

Competitive Precinct Projects: The Five Consistent Criticisms of “Global” Mixed-Use Megaprojects

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ABSTRACT

Mixed-use megaprojects on state-owned land have been increasingly occurring around the world over the past few decades. This article reviews the body of literature that has emerged on these projects during this period and investigates a number of projects more deeply by reviewing original planning documents and undertaking interviews with government officials, consultants, and other insiders. Project motives, delivery methods, and built outcomes have been examined in order to contextualize their emergence and proliferation, leading to a typological understanding, defined in this article as *competitive precinct projects*. A content analysis of 30 reviews covering 42 mixed-use megaprojects in 20 countries reveals remarkable global consistency in thematic criticisms. Framed in this article as the “five consistent criticisms of ‘global’ mixed-use megaprojects,” they pose a significant barrier to addressing increasingly complex urban challenges as well as to their successful management from inception to delivery. While the consistent criticisms represent patterns that have endured within a globally active urban development type for over three decades, this research shows that rather than being a neoliberal hegemony, there are mixed political and ideological aims and outcomes across projects and sometimes within the same project. A typological understanding allows patterns to be examined and understood, variances and hybridity to be evaluated, and more sophisticated future directions to be mapped out in the pursuit of broader based and city-scale project outcomes.

KEYWORDS: urban megaprojects; competitive cities; neoliberal globalization; urban renewal; urban planning

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INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, competitively orientated, precinct-scale urban renewal projects on state-owned land have been increasingly undertaken around the world. Large-scale development projects are far from new; however, the projects occurring in the past few decades have been similarly driven by globally interlinked political and economic restructuring processes occurring since the late 1970s (Del Cerro, 2013b; Lehrer & Laidley, 2008; Moulaert, Rodriguez, & Swyngedouw, 2003; Oakley & Rofo, 2005; Olds, 2001; Orueta & Fainstein, 2008).

The focus of this article is on mixed-use megaprojects that are explicitly motivated by four global processes: (1) city-based international competition (Florida, 2002; Moretti, 2013b; Porter, 1998); (2) the mobility and growth of knowledge economies (Montgomery, 2007; Moretti, 2013a); (3) the redirection of global investment from physical to human capital (Sassen, 2001); and (4) the dominance of market-rule ideology and politics (Brenner & Theodore, 2005). They vary in size from a few hectares to hundreds, as long as they occupy at least enough blocks to be considered a city “precinct” or “quarter” in their own right. They are multibillion-dollar comprehensive transformations of the urban space within their boundaries, commissioned by public authorities and usually delivered in partnership with private enterprise (Lehrer & Laidley, 2008; van Marrewijk, Clegg, Pitsis, & Veenswijk, 2008). As such, these projects offer lucrative capital markets, often publicly funded (Swyngedouw, Moulaert, & Rodriguez, 2002), despite public-private partnerships being driven by the desire to reduce public spending (Zimmermann & Eber, 2014). This capital market is now an underlying driver of urban megaprojects, with powerful urban growth coalitions advocating for and benefiting from their production (Siemiatycki, 2013).

From a typological point of view, these mixed-use megaprojects can be subcategorized as a globally active model of urban development, defined in this article as *competitive precinct projects* (CPPs) (see Table 1 for examples of project categorization).

The social, health, economic, and environmental benefits of a mixed-use approach to urban design and planning have been increasingly understood and implemented over the past 50 years, and in a general sense, such an approach can now be considered standard practice (Dovey & Pafka, 2017). CPPs emerged roughly 20 years after the disciplinary reengagement with mixed-use cities. The political alignment with the above four global processes separates CPPs from the conventional approach to increasing the diversity of use within an urban area. In fact, as will be explained, CPPs can be seen to limit diversity within rigid formulations of mixed-use development.

Large-Scale Development Project	Construction Period	Key Objectives	Mixed-Use Megaproject	Competitive Precinct Project
Biljmermeer, Amsterdam 500 ha	1968–1975	Response to housing shortage. Planned for working- and middle-class families. Design based on modernist principles of strict separation of living, working, recreation, and travel functions (Fainstein, 2010).	No	No
Canary Wharf, London 47 ha	1988–ongoing	Anticipating demand for office space in a deregulated market. Compete with regional financial centers, particularly Frankfurt and Paris (Newman & Thornley, 1996).	Yes	Yes
Hammarby Sjöstad, Stockholm 160 ha	1995–ongoing	Integrated environmental infrastructural systems precinct that exemplifies Stockholm's commitment to environmental policy (Pandis Iveroth, Vernay, Mulder, & Brandt, 2013).	Yes	No
Ørestad, Copenhagen 310 ha	1997–ongoing	Attract international companies and investment in competition with regional centers, particularly in northern Germany and Scandinavia. Attract higher-earning Danish residents to Copenhagen. Fund new metro lines with land sales revenue (Danish Ministry of Finance, 1992).	Yes	Yes
Vauban, Freiburg 41 ha	1998–2010	Deliver an ecologically, socially, economically, and culturally sustainable city district in a cooperative, participatory process (City of Freiburg, 2015).	Yes	No
Barangaroo, Sydney 22 ha	2012–ongoing	Attract international companies and investment in competition with centers in the Asia Pacific (BDA, 2014).	Yes	Yes
Hudson Yards, New York 11 ha	2012–ongoing	Expand the midtown central business district seeking global attention (HYDC, 2014).	Yes	Yes
West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong 40 ha	2013–ongoing	Become Asia's arts and cultural capital (WKCD, 2016).	Yes	Yes

Table 1: Large-scale development project categorization.

The rhetoric from CPP protagonists will always embrace a globalization discourse in which international economic competitiveness is paramount for the prosperity of the city and the state. In both times of genuine bust, as in Copenhagen in the late 1980s, or times of obvious boom, as in Sydney in the 2010s, this rhetoric dominates public discourse, frames objectives, and guides decision-making processes, despite rarely being operationalized into official project management processes.

In Flyvbjerg's (2014) definition, the intent of a megaproject is to change the structure of society, rather than work within existing structures. However, the structural change that these projects are aiming to bring about, who

precisely stands to benefit, and more importantly, what alternatives might be available all remain shrouded in a generic "glossy globalization" discourse that glorifies potential investment and growth while obscuring real urban displacement and socio-spatial polarization (Marcuse, 1997).

This article argues that CPPs represent a globally embedded approach to city making, spanning cultural and geographical contexts, with a management process defined loosely by common aims and narratives. Despite their size and requirement to be strategically located, these projects are increasingly occurring in a great number of cities and, at times, with numerous projects being delivered at the same time in a single city.

Sydney can claim Barangaroo, Darling Harbour (the second wholesale redevelopment since the late 1980s), the Bays Precinct, and the Central to Eveleigh Corridor as examples of CPPs currently under way, totaling 243 hectares, all within four kilometers of the city center. Copenhagen, a much smaller city, can claim a massive 714 hectares across three projects: Ørestad, Nordhavn, and Sydhavn. All of these are within three kilometers of the city center and are being delivered by the same government-owned delivery authority, By & Havn (City & Port).

This article reviews the body of literature that has emerged on mixed-use megaprojects occurring over the past 30 years. Project motives, delivery

Competitive Precinct Projects

methods, and built outcomes have been examined within the discourse of neoliberal globalization and the increasing mobility of capital in order to contextualize their emergence and proliferation. A thematic content analysis of this literature was undertaken to determine the most common evaluative themes, followed by a more targeted, project-based investigation, including a review of planning documents, interviews with government officials and consultants, and onsite studies.

A conventional and summative approach to analysis was undertaken of subjective interpretation of content through systematic identification patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) in which themes were progressively grouped and reduced. Five thematic criticisms emerged as dominant evaluative themes and are expanded on in this article as the five consistent criticisms of global mixed-use megaprojects. In summary, these five are (1) introverted governance that circumvents local planning frameworks, (2) international positioning and marketing prevailing over the concern of local issues, (3) physical and social disconnection, (4) generic urbanity, and (5) lack of public benefit.

Among the literature's heavy criticism, threads of more inclusive planning mechanisms can be found. The shortcoming of the literature is that these mechanisms are under acknowledged. When compiled, they begin to offer alternate directions that disrupt the exclusive business-as-usual approach to delivering CPPs. The latter part of this article is, in part, a response to calls for more contextually grounded views of practice to better evaluate megaprojects (van Marrewijk et al., 2008) and shows that, while the consistent criticisms dominate project reviews, some projects demonstrate significant countering qualities. This suggests that although neoliberal-oriented development practices can appear hegemonic, there is an undercurrent of alternative ideologies and practices. Acknowledging the persistence of international city-based

economic competition, this article concludes with the proposition that more sophisticated future directions would couple competitive city goals with local planning goals to achieve broader-based city-scale public benefit.

In view of this evaluation and the tenacity of this model of urban renewal, there is a need for more normative research approaches in order to understand the genesis, delivery, urban implications, and future directions of this type of project. It is evident that far greater and more diverse city-scale benefits are possible than are currently being achieved.

Neoliberal Globalization and CPPs

CPPs have arisen from a complex set of geographic, economic and, above all, political processes of restructuring occurring throughout the world since the late 1970s and early 1980s. This period has seen the widespread ascendancy of globalization, neoliberalism, and as an urban manifestation of these processes, the CPP.

Globalization is not a new phenomenon. The origins of a "world-embracing market" have been placed as far back as the 16th century (Marx, 1978, p. 329). However, it was in the late 20th century that globalization became the central lens through which to understand the world in both the popular imagination (Dicken, 2007) and scholarly discourse (Featherstone, Lash, & Robertson, 1995).

Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Peraton (1999) explain globalization as a set of processes that underpin transformations in the extensity, speed, and impact of social and economic relations that have vastly increased regional and international flows of interactions and power. A quarter of a century ago, Giddens (1990) asserted the reach of this interconnectedness: "whoever studies cities today, in any part of the world, is aware that what happens in a local neighborhood is likely to be influenced by many factors—such as world money

and commodity markets—operating at indefinite distance away from that neighborhood itself" (p. 64). This observation introduces volumes of literature examining urban space under the processes of globalization.

Any discussion of the urbanization of globalization must include a reference to neoliberalism, as the ascendancy of both are inextricably linked (Angelis, 2014; Harvey, 2005; Soja, 2000). Most simply described, neoliberalism is the belief that economic benefits are best achieved by releasing entrepreneurial potential through deregulation, opening up markets, and expanding property rights (Campbell, Tait, & Watkins, 2013). Global politics is dominated by this language, with some arguing that neoliberalism as a political ideology holds a hegemonic influence on urban governance (Brenner & Theodore, 2005; Peck, 2001).

Neoliberal ideologies and policies were developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s as both an enabler of and in response to economic globalization processes (Del Cerro, 2013b). This period marks a global political and economic shift resulting in fundamental changes in terms of financial capital becoming more fluid in a world of increasing complexity, interconnectedness, mobility, and competitiveness. This has been extensively documented in the context of the United States and the United Kingdom (Dicken, 1992; Sassen, 2001), with a similar impact in Australia (Stimson, 1995).

Megaprojects occurring over the past three decades represent spatial outcomes of these processes (Moulaert et al., 2003; Olds, 2001; Taşan-Kok, 2010), featuring prominently on policy agendas of ambitious metropolitan governments around the world (Altshuler & Luberoft, 2003). The project of neoliberal globalization is simultaneously a response and stimulus to increasingly internationalized markets and practices (Peck, 2001). Similarly, CPPs are a product of and catalyst for urban, political, and economic changes, accelerating

processes that are felt locally, nationally, and internationally (Swyngedouw et al., 2002).

Despite its apparent hegemony, neoliberalism and its associated globalizations are complex and more open to subversion than common discourse often suggests. Similarly, the narrowly focused narratives of CPPs, particularly in the early phases of project conceptualization, fail to provide an accurate impression of the wide-ranging, city-scale benefits that these projects might offer. These narratives of exclusion demonstrate Yeoh's (1999) point that rather than simply being a term describing the way the world works, globalization is "a discourse (or even a myth) drawn upon to legitimize particular political and economic agendas" (p. 607).

Narrative Versus Practice

Globalization is an incredibly loaded concept, which can appear to act as a prevailing term for contemporary existence. In common discourse, globalization is a processional fact of life, used as a "metaphor for practically everything that has been happening everywhere through the late 20th century" (Soja, 2000, p. 190). However, it is important to acknowledge that globalization is a multivalent concept, operating through many actors and materializing in many forms at many scales. Dicken (2007) claims that today the concept of globalization is commonly misused and ill-considered as an "all-embracing, inexorable, irreversible, homogenizing force" (p. 29) and argues that this tendency belies the complex and varied nature of globalization. He stresses that the concept needs to be conceived as an underlying set of complex interrelated processes under way in the world. Marshall (2003) highlights the danger in the assertion that globalization is a foundational concept for decision making. He argues that once it is accepted as pervasive and self-perpetuating, a condition is set up in which its negative aspects are clearly apparent but seemingly unavoidable. In this context, city

decision makers become faced with an ethical crisis in which neoliberal globalization is both the problem and the answer.

The degree and relationships of influence wielded by state and private entities are heavily debated (Wiener, 2001). Although generalities are common, as with the amorphous term *globalization*, neoliberalism manifests in many, sometimes contradictory, variances of governance, regulatory frameworks, and urbanization (Brenner & Theodore, 2005). Jessop (2013) provides a detailed analysis of neoliberalism's unstable foundations and outcomes, concluding that its diverse proponents draw on its unevenly developing "crisis-tendencies, contradiction and resistances" (p. 73) to renew the broad project under changing conditions, resulting in immense variation in neoliberalism. In this manner, the project of neoliberalism has proved highly resilient in its tendency to "fail forward," in that its failures to deliver on promises merely prompt further attempts of neoliberal invention (Peck, 2011).

According to Campbell et al. (2013), like the welfare state model before it, *neoliberalism* is a generalized term, and both should be regarded as groupings of ideas and policies rather than single positions. Larner (2003) criticizes the reductionist discourse surrounding neoliberalism as a hegemonic story that has supplanted the similarly used term *globalization*. She argues that not enough attention is paid to the differences, hybridity, and contradictory aspects of neoliberalism—it is not an either-or, and if we interrogate the complexity and contradictions, we can more carefully work through processes of political power. Peck (2001) stresses the need to recognize that processes of restructuring under the neoliberal banner are part of a sustained political project striving for certain economic conditions, rather than simply "the way the world works." Marcuse (1997) presses this fact of agency: that globalization does not move of its own accord;

rather, it is the direct result of consciously coordinated human actions.

Brenner and Theodore (2005) argue that diverse social forces aggressively contest these attempts by resisting unfettered capital accumulation and advocating the preservation of "socialized" forms of coordination. Campbell et al. (2013), opposing the Thatcherite mantra that "there is no alternative" to neoliberal policies, raise two planning models that have emerged in response to rising inequality. The first is communicative, or collaborative, planning that recognizes the diverse nature of contemporary societies and promotes more inclusive forms of deliberation. The second is the reemergence of substantive forms of justice in planning, including material redistribution, framed as a concern for the "just city."

Globalization is a continually evolving set of interrelated processes that are subject to checks and guidance. Understanding globalization in this manner suggests more agency is available than is often assumed. Certain processes can be modified, restrained, or encouraged. New or emerging processes can be cultivated.

CPPs are a product of the political and economic shifts rhetorically driven by less government intervention. However, as stated by Swyngedouw, Moulaert, and Rodriguez (2002), these projects are "decidedly and almost without exception state-led and often state-financed" (p. 551). This level of government involvement is typical of the tension between the ideology and practice of neoliberalism and is revealed starkly in CPPs. Peck (2003) argues that it is simplistic to conceive "deregulation" as a cornerstone of neoliberalism. More than merely "liberating" market forces, the neoliberal project has constructed new institutional forms, government practices, and regulatory conventions to extend and maintain certain market conditions. Keil (2002) asserts that contrary to what its ideology sustains, neoliberalism has always been reliant on state intervention. Therefore,

Competitive Precinct Projects

neoliberalism doesn't necessarily represent a less interventionist state; the interventions are just organized in different ways (Peck, 2001). In Brenner and Theodore's (2005) review of theoretical and empirical perspectives on the neoliberalization of urban space, they claim that by generating a complex reorganization of state-economy relations, whereby the state actively enables and promotes market-based regulatory arrangements, neoliberalism and its urbanization hinges upon the active mobilization of state power. Moretti (2013a) describes the urban economic policies behind special economic zones designed to attract foreign investment to specific areas as effectively forms of welfare—they just target locations rather than individuals. Shifting capital in this manner should come as no surprise, as cuts in social spending alongside the development of corporate welfare were central themes during the first phase of neoliberal strategies in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Angelis, 2014). Therefore, according to Peck (2003), these new forms that have displaced the Keynesian or welfare model are not liberalized markets per se but rather new forms of statecraft.

Global Competition for Mobile Capital and Urban Space

The mobility of financial and human capital under globalization processes has exerted profound pressures on urban space. The massive economic shift from manufacturing to service- and knowledge-based industries over the second half of the 20th century is the central historical turn that transformed the global geo-economic landscape (Castells, 1989; Dicken, 1992; Sassen, 2001).

Changes in foreign direct investment (FDI) over this period demonstrate the extent to which the global mobility of capital has increased. Significant FDI increases in services occurred during the 1960s and 1970s and then increased massively through the 1980s and 1990s. Global FDI in services has

continued to grow steadily, while falling in primary products and raw materials.

Alongside the competition for internationally fluid financial capital, human capital has shifted to a global marketplace:

"What the international firms say . . . is that first they could recruit their workforce nationally, but now the market is such that they have to go out and recruit internationally. . . . It's therefore important for them to locate where they can attract international labor." (Poul Madsen, director, commercial development planning, Roskilde County Copenhagen, 21 January 2000, quoted in Hansen, Andersen, Clark, & Lund, 2001, p. 854)

Demonstrating how mobile the labor market can be, Sassen (2001) lists prominent law firms in New York, Chicago, and London by their percentage of foreign employees. Topping the list is the Chicago firm Baker & McKenzie, where foreign citizens constitute almost 80% of the lawyers. Half of the firms on the list have a foreign-employed workforce of over 30%. At the extreme end of the spectrum, approximately 90% of the entire urban population of both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, collections of wildly speculative megaprojects, are sourced from around the world to make up a truly foreign workforce (Ponzini, 2013).

The wealth of cities today, determined by productivity and high salaries, derives more from deep pools of knowledge markets than mass production and natural resource endowments. Financial and human capital is more mobile today than ever before, but both are increasingly clustering in particular urban locations (Moretti, 2013b). Capturing a share of the world's mobile wealth is foundational to the justification of CPPs being developed on public land. Protagonists embrace a narrative of international competitiveness, framing a project discourse that is dominated by the rhetoric of economic survival.

The response has been urban transformations in which governments and

private-sector actors have been striving to position their cities and services within a globally fluid sociopolitical division of labor, production, and consumption, and coordinate their local networks with the perceived or real requirements of an increasingly deregulated and neoliberal international economic system (Moulaert et al., 2003).

In recent decades, cities have increasingly been framed as "growth engines" of regional and national economies (Jonas & Wilson, 1999). Increasing economic prosperity is often equated with growing cities. Batty (2011) claims there is conclusive evidence that more populous cities are more prosperous. He argues that income per capita, the number of innovations, cultural and educational institutions, and creative pursuits scale more than proportionately with city size, by the simple fact that face-to-face contacts increase more than proportionately. It is the large cities, according to Batty, that are the success stories of the global economy and wealth generation.

Of course, it is not as simplistic as "more is better," at least not for everyone. In the 1980s, a "world city hypothesis" argued that the pursuit of growth-oriented "world city status" would inevitably lead to damaging spatial and socioeconomic polarization, as the growing social investment required for housing, education, health care, transportation, and welfare is increasingly deferred against the needs of transnational capital for economic infrastructure and subsidies that benefit the corresponding social classes (Friedmann, 1986).

More recently, a list of the most prosperous cities according to the UN Habitats City Prosperity Index shows an extremely varied relationship between population size and prosperity (Table 2). According to this index (it is important to acknowledge that there are many others), the most prosperous city in the world, Vienna, has only 1.7 million inhabitants, whereas the second most prosperous, New York,

Ranking	Population (millions)
1. Vienna, Austria	1.7
2. New York, United States	19.4
3. Toronto, Canada	5.4
4. London, United Kingdom	8.6
5. Stockholm, Sweden	1.3
6. Helsinki, Finland	1.1
7. Dublin, Ireland	1.1
8. Oslo, Norway	0.9
9. Paris, France	10.5
10. Tokyo, Japan	36.7

Table 2: The top 10 most prosperous cities according to the UN Habitats City Prosperity Index 2012/2013 (United Nations Human Settlements Programme [UN Habitat], 2012).

has almost 20 million. Five of the top 10 most prosperous cities have fewer than 2 million inhabitants, yet Tokyo, at number 10, has almost 37 million inhabitants.

The point is there are many variables: productivity, quality of life, infrastructure development, cost of living, conveniently located housing, recreation, and services, to name a few. The efficiencies of more populous cities are reliant on a degree of accessibility. This requires certain land-use and transport patterns to be coordinated in order to achieve broad benefits of scale. The premises can be, in principle, correct, but as will be discussed, the relationship between city growth and prosperity under urban policies guided by neoliberalism has been shown to favor certain groups and places while disadvantaging others, accruing benefits that are geographically highly uneven.

From Planning to “Competitive” Megaprojects

“There doesn’t seem to be any strategic coordination. That’s something I’ve been quite vocal about. It’s all state land. But at the moment we’re all kids

competing for attention from our parent who is the minister. You know, the minister has given a project there, a project there, a project there . . . and we’re competing against each other. As I say, cannibalizing each other.”

(R. Mellan, development director at Places Victoria, 25 September, 2015)

The political strategy of neoliberalism has been linked to the cultivation of a planning agenda that exhibits spatially selective characteristics, favoring targeted capital accumulation over strategic planning and distributive policies. According to Swyngedouw et al. (2002) large-scale urban projects, presented as project-focused and market-led initiatives, have replaced statutory planning as the primary means of city development:

“Essentially fragmented, this form of intervention goes hand in hand with an eclectic planning style where attention to design, detail, morphology, and aesthetics is paramount. The emblematic *Project* captures a segment of the city and turns it into the symbol of the new restructured/revitalized metropolis cast with a powerful image of innovation, creativity, and success.” (p. 562)

Brenner and Theodore’s (2005) review of case studies on contemporary urban restructuring demonstrates how neoliberal policies have extremely variegated geographical implications. Places or systems are targeted in search of some form of capital accumulation particular to the opportunities presented by their conditions, and thus, each intervention has its own specific set of policy processes. Oakley (2014) explains that the effect of neoliberal governance skews development provision toward large-scale, high-end residential projects where housing is primarily viewed as a commodity for its speculative and accumulative potential and that the state is increasingly relying on private-sector and market-led approaches to deliver them.

In the Australian context, a report on productive cities by the Grattan Institute

reveals a socio-spatial economic divergence within large cities (Kelly & Mares, 2012). The report found that there is an increasing polarization within Australian cities by income, health, education level, and access to jobs. City centers are increasingly concentrated with higher-paid, knowledge-based professionals, while workers with trade skills or low skills are concentrating away from the center. A recent study demonstrates that 20 years of neoliberal policies underpin the geographic concentration of disadvantage in Australian cities, particularly a marked locational shift of disadvantage to suburban areas. The authors conclude by acknowledging:

“It is hardly surprising that a greater reliance on the market to allocate housing opportunities will have led to greater spatial polarization, because housing markets have responded to these initiatives in the only way the market knows—to ‘sift and sort’ social classes into their respective spatial locations reflecting ability to pay.” (Randolph & Tice, 2014, p. 397)

Campbell et al. (2013) argue the competitive discourse of neoliberalism with its rhetoric of “delivery,” in which visible signs of change are highly symbolic, encourages development with minimal scrutiny on overall benefits. Under these conditions, Marshall (2003) claims that large-scale urban projects represent a new way of planning the city that is centrally concerned with marketing and the provision of competitive infrastructure. The literature suggests that much of today’s city making is undertaken by delivering a list of big, often disconnected projects with the primary aim of attracting investment, the benefits of which, according to Swyngedouw, Moulaert, and Rodriguez (2002), are almost always reaped by the private sector.

CPPs are an exemplar of these processes. They are charged with a narrative of high symbolic importance as the economic savior of the city, embodying Flyvbjerg’s (2014) political, economic, and aesthetic “sublimes.” They hold the

Competitive Precinct Projects

promise of wealth generation, directly for the protagonists and suggestively for the public (Siemiatycki, 2013), yet the benefits are often left to “trickle down” without any mechanisms to ensure that they do (Turok, 1992).

Competitive Precinct Projects

There is now a body of literature examining the genesis, governance, delivery, and built outcomes of mixed-use megaprojects around the world. This section looks at how these projects have been appraised as a particular type of urban development.

A content analysis of 30 reviews covering 42 mixed-use megaprojects in 20 countries (Table 3) demonstrates a remarkable consistency in the projects' motives, public narratives, governance structures, delivery methods, and built outcomes. In addition to their scale and mixed-use nature, they share the premise of elevating the competitive position of their metropolitan economies into regional and global economic networks—an intercity economic competition using office and residential buildings and the urban space they sit within as the mechanism with which to compete (Beauregard, 2005; Bunnell, 2013; Marshall, 2003; Swyngedouw et al., 2002). For projects occurring in wide-ranging geographical, political, and social urban contexts, the similarities in their aims and outcomes are striking, exhibiting varying degrees of “copycat” competitive urban entrepreneurialism (Siemiatycki, 2013).

Under these conditions, CPPs invariably consist of:

- High-end residential and A-grade office space aiming to attract (often foreign) investment and subsequent high-profit companies and affluent residents;
- Leisure and consumption amenities targeting affluent residents and visitors; and
- Large and striking buildings to symbolize new economic growth and provide high marketing visibility regionally and globally.

The Five Consistent Criticisms

The dominant evaluative themes from the content analysis can be distilled into five consistent criticisms, listed below and subsequently expanded. They represent a global perspective from the literature on internationally oriented mixed-use megaprojects:

1. Introverted modes of governance that circumvent local planning frameworks, traditional democratic channels of participation, and accountability.
2. Global economic positioning and marketing toward a globally mobile elite prevailing over the concern of local issues.
3. Physically and socially self-contained, isolated, and disconnected from the context of the host city.
4. Similar urban form regardless of the host city that encapsulates a narrow definition of urban life and culture.
5. Minimal commitment to public benefit or socially just policies arising from a primary focus on profitability.

Consistent Criticism 1: Introverted governance models that circumvent local planning frameworks, traditional channels of democratic participation, and accountability.

“We got a new set of planning laws in the 1970s and 1980s that meant increased public access to and engagement in planning. It was troublesome and time-demanding. Therefore, these corporations were constructed, which need not be subjected to the same rules of public transparency, for some of the big projects.”

(Kaj Lemberg, retired head of planning, Copenhagen, 25 January 2000; quote from Hansen et al., 2001, p. 586)

According to the literature, CPPs are managed under introverted, business-oriented, and flexible governance models that circumvent traditional channels of democratic participation and accountability (Desfor & Jørgensen, 2004; Fainstein, 2008; Malone, 1996; Oakley &

Rofe, 2005; Swyngedouw et al., 2002). Despite the complexity of megaprojects, objectives are rarely operationalized for delivery. A lack of accountability mechanisms, such as reward-penalty systems, often results in failure to achieve the goals articulated at the beginning of the project (Bruzelius, Flyvbjerg, & Rothen-gatter, 2002). These fluid arrangements align with recent tendencies for “flexible” urban governance in which a coalition of actors within public and private spheres manipulate and distort established practices for ends that are often poorly articulated publicly (Desfor & Jørgensen, 2004).

It is argued these introverted, project-tailored governance models tightly control access to decision making through formal and informal channels, favoring those who stand to gain the most (Majoer, 2008a). This suggests that the processes and outcomes of CPPs are manipulated to represent the global ambitions of local urban elites (Del Cerro, 2013b).

CPP governance models operate in very similar ways to the development model formulated for large urban projects by the government of the United Kingdom in the New Towns Act 1946. Under this model, a government-appointed Development Corporation was established to plan and develop each proposed town, independent of local authorities (Heraud, 1966)—in other words, transferring complete control to a single authority to plan, approve, and deliver a large urban project.

In the case of Ørestad, Copenhagen's first CPP, the Ørestad Development Corporation (ØDC) was formed with a governance and development approach explicitly adopted from the English New Towns model (Ørestadsselskabet, 1994). Although owned jointly by the state and city governments, this was branded a “nonpolitical” delivery corporation with a mandate to operate under market conditions. Full property rights for the 310-hectare government-owned site were transferred to the corporation, which effectively became the owner, planner,

Project	City	Sources
1. Abandoibarra	Bilbao	(Del Cerro, 2013a; Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
2. Adlershof	Berlin	(Backmann, 2007; Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
3. Al Reem Island	Abu Dhabi	(Ponzini, 2013)
4. Al Sowwah Island	Abu Dhabi	(Ponzini, 2013)
5. Barangaroo	Sydney	(Johnston & Clegg, 2012; Stickells, 2010)
6. Birmingham CBD	Birmingham	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
7. Bundang and Ilsan	Seoul	(Min Joo, 2013) (Ponzini,
8. Central Market	Abu Dhabi	2013) (Swyngedouw et al.,
9. Centro Direzionale	Naples	2002) (Lobo, 2013)
10. Clichy-Batignolles	Paris	(Boydell & Searle, 2014; Daly & Malone, 1996)
11. Darling Harbour	Sydney	(Malone, 1996; Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
12. Docklands	Dublin	(Barnes, Colenutt, & Malone, 1996; Fainstein, 2008; Hinsley & Malone, 1996)
13. Docklands, Canary Wharf	London	(Dovey, 2005; Dovey & Sandercock, 2002; Shaw, 2013)
14. Docklands	Melbourne	(Grubbauer, 2013; Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
15. Donau City	Vienna	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
16. Espace Leopold	Brussels	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
17. Euralille	Lille	(Ziller, 2004)
18. Green Square	Sydney	(Grubbauer, 2013)
19. HafenCity	Hamburg	(Taşan-Kok, 2010)
20. Het Eilandje	Antwerp	(McGuirk, Winchester, & Dunn, 1998)
21. Honeysuckle	Newcastle, Australia	(Lobo, 2013)
22. Hudson Yards	New York	(Desfor & Jørgensen, 2004)
23. Kalvebod Brygge	Copenhagen	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002; Taşan-Kok, 2010)
24. Kop van Zuid	Rotterdam	(Bunnell, 2013)
25. Kuala Lumpur City Center	Kuala Lumpur	(Carpenter & Verhage, 2014)
26. La Confluence	Lyon	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
27. Lisbon Expo 1998	Lisbon	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
28. Athens Olympic Village	Athens	(Lobo, 2013)
29. Operacao Urbana Agua Branca	Sao Paulo	(Oakley & Johnson, 2011; Oakley & Rofo, 2005)
30. Port Adelaide Waterfront	Adelaide	(Majoer, 2009; Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
31. Ørestad	Copenhagen	(Fainstein, 2008)
32. Pacific Park (formerly Atlantic Yards)	New York	(Ponzini, 2013)
33. Rogoredo Santa Giulia	Milan	(Ponzini, 2013)
34. Saadyat Island	Abu Dhabi	(Suitner, 2015)
35. Seestadt	Vienna	(Fainstein, 2008)
36. Stratford City	London	(Swyngedouw et al., 2002)
37. Southbank	London	(Seguchi & Malone, 1996)
38. Tokyo Waterfront Subcenter	Tokyo	(Lehrer & Laidley, 2008)
39. Toronto Waterfront	Toronto	(Majoer, 2009)
40. Universal Forum	Barcelona	(Ponzini, 2013)
41. Yas Island	Abu Dhabi	(Fainstein, 2008; Majoer, 2009)
42. Zuidas	Amsterdam	

Table 3: Content analysis of literature on 42 mixed-use megaprojects in 20 countries.

Competitive Precinct Projects

approval authority, and project manager, as well as the property marketer and vendor for individual plots. The ØDC was also responsible for delivering and operating the entire 22-station metro system. Vesting this amount of power in one unelected body, and the process it managed, has been widely criticized for bypassing existing planning legislation, as being elite-driven, exclusionary, and reducing transparency and accountability (Book, Eskilsson, & Khan, 2010; Gaardmand, 1991; Majoor, 2008b; Swyngedouw et al., 2002).

Consistent Criticism 2: Global economic positioning and marketing toward a mobile elite prevailing over the concern of local issues.

Zuidas is Amsterdam's prime location, an urban hub with international allure. (Amsterdam Development Office, 2014)

Barangaroo is the future of Sydney. It is being created as a landmark for our economic future. (Barangaroo Delivery Authority, 2014)

CPPs are explicitly initiated and delivered within a narrative of intense international economic competition (Oakley & Johnson, 2012; Orueta & Fainstein, 2008) in which “competitive advantage” has become the mantra of city governance (Marshall, 2003). Governments eagerly promote their CPPs as “world standard” projects in their aspirations to connect into global economic networks and acquire a share of global wealth (Marshall, 2003; Min Joo, 2013; Olds, 2001). Urban megaprojects feature prominently in more than two decades of research on government-sponsored place marketing on a global scale (Bunnell, 2013).

Competing with the neoliberal pursuit of individualism, competitiveness, and economic self-sufficiency are domestic and increasingly common city-scale challenges such as access to affordable housing and economic opportunities. Goals to address these challenges are often articulated at the local, city, and state levels; however, the literature

argues that CPPs conflict with these goals and exacerbate social exclusion and marginalization via the restructuring that occurs through their land-use and transport prioritization patterns. This occurs under newly created powers that supersede existing plans, outlined in the previous consistent criticism, with the justification of project “exceptionality” (Grubbauer, 2013; Majoor, 2008a; Moulaert et al., 2003).

Lehrer and Laidley (2008) track Toronto's repositioning to a “competitive city” in the pursuit of global capital first by narrative—relabeling itself from “the city that works” to “the city that astonishes,” then regulatory—reconfiguring planning and investment regulations to become more globally attractive, and finally project led—launching the Toronto Waterfront CPP with the ambition to “generate economic activity early and establish the international presence of the city and its revitalization” (Lehrer & Laidley, 2008, p. 789).

The design and supporting narrative of CPPs enable this by being “made to travel” as products in a global market (Bunnell, 2013). A fundamental objective of CPPs is to attract national and international investors, high-profit commercial tenants, and affluent residents (Oakley & Rofo, 2005; Swyngedouw et al., 2002; Taşan-Kok, 2010). Imagery and narrative disseminated globally is a key component of this objective (King, 2004)

Consistent Criticism 3: Physically and socially self-contained, isolated, and disconnected from the context of the host city.

The literature commonly criticizes CPPs as being physically and socially self-contained, isolated, and disconnected from their context. Boundaries are formed between the new “project” and the surrounding communities. These boundaries may not take the form of gated communities, but access patterns, transport infrastructure, exclusive land uses, and public-domain design can set up clear socio-spatial demarcations

(Marshall, 2003; Rofo, 2010). Public land is privatized and the public is more heavily scrutinized than in other parts of the city by cameras and security guards with the power to control and remove members of the public (Boydell & Searle, 2014).

CPPs are commonly described as being physically unrelated to their surroundings. The historic identity, local qualities, and uniqueness of the location are not meaningfully taken into consideration in the design of these new city quarters (Fainstein, 2008; Oakley & Rofo, 2005). The prevailing condition that CPPs visually and socially depart from their surroundings is a logical and intentional outcome when considering their competitive objectives. A dramatic difference in form is perceived as a necessary component of CPPs in order to secure their intended global status and visibility, and to convey an image of regeneration and economic growth (Grubbauer, 2013; Ponzini, 2013; Sklair, 2013). This implies a distinctive form as well as a clear demarcation of the project in relation to the surrounding urban fabric.

“Starchitects” are virtually guaranteed a place on the agenda of CPPs. “World-renowned” architects are habitually brought in to “put the city on the map” with “iconic” buildings (Del Cerro, 2013b; Fainstein, 2008; Marshall, 2003; Taşan-Kok, 2010). Olds (2001) describes how governments accessorize their cities by actively seeking to acquire a trophy case of buildings from a select group of international architects. Parachuting global architects and their buildings are criticized as being detached from the dynamics, networks, and forms of the host city (Koolhaas, 1998; Lang, 2011).

Changes in demographics and urban form and character under urban-economic renewal have been thoroughly debated in the discourse of gentrification (Lees, Slater, & Wyly, 2010; Smith, 1996). Mixed-use megaprojects are frequently cited as symbols of gentrification, with links having been made between CPPs and intended, or at least

accepted, social dislocation (Del Cerro, 2013a; Fainstein, 2008; Marshall, 2003; Min Joo, 2013; Rofo, 2010; Shaw, 2014).

Consistent Criticism 4: Similar urban form regardless of the host city that encapsulates a narrow definition of urban life and culture.

Interviewer: “Are Australian cities getting this (sustainability of high density) message?”

Richard Rogers: “I have to be careful because I don’t know it (Sydney) well . . .”

Ivan Harbour: “We were very reluctant to get involved in a big way simply because we were at such a distance. . . . How do we know what is right for this place?” (Withnell, 2011, pp. 80–81)

Yet despite this distance and self-confessed lack of local knowledge, Rogers Stirk Harbour is the master planner of Sydney’s CPP Barangaroo and architects of its most dominant collection of towers. This architectural fly-in, fly-out process has been described as the continuation of a decontextualized and universal approach:

“In keeping with these modernist approaches to planning and design . . . architects such as Rogers, Perrault, Piano and Foster will accept work in cities and nations where they have little understanding of the social, cultural, political and economic context. They are firms that offer ‘universal’ solutions to universal problems—a pure modernist design ethos underlying monumental self-referential architecture.” (Olds, 2001, p. 150)

The literature consistently presents a picture of generic urban form and activity, arguing that these large projects lack idiosyncratic qualities, incidental activities, and pedestrian-scaled interaction. It appears the realization of CPPs represents an uncritical local manifestation of a global phenomenon that encapsulates a specific and narrow definition of urban life and culture (Marshall, 2003; Oakley & Rofo, 2005). The messiness of the city, difficult to control and market, is intentionally replaced by a

predictable “absent urbanism” that can be readily packaged and reliably sold to investors and incoming inhabitants (Marshall, 2003). The manufacture and presentation of a recognizable, internationalized image is perceived as crucial for cities to gain competitive advantage on the global stage (Zukin, 1992).

In Castells’ (1989) view of the Information Age the ease of which information can be disseminated has led to a tendency where different societies adopt the same ideas. The effectiveness of “competitive city” urban policy transfer has been questioned, particularly the mostly generic responses to the creative cities movement that has swept through North America, Europe, and the Asia-Pacific region (Hansen et al., 2001; Peck, 2005). The results, according to Fainstein (2010), are urban assemblages that bear striking physical similarity regardless of the host city.

Consistent Criticism 5: Minimal commitment to public benefit or socially just policies arising from a primary focus on profitability.

CPPs are widely criticized for their poor contributions to public benefit and social outcomes. The literature consistently reveals a primary focus on profitability that inevitably conflicts with socially just policies (Fainstein, 2008; Majoor, 2009; Sklair, 2013; Swyngedouw et al., 2002). CPPs are fundamentally geared toward high-income groups or potentially high-productivity-based economic activities (Marshall, 2003; Swyngedouw et al., 2002). In doing so, it is argued, CPPs not only avoid addressing social segmentation and exclusion, but they actively accentuate the problem. According to Oakley and Rofo (2005), the growing importance placed on the commodification and consumption of these urban landscapes undermines the potential for communities of diversity and difference to establish.

Oakley and Rofo (2005) observe that the governance transition from managerialism to entrepreneurialism has run parallel with governments’

push to repopulate inner-city areas. Swyngedouw, Moulaert, and Rodriguez (2002) describe this new competitive urban policy as “re-centering” whereby inner-city development is primarily geared toward investors, developers, businesspeople, and wealthy tourists whom they group collectively as “outsiders,” as opposed to established residents and communities. The degree to which cities pursue this strategy through explicit policy is debatable, but certainly for CPPs the literature is strikingly united in suggesting that today’s large urban projects are consumption oriented in a quest to attract mobile capital (Del Cerro, 2013b; Oakley & Rofo, 2005; Siemiatycki, 2013).

The result is an inherent tension between the desire to accumulate capital and social justice (Fainstein, 2010). Nevertheless, the provision of urban infrastructures and the amenities required by service sectors are seen by public agencies as a crucial factor to enhance the competitiveness of cities (Beauregard, 2005). Investment is being funneled into developments that are intended to enable and increase consumption economies with a focus on high-end residential, office, and retail projects—those with the greater anticipated financial return.

The Missed Opportunities of CPPs

Large government-owned sites with spatially high strategic relationships present exceptional opportunities at the city scale for at least three reasons: (1) They offer significant housing and employment opportunities in areas that are already connected, or relatively easily connected, to existing transportation networks, city functions, communities, and amenities; (2) they create enormous increases in land value through rezoning, most often from heavy industry to residential and commercial; and (3) they offer opportunities for coordination with other major government assets or strategic projects that can achieve benefits greater than any one

Competitive Precinct Projects

project can achieve in isolation. As the land owner and approval authority, government can set, and clearly articulate, the goals and the rules of these projects: their composition, their intended benefits, and their strategic relationships. However, according to the literature, they are commonly non transparently guided by powerful actors, often outside of government; have narrowly focused outcomes; and demonstrate a significant transfer of wealth from public to private interests with unclear public or strategic benefits at the city scale.

This review of mixed-use megaprojects expands on Flyvbjerg's (2005) extensive study on infrastructural megaprojects and risk in which hundreds of projects in more than 20 countries were reviewed. Flyvbjerg concluded that it is not the most feasible projects that get built, but rather "those projects for which proponents best succeed in conjuring a fantasy world of underestimated costs, overestimated revenues, undervalued environmental impacts and overvalued regional development effects" (Flyvbjerg, 2005, p. 18).

Considering the strategic opportunities presented by these sites, this review demonstrates an alarmingly poor track record of projects realizing their city-scale potential. The five consistent criticisms demand a reevaluation of this model of development, calling into question the objectives, planning processes, and delivery methods of these projects.

Alternative Directions of CPPs

Accepting that mixed-use megaprojects, and CPPs, will continue to occur, there is a pressing need to identify alternative directions that can deliver broader-based city-scale benefits. Two processes respond to the call for a reevaluation of CPPs. First is a framework for overcoming the five consistent criticisms. This would require contextual specificity, both regulatory and spatial; however, each project's framework would need to articulate principles aimed at overcoming each consistent criticism. Critically, monitoring and accountability practices

for each principle would need to be established before project commencement to ensure that they are pursued diligently throughout the project's delivery period. Second, a finer and more contextual evaluation of the variances and hybridity of existing CPPs is required to demonstrate potential directions. The remainder of this article begins this process.

Much like practices of neoliberal globalization, a more nuanced examination of CPPs reveals divergent ideologies, practices, and outcomes. Although the literature favors criticism, there are examples of CPPs where broader benefits have been achieved, pairing international economic positioning with wealth distribution strategies. These show traces of a Keynesian state model, aiming to "counter the cycles and damaging effects of the market, to ensure collective 'well-fare' and to reduce inequalities" (Wacquant, 2001, p. 82).

Two areas offer perhaps the most transferable opportunities, which will be further expanded. They are (1) housing, where significant portions of residential floor space is dedicated to affordable housing; and (2) transport, where the site's rezoned land value is leveraged to finance public transport infrastructure for other parts of the city, as well as for the project itself.

It should also be acknowledged that there are mixed-use megaprojects that forgo global positioning altogether and demonstrate a high degree of community participation, such as Vauban in Freiburg (Schroepfer & Hee, 2006), or that reflect a city's commitment to realizing long-term environmental sustainability policies, such as Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm (Pandis Iveroth et al., 2013). These projects represent a minority of examples among more neoliberal-oriented development practices, but they still offer hybridization opportunities for future CPPs.

Housing

As discussed, city growth and internationalized markets under neoliberalism

have resulted in growing socioeconomic spatial polarization. Many mixed-use megaprojects, including those that fit neatly into the CPP definition, seek to counter this polarization by committing a significant amount of the residential floor space of the project to affordable housing. In fact, an affordable housing provision appears to be the strongest consistent public benefit of mixed-use megaprojects by global standards. This commitment counteracts consistent criticism 2: Global economic positioning and marketing toward a globally mobile elite prevailing over the concern of local issues, and consistent criticism 5: Minimal commitment to public benefit or socially just policies arising from a primary focus on profitability.

Table 4 shows a range of affordable housing provisions in recent mixed-use megaprojects, from 60% to 0%. Some CPPs are meeting their goals, such as Ørestad in Copenhagen and Zuidas in Amsterdam. Others are experiencing uncertainty in the design and construction phase. Some affordable housing goals are legally binding, such as Pacific Park in New York with its Community Benefits Agreement (Atlantic Yards Development Co. LLC, 2005). Others rely on the will and ability of the delivery authority to enforce. Some CPPs remain uncommitted to housing affordability, despite being developed on government-owned land in cities with acute housing affordability challenges, such as Barangaroo in Sydney or Docklands in Melbourne.

Public Transport

An example of leveraging a CPP to finance public transport infrastructure for the city can be found in Ørestad, Copenhagen. This 310-hectare CPP was conceptualized in the late 1980s with the dual objectives of financing a new, two-line, 22-station metro from the sale of serviced land on a plot-by-plot basis and providing the City of Copenhagen with a strategic location that would attract international companies. The metro was constructed first to increase

Project	City	Affordable Housing	Area (ha)
Hunters Point	New York, United States	60%	17
Pacific Park	New York, United States	50%	9
La Confluence	Lyon, France	48% ¹	150
Greenwich Peninsular	London, United Kingdom	38%	19.4
Stratford City	London, United Kingdom	35%	73
HafenCity	Hamburg, Germany	33% ²	157
Zuidas	Amsterdam, Netherlands	30% ³	270
Kop van Zuid	Rotterdam, Netherlands	30%	125
Mission Bay	San Francisco, United States	28%	122
Hudson Yards	New York, United States	25%	11
Nordhavn	Copenhagen, Denmark	20%	360
Ørestad	Copenhagen, Denmark	20%	310
Green Square	Sydney, Australia	3%	278
Barangaroo	Sydney, Australia	2.3%	22
Docklands	Melbourne, Australia	1.84% ⁴	146
Hammarby Sjöstad	Stockholm, Sweden	0%	160
Wynyard Quarter	Auckland, New Zealand	0%	37

¹48% consists of 17% assisted family housing, 11% “medium”-level housing, and 20% social housing.

²HafenCity began in the late 1990s with no affordable housing provision under a conservative senate. When the Social Democrats came into power, they introduced a target of 33%, with construction beginning on the first affordable dwellings in 2014 (Menzl, 2014).

³It has been noted that although it is considered high elsewhere, 30% is a low rate for Amsterdam (Fainstein, 2008).

⁴Figure calculated from current affordable housing residents of 184 and current total population of 10,000. The final Docklands population will be 20,000. If no additional affordable housing is built by completion, the rate will be 0.92%.

Table 4: Global comparison of committed affordable housing in mixed-use megaprojects.

the land sale revenue with which to repay the state loans for upfront construction costs (Knowles, 2012).

Value capture mechanisms such as this can be contextually targeted to finance local infrastructural deficits. A particular benefit of financing public transport as part of the megaproject above other options is the additional increase in land value generated by the site’s new connectivity. This additional revenue can help repay loans faster or extend the transport line farther, as was the case with Ørestad, where revenue was expected to be high enough that the lines could extend six stations past the city center into the neighboring municipality of Frederiksberg (Danish Ministry of Finance, 1992).

Ørestad and the metro were part of a series of large, linked infrastructural investments aimed at steering the city away from near bankruptcy toward an internationally competitive city that would act as the “growth locomotive” for the nation (Andersen, 2003). In addition to Ørestad and the metro, a road and rail bridge/tunnel was constructed between Copenhagen and the Swedish city of Malmö, greatly increasing the catchment of Copenhagen Airport, which was expanded as one of the linked projects.

The period in Denmark during which Ørestad was conceived is referred to as marking a decisive shift from a redistributive, welfare-oriented perspective to embracing outward-looking entrepreneurial policies (Andersen &

Jørgensen, 1995). The governance methods of this CPP have been criticized as circumventing planning frameworks and lacking transparency (Andersen, 2003) and the public domain as severely lacking activity (Majoer, 2008b). However, within this new entrepreneurial approach, there remained core elements of redistributive policies such as the metro financing model and a 20% affordable housing component, matching the nationwide share. The metro was conceived as a means to modernize the city and make it—and particularly Ørestad—attractive for international companies; however, most of its users reside outside of Ørestad—the site that paid for its construction. The strategic relationships between major projects and the spread of benefits demonstrate high-level city- and regional-scale land-use and transport coordination. This metro planning and financing strategy counteracts consistent criticism 2: Global economic positioning and marketing toward a globally mobile elite prevailing over the concern of local issues; consistent criticism 3: Physically and socially self-contained, isolated, and disconnected from the context of the host city; and consistent criticism 5: Minimal commitment to public benefit or socially just policies arising from a primary focus on profitability.

Mutual Benefits of CPPs?

CPPs are primarily predicated on their potential to attract companies and workers of knowledge-based industries and provide employment growth. They overwhelmingly do so by offering specialized, high-end, exclusive urban environments. However, evidence suggests that the scale of specialization of conventional CPPs is less important in affecting employment growth than diversity in industry type and size (Andersson, Quigley, & Wilhelmsson, 2005; Glaeser, Kallal, Scheinkman, & Shleifer, 1992; Porter, 1998). Additionally, empirical research shows that the residential preferences of those within knowledge industries are weighted toward affordable housing and efficient public transport (Lawton,

Competitive Precinct Projects

Murphy, & Redmond, 2013). More simply put, the same city-scale issues matter to both “knowledge workers” and “non-knowledge workers” as well as long-term residents and recent arrivals. There are various urban qualities that increase the attractiveness of a city, for living and investment. However, the five consistent criticisms demonstrate that CPPs are commonly narrow in focus, both in employment growth and social opportunities. Despite the rhetoric of innovation, the similarities in these projects indicate that they are far from innovative urban responses to global economic competitiveness.

Globalization and CPPs are both part of continually evolving sets of interrelated processes. Globalization does not move of its own accord; it is the direct result of consciously coordinated human actions that navigate and materialize within particular locations. Similarly, each CPP is planned and delivered in a contextual milieu. Those CPPs that deliver demonstrable public benefit indicate that this development model does not have to be bound to a particular outcome in which the socioeconomic polarizing project of neoliberal globalization is accepted and perpetuated. Strategies that attempt to diversify the social groups who live in, work in, and visit these new city precincts indicate that a more inclusive approach to planning can occur within the type while still being premised on attracting investment and city competitiveness.

However, it needs to be repeated that these examples represent a minority of cases. The typical outcomes that have been consistently criticized represent patterns that have endured within a globally active development model for over three decades. The range of city-scale opportunities these projects present are exceptional and potentially highly impactful, yet they are only being realized as exceptions to the rule.

This article has set out to define a megaproject type in order to better understand the emergence and continuation of a particular method of

large-scale urban development. The five consistent criticisms of these projects reveal major systemic faults with their delivery processes and built outcomes. By extending the critical review with identification and illustration of the less acknowledged inclusive planning mechanisms within some projects, this article hopes to contribute to a shift toward CPPs achieving broader-based city-scale goals.

Acknowledging the global commonalities and understanding these projects as a type means admitting that they are not as unique as the competitive city narrative on which these projects are often founded suggests. This acknowledgment would be the first step in working through how this major urban development type would be most effectively appropriated to unique conditions in order to overcome the five consistent criticisms.

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