

Urban Doers Community

Supergrätzl Lichtental

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Abstract

We are a citizens' initiative based in Vienna who aim to transform our neighbourhood – a clearly-defined area known as Lichtental – into the city's first bottom-up Supergrätzl. Our project is conceptually grounded in the superblock concept, one of our biggest goals is to invite our neighbors to take action in the planning process themselves. In the past few years, we have gathered support for our project in the neighborhood and developed a traffic plan for a Supergrätzl Lichtental with the help of superblock experts. In Summer 2023 we invited our neighbors to take part in a series of co-creative planning workshops for each individual street in the neighborhood. The results are eight large-scale street maps with creative, colorful and detailed annotations on what a Supergrätzl Lichtental might look like according to the over 250 people that took part. In this paper, we will describe the conceptual background of these workshops, the challenges we encountered along the way and the achievements that are already visible in our neighborhood. We hope to inspire initiatives in neighborhoods in Vienna or Europe to take matters in their own hand and with the help of their neighbors push policy makers to enact urban transformation.

Key lessons:

1. Document your Work. Take pictures and notes, and loads of them! It is important to document your work carefully and also have to show something for it. It is best to put somebody in charge of this task to someone in your group for every event/activity.
2. Find a Basecamp. If possible, try to get a roof over your head and find a suitable 'basecamp' for your initiative. We find that our productivity and ability to activate our neighbors was improved greatly once we were able to use our neighborhood center for open meetings, workshops or casual gatherings.
3. Manage your Resources. According to the well-known 80/20 rule, 20% of your effort makes up 80% of your achievements, with the other 80% of your effort accounting for only 20% of your success. When it comes to our project (which we are very much passionate about), it is often difficult for us not to be perfectionists. But in our experience, it is important to allow chance to play a part, expect setbacks and deal with them creatively without spending too much time and resources on sticking to a plan. Plans change, sometimes for the better!

4. Show Appreciation. Do not take for granted the time people make for participating or engaging with your projects. We actively remind ourselves that it is not only the members of our initiative who take time out of our day to work on our project, but also the people who are not involved in the group but actively participate. Let them know you appreciate their time!
5. Don't be Afraid to Ask for Help. Whatever your project is about, you are most likely not alone in your endeavor. It is inspiring to exchange ideas with like-minded people and projects and most often they are willing to support and help you, so don't be afraid to ask for help.

Introduction

"Planning is not only for the people, it should also be of the people and by the people." This quote, written under the impression of a post-war society that not only needed to rebuild its cities but its democratic tradition, to us naturally sounds somewhat utopian. Yet even though the challenges to our cities are radically different ones today, the underlying ideal is just as alive. When we speak of the daunting tasks of urban transformation and mobility transition to combat the effect of climate change on our cities, it is important to remember that it is only with the help and support of local communities that we can achieve these goals in a sustainable manner. Planning of and by the people is a commonplace among urban planners in many European cities today, but most often it is still initiated through a top-down approach. In our little neighborhood in Vienna, we are taking matters in our own hand to achieve self-organized urban transformation.

We are a local initiative who aim to make our neighborhood, a quarter known as Lichtental, into a Supergrätzl. What is a Supergrätzl? Basically, the term describes the Viennese variant of the superblock concept developed in Barcelona. What distinguishes the superblock concept from common traffic-calming measures is its holistic approach to urban transformation. In a superblock, traffic calming does not stop at limiting through-traffic and parking for cars. Instead, it makes us think about what to do with the reclaimed public space. The possibilities of how this space can be repurposed are limitless, most often it includes better walking and cycling infrastructure, an increase in green space and the creation of places for rest, play or other social activities that have tangible benefits for local communities.

There is undoubtedly a great demand for measures like this in our Vienna neighborhood. The Lichtental quarter is an anomaly in the otherwise middle-class ninth district, with half of the district's social housing situated in this relatively small area. For centuries the quarter has been densely populated. In the mid-twentieth century, the often catastrophic living conditions were remedied by a large-scale transformation of the area. A small but lively park was created at the center of the neighborhood, which also houses a baroque church, an elementary school, youth center and several kindergartens. The primarily residential neighborhood today is a dense, lively, and diverse area which lies in between three busy traffic arteries (Althanstraße, Alserbachstraße, Liechtensteinstraße).

Because it is somewhat of a 'blind spot' in the arterial road network, the Lichtental neighborhood has already been identified in a 2020 paper as an area with high potential for creating a superblock. Not much later the city of Vienna officially espoused the creation of superblocks as one of their strategies to combat the effects of climate change and has recently initiated its first Supergrätzl in another district. The preliminary planning for such a project alone supposedly requires not only a whole squad of experts but the concerted effort of the political arena and multiple municipal departments. But what if it doesn't? What if the planning of a Supergrätzl was self-organized in a bottom-up initiative, tapping in on expert

knowledge of the people living in the neighborhood that is often not accessible to municipal departments or city planners?

For several years now, we have been active in demonstrating the benefits of a Supergrätzl to our neighbors, asking them to take part in our bottom-up planning efforts. Of course, we have had help along the way. From the start, we have fostered support among local stakeholders and institutions. Through the support of Lokale Agenda Alsergrund (part of LA21) together with other local initiatives we have also been maintaining a self-organized neighborhood center (Projektraum Lichtental). Last but not least, we have benefited from the cooperation with experts from the transnational Tune Our Block consortium who have supported us in many ways (in turn studying us as one of their urban living labs), particularly in creating a viable traffic plan and map of potential trees in the area to implement the Supergrätzl Lichtental.

In the course of autumn 2023, after years of planning, collecting information and data and building relationships, we took to the streets with a pop-up planning table to finally make the Supergrätzl a reality. The process, challenges, results and first successes of these co-creative planning workshops (Gemeinsam-Planen Workshops) are at the heart of this paper. In the following section, we will talk about the ideas and resources that fed into this format and how it was eventually executed by describing one of our workshops in detail. In the section that follows, some of the major findings illustrate the potential for bottom-up planning, before we will proudly present some visible achievements of our activities in our neighborhood that have only recently been realized or are still in progress. Finally, we will offer some concluding thoughts on how our project might inspire other urban doers.



Figure 1: Us failing to look natural while posing in our parklet in front of Projektraum. Source: Supergrätzl Lichtental

Planning and Realization of the Gemeinsam Planen Workshops

Workshop Concept

Since the beginning of the project we were led by the conviction that to make a neighborhood for the people who live in it it has to be designed by the people who live in it. Because no matter how good the city planner, no matter how well-meaning the municipal departments, they will never be able to collect all the knowledge that comes from the experience of actually living in our neighborhood. So for three years we held open meetings, talked to our neighbors and invited them to join our effort for a Supergrätzl Lichtental. But we were also aware that many if not most people did not have the same resources, especially time, to spend working on this vision as we do. So we devised a set of workshops to involve as many people as possible in the planning of our shared urban future.

The questions that guided us were:

- How to get people invested in planning a future version of our neighborhood, considering that we could not offer them any guarantee of their plans actually becoming reality other than promising them our commitment to the results?
- The participants of our workshops should be as representative of the community we live in as possible. A community that, as in any big city, involves people from any age group and gender. People with different abilities, different languages and backgrounds. People who also have had very different experiences when it comes to whether their voices, especially in a political context, are heard and how. And also very different experiences in – and therefore views on – public space. We wanted a workshop that would allow for different perspectives to still be visible in the final result, while making clear in which direction the majority of inhabitants want the development of their neighborhood to go.
- Furthermore we wanted their input not just to consist of a one-dimensional answer, like choosing between three versions of an already fully designed street, ticking boxes to best express their behavior in public space (walking, cycling or driving), or to rate which part of an area they like most and which they didn't. (We did that too and soon realized that people liked the park and didn't like the big road with the cars driving too fast.) We had done workshops with kids which allowed for more creative answers in the past, with ideas for a transformed public space drawn on paper in big bold markers and their importance emphasized with glitter. We decided to give adults the same chance at expressing themselves and their visions. Who knows, they might surprise us.

For pragmatic reasons, we decided to take on the task street by street. The Lichtental neighborhood has a total of 10 streets of different shapes and sizes of which – after some deliberation – we planned to do eight. So far so easy. But how to go about this in practice? We were convinced that our workshop had to be somewhat stagy to attract the attention of neighbors we would not normally reach. Fortunately, we could get inspired by workshops developed by Georg Wieser and Florian Lorenz from Studio Laut for the first Vienna Supergrätzl in the tenth district. They had worked with gathering peoples' ideas on a true to scale map of the future superblock painted on an intersection. In fact, we closely collaborated with Studio Laut and the NGO Smarter Than Car, both members of the Tune our Block consortium, to develop and execute our workshops. We also used true to scale maps (scale 1:50) in our workshops, in our case each one of a single street. In practice this meant that the length of our eight Lichtental street maps ranged from about 6.5 to 10 meters. To properly display these maps we were fortunate to

be equipped with a pop-up planning table designed and built by Studio Laut. The table itself is nothing less than a masterpiece of tetris-inspired furniture on wheels which can be hooked up to a bicycle and disassembled to unfold for 7 meters with an accompanying information board to display maps and further information on superblocks. The process of dismantling this strange, colorful vehicle alone already generated much interest among our neighbors, used to seeing the same old bore on four wheels clogging up the streets.

The workshops themselves did not necessarily play out as planned. Our initial idea was to place our pop-up planning table squarely on the respective street, but we quickly realized that closing off a whole street or even just parts of it was not popular with the responsible municipal department. In the end we conducted several workshops in a public space not occupied by parking cars (e.g. the park) for which no permit was required. For two workshops we applied for an official permit to use 2-3 parking spots, for another we did manage to close off parts of the street. For each workshop, we would dismantle our table on the spot and roll out the map of the street. On this map we would only interfere by marking the potential trees, everything else – be it written comments, drawings, or post-its – had to come from our neighbors. And indeed, whenever we rolled up to a new street, people did show up! Between 4pm and 7pm, we were busy talking, discussing and convincing. After each workshop we would discuss our experiences among ourselves to adapt the format going forward. After four weeks and seven workshops, all of us were exhausted but inspired and motivated by their results. Above all they showed that people are curious and creative when given the chance of envisioning a transformation of the status quo. The results of this co-creative

Activation Phase

When it came to the organizational planning of the workshops we knew from experience that the timing of the workshops would be of big importance. Also, holding workshops on how the public space should be in the future and not holding them in public space just makes no sense whatsoever. Mainly because way less people participate when they are asked to go to a second location. But also because it makes the planning process much more tangible to stand in the spot one is trying to redesign. Wanting to do the workshops outside also meant they would have to be in summer. But they shouldn't be in July or August because many families with school children would be on vacation, visiting their families outside Vienna, or if they stayed in the city they would have very different routines during the summer holidays than during school time. This left us with June and September which in our experience were best suited for people to show up for workshops and other activities. We finally chose September because it gave us all summer to prepare and the times worked best for our team members. Once again we settled for weekdays as people are more accessible in their routines rather than on the weekend. We also avoided Mondays and Fridays which for obvious reasons are often characterized by post-weekend gloom or pre-weekend anticipation, finally deciding on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

To invite our neighbors to our workshops we chose to invite them as directly as possible. Many top-down participation processes send invitations to every household in the area via the post. For a bottom-up initiative like us, this of course was not a financially viable option. An Austrian curiosity, 'post keys' which guarantee access to many of the older buildings in Vienna, allowed us to take delivery into our own hands in a sort of guerilla postal service. So we teamed up in pairs and at least one week before the workshops we sneaked postcard-sized flyers in all the mailboxes we could get access to. We managed to get into most houses but for those people we couldn't reach via mail we also placed posters at strategic points in our neighborhood like bus stops, recycling stations, the park, next to the entrance of the school and kindergartens where parents would wait for their kids. The distribution of the flyers alone took several afternoons and evenings. Had we

the Austrian post. But we also got to see the inside of the houses in our neighborhood and their courtyards and meet some more of our neighbors. The flyers contained the dates for all planned workshops as well as a short text explaining who we are, what we want and what the workshops would be about – brief enough to intrigue readers. Another, even more mysterious activation method was developed by our collaborators from the NGO Smarter Than Car. Drawing from the map of potential trees in our neighborhood, they drew attention to this potential by painting the outline of these virtual trees on the pavement in bright green using spray chalk.

Checklist of Materials

The materials we used for the workshops can be divided into three groups: print products we used to inform our neighbors of the workshops, street signs and physical barriers to guarantee safety and all the materials we actually used in the workshops.

The poster and flyers were designed by us and printing costs were sponsored by Lokale Agenda Alsergrund. As mentioned above, to avoid mailing fees, we distributed our workshop invitations ourselves approximately two weeks prior to each workshop. It was a lot of work, but we also learned a lot about our neighborhood, visiting countless courtyards, staircases and discovering special hidden corners. There were a few houses we didn't get in so visibly hung up posters at the entrance. And of course we talked to the important institutions in our neighborhood to put up posters and disseminate flyers. If one wants to organize an event in public space – or rather, the part of public space occupied by cars – in Vienna, a permit is needed. We ended up needing three of them, each costing around €90. Two of the workshops we held on a stretch of on-road parking and for the last one we managed (not without some difficulty) to get a permit to close off a part of the street and performed the workshop right in the middle of it. Fortunately, we were able to organize four of our workshops without needing permits, i.e. in the park, the square in front of the local school and a broader stretch of pavement. For local initiatives in Vienna who might not have access to public space unoccupied by cars, of course, the cost of the required permits is a considerable hurdle. Picture this: we had to pay around €180 for three days of workshops, yet a yearly permanent parking permit in Vienna costs €120.

On top of the permit-fees a lot of hardware is officially required to guarantee a safe environment for workshop participants such as street signs and worm shaped extending barriers. Fortunately we could borrow this expensive equipment from Studio Laut. As mentioned above, Studio Laut also built the mobile pop-up planning table we used for the workshops as well as supplying us with other essential materials such as the maps, little figurines and other materials mentioned in the chapter below. Most important, of course, was our assortment of different pens and markers in a variety of shapes and colors as well as post-its to allow for ideas to be quickly written down.

In the end, the workshops definitely weren't 'cheap'. In fact, other local initiatives will find it very difficult to re-create our workshops and it makes sense to think of ways to down-size the format. We believe that location is key and for projects dealing with issues of public space, it is important to reclaim that space even if there are financial hurdles such as permits. It is easier to cut costs with workshop materials. A lot of the materials can be substituted for other, cheaper items. In the end, the only resource that really cannot be replaced is also the most important: people. people who are well-informed on local politics, the technical facts of superblocks and creating a more livable city, but especially on living in the neighborhood that is being re-designed. People who really care about the neighborhood and therefore the workshop. Because the workshop is what is going to change the neighborhood.

Workshop at Marktgasse on 6 September 2023

To describe each of our seven workshops in detail would take up much more space than ten pages. Let us instead share a more detailed account of the first of our workshops at Marktgasse, one of the streets crossing the center of our neighborhood. In the next chapter, we will also include results and insights gathered from the following workshops. While each workshop was different from the last and we learned new things about how this workshop tool might best be used and adapted every time, the learning curve was never as steep as on 6 September 2023.

The morning of Wednesday the 6th of September started with a special delivery: Georg Wieser from Studio Laut had driven since dawn to deliver the mobile pop-up planning table from his workshop in Tyrol to Vienna. We drank some coffee in the Projektraum and checked once again if we had all the necessary materials for the workshop. At 2pm the team assembled in the little parklet in front of the Projektraum. We were seven people, five from our group (Magdalena, Claudia, Max, Lena, Sonja) and our two collaborators from Studio Laut (Georg Wieser and Florian Lorenz). We came prepared with coffee and cookies for us as well as our neighbors to create a pleasant atmosphere. We also figured that offering a cup of coffee might make us more approachable, not wanting to be mistaken for members of a local political party. After checking whether we had everything we needed, we finally started setting up the workshop.



Figure 2: Setting up our last workshop in Reznicekgasse during the urbanize! festival. Source: Supergrätzl Lichtental

For our first workshop we chose the longest street in the area which made for the longest 1:50 map at a length of 10 meters. We chose this street because we wanted to start in the center of the future superblock. And, to be perfectly honest, we also decided to start with Marktgasse because we had doubts that anyone would show up for the workshops and we figured our chances were best in the most populated street (we need not have worried so much). Marktgasse runs from the south of Lichtental straight up to the north and abuts the park, the church, the school and two kindergartens. Because it runs along the park, this street is also the street with the most trees in public space, which makes it an important source of shadow and a cool route for pedestrians during the increasingly hot summers. At the moment it is dominated by cars, with several tricky to dangerous sections for pedestrians, especially children. Since the street runs through what we consider to be the heart of the neighborhood, one of our most important demands is for the middle part of Marktgasse to be traffic-calmed. So we chose a spot right in the centermost part of Marktgasse, a little square in front of the school and next to the church.

Under the watchful eyes of a bust of the most prominent local of Lichtental, Franz Schubert, we started setting up the planning table and the information board on which we pinned a map showing the entire Lichtental to give the workshop participants an overview of the entire project area. This plan turned out to be very useful for a more fact-based conversation with locals who might live in different streets than the one we did the workshop on that specific day. We set up the table, rolled out the plan and used clips to hold the 10 meters of paper in place. Then we put little wooden tree figurines on all the places on the map where future potential trees could be planted. The locations of potential trees were marked on the map by little golden spots with a thin circle around them showing how much space the crown of a grown tree would take up in the street. Additional small wooden figurines of people, tables and benches, bicycles and cars might be placed on the map by workshop participants at will and we also worked with chips featuring images of different amenities (such as drinking fountains or bicycle racks) as well as activities like children playing. At the end of each workshop, we would of course also mark the position of the figurines or chips used. This first day it took us almost an hour to prepare the planning table and all the other materials; by the end of our workshop series we got the set-up time down to about 20 minutes. At 4pm we were ready and already some people were approaching us.

At each workshop we designated one person to document the workshops as well as possible. They were tasked with counting the number of people that participated as well as approximating their age and gender. They could also collect more anecdotal evidence on peoples' motives to participate in case they had specific interests in a topic. On the 6 September a total of 38 people participated actively during the workshop, meaning they left a trace on the map and didn't just stop to talk to us. Some of our neighbors gladly took the chance to tell us what ought to be done but convincing them that they should write their ideas on the workshop plan proved to be somewhat more difficult. In any case, we always stressed that only what was on the map would become part of our official demands and we believed it was necessary for people to commit their thoughts and ideas to paper themselves.

We suspected that some people would find it difficult to just start writing and drawing on the map, so we offered the chips and figurines as a way of easing into the planning. By placing them on different points on the map the workshop participants had the chance to try out numerous variations before committing to one idea. The temporary symbols also worked well to aid conversations between participants about the redesigning of street corners. Because at first it is possible to just collect many ideas of what an area needs and then in a second step to edit and decide where the different items (benches, water fountains, bicycle stands, etc.) should actually go. The downside of the movable chips is that they require a certain amount of trust by the participants, that we wouldn't just move them after they had left. For that reason we encouraged them to additionally leave a short drawing or note on the map when they were satisfied with their design. But we made sure that by the end of the workshop we had transferred all the ideas the chips represented on the paper before we packed them up. Otherwise we tried to give as little creative input ourselves as we could but rather just tried to motivate people to participate and help them in putting down their ideas for a Supergrätzl Lichtental.



Figure 3: Section of the Wiesengasse co-creative map with one of the more tistic contributions.

Source: Supergrätzl Lichtental

One hour into our first workshop we realized that we were having the same conversation with each participant: explaining which part of the street would be traffic-calmed and which would become regular one-way streets. This was when we noticed we had forgotten to integrate the new traffic plan for the Supergrätzl into the workshop map. So we added lines in bright green and orange signifying pedestrian areas and one-way streets, also indicating direction of traffic. We also made sure to apply this system to all future workshops.

Before the workshop some of us imagined the workshop would proceed in an orderly fashion. According to our original plan, the workshop would have started at 4pm with all people showing up on time, followed by a brief introduction after which participants would split up in groups to gather and discuss ideas before writing down a mutually agreed upon decision at the end of the workshop. Luckily it went nothing like this. People showed up whenever they wanted: on the way to the park with their kids, taking a stroll with their dog or coming back from work or the supermarket. Most did remember the invitation in their letterbox and some came especially to participate but the majority it was simply that we were on their way. Which was perfect seeing as we were also dealing with precisely that: their use of public space and how to change it to better fit their needs.

We decided to end the workshop at 7pm and to slowly pack up our things even though people were still approaching us. Naturally, after 4 hours of discussing, guiding and information overload our brains were fried. We considered splitting up into two teams for the next workshops so the second team could take over after some time but ultimately decided against it. We figured that having been part of the entire process of redesigning a street would give us a much better understanding of why the plans turn out as they did, enabling us to explain designs by people arriving in the early afternoon to participants who came in the late afternoon. Thus, we could act as a bridge for two people who could not be there at the same time. After each workshop we deconstructed the planning table and packed up the materials before sitting down in the parklet in front of the Projektraum for a quick debriefing, to discuss what went well during the workshop and what potential improvements we would like to implement in the next one. As well as checking in with each other to make sure nobody is left alone with all the feelings of the afternoon.

The feedback we got on our workshop series was overwhelmingly positive and the appreciation of the majority of our neighbors kept us going in the few cases when people came to our workshop table just to yell at us. In general, we accepted all comments and ideas as long as they were constructive. For example: saying there is too much trash in the park is not a constructive input. Constructive input, on the other hand, would for instance include solutions on how to reduce trash on the ground, for example by installing more trash cans or organizing trash collecting initiatives among neighbors. And of course we also respect ideas that didn't align with our vision of the future of our neighborhood which one can find on the maps. This way of keeping all the different inputs naturally leads to some contradictions like the juxtaposition of a comment saying "we need more parking spaces for cars" right next to another reading "no more parking for cars in public space." But we have found this 'living map' to be appropriate for our approach and ultimately, when you look at the plans as a whole, you'll still see a coherent vision of what the people in Lichtental would like their neighborhood to look like.

In total, a little over 250 people showed up for our 7 workshops to help create a detailed plan for a Supergrätzl Lichtental. The majority of people that participated were between 30-50 years old, often accompanied by children. Originally we planned on making a more professional looking map of the workshop results, i.e. the map of a future Supergrätzl Lichtental, to present to politicians and municipal departments. But we found that the strength of the plans is best appreciated on the original paper rolls. At time of writing, an artist and supporter of our project is working on creating an illustrated map of her interpretations of the workshop results. We have also spent the last months digitizing the plans by mapping the ideas committed on paper in QGIS to prepare a launch of a digital map juxta-

posed to the scanned originals this autumn. Most importantly, of course, we will use our neighbors' input to make demands vis-à-vis local politicians and the city.

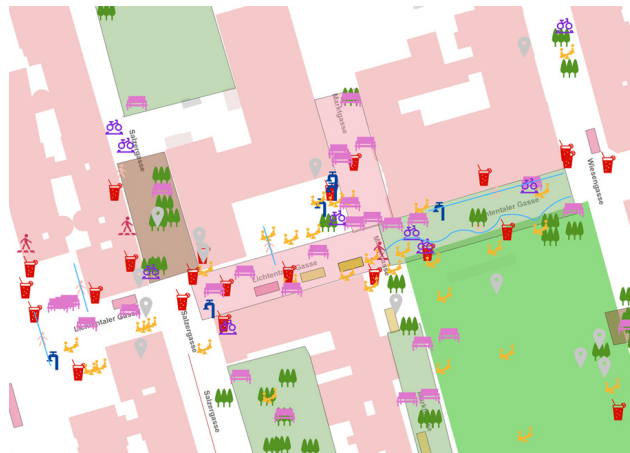


Figure 4: Snippet of the digitized map. Source: Supergrätzl Lichtental

Achievements

Exhibition during Urbanize as a First Presentation of Results

Even before we had finished our series of workshops we were given the chance to present our wonderful co-creative maps of the Supergrätzl at the 2023 urbanize! festival in October, an annual urbanism festival with workshops, lectures and other events. This year's theme was focused on 'urban commons' and we were fortunate to participate with different formats, among them the last of our planning workshops and an exhibition of the co-creative maps created up to that date. For us it was a chance to present the vision of a Supergrätzl to festival goers but in particular to our neighbors – some of whom approached us at a later point in time because they could not participate at the workshop – and the local politicians whom we had invited (most of whom did not show up unfortunately). An exhibition of all the plans after the workshops was a fitting addition to the workshop format, in which transparency and collective design play a major role. We believed that the results should also be presented in the informal atmosphere in which they were created. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and even though this autumn had been the most intense experience for our initiative so far, we knew it would pay off.

Inclusion in the Re-design of Simon-Denk Gasse and the Extension of Lichtentaler Park

There are two building projects under way in our neighborhood this year which fit in neatly with our traffic plan and co-creative maps. The first project, older plans by the district to transform Simon-Denk-Gasse into a 'cool street' with trees, seating areas and reduced parking space, was unearthed only recently by the district. After inquiring about the project, we were invited by the district to share our co-creative maps of the street to finalize its design. Another project concerns an extension of the park on the north side which will stop through-traffic through the neighborhood center. The project had been initiated by one of the factions and adopted by a majority in the district after our presentation of the Supergrätzl traffic plan to local politicians in early 2023. Subsequently, we were asked to help formulate the proposal according to which we were to be consulted for the new design. Thus, only a few years after we started our initiative, there are already some tangible results of our efforts visible in the public space.

Of course, our efforts have not always been rainbows and sunshine, particularly when it comes to actually achieving change. There is no direct channel for citizens

to submit requests to the district governments in Vienna, which means that we have to depend on the collaboration and the goodwill of political representatives to argue our cause in the district parliament. As a result, where our collaboration and exchange with the district and local political factions yielded results, it was often at risk of getting involved in political rivalries.

Outlook: A Model for Vienna/Europe?

In hindsight, we cannot say when exactly the idea for the co-creative planning workshops had originated. It developed slowly and changed over time and throughout the workshop series with the help of the many people that made them happen and those that participated in planning their neighborhood. From trial and error a format was created that can collect ideas for urban transformation from many different people while at the same time not isolating their ideas but letting them merge into a kind of tapestry. People with different abilities can participate which makes the workshop not just a reasonable standard of inclusivity but is actually the strength of the workshop. As far as planning for the people, of the people and by the people goes, our format of co-creative planning workshops offer a toolkit through which collective bottom-up urban transformation can realistically be achieved. Reclaiming public space for our workshops and their performative aspect were crucial as well, with all of us taking to the streets and acting as a community of self-made urban innovators who support each other and foster sustainable urban transformation. With this and other collective approaches to the Supergrätzl Lichtental we hope to pioneer a catalogue of democratic practices which might be applied to other neighborhoods in Vienna as well as urban contexts in Europe. But we consider it an ongoing project. If we do workshops again in the future, we will further develop the format and maybe create different variations of it. And we hope anyone who might be inspired by what we have done will do the same. We believe that most top-down participation formats are too restrictive to capture the creative solutions of the people that live, work or simply spend time in a neighborhood; our neighbors' colorful, inventive and daring co-creative plans are the best proof of this.

If the above description of our Gemeinsam-Planen workshops was helpful to you or if you were inspired by our workshops to do something completely different, we would love to hear from you and your experiences: you can contact us at supergratzl.lichtental@gmail.com.