attachment and identity; social activities, sustainability, and community engagement; as well as social attributes and identity. Additionally, the physical and spatial qualities of public spaces, such as design, urban form, and environment, are closely linked to social dynamics. Governance and stakeholders' involvement also emerge as key components, emphasizing citizen participation, community-based decision- making, and supportive policy mechanisms. Furthermore, mobility-related factors like walkability, accessibility, and connectivity are integral to enhancing social inclusivity. Lastly, urban revitalization, regeneration, and

development processes are highlighted as essential to fostering resilient and vibrant communities. These diverse yet interconnected criteria underscore the central role of social considerations in shaping effective, inclusive, and sustainable placemaking strategies.

**Table 1.** The social dimensions and its criteria.

| Dimensions | Criteria | References |
|---|---|---|
| Social | Health, Wellbeing, Safety | Monteiro et al, 2023; Sepe, 2017; Al-Issawi et al, 2021 |
| | Place attachment, Place Identity | Monteiro et al, 2023; Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Social Activities, Social Sustainability, Community Engagement, Social Attributes, Social Identity | Khemri et al, 2020; Guttormsen et al, 2023; Ramli et al, 2020; Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Public Spaces, Physical Design, Urban Spaces, Urban Environment, Urban Form | Khemri et al, 2020; Rahman et al, 2018; Sepe, 2017; Gawad et al, 2019; Strydom et al, 2024; Sadeghi et al, 2022; Al-Issawi et al, 2021; Abusaada et al, 2021; Marthya et al, 2021; Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Stakeholders, Citizen Participation and Governance, Community Engagement, Policy Mechanism | Kumar et al, 2023; Mya et al, 2024; Bagiouk et al, 2024; Keleg, 2020; Hansasooksin et al, 2021; Amin et al, 2022; Buldeo, 2024; Fingerhut et al, 2023; Marthya et al, 2021 |
| | Walkability, Accessibility, | Chidambara, 2019; Mohamed et al, 2020; Hansasooksin et al, |

## 3.1 Health, wellbeing, safety

The studies offer valuable insights into how placemaking strategies support the health, wellbeing, and safety criteria of the social dimension in placemaking. Monteiro et al highlight on biophilic design illustrates how natural elements, when embedded into the identity of a place, contribute to both emotional attachment and long-term sustainability [20]. This directly supports the comfort and image element of the Place diagram, as well as psychological wellbeing, suggesting that environments designed with nature in mind can foster a sense of calm, safety, and rootedness within communities. Sepe's case study in Hafen City reinforces the importance of public space as a medium for expressing happiness and livability, linking strongly with the uses and activities and sociability aspects components [21]. Spaces that enable joyful, inclusive, and meaningful interactions contribute not only to individual wellbeing but also to collective social health. The manifestation of happiness in such spaces signals their success in fostering safe, vibrant, and emotionally supportive environments. Meanwhile, Al-Issawi et al emphasize the adaptive and sustainable nature of placemaking [22]. These research focus on the importance of designing urban spaces that respond to current challenges, maintain ecological compatibility,

and uphold long-term continuity. This reflects the access and linkages, comfort and image components of the Place diagram.

## 3.2 Place attachment, place identity

As mentioned before, Monteiro et al emphasis on biophilic design demonstrates how integrating natural elements into a place's identity [21]. Rosenbluth et al offers a complementary perspective by examining how public parks act as contested yet unifying spaces [14]. The transformation of the park from a local refuge for marginalized groups into a highly frequented metropolitan destination reflects a tension between memory, belonging, and urban change. The sense of nostalgia and symbolic importance attributed to the space by its early users underscores the emotional depth of place attachment, while the ongoing negotiations over the park's identity point to the fluid and dynamic nature of place identity in pluralistic societies. These findings support the sociability, access and linkages components of the Place diagram, illustrating how inclusive access, symbolic resonance, and collective memory contribute to the success and sustainability of public spaces.

## 3.3 Social activities

The studies converge on the significance of social activities, attributes, identity, and community engagement as critical social dimensions in placemaking, each reinforcing the sociability component of the Place Diagram. Khemri et al [12] analysis of el Houma illustrates how the spatial distribution of everyday social activities animates public spaces, enhancing their liveliness and reinforcing their role as communal hubs. Guttormsen et al [13] deepens this discourse by explaining placemaking as a dynamic process where heritage-based social practices either stabilize or transform space through assemblage and disassembly. This reflects how collective social memory and interaction patterns co-create or renegotiate place meanings over time, closely tied to social identity and continuity. Ramli et al emphasizes the social attributes of place as enablers of community- led creative placemaking, identifying them as catalysts for social sustainability and inclusive urban regeneration [23]. Meanwhile, the evolving park captures tensions around public versus private space and highlights how contested social use reveals deeper identity politics and struggles for recognition and belonging [14]. These findings all reflect how social activities are not only central to how people use public spaces, but also to how they experience identity, negotiate inclusion, and sustain long-term community ties.

## 3.4 Public and urban spaces, urban environment

The spatial distribution of social activities in el Houma illustrates how localized interactions and informal gatherings shape the liveliness of a neighborhood [12]. This supports the diagram of sociability, showing that everyday human behaviors are deeply entwined with how space is used and perceived. Rahman et al study the significance of architectural character as a medium for rejuvenating cities through tourism [24]. It links the aesthetic and historical aspects of the built environment to place identity. It is key to comfort and image within the Place Diagram. HafenCity is presented as an emblematic case where design enables happiness and emotional well-being [21]. These intangibles yet impactful outcomes underscore the comfort, uses and activities in creating emotionally resonant spaces. Gawad et al research on NUOS (Neglected and Underused Open Spaces) highlights their latent potential through placemaking, especially when activated strategically [25]. This directly emphasis on access and linkages, as well as uses and activities, by transforming voids into connective and vibrant urban nodes. Strydom et al illustrate a context-sensitive approach

combining environmental, social, and economic dimensions [26]. The integrated strategy reinforces the intersection between uses and activities, sociability, necessary for equitable and inclusive urban transformation. Sadeghi et al demonstrate that a synthesis of form, function, meaning, and ecosystem, when guided by behavioral data, enhances placemaking efforts [27]. These findings align closely with comfort and image as well as uses and activities by rooting design in lived experience. The notion that sustainable placemaking is dynamic and evolves over time underscores the need for urban forms to be adaptable and responsive [22]. This echoes the sociability, particularly in creating spaces that are welcoming and enduring. It highlights how perception and emotional responses are as important as physical features in public space design, especially post-COVID. Marthya et al proposes design interventions that facilitate accessibility, mixed-use functions, and architectural coherence, directly echoing dimensions of access and linkages, uses and activities, comfort and image. It emphasizes how intentional street design catalyzes pedestrian engagement and local vitality [28]. Finally, Rosenbluth et al states that the transformation of a metropolitan park into a symbol of both conflict and belonging demonstrates the sociability aspect [12]. It reveals how public spaces become arenas of negotiation, identity, and collective memory, especially in socioeconomically diverse contexts. Across the reviewed studies, a central theme emerges: placemaking is not only about physical design, but also about enabling meaningful social interactions, fostering emotional engagement, and accommodating evolving urban functions. These findings reinforce the Place Diagram, validating its relevance across diverse geographical and cultural contexts. Whether addressing underused spaces, tourism-led regeneration, or post-pandemic adaptations, the studies collectively advocate for a people- centered design ethos, one that values the social, physical, and symbolic dimensions of place as integral to creating vibrant, inclusive, and livable urban environments.

### 3.5 Stakeholders, citizen participation and governance, community engagement

The literatures consistently emphasize the critical role of stakeholders, citizen and governance participation, community engagement, and policy mechanisms in shaping socially sustainable and inclusive placemaking. These elements align closely with all the components in the Place Diagram, which stresses the importance of collaborative, engaged communities and responsive institutional frameworks in creating thriving public spaces. Kumar et al [16] and Mya et al [15] both highlight participation challenges, pointing to the need for collaborative governance and stakeholder alignment amidst socio-political and bureaucratic constraints. Despite strong willingness among communities to engage, institutional barriers like lack of resources, rigid governance, and bureaucratic red tape hinder meaningful involvement. Keleg [29] and Fingerhut et al [17] further critique centralized systems that limit inclusive placemaking, particularly in the Arab region, and advocate for restructuring administrative and power relationships to enable broader community engagement.

These concerns underscore the emphasis on community-based, bottom-up processes as a foundation for placemaking success. Similarly, Bagiouk et al [30] and Buldeo [31] illustrate how placemaking, when grounded in heritage, local identity, and community-specific needs, fosters collective ownership and spatial equity. Their findings reveal how creative, inclusive strategies can reconnect people with place, serving both symbolic and functional roles in urban transformation. Other literatures point to the essential integration of placemaking with broader urban policy and infrastructure planning, such as transit-oriented development and innovation districts [28]. These studies reveal how policy alignment and spatial planning can support vibrant, accessible, and multifunctional public spaces. Finally, the incorporation of

technology and innovation, the exploration of augmented reality, represents an evolving governance tool that can enhance participatory design and transparency, contributing to more inclusive, adaptive placemaking processes [32]. Together, these insights affirm that placemaking is not just a design endeavor, but a governance and policy challenge. For the Place Diagram framework to be fully realized, cities must foster inclusive partnerships, reduce institutional barriers, and embrace context-specific strategies that allow communities to shape, use, and sustain their shared spaces effectively.

## 3.6 Walkability, accessibility, mobility

The studies collectively underscore the essential role of walkability, accessibility, and mobility in supporting socially sustainable placemaking, as conceptualized in the Place Diagram particularly under the access and linkages component. These dimensions are not merely functional aspects of spatial design but are deeply tied to how people interact with, move through, and derive meaning from a place. Chidambara highlights the multidisciplinary consensus that walkability features, such as pedestrian safety, clean and aesthetic environments, tree cover, and engaging architectural details, are vital in encouraging physical activity and improving public health [33]. This aligns with comfortable and safe pathways are foundational for attracting people to and through public spaces. A walkable environment not only promotes everyday usage but also enhances social vitality by fostering spontaneous interactions and a sense of comfort and belonging. The attention to how accessibility and linkages within heritage contexts can significantly revitalize underutilized or fragmented areas, enhancing both visitor experience and place cohesion. Strengthening physical connections between historically significant zones reinforces the narrative continuity of a site, thus deepening both place attachment and the legibility of urban identity [34]. Finally, Hansasooksin et al illustrates how mobility infrastructure intersects with policy and spatial planning, suggesting that integrated mobility systems and regional accessibility can foster innovation hubs that balance economic activity with residential life [35]. This perspective adds a macro-urban layer to placemaking by showing how walkability and mobility extend beyond the immediate site, influencing urban patterns and usage on a broader scale. These findings advocate for walkable, accessible, and well-connected urban environments as critical enablers of active, inclusive, and meaningful places. Enhancing these aspects not only improves functional movement but also contributes to the social and experiential richness of the public realm.

## 3.7 Urban revitalization, urban regeneration, urban development

The literatures demonstrate how urban revitalization, regeneration, and development processes serve as critical strategies in achieving socially sustainable placemaking, particularly when aligned with the Place Diagram notably through the components of sociability, uses and activities, access and linkages. These interventions reflect the layered complexities of renewing urban spaces not only through physical transformation, but through the restoration of cultural meaning, accessibility, and community function. Gawad et al [25] emphasize the importance of contextually responsive revitalization, stating how the type of non-utilized open space (Neglected and Underused Open Spaces) dictates the appropriate placemaking approach. When addressed sensitively, such leftover spaces can be reimagined as productive community assets, supporting the principle that successful public spaces must be flexibly adapted to their local context and community needs. Other studies articulate the role of urban regeneration as a socio-spatial practice, especially in historically layered environments [30,36]. Through a careful blend of conservation and contemporary interventions, these efforts create a renewed sense of authenticity and character, which is

essential to the identity and sociability. These projects not only preserve heritage but invite ongoing relevance, drawing communities into active relationships with their surroundings. There are studies that underscore the social and connective dimensions of urban revitalization. Ramli et al focus on community-led creative placemaking showcases regeneration as a bottom-up catalyst for sustainable change [23], while Mohamed et al illustrate how access and linkage strategies enhance the legibility and functionality of heritage districts [34], improving both movement and experience, key principles of access and linkages component. Finally, Hansasooksin et al case broadens the view to regional-scale urban development, where the transformation of underutilized zones into innovation districts integrates mobility, jobs, and housing in a way that fosters work-life balance and spatial inclusivity [35]. Finally, the integration of placemaking into urban regeneration and development strategies, as these studies demonstrate, not only rejuvenates physical infrastructure but reinstates human-centered values into the urban fabric. When guided by community needs, historical awareness, and access to opportunity, revitalized places can become anchors of social cohesion, and identity.

**Table 2.** The Place Diagram components align with existing literatures.

| Place Diagram | Elements | References |
|---|---|---|
| Sociability | Welcoming, Interactive | Sepe, 2017 |
| | Diverse | Rosenbluth et al, 2024; Khemri et al, 2020 |
| | Stewardship | Guttormsen et al, 2023; Strydom et al, 2024 |
| | Cooperative | Ramli et al, 2020; Rosenbluth et al, 2024; Kumar et al, 2023; Mya et al, 2024; Keleg, 2020; Fingerhut et al, 2023; Bagiouk et al, 2024; Buldeo, 2024; Amin et al, 2022; Furlan, 2019 |
| | Friendly, Welcoming | Khemri et al, 2020 |
| | Welcoming | Al-Issawi et al, 2021 |
| | Neighborly | Hansasooksin et all 2021 |
| Access & Linkages | Continuity | Al-Issawi et al , 2021 |
| | Accessible | Rosenbluth et al, 2024 |
| | Connected | Gawad et al, 2019; Marthya et al, 2021 |
| | Walkable | Marthya et al, 2021; Chidambara, 2019; Hansasooksin et all 2021 |
| Comfort & Images | Safe, Green | Monteiro et al, 2023 |
| | Green | Al-Issawi et al , 2021 |

| Place Diagram | Elements | References |
|---|---|---|
| | Attractive, Historic | Rahman et al, 2018 |
| | Attractive | Sadeghi et al, 2022 |
| | Walkable | Marthya et al, 2021; Mohamed et al, 2020 |
| | Historic | Bagiouk et al, 2024; Buldeo, 2024; Mohamed et al, 2020; Furlan, 2019 |
| Uses & Activities | Fun | Sepe, 2017 |
| | Active | Gawad et al, 2019; Marthya et al, 2021 |
| | Sustainable | Strydom et al, 2024; Ramli et al, 2020 |
| | Useful | Sadeghi et al, 2022 |

The literature review undertaken in this study underscores the growing scholarly engagement with the concept of placemaking, particularly through the lens of the Place Diagram developed by the Project for Public Space. By categorizing the findings across the diagram's four quadrants or components; sociability, access and linkages, comfort and image, and uses and activities, the analysis offers a nuanced understanding of how placemaking principles are being interpreted, applied, and operationalized in contemporary urban research and practice. Among all the dimensions, Sociability emerges as the most comprehensively discussed and most frequently cited domain in the reviewed literature. Elements such as welcoming, interactive, diverse, cooperative, friendly, and neighborly are strongly represented, with multiple studies affirming the centrality of social dynamics in shaping place identity and meaning. The emphasis on stewardship and community engagement, as articulated by Guttormsen et al. [13], Strydom et al. [26], and Ramli et al. [23], illustrates a growing recognition of bottom-up, citizen-led initiatives as crucial mechanisms for sustainable and inclusive urban transformation. These findings also reflect a broader movement toward a more participatory and collaborative approach to urban development, which aligns with international trends advocating for democratic governance in public space design and management. The dimension of access and linkages also features prominently in the reviewed studies. Concepts like connectivity, walkability, accessibility, and continuity are consistently highlighted as prerequisites for creating inclusive and integrated public spaces. Authors such as Al-Issawi et al. [22] and Marthya et al. [28] demonstrate how effective linkages between different urban zones can significantly enhance the usability and inclusivity of heritage sites, commercial areas, and mobility corridors. These findings affirm that physical and visual connectivity is not merely a matter of infrastructure, but also a facilitator of social exchange, cultural engagement, and economic vitality within the urban fabric.

In contrast, the comfort and image component, while represented, is less thoroughly explored. Although some studies address visual aesthetics, safety, greening, and historical character, there remains a noticeable gap in the detailed analysis of comfort-related attributes, such as safety, seating arrangements, and tactile experience of place [20,24]. Moreover, the relationship between perceived safety and social trust is not as extensively elaborated upon in the selected literatures. Likewise, the uses and activities component are present but

underdeveloped in comparison to the other categories. The reviewed literatures touch on aspects such as fun, useful, active spaces, and sustainability, yet there is limited engagement with how these activities are curated, managed, or adapted over time to respond to evolving user needs. The temporal dynamics of use, how activities vary by time of day, season, or cultural calendar, are also largely absent, suggesting that while researchers acknowledge activity as an essential component of placemaking, it remains a less theorized and less measured aspect in observed studies.

## 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature affirms the relevance and utility of the Place Diagram by Project for Public Spaces as a conceptual platform for analyzing placemaking practices. However, while the social and spatial dimensions, especially sociability, access and linkages, are well-articulated in the selected literatures, there remains considerable room to deepen the understanding of comfort and image, uses and activities. Specifically, more research is needed on the sensory, emotional, and experiential qualities of place, as well as on the design and governance of activities that animate space over time. Placemaking strategies, as reflected through these dimensions, are increasingly recognized as critical tools for enhancing urban livability. By fostering inclusive public spaces that are safe, accessible, meaningful, and socially vibrant, placemaking directly contributes to the quality of everyday life in cities. Whether through community-driven initiatives, heritage-based regeneration, or improved walkability and connectivity, placemaking reinforces the spatial and social conditions that make urban environments not only functional, but also enjoyable and equitable. Future studies should also aim to bridge the gap between physical design and socio-political processes, paying closer attention to how policy, regulation, and civic participation interact to shape the lived experience of place. This includes addressing systemic challenges such as governance fragmentation, bureaucratic inertia, and socio-spatial inequality. By doing so, the field of placemaking can move toward a more holistic, inclusive, and adaptive model, one that honors both the physical and human dimensions of urban life, and one that ultimately supports the broader goal of creating more livable cities for all.

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