

Tatjana Blum

# **COLLABORATIVE EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITY-BASED INITIATIVES AND MUNICIPALITIES**

A case study of community gardening in Tampere,  
Finland

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# ABSTRACT

Tatjana Blum: Collaborative experiences of community-based initiatives and municipalities – A case study of community gardening in Tampere, Finland

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In times of rising awareness of the need for climate change adaptation and, more so, a need for our societies to undergo a fundamental sustainability transition, polycentric governance, i.e., the practice of involving various actors and different spheres of society in policy making and implementation, has gained momentum. Community-based initiatives (CBIs) are receiving increased attention since they constitute a bottom-up approach to climate change adaptation and sustainability. However, CBIs' relationships with local governments and municipalities have been known to be burdened by a variety of factors. A type of CBI which contributes to sustainability transitions in cities in manifold ways is urban community gardening. Like CBIs generally, urban community gardeners' relations with local public authorities may take any form between collaborative and mutually opposing.

This thesis features a case study on the collaborative relationship between community gardening initiatives in Tampere, Finland and the municipal administration, the City of Tampere. Based on literature on cross-sector collaboration in the Public Administration as well as literature on CBIs' experiences in collaborating with public authorities, the relationship between urban community gardens and the City of Tampere is explored guided by the following criteria: accountability, legitimacy, trust, power, shared vision/goals, joint responsibility and support & motivation. Data was generated through semi-structured in-depth interviews with seven (7) community gardeners from five (5) subcases (urban community gardens in Tampere), an additional e-mail interview with a community gardener, four (4) e-mail interviews with individuals involved in the governance of urban community gardens from the municipality's side, four (4) municipal policy documents and four (4) related websites. Code-based qualitative content analysis was employed to analyse the data according to previously identified criteria for success in public-sector - CBI collaboration.

The findings of this study display a diversity of experiences and views among community gardeners with respect to the City of Tampere. Despite great variety in the data, community gardeners and the city administration alike favour collaboration with each other. However, the former are subject to challenges common to urban community gardeners. A vital shortcoming of the present collaborations is the lack of continuous long-term relations. This causes, for instance, uncertainties about gardening on temporarily accessible municipal land. This thesis contributes to the broad literature on CBIs for climate change adaptation and sustainability, as well as the body of knowledge on urban community gardens. It depicts the multi-faceted relationship between a local urban CBI-niche and its municipality and reveals barriers to collaboration which are potentially unknown to the City of Tampere. Lastly, drawing from citizen hybrid governance research in the Finnish context, this thesis provides recommendations for the City of Tampere to embrace CBIs and especially urban community gardens in public service delivery regarding urban sustainability.

**Keywords:** community-based initiatives, urban community gardening, collaboration, collaborative relationship, municipality, co-creation, co-production, qualitative content analysis, climate change adaptation, sustainability transition, governance

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Climate change adaptation and sustainability transition

In recent decades, the impacts which humanity has had on the Earth have become visible globally (Aguiar et al., 2018). Specifically, the Earth system has undergone profound changes regarding ice cover, sea level, species distribution and extreme events due to climate change and other environmental changes (IPCC, 2014). Major sectors of human activity impacting the environment negatively are, for instance, energy production based on fossil fuels, industrial activity, agriculture and forestry (Government of Canada, 2019). It is widely known that unless global action is taken to reduce such harmful activities, most importantly the emission of greenhouse gases, entire ecosystems will face collapse (Dunne, 2020).

The awareness that especially climate change threatens both natural ecosystems and human security caused an increase in research, planning and practice concerning *adaptation* (Aguiar et al., 2018). The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s emphasis on adaptation as an imperative for industrialised and industrialising countries alike is seen as a major contributor to a changing focus towards adaptation; especially in regions which previously had been less concerned with adaptation to climate change, e.g., Europe and the EU (Remling, 2018). While the meanings of the term adaptation vary, the IPCC defines it as “the process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects” (IPCC, 2014). The focus of this definition lies on reducing vulnerability to current and future change, as well as enhancing adaptive capacity (Aguiar et al., 2018). Earlier literature on climate change, similarly, identified vulnerability, adaptive capacity and resilience as core components of adaptation (see McNamara & Buggy, 2017).

Climate change adaptation is often mentioned along with the terms *societal* or *sustainability transition* (e.g., Kabisch et al., 2017; Campos et al., 2016) and *societal transformation* (e.g., Amundsen et al., 2018). In a variety of research approaches, transition and transformation are seemingly used interchangeably to describe a radical, non-linear and structural change in a system (Hölscher et al., 2018). Although there are differences in the etymological meanings of the two concepts, the use of either transition or transformation is due to the different research communities employing either of these terms. Essentially, both terms are founded on the

normative notion that present-day societal systems are unsustainable, implying a desire for a transition and transformation with a collectively defined sustainability orientation. (Hölscher et al., 2018) In the following, the terms societal/sustainability transition and transformation will be employed associated with (local) action for climate change adaptation and other sustainability goals.

## 1.2. Critique of existing approaches

Pursuing a global goal of building resilience and adaptation to climate change, governments and practitioners rushed to implement a variety of impact-based initiatives. Yet, many of these have been criticised as techno-centric ‘command and control’ approaches and blamed for maladaptation and negative externalities. (McNamara & Buggy, 2017) Maladaptation may occur when long-term adaptation goals conflict with short-term development priorities, for instance, when economic growth relies on climate sensitive resources, failing to consider the impacts of climate change (Ayers & Dodman, 2010). Also, early top-down adaptation approaches often implicitly assumed that adaptation technology and knowledge are the single most relevant factors. This thinking, however, neglects communities’ de facto access, ability and willingness to acquire them - and hence insufficiently deals with local socio-economic circumstances (van Aalst et al., 2008). Furthermore, the EU developed an adaptation strategy and launched several projects to promote climate change adaptation; however, these did not necessarily lead to increased adaptive capacities in the targeted cities because of the ineffective use of EU funds (Hartmann & Spit, 2015).

According to Amundsen et al. (2018), traditional top-down approaches to adaptation are typically based on international agreements which are to be executed by national governments resulting in obligations for local government levels. An explanation for this early path to adaptation is that Climate Change was framed as a global environmental pollution problem and future scenarios were derived from Global Climate Models (van Aalst, Cannon and Burton, 2008). In contrast to this, the Paris Agreement emphasised the importance of engaging all levels of government and a variety of actors in tackling climate change (UNFCCC, 2015 in Amundsen et al., 2018). Climate Change impacts are known to depend on many variables in addition to environmental pollution (van Aalst, Cannon and Burton, 2008). Localised adaptation action has been on the rise due to the recognition of the various local impacts of climate change as well as the limits of large-scale approaches to adaptation (Aguilar et al., 2018). Within the EU and EFTA, for instance, at minimum 147 local adaptation strategies could be identified by 2018.

As opposed to national, top-down strategies, local authorities oversee public functions that are essential to adaptation, such as the regulation of land use or infrastructure protection. Likewise, local decision makers have a more direct access to knowledge about place-specific vulnerabilities making them more qualified to cater for the needs of local communities. (Aguilar et al., 2018)

### 1.3. Participation of multiple actors in local governance

Many authors have identified the necessity of a polycentric, multi-actor system in which actors on different levels and from different sectors complement each other in addressing climate change. In addition to strengthening the transformative capacity of cities and communities, actors at sub-international levels may trigger international regimes to be more active by initiating a change toward lower greenhouse gas emissions (Amundsen et al., 2018). Newig and Fritsch's (2009) analysis suggests that a highly polycentric governance system with many agencies tends to yield higher environmental policy outputs than monocentric governance. Recent research at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment suggests that combining insights from future-oriented top-down approaches to adaptation and bottom-up assessments based more in the present can generate a holistic picture of climate risks and potential local responses (Conway & Curran, 2019, see also Conway et al., 2019). Achieving this understanding, it is argued, requires partnerships between policy makers, modellers and representatives from business and local communities (Conway & Curran, 2019). For Frantzeskaki and Rok (2018), sustainability transitions in themselves are multi-actor processes. Examining the functions of what they refer to as multi-stakeholder engagement spaces, the authors advocate for the co-creation between local governments and community initiatives in urban sustainability transitions.

Hence, another strategy to respond to the ineffectiveness of environmental policies in Europe and elsewhere is to enhance the participation of non-state actors in environmental decision-making (Newig & Fritsch, 2009). In line with the increased focus on local adaptation, as well as the inclusion of various stakeholders in multi-actor governance spaces, policymakers, as well as researchers, practitioners and donor agencies concerned with climate change adaptation have shifted their focus to community-based approaches to sustainability and adaptation (see McNamara & Buggy, 2017). Whereas so-called techno-centric approaches have been criticised as inadequate for addressing elementary social, economic, political and environmental

circumstances in early literature already, bottom-up community approaches have been considered more likely to ensure practical approaches built upon existing knowledge, capabilities and the context of the community. (McNamara & Buggy, 2017)

#### 1.4. Community-based initiatives for adaptation and sustainability

More recently, community-based initiatives (CBIs) have been known to cover a range of social, economic, and/or environmental sustainability goals, such as community autonomy, environmental protection or community-based energy projects (Fischer et al., 2017). The European Network for Community-Led Initiatives on Climate Change and Sustainability (ECOLISE) describes community initiatives as self-organised activities in which people get active concerning a sustainability issue – whether local or global in scale – on a local level (Penha-Lopes & Henfrey, 2019). Concrete examples of such CBIs are community-run food cooperatives, sustainability student organisations, social-cultural centres or non-profit repair cafés (Fischer et al., 2017). It is important to note that the size of what is considered a CBI can vary significantly: whereas some initiatives might only consist of a handful of active individuals, others evolve into whole sustainable neighbourhoods or towns (see e.g., the Ecobairro in São Paulo or the various examples of Transition Towns in Macedo et al., 2020)

Prominently, CBIs have been researched as drivers of social innovation and explored in the context of Strategic niche management<sup>1</sup> (e.g., Seyfang & Smith, 2007) along with the role of civil society in governing sustainability transitions (Seyfang & Haxeltine, 2012). Such bottom-up CBIs are considered to have a potentially high impact, modelling what exemplary socially just and environmentally sustainable societies could look like (Penha-Lopes & Henfrey, 2019). Despite their vital role in leading societal transitions to sustainability, CBIs regularly face a number of difficulties, ranging from smaller, practical issues to general tensions between the self-organising community and the wider political regime including the policy landscape (Celata & Coletti, 2018a).

In this thesis, CBIs may also be referred to as grassroots initiatives, civil society-led organisations or – quite broadly – citizen activities. The members of CBIs will be referred to also as community actives or activists. The reason for this stems from the different vocabulary

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<sup>1</sup> SNM is an approach designed to initiate and diffuse new sustainable technologies through protected societal experiments (Caniëls & Romijn, 2008).

used by different authors when, essentially, they all refer to the same phenomenon and group of people.

### 1.5. Research purpose, aim and research question

The inspiration for this thesis came in part from a research project called “Municipalities in Transition” (MiT)<sup>2</sup>. Started in 2017 and run by the Transition Network and Transition Hubs Group<sup>3</sup>, it is based on the assumption that a great potential for sustainability transformation rests in the joint action between local authorities and civil society. One component of the project was the development of a framework to improve existing local ‘collaborative transformations’, i.e., potentially fruitful collaborations between municipalities and CBIs (Macedo et al., 2020). Among other literature, elements of this framework will inform the theoretical part of this thesis.<sup>4</sup> Beyond the research component of Municipalities in Transition, the project also aims to bring the various experiences of its case-study CBIs together so community initiatives can learn from and help each other in starting their own journey towards a more sustainable future in collaboration with their local municipalities (Municipalities in Transition, n.d.).

This thesis, likewise, intends to contribute to the pool of knowledge on community-based initiatives for sustainability transition and/or climate change adaptation, especially with respect to the relationships between such CBIs and public-sector organisations, i. e., local governments and municipal authorities. Influenced by the ambitions of the Municipalities in Transition research project to create practical knowledge for CBIs in their collaboration with municipalities and to promote collaboration between sustainability initiatives and public-sector agents (see Macedo et al., 2020), this thesis explores CBI and municipal collaboration in the context of Tampere, Finland. Specifically, a case study of community gardening initiatives, a type of CBI which combines various aspects of sustainability and climate change adaptation, is

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<sup>2</sup> Municipalities in Transition research project: <https://municipalitiesintransition.org/>

<sup>3</sup> The Transition Network is the official network of Transition Initiatives around the globe. Transition Initiatives exist in places where a community-led process seeks to make a town or neighbourhood stronger, happier and more resilient. A Transition Initiative usually engages in projects of sustainable and local food production, transport, energy and education. (Penha-Lopes & Henfrey, 2019)

Whilst the Transition Network functions at a global level, at the local level there are the core teams of local initiatives and in between them are the National and Regional Hubs. The latter form together the Transition Hubs Groups. (Transition Network, 2020)

<sup>4</sup> In brief, the framework for collaborations between CBIs and the public sector in pursuit of sustainability contains four dimensions termed co-creation, mutual support, co-production and open innovation. Some of these concepts will be explained further below.

conducted to outline the relationship between community activists and the City of Tampere in a concrete context.

To generate knowledge on the topic as described above, the central research question of this thesis is:

**RQ: How can the collaboration between the City of Tampere and community gardening initiatives as a type of community-based sustainability initiatives in Tampere be characterized?**

**With respect to the following features of collaboration: accountability, legitimacy, trust, power, shared vision/goals, joint responsibility and support & motivation.**

The following chapter will contain a literature review, presenting the emergence and young history of CBIs committed to climate change adaptation and/or sustainability transitions in more detail. Additionally, it will cover the challenges of CBIs in public-sector relationships generally and, more explicitly, the role of urban gardening for climate change adaptation and CBI activism as well as the experiences of community-led gardening initiatives in urban spaces. In the chapters after this, the framework for assessing the features of collaboration between urban community gardens in Tampere and the municipality will be developed.

## 2. Community-based initiatives for sustainability

### 2.1. CBIs in recent academic literature

According to an extensive review of academic literature on the emergence of community-based initiatives for climate change adaptation by McNamara and Buggy (2016), CBIs emerged in the scientific literature around the 2000s. As already mentioned above, community-based adaptation arose partly in a search for alternatives to top-down techno-centric approaches – more precisely, a perceived need to bridge the gap between top-down and bottom-up approaches to adaptation.

Another factor was the recognition of local knowledge, as well as the social dimension of climate impacts. The latter entails defining vulnerability, resilience and adaptive capacity – the key components of adaptation in early research – in relation to communities, households and individuals, in particular poor and marginalised ones. Many authors identified the goal congruence of adaptation in particular and sustainable development more broadly (see Schipper, 2007; Ayers & Forsyth, 2009; Ensor & Berger 2009 and Heltberg et al. 2009 in McNamara & Buggy, 2016), especially the importance of reducing poverty so as to increase adaptive capacity. As for the value of local knowledge, a number of case studies on communities were conducted in the early days of CBI research to analyse local actions countering environmental precarities (see e.g., Roncoli et al., 2001; Pelling, 2002 and Smit & Skinner, 2002 in McNamara & Buggy, 2016). These resulted in the reiterative argument that local expertise should become an integral part of the Western scientific understanding of climate change. (McNamara & Buggy, 2016)

Later publications on community-based adaptation, mainly from 2010 onwards, identify “key enablers” (McNamara & Buggy, 2016, p. 448); one of these contains participatory research approaches to support community practitioners in establishing effective adaptation. When local people are given agency in conceptualising change, adaptation activities are more likely to focus on community needs and priorities and are considered more effective and accepted. Moreover, participatory tools have proven to build awareness and understanding of climate change impacts among affected communities. Yet, authors have stressed that participatory approaches require more than mere consultations, but a continuous involvement of local stakeholders in adaptation

projects (see Smit & Wandel, 2006 Kwiatkowski, 2011 and Bele et al., 2013 in McNamara & Buggy, 2016). With respect to the role of participatory approaches in power shifts from top-down leadership to bottom-up responsibility, McNamara & Buggy determine social processes in socio-political contexts as another enabler of CBI adaptation. (McNamara & Buggy, 2016)

More precisely, the authors name social capital and cohesion, as well as collective problem solving as key factors for the success of community-based adaptation. Whereas these collective approaches may defy and change political and social structures as well as reduce vulnerability of the community, power imbalances *within* the community must not be overlooked: vulnerability is also linked to wealth, access to resources, networks and education. Community-based action can disempower parts of the community when more powerful members of the community enforce their interests to the disadvantage of more vulnerable members. Socio-political context thus matters in community-based adaptation and CBIs themselves are no panacea for climate change adaptation. (McNamara & Buggy, 2016)

Holstead et al.'s (2017) research similarly explores CBIs as socially dynamic spaces by examining conflicting rationalities and tensions within CBIs and CBI niches concerned with sustainability transitions. Their findings show that incompatible views which typically create tensions within a community initiative often relate to 1) the degree of politicisation, 2) the priority of financial goals and 3) the organisational form. They conclude that in order to understand and research community-led sustainability transitions, CBIs need to be acknowledged as inherently pluralistic places of struggle. Eventually, the authors admit that the observed tensions can be an opportunity or a risk for the not seldom perilous existence of a CBI. (Holstead et al., 2017) Some of these internal CBI conflicts also manifest in or originate from the relationship between CBIs and public-sector officials. Financing issues and a CBI's legal form, for instance, go hand in hand as the following section will show.

## 2.2. CBIs' role in urban sustainability transitions

Frantzeskaki et al.'s (2016) review covering various case studies conducted mostly within European research projects deducts three main functions which civil society – of which CBIs as more or less organised groups of citizens are part – can adopt regarding urban sustainability transitions. Firstly, when pioneering new practices which can inspire other actors - policy makers, for instance – civil society agents act as *drivers of sustainability transformations*. Secondly, in situations where civil society compensates for the absence of a (retreating) welfare

state, the authors describe CBIs' role as *safeguard and self-servicing actor of social needs and resolving social conflicts*. Thirdly, civil-society groups can act as *disconnected innovators* in cases in which initiatives contribute to sustainability but are disconnected from the rest of society.

Concerning the first role, civil society is argued to adopt the role of changing societal beliefs and values to more sustainable ones. Most importantly, CBIs possess local knowledge (see Kelly & Adger, 2000 in McNamara & Buggy, 2016), flexibility and capacity for contributions to environmental sustainability. Their success can lead to proof-of-concept for new market forms (e.g., shared economy or alternative currencies) and therefore potentially drive a transition. As for the safeguarding function of civil society, local communities can counterbalance the effects of neoliberal policies and sustain democratic processes, representing the citizens' voice. Lastly, as a disconnected innovator, civil society initiatives may deliberately stay 'below the radar' when perceiving that exposure will drain resources or threaten the founding mission. (Frantzeskaki et al.'s, 2016)

For all these three roles, the authors point to challenges, many of which will be recurrent in this thesis. One central one, affecting especially the second function, is the concern of reinforcing the retreat of the welfare state (see e.g., Thörn & Svenberg, 2016) by compensating for its increased absence which may also overburden the CBI. This issue may be summarised as a risk of co-optation in which consequence CBIs are used to strengthen neoliberal narratives of the need for a reduced 'small government' (see also Blanco et al., 2014; Rodríguez & Di Virgilio, 2016). Also, by relying on civil society to take over service delivery, social inequalities between and within communities may deepen (see Burton et al., 2002; Smit & Wandel, 2006 and Ribot, 2014 in McNamara & Buggy, 2016). (Frantzeskaki et al., 2016)

### 2.3. Challenges in public-sector relationships

According to some studies, collaboration between local governments and CBIs occurs in only approximately half of the cases where local sustainability strategies are present (Macedo et al., 2020). This is a consequence of the obstacles with which CBIs are commonly confronted, especially with respect to public-sector relations, as documented in the literature. A body of literature exists on both the enabling and constraining role of public institutions for grassroots initiatives in a variety of domains (see Celata & Coletti, 2018a). Ideally, policymakers should

endorse initiatives which serve a public interest, provide services and benefits to the community and generally strive for a just and sustainable future. Indeed, CBIs are frequently supported by public policies through funding and economic incentives, agreements and collaborations as well as the adaptation of regulations. Yet, political officials also show ambivalent behaviours towards local movements – and collaboration is not necessarily the rule, as indicated above (see Macedo et al., 2020). For instance, forms of selectiveness and exclusion have been observed in situations where policymakers prefer certain types of community approaches over others, e.g., based on the size or organisational form of the initiative. (Celata & Coletti, 2018a)

### 2.3.1. Funding arrangements of CBIs

Funding schemes, in particular, are essential for the survival of CBIs; however, there are challenges related to the short-term logics of external funding agencies (McNamara & Buggy, 2016). McClymont Peace and Myers (2012), for instance, found that a community-based participatory research programme in Canada suffered from the fact that funding was limited to a single year at a time. Due to a delay in approving funding across all projects in the programme, many communities could not collect their data as expected, resulting in a compromised research outcome. A multi-year funding arrangement would eliminate this very problem and was therefore identified to be more suitable for the programme. (McClymont Peace & Myers, 2012) These findings are in line with Seyfang & Smith (2008) noting the challenge of short-term funding frameworks which often are imposed by funders instead of being responsive to CBIs' development. What is more, McNamara & Buggy (2016) conclude that a combination of funding opportunities, i.e., financing from local governments, NGOs and international sources is necessary.

Exploring CBIs and funding arrangements in Scotland, Dinnie and Holstead (2018) found that the latter are based on principles of management – evidence, impact and standardisation – which are at odds with democratically-run, deliberative and process-oriented grassroots. Favouring initiatives with appropriate organisational forms and capacities, the accountability mechanisms of public funding hence require and produce a certain type of community movement (Dinnie & Holstead, 2018). Not unlike the problem of public funding, acquiring and maintaining a legal status may be challenging for CBIs (Becker et al., 2018). As Becker et al. investigate with a focus on initiatives in Berlin, the adoption of an appropriate legal form makes communities subject to isomorphic pressure. Concluding that this exemplifies how regimes enforce barriers to community innovations through resource dependency, the authors describe CBI strategies to

resist and overcome this pressure via internal agreements, umbrella organisations and the use of social capital. (Becker et al., 2018)

### 2.3.2. Political struggles and the fear of co-optation

Furthermore, the attitude of CBIs towards public institutions is often problematic due to the goals and political orientation of the movements. On the one hand, many initiatives seek collaboration with local and even national or international authorities – such as national innovation funds or UN programmes promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – for practical and financial reasons, as well as for the sake of spreading alternative practice and influencing other actors. On the other hand, some CBIs follow an agenda of self-sufficiency. (Celata & Coletti, 2018a)

As these movements usually emerge in response to an unsustainable situation which governments failed to avoid or react to through adequate public service delivery, there are two common barriers to collaboration: First, local government representatives are likely to act defensively, especially when blamed for past or present action by the city administration, and second, initiatives generally fear a risk of being co-opted when developing relations with more powerful actors (Frantzeskaki & Rok, 2018). Consequently, Frantzeskaki and Rok (2018) identify the need to build trust between CBIs and local policymakers.

Related to this, Henfrey and Penha-Lopes (2018) note the general paradox that CBIs operate within the very structures they seek to change.<sup>5</sup> Adding to Frantzeskaki & Rok's (2018) mention of CBIs' fear of co-optation, they outline transition initiatives as niche actors at the margins of incumbent regimes. Therefore, they argue, governments – as regime actors – are unlikely to support CBIs unless it helps advance their policy goals. Reluctant to embrace radical policy reforms and structural changes - as often advocated by CBIs - governments may limit their political support to rhetoric or cosmetic mitigation of deficiencies in climate and sustainability policies. (Henfrey & Penha-Lopes, 2018) In this case, collaborative movements may be accused of supporting the neo-liberal agenda when community activism compensates for the absence of adequate policies (Celata & Coletti, 2018a; see Frantzeskaki et al., 2016). To minimise the risk

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<sup>5</sup> Henfrey & Penha-Lopes's (2018) argument concerning the contradictory relationship between CBIs and the societal structures they are situated in is similarly found in Siegrist and Thörn's (2020) article on heterotopias and critical urban theory. These authors reach the conclusion that their case -study site which sought to resist neoliberal urbanism was vulnerable to the same processes it meant to challenge due to its openness; hence, it may disrupt but also – paradoxically – enforce neoliberal urbanism.

of co-optation, CBIs need to become an ‘empowered niche’, leveraging the gaps between political rhetoric and action in a disruptive but conciliatory manner (Henfrey & Penha Lopes, 2018).

With respect to community gardening in urban spaces, Celata & Coletti (2018b) deduct from existing literature that the relationship between urban gardeners and policy makers can take any form between more collaborative and mutually opposing. Administrative and political limitations have been known to constrain the development of community gardens – even in situations where policies are designed to promote them: Celata & Coletti’s research on community gardening in the city of Rome demonstrates how a policy scheme meant to encourage gardening initiatives paradoxically resulted in constricting gardening activism and in creating a type of “policing”. Echoing the issue of co-optation, the authors also contrast how in Rome, community gardening has been framed positively by left and right-wing city governments alike. Eventually, they highlight the risk of community gardening activism being exploited as a low-cost venue for social and environmental urban policy goals in an era of austerity and neoliberalism. (Celata & Coletti, 2018b)

The table below summarises the reviewed literature and its authors, i.e., the challenges and limitations CBIs often face when engaging in relationships with governments or administrative bodies.

Challenging factors in public-sector relations	Authors
Conflicts of fundamental values: CBIs as <b>niche-actors</b> seek to change the dominant structures	Henfrey & Penha-Lopes, 2018
Risk of <b>co-optation</b> by more powerful actors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unintended support of neoliberal narratives</li> <li>• Exploitation for policy goals and mere rhetoric</li> </ul>	Frantzeskaki et al (2016), Celata and Coletti, 2018a, Celata & Coletti, 2018b Henfrey & Penha-Lopes, 2018
Selectiveness and <b>exclusion</b> based on e.g., size	Celata and Coletti, 2018a
Suboptimal <b>funding arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short-termed and dependant on a single source</li> </ul>	McClymont Peace & Myers (2012)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for specific organisational form and capacities due to accountability mechanisms</li> <li>• Pressure to adopt a legal form</li> </ul>	<p>Dinnie &amp; Holstead, 2018</p> <p>Becker et al., 2018</p>
<p><b>Suboptimal support policies</b> resulting in restrictions</p>	<p>Celata &amp; Coletti, 2018b</p>
<p>Defensively acting local government representatives, feeling blamed for a lack of action</p>	<p>Frantzeskaki &amp; Rok (2018)</p>

*Table 1 - Central literature on the challenges of CBIs in public-sector relations*

## 2.4. Urban gardening initiatives

### 2.4.1. Urban community gardens in the context of climate change adaptation and sustainability

Broadly speaking, urban green spaces have been identified as a major factor in adaptation to climate change in cities by, for example, SDG 11 or the IPCC in 2014 (Revi et al., 2014) – especially with respect to air quality and the phenomenon of Urban Heat Islands (Sturiale & Scuderi, 2019). Globally, urban soils in residential areas have been found to potentially store large amounts of carbon (Pouyat et al., 2006) which could slow down the pace of climate change and support the prevention of water pollution (Union of Concerned Scientists, 2010). Urban gardening or farming, one form of urban greening, is considered to hold a great potential for climate change adaptation as well. Van der Jagt et al. (2017), for instance, research the growing popularity of urban communal gardening in countries of the Global North and conclude that in the EU, such gardens can serve as nature-based solutions to climate change. Other studies explore the link between urban gardens and biodiversity - such as Hall et al.’s (2016) research on the diversity of bee species in urban spaces – or the impact of biodiversity in city gardens on human psychological wellbeing (Young et al., 2020). Additionally, concerns of food security in cities have made the local production of affordable and sustainable food in urban gardens come to the fore in cities of the Global North (see Diekmann & Baker, 2020 and Eigenbrod & Gruda, 2014).

To be precise, not all food-producing gardens in city areas qualify as urban community gardens. In community gardens, people who are not usually connected by family ties produce edible crops on plots of land – often due to a lack of access to their own land in urban areas. There are

two prevailing types of community gardens: Those that are tended to by a system of individual plots and those which are, as a whole, cultivated by a group of active volunteers. (Okvat & Zautra, 2011). The former is considered a more conservative and official type of allotment gardening and hence not qualified as community gardening by some (Bell, 2016). The latter form, however, emphasises communality over the individual production of food in a shared space and is often tied to informal land use or *critical urban gardening* (see Certomà, 2015 below). Nonetheless, mixed forms of allotment and community gardens can be found in cities these days (Bell, 2016), as can also be seen in the case study below.

The adaptational capacity of urban community gardening lies in its versatile benefits, most notably environmental and social resilience in urban neighbourhoods (Hou, 2020): environmental resilience, on the one hand, because of a higher demand for more sustainable food options and an increased commitment to sustainable life choices and environmental education. Social resilience, on the one hand, due to citizen self-organisation and the community-building function of shared gardens (Hou, 2020). As for the latter, community gardens have been found to give vulnerable individuals the chance to join a common effort, providing access to a place where city residents can come together to network and simply be (Kingsley & Townsend, 2006). In this sense, community gardens may also be viewed as urban commons utilised by minorities to form alternative social relations in a neoliberal city (Ghose & Pettygrove, 2014; see *critical urban gardening* below). Social connectedness in community gardens is further strengthened by ideas and practices of cooperative behaviour among gardeners where mutual support and knowledge exchange concerning gardening and other issues is common (see Kingsley & Townsend, 2006 and Roviomaa, 2018).

The former social function of communal gardening is illustrated, for instance, in “Incredible Edible Todmorden” in the UK which has become well-known for its success in spreading communal gardening throughout the town and even across the country. Urban gardens in public areas create conversations among neighbours and strangers and foster a shared motivation to produce food together among residents. The movement has also led to schools teaching pupils about horticulture in school gardens; the latter is particularly intertwined with the environmental aspects of communal gardening. (Dobson, 2014) Due to the holistic impacts of sustainable change the movement has had, “Incredible Edible” illustrates how community gardening is a relevant ingredient for a societal transition (see Celata & Coletti, 2018b).

### 2.4.2. Urban community gardens as a form of activism

As indicated above, there is a political dimension in urban communal gardening as well. In many places in the world, people have been engaging in *critical urban gardening* (Certomà, 2015). Understood as a countermovement to neoliberal trends in urban development, critical urban gardening describes the grassroots practice of bringing nature back into urban spaces, reclaiming public land and the right to produce food locally. Whereas some emphasise the critique of neoliberal city planning and global structures of resource distribution, others highlight the joint involvement of citizens in local political decision-making. (Certomà, 2015) The latter relates to the concept of “active citizenship” which has also been studied as a governance arrangement in relation to urban gardening and sustainability transitions (van der Jagt et al., 2017; see also Hajer et al., 2015). Going beyond the claim to grow food in public spaces, some urban gardeners collectively cultivate edible crops on private lands and thereby challenge conventional ideas of property and agriculture (Wekerle & Classens, 2015). Wekerle and Classens (2015) further present cases where re-localised food production in the form of urban food-growing leads to unconventional social dynamics between producers and consumers, new collaborations of stakeholders and a local sharing economy outside the dominant capitalist economy.

Like Celata and Coletti (2018b), a number of scholars have studied the public governance of urban gardens and the tensions which arise between community gardeners and public officials. Lawson (2004 in Hou, 2020) outlines three common discrepancies between urban planners and gardeners: gardens as entities which develop incrementally with a personal dimension as well as an emphasis on social activity mismatch the public nature of planning with its preference for regulated urban spaces and the physical element of planning. Furthermore, from the authorities’ point of view, urban gardens are often seen as a provisional use of land only until higher-value urban development takes place (e.g., Rosol, 2010 in Hou, 2020). As such they are often based on short-term agreements and vulnerable to institutional shifts or changes in political leadership (Hou, 2014 and Kirschbaum, 2000 in Hou, 2020).

Resonating ideas of critical urban gardening, some authors describe the recent urban gardening development in Western Europe as grassroots politics for a just and ecological city (Follman & Viehoff, 2015 in Hou, 2020) i.e., an urban sustainability transition; others view it as a contestation of the dominant regime which decides over the use of urban spaces (Purcell & Tyman, 2015 in Hou, 2020; see also Henfrey & Penha-Lopes, 2018 above). In contrast to the

challenging character of urban community gardens, more organised and official garden initiatives have been criticised as an expression of neoliberal governmentality, e.g., for substituting the welfare state (see e.g., Rosol, 2010 in Hou, 2020; Thörn & Svenberg, 2016 and Frantzeskaki et al., 2016 above)

Due to the political aspect of urban community gardening, members of such a CBI – community gardeners, community gardening actives or community gardening practitioners – will also be referred to as community gardening activists in this thesis.

## 2.5. CBI activities in Finland

Finland was among the first European states to have a National Adaptation Strategy, along with regional and local climate strategies (Juhola & Westerhoff, 2011). Yet, Finland's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022 (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2014) mentions citizens only as recipients of education and awareness raising about climate change and adaptation, instead of examining their agency and role in co-creating adaptation efforts. As for more general environmental action led by citizens, there have been individual cases; for instance, SENSEI community initiative in which civic technologies that help to tackle environmental problems were co-created by individual community members, organisations, decision makers and researchers (Palacin et al., 2019). In Tampere, citizens were involved, although not the driving force, in the creation of a new sustainable city district (see Särkälähti, n.d., below).

Still, a considerable social change with respect to civil society's engagement in shaping urban spaces has been observed in Helsinki (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017). Exploring the rise of what is framed as 'civic activism', Mäenpää and Faehnle observe a considerable social change in the Finish capital and near-by cities as citizens proactively organise and act to change their urban environment without consulting public authorities. Although the authors are not focusing on sustainability or climate change adaptation in particular, they note that environmental awareness is a driving force of most community-based activities in Helsinki. Among the examples listed are, most notably, an evolving peer-to-peer, sharing economy – often in the form of food co-ops, providing locally and sustainably grown food – and online flea markets. In addition to this, urban gardening has gained significance engaging ever more volunteers. An essential catalyst for all these CBIs is social media; platforms, such as Facebook, allow for the organisation of the actors or the activities in themselves, as in the case of e-flea markets. (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017)

As for the relation between CBIs and city authorities, Mäenpää and Faehnle (2017) outline that some events which started as citizen initiatives were later co-organised with the city or even taken over by the municipality. Demonstrating how CBIs in Helsinki promote the city authority's goals of an ecological and collaborative city, the two authors conclude that city officials should recognise citizens' activeness as a resource – and citizens as self-organising actors, cooperation partners, service providers or community managers. What they recommend, thus, is for administrative units to adapt their working culture and to discuss and redevelop the traditional division of roles between citizens and administration to be able to support beneficial community activism. (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017)

Arguably, Finnish CBIs are, until this point, under-researched as the study of community initiatives and their collaborative experiences with local governments has only recently received increased attention.

# 3. Collaboration in public administration and the governance of sustainability

## 3.1. Introductory words on collaboration

Collaboration is a central element in biological evolution – not least in the development and success of the human species (van Schaik & Michel, 2020). Despite a rising focus on the notion of competition, collaboration is regarded as a beneficial feature across all known cultures without noteworthy exceptions (Curry et al., 2019 in Macedo et al., 2020). For this reason, collaboration has been studied in many disciplines and fields, e.g., game theory, strategic management and policy studies. The latter shows for instance that collaboration can mitigate conflict and inspire collective action. (Macedo et al., 2020) Acknowledging that there are several challenges around collaboration, the following chapter will explore collaboration and the criteria which determine its success in the context of Public Administration and across sector boundaries. Thereby, each paper contains its own definition of *collaboration* - or *partnership* - although they are convergent in meanings. Table 2 below will provide an overview of all relevant definitions including related concepts such as *co-production* and *co-creation*.

## 3.2. Cross-sector collaborations in public administration

### 3.2.1. Collaboration across all sectors

In the review of their original 2006 article “The Design and Implementation of Cross-Sector Collaborations”, Bryson et al. (2015) endorse but also point to the challenges of collaboration in the public sector. Evaluating seven different theoretical frameworks of cross-sector collaboration, the authors contrast and summarise various empirical findings published between 2006 and 2015 on collaboration in public administration practice. When employing the term collaboration, Bryson et al. (2015) refer to “the linking or sharing of information, resources, activities, and capabilities by organizations in two or more sectors to achieve jointly an outcome that could not be achieved by organizations in one sector separately” (Bryson et al., 2006, p. 648). The authors observe a number of supporting or constraining aspects related to the

processes and structures of collaboration as well as the intersection of the two. The ones most prominently covered in their literature review are mentioned here.

Essential factors for a thriving collaboration, such as trust, may depend on previous relationships between the administration and the collaboration partner, as well as the existence of networks among the involved actors. Trust in itself is a component of most of the reviewed theoretical frameworks on collaboration.<sup>6</sup> Building trust is an ongoing process during collaboration and happens via the sharing of resources, competencies and intentions. Key driving factors of collaboration are also leaders with a corresponding mind-set which Crosby and Bryson (2010) call sponsors and champions. They argue that the former take the shape of people with formal authority while the latter motivate mutual work efforts through informal authority (Bryson et al., 2015). Above that, collaboration requires a higher number of individuals exerting leadership to maintain the collaborative vision and to prevent the partnership from experiencing *collaborative inertia*, a phenomenon which occurs when the output and/or outcome of a partnership are disappointing and the process troublesome (Huxham & Vangen, 2004). (Bryson et al., 2015)

Moreover, accountability in collaboration projects entails potential for conflict when the perceptions of success in the results and outcomes differ or even compete (Clarke & Fuller, 2010). Despite this, an emphasis on accountability can lead to more formal agreements between partners specifying terms and goals of the collaboration – which typically facilitate mutual work, especially when there is a shortage of administrative resources (Babiak & Thibault, 2009). However, as addressed by Dinnie and Holstead (2018) above, accountability mechanism in public funding may also conflict with the informal (non-bureaucratic) character of CBIs.

Related to accountability is legitimacy. In the case of collaborations, internal and external legitimacy matter. These may differ when collaboration partners follow competing institutional logics. In such a situation, one side might, for instance, practice inclusive decision making in non-hierarchical structures which is not perceived as legitimate by outsiders more used to traditional bureaucracies. For internal and external legitimacy alike, it is essential that collaboration partners and outsiders view the collaboration as a legitimate entity (Human & Provan, 2000). Legitimacy and accountability can be fostered by marketing the collaboration

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<sup>6</sup> It is considered a major component in, for instance, Thomson and Perry (2006 in Bryson et al., 2015), Ansell and Gash (2008 in Bryson et al., 2015) and Provan and Kenis (2008, in Bryson et al., 2015)

to the external environment; this can also improve the collective agency of the partners involved. (Bryson et al., 2015)

Authority and power imbalances, however, can undermine cross-sector collaborations. Mandates, for instance, have increased compared to voluntary collaborations in situations where public officials are required to engage in cross-sector partnerships to be eligible for public funds under policies and grant schemes. While stimulating collaboration, these mandates may stipulate hierarchical governance structures, granting one actor more control and authority than another. Consequently, there is a risk of a more powerful partner ignoring a less powerful one. (Bryson et al., 2015) The issue of power relations, especially with respect to co-optation, is addressed above already in the literature on CBI – public-sector relationships and again below.

Although non-governmental actors often bring additional expertise, network ties, technology and other resources (see e.g., Demirag et al., 2012 and Holmes & Moir, 2007), Bryson et al. (2015) conclude that collaboration with the aim of generating public value should only be chosen when there is an advantage to be gained (see also Huxham & Vangen, 2005). They support the argument for more collaboration research in a multilevel, dynamic systems view and note that due to the practical challenges in designing and exerting cross-sector collaboration, scholars and practitioners should collaboratively join to produce action research (see Popp et al., 2014). (Bryson et al., 2015)

### 3.2.2. Collaboration with citizens: co-creation and co-production

In research on multi-actor governance and in contexts in which citizens act as collaboration partners to public administrators and take up service-providing roles (as in the example of CBI activism in Helsinki), the terms co-productions and co-creation are likely to occur.

Coproduction, on the one hand, gained momentum as policy making moved away from top-down processes and towards negotiated outcomes of interaction (Bovaird, 2007). It also implies that service delivery in the public sector is no longer managed exclusively by professionals, but that users and community members are increasingly involved. The understandings of the concept differed and evolved from the 1970s, throughout the 80s and 90s and eventually encompassed citizen participation in the entire value chain of public services, from service planning to evaluation. Inspired by Joshi & Moore's (2003) definition of co-production in the

public sector, Bovaird (2007) delineates user and community co-production as “the provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalized service providers (in any sector) and service users or other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions” (p. 847). Bovaird (2007)

Bovaird (2007) himself divides co-production by the types of relationships between service professionals and communities/users; from traditional professional service provision with mere citizen consultation, via full co-production by users and professionals to communities as the only deliverers of jointly planned services. Generally, practices of co-production locate service users and communities more centrally in the (public) decision-making process which brings considerable implications for democratic processes. Bovaird (2007) also distinguishes between user and community co-production. In cases where there are stakeholders beyond the direct user of a public service, community co-production is required. Furthermore, typical organisational motivations in favour of co-production are governance drivers and logistical/feasibility drivers. (Bovaird, 2007)

Not unlike Bryson et al. (2015), Bovaird highlights the development of mutual relationships between service professionals and co-producing users/community. As both parties share resources, they are required to trust each other and take a risk at the same time. Concerning issues of power, Bovaird notes that co-producing stakeholders may have different values and levels of power, potentially leading to inequality among the service users – a possibility which was addressed in McNamara and Buggy’s (2016) review of community-based adaptation. An early concern detected by Bovaird in his case studies is that co-production dilutes the boundaries between the public, private and voluntary sector and therefore public accountability to majorly deal with public service delivery. (Bovaird, 2007)

The very argument about diluting sector boundaries corresponds somewhat to criticism in CBI research that community activism could be exploited in a collaboration with public authorities to compensate for a lack of public services delivered by service professionals due to neo-liberal and austerity politics (see Celata & Coletti, 2018a and 2018b). Yet, Mäenpää and Faehnle’s (2018) model of *hybrid governance* as a tight collaboration of civil-society activists and the administration develops the idea of merging traditionally separated spheres of society in a different way; the blurring of sector boundaries and involvement of service users can have an empowering effect (see Sullivan et al., 2004 in Bovaird, 2007). The motivational effects that co-production can bring for users and communities who see the concrete results of their inputs

can in turn be used to mobilise community resources and take advantage of citizens' potential – as advised by Mäenpää and Faehnle (2017) in the case of civic activism in Helsinki. In addition, Bovaird's observations include that citizen co-production can drive the decisions by professionals. (Bovaird, 2007)

In their analytic review of a great number of studies on co-creation and co-production in the public sector, Voorberg et al., (2014) study these very concepts in light of the public sector's aspiration for social innovation. Co-creation and co-production are arguably included in the authors' understanding of social innovation which they define comprehensively as “the creation of long-lasting outcomes that aim to address societal needs by fundamentally changing the relationships, positions and rules between the involved stakeholders, through an open process of participation, exchange and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including end users, thereby crossing organizational boundaries and jurisdictions” (Voorberg et al., 2014, p. 1334). Co-production and co-creation are defined similarly and closely linked in most of the literature analysed by Voorberg et al. Considering service receivers a partner of value in public service delivery, some research emphasises the sustainability of relations; Lelieveldt et al. (2009), moreover, stress the joint responsibility of governments and societal actors in the production of public services a central criterion for co-production. or the involvement of citizens in the process of service delivery. A key difference between both concepts, however, is seen in the co-creation literature highlighting co-creation as a value in itself (see e.g., Gebauer et al., 2010).

With respect to the types of co-creation and co-production identified in the review, the authors divide between citizens as co-implementors, co-designers and initiators of public services. While the first two types correspond to Bovaird's (2007) early distinction of co-productive relationships, the last one in which citizens are clearly the main agents appears to be a more recent phenomenon in the literature (see also the CBI literature above). According to Voorberg et al.'s suggestion, co-creation should be employed to describe citizens taking part in (co-) initiation or co-design, while co-production should refer to citizen involvement in the co-implementation of public services.

Moreover, the motivations for practicing co-creation and co-production are comparable to those identified by Bovaird: increasing citizen involvement as a virtue - like democracy and transparency – are met with perceived gains in effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery. Voorberg et al. (2014) further present a list of factors on the organisational and the citizen side which influence the success of co-creative and co-productive processes. For the organisation's

side, the structures in place or the communication infrastructure to engage with citizens, i.e., the compatibility of the public organisation with co-creation/co-production matters. Perhaps related to the structures are the attitudes of politicians and public officials. As Roberts et al. (2013) report, politicians and public managers often view co-production as unreliable and citizens as unpredictable, displaying a reluctance to give up status and control. Along with (the lack of) organisational structures and the concern that citizens might be unreliable service co-producers, a risk-averse administrative culture can contribute to a hesitant practice of co-creation. (Voorberg et al., 2014)

For the citizens' willingness to engage in public service delivery a sense of ownership and responsibility along with the perceived ability to participate play a decisive role. Klausen and Sweeting (2005), for instance, observe a display of responsibility for a public governance issue by the coproducing civil partner in their research on legitimacy and community involvement in local governance. Voorberg et al. also refer to Talsma and Molenbroek (2012, in Voorberg et al., 2014) who researched a local community in India whose perception of responsibility for their service recipients impacted their service delivery. Other factors mapped out by Voorberg et al. are intrinsic values, for instance loyalty or civic duty, social capital and trust in the co-creation initiative.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.2.3. Power in cross-sector collaborations

Due to the recurring mention of power dimensions in collaborative governance, Purdy (2012) developed a framework for assessing power relations in cross-sector collaborations. Among the power-related issues she raises – some of whom have been addressed before in this thesis – are the exclusion or co-optation of actors that are less powerful in relation to their dominant collaboration partners. The 'weaker' partner's ability to participate, voice their concern and to be represented might consequently be infringed. (Purdy, 2012)

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<sup>7</sup> With relation to social innovation, the study's results are ambiguous. Considering that in most cases co-creation and co-production appear to be virtues in themselves which do not require legitimisation, only few reviewed cases focused on the specific outcomes of co-creative/co-productive processes. Therefore, this particular review cannot confirm if the outcomes of co-creation and co-production relate to the outcomes of social innovation and effectively respond to the needs of citizens in an innovative way. (Voorberg et al., 2014)

Furthermore, power can be interpreted very differently, depending on the actors' societal sector and institutional background; government bodies tend to frame power as legal authority while private-sector organisations view power more as access to resources. Non-profit organisations may possess and see power in terms of values and discursive legitimacy. In her framework, Purdy considers these three different understandings of power - formal authority, resources and discursive legitimacy – as arenas of power which are complemented by the process elements of collaborative governance according to Booher (2004, p. 44): participants, process design and content. However, the framework should not be understood as presenting power as static; since power is an emergent phenomenon shaped by human interaction, the framework can be used for multiple assessments of the same collaboration process to evaluate changing dynamics of power. (Purdy, 2012)

With the help of a case study, Purdy demonstrates how the framework may serve as a tool to be made aware of and balance power through the elements of the collaborative process. Indeed, greater attention to power (in its multiple forms) allows collaboration partners to design and implement processes in a more representative, inclusive and impartial way, hence promote fairness and, in the long run, motivate more actors to engage in such processes. Other than privileging some collaborative actors and marginalising others, power might eventually also be used to advance the collaborative efforts for mutual gain. (Purdy, 2012)

The following table depicts how the different authors mentioned in this chapter define different related concepts integral to intersectoral collaboration, especially between public authorities and citizens. Most of these authors are addressed in the text above, except for Van Huijstee et al. (2007) who will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

Authors	Definitions of concepts related to intersectoral collaboration
Bryson, Crosby & Stone (2006, p. 648)	<b>Collaboration:</b> “[T]he linking or sharing of information, resources, activities, and capabilities by organizations in two or more sectors to achieve jointly an outcome that could not be achieved by organizations in one sector separately [...]”
Bovaird (2007, p. 847)	<b>User and community co-production:</b> “[T]he provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalized service providers (in any sector) and service users or other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions.”

Voorberg et al. (2014, p. 1334)	<b>Social innovation</b> (implying co-production and co-creation): “[T]he creation of long-lasting outcomes that aim to address societal needs by fundamentally changing the relationships, positions and rules between the involved stakeholders, through an open process of participation, exchange and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including end users, thereby crossing organizational boundaries and jurisdictions [...]”
Van Huijstee et al. (2007, p. 77)	<b>Partnership for sustainability:</b> “[C]ollaborative arrangements in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and civil society) are involved in a non-hierarchical process, and through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal.”
Purdy (2012, p. 410)	<b>Power in collaborative contexts</b> understood as potential to “advance the joint efforts of the collaborators, resulting in mutual gain, or to empower others to participate more effectively in the collaboration, resulting in altruistic gain.”

*Table 2 - Overview of definitions concerning intersectoral collaboration*

### 3.3. Public-sector collaboration for sustainability goals

#### 3.3.1. Partnerships for sustainable development

As for collaboration in the literature focusing on the implementation of sustainability policies, Van Huijstee et al.’s (2007) review of partnerships for sustainable development gives an overview of early literature on cross-sector collaboration between the public, private and third sector. In their article, the definition of inter-sectoral partnerships includes the joint aim of sustainability and is phrased as “collaborative arrangements in which actors from two or more spheres of society (state, market and civil society) are involved in a non-hierarchical process, and through which these actors strive for a sustainability goal” (Van Huijstee et al., 2007, p. 77).

To build a bridge to the introduction of this thesis, the responsibility for tackling issues of sustainability had traditionally been that of top-down government, but gradually shifted to other spheres and sectors of society (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). One reason for increased engagement

in inter-sectoral partnerships from the mid-1990s onward was the perceived deficit in democracy caused by processes of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation – see, for instance, Richter’s (2003) warning about neo-corporatism disguised as public-private partnerships. These trends are assumed to have led to the phenomenon of ‘sector blurring’ (Bozeman, 1987) as pointed out by Bovaird (2007). Another reason for the rise in collaboration is seen in the focus on sustainability challenges: On the one hand, sustainability problems are characterised by complexity and thus require the active engagement of all societal spheres for solving. On the other hand, the very concept of sustainable development highlights the need for a mutual attainment of social, environmental and economic goals of sustainability (see e.g., Purvis et al., 2019). Resources and responsibilities for these different pillars of sustainability are typically divided among different societal spheres: business is seen as in charge of economic development, government of public goods of social and natural capital and civil society of social cohesion including social and environmental quality. (Van Huijstee et al., 2007)

Partnerships can take a variety of forms; governance arrangements can vary by the actors involved, the intensity of collaboration, the intentions with respect to sustainability, etc. and deal with global or local sustainability issues. Yet, the authors summarise roles and functions of partnerships in addition to common advantages and risk factors. Many of the assets of inter-sectoral partnerships have been featured in this thesis and addressed by other authors above: the access to a wider array of resources (Bryson et al., 2015; Bovaird, 2007) and localised expertise and knowledge of local partners which was raised as an argument for involving local government and non-governmental actors in climate change adaptation (see introduction). What is more, creative, innovative solutions and knowledge accumulation are named along with increased legitimacy and credibility of operations (especially for governments and companies). (Van Huijstee et al., 2007)

Legitimacy, at the same time, may also be at stake in collaborative arrangements: Whereas Van Huijstee et al. list eco-marketing as a positive result of partnerships with NGOs for companies, the NGO partners can face accusations of cooperating with a traditional enemy. This criticism was similarly addressed above among the challenges of CBIs in public-sector collaboration. While cultural differences might also burden cross-sectoral partnerships, there is a risk of wasting resources should the outcome of the collaboration not be fruitful. Again, comparable to Bryson et al. (2015) and Bovaird (2007), trust is emphasised in the literature on partnerships, especially when there is a history of burdening previous relationships. (Van Huijstee et al., 2007).

As addressed in the first and second chapter of this thesis, collaboration between citizens or communities and the public sector in the context of (urban) sustainability has been studied by various authors in the last years, such as Newig and Fritsch (2009) or Frantzeskaki and Rok (2018); see also e.g., Frantzeskaki et al. (2014) and Lewis (2013). The resulting body of literature influenced the Municipalities in Transition research project which centred around the collaboration between local governments and CBIs. Most recently, research on the public collaborative governance of sustainability in urban spaces has focused on Urban Living Labs approaches (see Bradley et al., 2022 or Sarabi et al., 2021) which are presented in the next section ('Living lab models for sustainable cities').

Briefly addressed in the introduction of this thesis as an inspiration for the research topic, the framework developed by the MiT-project was used to explore synergies between local organisations – public bodies and community initiatives – with the aim of researching how to promote better collaboration between CBIs and local governments in the pursuit of sustainability (Macedo, 2019a and Macedo, 2019b). Referred to as the 'Compass for Collaborative Transformation', the framework consists of concepts which have been discussed in this chapter and is further characterised by its normative association with a transformation towards sustainability.

The compass is constituted of four elements which are considered crucial for successful collaborations with a transformative potential. Thereof, co-creation and co-production are most extensively covered above. In the MiT project, co-creation entails, for instance, a shared vision by the collaboration partners, joint implementation of projects, collective intelligence and accountability. Co-production – framed as 'community resilience' – means the cooperative delivery of services with a sustainability dimension, such as carbon reduction or learning opportunities. The remaining two components of the compass framework are termed mutual support and open innovation. The former - which conceptualises collaborations as a win for both/all sides – stresses, for instance, reciprocity, empowerment and fulfilling relationships. Lastly, open innovation is viewed as 'deliberate disruption' and focusing more on the transformative aim of the collaboration in the sense of destabilising the status-quo, invoking cultural change and social innovation, reshaping practices etc. For this component of the framework, the MiT research draws, for instance, on Haxeltine et al.'s (2016) theory of Transformative Social Innovation.<sup>8</sup> (Macedo, 2019a; Macedo, 2019b)

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<sup>8</sup> In general, co-creation relates to the quality of the collaborative process, the element of mutual support to the relationships established and the two others pertain to the outcomes of collaboration, i.e., co-creation to concrete outputs and open innovation to less tangible impacts.

### 3.3.2. Living lab models for sustainable cities

With respect to cross-sector co-creation in urban spaces, Nevens et al., (2012) present the Urban Transition Labs approach to creating transformations toward sustainability in cities. It aims, for instance, to identify, boost and scale up innovations - social, economic, technological or ecological - arising in an urban context. The core idea is to co-create a shared vision for the future city based on which a transition can be initiated. This process involves many actors, such as private and public organisations, researchers, government agencies etc. A so-called transition team which facilitates the co-creative process can (and should) be supported by policy actors and public administrators with expertise, communication channels and more. (Nevens et al., 2012)

Nevens et al. (2012) specifically stress the building of trust among the actors as an essential feature and outcome of the process. Consisting of regime' actors (those operating in the current system) and innovative 'niche' actors calling for change, the arena for transition aims to be a space in which transition action and strategies can be co-designed *without* a dominant rationale of 'business as usual' fixed time frames and tangible results. All in all, The Urban Transition Labs model can be considered an experiment for new governance structures in sustainable cities. It stands, among other things, for challenging the conventional administrative culture and the empowerment of actors - the people who care about their city and communities and want to take part in creating their future urban environment. (Nevens et al., 2012)

Tampere as a city is a part of two EU-funded projects which utilise the *Living Lab* approach. One of these which is an example of a more public sector-led example of collaboration with a strong sustainability focus is the recent UNaLab – Urban Nature Labs project (UNaLab, n.d.). This project which is taking place across several (European) cities seeks to develop sustainable and resilient urban communities by implementing nature-based solutions<sup>9</sup> as a means of addressing climate-related urban challenges, i. e., climate change adaptation. Like the Urban

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<sup>9</sup> Nature-based solutions (NbS) involves addressing societal challenges by working with nature which results in benefits for human well-being and biodiversity. NbS entails actions such as the protection, restoration or management of natural and semi-natural ecosystems; the sustainable management of aquatic systems and working lands such as croplands or timberlands; or the creation of novel ecosystems in and around urban spaces. These actions stress biodiversity and are designed and implemented with the involvement and consent of local communities and Indigenous Peoples. (Nature-based Solutions Initiative, 2021)  
See Frantzeskaki et al. (2019) for nature-based solutions in urban climate change adaptation.

Transition Labs model, it is focused on the co-creation of these solutions together with local stakeholders and citizens. (Unalab, n.d.a)

In addition to implementing and monitoring climate change adaptation mechanisms, the adaptation efforts in Tampere include developing the municipality's administrative processes and advancing business models for the implementation of nature-based solutions (Särkilahti, n.d.). With the use of the *Living Lab* methodology<sup>10</sup>, municipalities, citizens, researchers and companies are supposed to identify obscure problems and generate novel ideas (Unalab, n.d. b). Nevertheless, Särkilahti (n.d.) notes that the administrative culture's compatibility with citizen participation must be considered (see Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017 and Voorberg et al., 2014). In this context, the living lab approach in relation to a sustainability transition in Tampere has also been covered by Engez et al. (2019).

The other Living Lab project in Tampere is FUSILLI. FUSILLI (**F**ostering the **U**rban food **S**ystem transformation through **I**nnovative **L**iving **L**abs **I**mplementation) is an EU-funded project in 12 cities which strives to develop urban food plans in local context for a transition towards sustainable food systems (FUSILLI, 2022a). In Tampere, FUSILLI is involved in food-related municipal programmes concerning, for instance, the education and promotion of climate-friendly diets. As will be demonstrated in more detail in the next chapters, FUSILLI also has a role to play in promoting community gardening in Tampere. The presence of FUSILLI in Tampere, can be considered a driving force in bringing communal gardening into the discourse of sustainable food consumption in Tampere.

### 3.4. Summary of collaboration literature

Finally, table 3 displays which features of cross-sectoral collaboration in public governance are considered vital for the collaboration's outcome by the respective authors. Such features which are stressed by the author(s) in question, and which occur most prominently across the literature are emphasised in italics. The first three sets of authors in the table refer to cross-sectoral collaboration in the public administration context more broadly, whereas the last four view collaboration in a more specific theoretical or empirical context; Purdy (2012) in relation to

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<sup>10</sup> A living lab is a physical or virtual space in which societal - mostly urban - problems are to be tackled by a variety of stakeholders who engage in collaboration and collective ideation (Hossain, Leminen and Westerlund, 2019). Urban living labs often appear in the context of sustainability and low carbon cities in Europe (see Voytenko, MrCormick, Evans & Schliwa, 2016).

power, Van Huijstee et al. (2007) in relation to sustainable development, Macedo et al. (2020) with respect to their research framework and Nevens et al. (2012) in the context of the Urban Transition Labs Approach.

<b>Central factors for the success (or failure) of cross-sectoral collaboration in Public Administration</b>	<b>Authors</b>
<i>Trust</i> , previous relationships, networks, individual <i>leadership</i> (sponsors and champions) to prevent collaborative inertia, <i>accountability</i> , <i>legitimacy</i> , <i>power &amp; authority</i>	Bryson et al. (2015)
<i>Mutual relationships</i> , <i>trust and risk-taking</i> , <i>(dis-)empowering function on citizens</i> , diluting sector boundaries	Bovaird (2007) and author mentioned therein
Sustainability of relations, joint responsibility, communicative and structural compatibility of the administration, officials' attitudes, citizens' sense of responsibility and ability to participate	Voorberg et al. (2014) and authors referenced therein
<b>Power framework:</b> Risk of exclusion, co-optation, infringed ability to participate vs. collaborative use of <i>power as legal authority</i> , <i>access to resources</i> or <i>discursive legitimacy</i>	Purdy (2012)
<b>Partnerships for sustainable development:</b> <i>Trust</i> , previous relations, <i>cultural differences</i> , <i>creativity</i> , <i>knowledge accumulation</i> , <i>legitimacy and credibility</i>	Van Huijstee et al. (2007)
<b>Compass for collaborative transformation:</b> <i>co-creation</i> , shared vision, joint implementation, <i>accountability</i> , <i>mutual support</i> (empowering relationships), <i>co-production</i> (community resilience), <i>open innovation</i> (deliberate disruption)	Macedo et al. (2020)
<b>Urban Transition Labs Approach:</b> Trust, citizen empowerment, openness to new governance models and innovative processes	Nevens et al. (2012)

Table 3 - Features of successful collaboration across sectors

Due to the limitations of this Master's thesis, not all factors impacting the success of collaboration between the public sector and citizen groups, i. e., CBIs, that are covered above and summarised in table 3 can be explored in the empirical part of this study. The most integral

criteria of co-creation and general collaboration in Public Administration – based on the frequency of occurrence in the reviewed literature as well as on their relevance in the context of CBIs working jointly with municipalities - lay the foundation for data collection and analysis in this thesis. They are summarised in the following paragraph using Forrer et al.'s (2014) work on the governance of cross-sector collaboration as an additional reference and illustrated in table 4 below. The following methodology chapter will outline how the selected collaboration criteria informed the creation of codes in direct content analysis and the analysis of the collected data.

In summary, as accountability is considered central in public administration, it is equally crucial in cross-sector collaborations (Forrer et al., 2014). New Public Service scholars in fact emphasise the engagement of citizens to strengthen accountability as well as legitimacy of public service delivery. Strict rule enforcement by public managers - to uphold traditional accountability and legitimacy structures - however, may well curb collaboration partners' motivation to uphold the relationship. Indeed, situations of mutually negotiated agreements require developing reciprocal accountability and mutual trust. Relating to this, there is less control on the side of public servants in horizontal partnerships – and public managers should share their basis of power with their collaboration partners (and vice versa), rather than exercising power over them. Trust has been identified as a similarly relevant success factor for collaboration partners to believe in each other's abilities and engagement in the shared goal. Discussing citizen involvement in the public sector, the authors also stress the need to not only communicate the aims of a collaborative programme but to allow citizen groups to influence the terms. In line with this, New Public Service advocates Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) are cited to have argued for joint interests and responsibilities to be formed between public managers and engaged citizens. Moreover, Forrer et al. (2014) identify individual leaders as potential main supporters of cross-sector partnerships. (Forrer et al., 2014)

**Key concepts for the success of  
intersectoral collaboration**

Accountability
Legitimacy
Trust
Shared goals/visions
Power (and influence)
Joint responsibility
Support
Motivation

*Table 4 - Key concepts for content analysis*

## 4. Research methods

### 4.1. Methodological approach: case study research

The methodological approach of this thesis is a case study design. Case studies typically serve the purpose of gaining in-depth understanding on a phenomenon of interest in its natural context (Gondo et al., 2010). The phenomenon under study in this thesis is the collaborative relationship between communal gardening initiatives in Tampere, Finland and the municipal administration, the City of Tampere. Following the characteristics of case research in social sciences (Swanborn, 2010), the boundaries of the social system which constitutes this case are defined by community gardens in the Tampere city area, in addition to the municipal administration which is involved in the garden's governance to some degree. So as to explore a research case thoroughly, the actual case may be divided into subcases which allow for comparison of similarities and differences across these subcases (Gondo et al., 2010). Subcases seemed an appropriate means of examining whether different communal gardening groups, operating independently from each other, share similar experiences in collaborating with the City of Tampere. Thus, using subcases provides insights into how the phenomenon under study manifests in different sub-contexts (Gondo et al., 2010).

The selection of subcases for this study requires demarcation (Swanborn, 2010), i. e., the domain of suitable cases or the bounded system (Gondo et al., 2010) needs to be established. In the context of this case research, the bounded system entails all urban communal gardening initiatives in Tampere. Following the definition(s) of urban community gardens given above, the subcases need to match the requirement of being affiliated with an urban allotment garden or of a shared and collective cultivation action in an open space (see Okvat & Zautra, 2011). In the case selection, preference shall be given to the latter type, i. e., such community gardening initiatives which any interested and motivated person may join. This is to ensure that there is a strong social and communal dimension in the subcase. In practice, however, there are difficulties in determining which type of urban garden an initiative might be classified as due to the blurring of allotment and community gardens (see Bell, 2016) or the prominence of residential gardens in Tampere.<sup>11</sup> Further limitations in the selection of subcases are outlined

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<sup>11</sup> Residential shared gardens may be situated between the spheres of open community gardening and private gardens and partially match the definition of communal gardens: Although there is a community aspect when neighbours - for instance, in an apartment building - engage in gardening together, the garden may be located on

below. In line with the theme of community-based activities, the communal garden subcases need to satisfy the theoretical criterion of citizen-driven activity (purposive selection, see Gondo et al., 2010).

The phenomenon studied in this thesis is shaped by processes and developments of recent years which have impacted current relations. Therefore, process-tracing (Swanborn, 2010) was done by exploring and describing (among others) the values, expectations and perceptions of community gardeners concerning the involvement of the City of Tampere in communal gardening. This included the resources dedicated to it, past decisions made by the City of Tampere with respect to communal gardening and mutual behaviour of city administration and gardening actives. So as to interpret the administrative context in which community gardeners operate in Tampere, documents of official municipal policies, as well as civil servants and one other related individual involved with community gardening were also consulted as sources in this research. The former - documents – typically constitute a main form of data in case study research (Olsen, 2010) whereas the latter constitute the type of interviewees who elucidate the subject of study without necessarily being at the core of the case (McGinn, 2010). The role of the civil-servant interviews is elaborated below (see section validity).

#### 4.1.1. Data collection methods

The first batch of empirical data of this thesis is constituted by interviews. Interviews are a common method of data collection in qualitative studies (Qu & Dumay, 2011) and particularly in an in-depth case study approach (Swanborn, 2010). Interviews were chosen over field observations in order to be able to collect data which would help answer the research question of this thesis. In-depth interviews, in particular, are commonly used to study individual experiences and/or cultural perspectives of interviewees (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). This corresponds to the research focus of this study: the collaborative experience and relation of community gardeners with the City of Tampere. Moreover, there were no regular meetings taking place between representatives of the City of Tampere and the city's communal gardens. During the course of the interviews, it became evident that encounters between communal gardeners and municipal representatives were generally rare. Therefore, observations or

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private property and the circle of potential gardeners limited to residents of the specific building(s) or area. Although unknown in the context of Tampere, this issue was observed by Engel-Di Mauro (2018) in a different local context where the 'community' in community garden was limited to a narrow social group of nearby-living flat owners.

meeting minutes could not be relied on as another source of data for this thesis.

Instead, a compilation of official documents by the City of Tampere, as well as e-mail interviews with four individuals involved in the municipal governance of urban gardening serve as additional data. Since the topic of this thesis is urban communal gardening in the context of climate change adaptation and sustainability transitions in cities, the public policy documents selected for this case study are the city’s official strategy, along with its policy goals for sustainable development and a more concrete action plan for becoming a carbon-neutral city (outlined further below). These policy documents appeared to be the most suitable municipal records as there was no official strategy for climate change adaptation, urban greening or even urban gardening specifically at the time of this research. Adding to the official municipal documents are two articles about communal gardening opportunities organised by the City of Tampere in Tampere’s district Hiedanranta, the FUSILLI project’s website and the municipality’s website informing about grants for citizen activities (described in more detail below).

The participants of e-mail interviews, most of whom represent Tampere’s city administration, were selected based on the insights gained from the in-depth interviews with practitioners of community gardening, as well as recommendations by other individuals knowledgeable about this case-study topic (see *snowball sampling* below). As illustrated in table 5, the interviewees are directly or indirectly affiliated with communal gardening in Tampere due to the administration of public land, grant funding or municipal involvement in local and sustainable food production. These interviews were finalised between April and June 2022. The e-mail interview questionnaires can be found in the appendix of this thesis. In addition to the interviewees affiliated with the City of Tampere and their positions, table 5 also lists the municipal documents and websites which served as data for this case study.

<b>Official municipal policy documents</b>	<b>Interviewees from the City of Tampere (and associated with it)</b>
<p><i>Tampere City Strategy 2030</i> (“The City of Action”)</p> <p><i>Sustainable Tampere 2030 – towards a carbon-neutral city policy</i> &amp; “Guidelines for</p>	<p>1) Environmental planner at the City of Tampere, responsible for the environmental protection grant</p>

Sustainable Tampere 2030 – towards a carbon-neutral city” document  <i>Carbon Neutral Tampere 2030 Roadmap</i>	2) Property secretary, responsible for city-owned gardening plot areas  3) Plot manager at 4H, a non-profit organisation which manages municipal gardening plots for the City of Tampere
<b>Other online sources</b>	
Two articles from <a href="http://www.hiedanranta.fi">www.hiedanranta.fi</a> FUSILLI’s official website City’s grants website	4) Project coordinator at the FUSILLI project

*Table 5 - Overview of municipal documents, other online sources and interviewees responsible for various municipal services*

#### 4.1.2. In-depth interviews with community gardeners

##### 4.1.2.1. Sampling procedures

As for the interviews with members of community gardening initiatives, a total of five in-depth interviews with seven individuals were conducted between August and October 2021. All interviews with community gardeners lasted between 25 minutes and 1h 10 minutes. Another (eighth) community gardener was interviewed via e-mail. Following the idea of criterion sampling (Palys, 2008), the interview participants were selected based on the criterion of involvement in local community gardening initiatives in Tampere. In most cases, a communal gardening group was first defined as a suitable subcase for this thesis, then, contact was established with the most active members of the initiative to find interview participants. Some of the interviewees were also located with the snowball technique (Palys, 2008 and Morgan, 2008). In this method, a relatively small number of informants serves to identify other possible research participants who are eligible for the study at hand (Morgan, 2008). The informants were earlier interviewees and other contacts from the university or the environmental activist scene in Tampere. Snowballing was also used to later find research participants from the City of Tampere via the interviewees from the community garden subcases.

Inarguably, the accessibility of the research site (subcases) which may depend on the relation between the researcher and at least one member of the group is vital for case research (Gondo, et al., 2010). The very first access to potential interviewees who were part of a communal gardening group, or at least knowledgeable about community gardening in Tampere, took place via a course teacher from university. Additionally, one early interview was especially useful in

mapping out further suitable cases of community gardens in Tampere. Indeed, interviews and personal contacts proved to be the best way to detect existing community gardens in Tampere, considering that there was no official, retrievable information about the number and locations of communal gardens.<sup>12</sup> Due to the limited availability of information about community gardens, it proved more feasible to locate those with a strong community aspect where gardening happens. These urban gardeners were also better known among researchers and practitioners from local CBIs.

Case initiatives and potential interviewees were contacted via e-mail if e-mail contacts existed and were known. Yet, due to the informal, grassroots logic of CBIs and the volunteer nature of communal gardening, social media – especially Facebook - was the most successful platform for reaching these research participants. Most of the mapped community gardens operated Facebook pages or groups via which they could be contacted. Also, active individuals from these CBIs could be identified and reached out to in the same way. All the gardeners who were eventually interviewed for this thesis were initially contacted through Facebook. In two cases where e-mail was the only way of establishing contact with members of a community garden, no suitable interviewees could be recruited. Since no relationship could be formed with any insiders of these two known gardens and potential subcases (see Gondo et al., 2010) repeated requests for interviews remained unanswered. Another CBI which may have been involved in communal gardening in the past could not be reached neither via e-mail nor its Facebook page. Eventually, seven confirmed cases of communal gardening initiatives in Tampere could be mapped out, although there are likely to be more. Somewhat excluded from this are residential gardens for neighbourhood activity; although they may have relations with the City of Tampere, they do not usually operate in open public spaces and are thus harder to find and access for researchers.<sup>13</sup> Interviews were successfully conducted with individuals from five of the seven identified cases which are all listed illustratively in table 6. The subcases of this case study are introduced further below.

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<sup>12</sup> To elaborate, neither the City of Tampere nor any other institution provided a comprehensive list of communal gardening initiatives in Tampere at the time of this study. On e.g., Google Maps, garden areas in the city were registered – many of which, however, were private allotment gardens or public garden areas where no food was grown. They cannot be classified as communal gardens according to the definition used in this thesis.

<sup>13</sup> One subcase of this study is a residential garden which could be accessed only partly via its co-creator who is a local artist and vocal advocate for community gardening. Another potential subcase of residential gardeners could not be accessed as the only direct contact person was a municipal worker who was involved in the funding of the garden - yet had no connection to any active gardeners.

Subcases of this study	Potential subcases where access failed
<p>Kalevanharjun yhteisöviljelmä / Kalevanharju community garden</p> <p>Kurpitsaliike ry (association linked to allotment garden area in Tahmela)</p> <p>Hiedanrannan Kelluva Puutarha / Hiedanranta's Floating Gardens</p> <p>Community garden in Hirvitalo cultural centre</p> <p>Community garden in Kuusela elderly home, Härmälä</p>	<p>Community garden on allotment garden area in Hatanpää</p> <p>Community or residential garden in Vuores<sup>14</sup></p>

Table 6 - Overview of subcases and inaccessible community gardening cases

#### 4.1.2.2. Interview methods

With the exception of one interview which was completed in written form, all the in-depth interviews with communal gardening practitioners were conducted in person or via Zoom. With respect to the decision of whether an interview would happen face-to-face or remotely, preference was given to in-person meetings. In methods literature, it is commonly assumed that interviews should be conducted in places in which participants feel secure and comfortable (Seidman, 1991 in Herzog, 2012). Also, according to Gillham (2000 in Herzog, 2012), the researcher ought to show flexibility and adapt themselves to the preferences of their interviewees. As the place of the interview can impact the interviewer's understanding of the studied subject (Palys, 2008), the preferred location for the interviews was in the community garden itself. Due to factors relating to weather, sickness or interviewee's convenience, however, only two interviews actually took place on-sight in community gardens.

Most of the interviews display an interview characteristic outlined by Kvale (2007) as representing an exchange of ideas between people whose conversation revolves around a topic

<sup>14</sup> According to the UNaLab coordinators in Tampere, there is/was a community gardening project related to the UNaLab activities in the district of Vuores. Possibly a type of residential garden, none of the active gardeners there could be reached, however, to retrieve any further information (see footnote 10).

of shared interest. What is more, “[t]he research interview is an inter-view where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee.” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018, p. 2). This means that both the interviewer and the interviewee(s) are engaged in the interview and the interviewer’s role is not limited to asking questions - a dynamic which is visible in these thesis interviews. Even though most interviews resembled a lively conversation about community gardening in Tampere, all interviews were semi-structured in design. Semi-structured interviews - which integrate features of structured and unstructured interviews - typically contain central interview questions yet allow for flexibility during the interview (Farquhar, 2012). According to the subcase and interviewee, some questions were changed in wording or emphasised over others in a specific interview of this study.

#### 4.2.1. Research ethics

Concerning research ethics in interviewing, the following aspects were paid special attention to: Informed consent (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018) was given by all participants of in-depth interviews before the interview as the purpose of the research, as well as potential risks for individual interviewees or the community gardening group were outlined to them. Both before and again after the actual interview, the issue of confidentiality was highlighted (see Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). While individual participants were ensured to be anonymised, hence not referred to by their real names, it was left to them to decide after the interview whether they would approve of their CBI to be mentioned by name in the thesis or if they preferred anonymity for the entire group. This appeared relevant as many interviewees made critical remarks about the City of Tampere’s involvement in their community garden or CBIs more generally. However, all interviewees agreed to have the CBI(s) they are affiliated with mentioned in this study.

What is important to bear in mind are possible consequences (see Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018) for the community group, as well as the fact that in none of the cases, an entire group agreed to take part in this research but merely one or two members of each CBI. Therefore, the participating subcases are transparently mentioned, whereas statements which might allow for conclusions to be drawn about which group an interviewee is connected to have been omitted and interviewees are anonymised. However, interview answers revealing information which is publicly available – and especially, known by the municipal administration – may be cited or paraphrased with reference to the community gardening group. In summary, the risks of

disclosure of the CBI's identity with respect to some remarks was balanced against the benefits of transparently stating which gardening group an interviewee is part of.

As for the e-mail interviews conducted with representatives of the City of Tampere or its partner organisation, the risks outlined above did not occur since these interviewees represented their organisation's view and furthermore, their names and positions are publicly available on the respective websites. In order to maintain some consistency with the confidentiality of the community gardeners' identities, the remaining interviewees are not referred to by their name either but by their position or affiliation.

#### 4.2.2. Validity and limitations of the data

Regarding the validity of interviews as a method for data collection, it must be stated that despite representing the experiences of a group of community gardeners – the subcase – the interviewees speak for themselves and as individuals. Their personal perception shapes their understanding and judgment of a situation (Munhall, 2008) - in this case the involvement of the City of Tampere in their local initiative. Hence, the data generated from the interviews is subjective and non-replicable. This was particularly noticeable in one subcase where two interviewees contributed to data collection; whereas both interviewees shared the same broad perception of the collaboration between their group and the municipality, their opinions differed with respect to details of the relationship.

The fact that the perceived experiences of one member of a communal garden may differ from another member of the same group impacts the claims that may be made concerning the external validity and generalisability of the data. It is disputable, however, if the aim of case study research should be to generate generalisable knowledge of a phenomenon or rather to produce rich knowledge of the case at hand - for instance, with respect to specific relations, new perspectives or power dynamics (Moriceau, 2010). The objective of this thesis, indeed, is to explore the inexplicit relation between urban communal gardeners and the City of Tampere. The subcases, as well as further data, thereby serve to gain insights in the level and quality of collaboration between the municipality and local gardening CBIs.

Arguably, the validity of the highly subjective interview data can be seen as limited. This was attempted to be outbalanced by the selection of particularly knowledgeable individuals as

research participants with a central role in their CBI and/or communal gardening in Tampere in general. One clear limitation, nonetheless, is the relatively small number of subcases and CBI-interviewees featured in this thesis. The reasons for this are the experienced difficulties in contacting and gaining access to communal gardening groups, as well as finding active members who are willing to give interviews. On the one hand, a general reluctance to participate in interviews, a perceived language barrier or a lack of interest and time are likely to have been the case for some CBI members. On the other hand, the issue of being unable to reach anyone at all occurred in at least two potential subcases. Especially the community garden in the district of Hatanpää was suggested by knowledgeable gardening practitioners and researchers as an interesting subcase. It is considered one of the oldest still existing community gardens in Finland (FUSILLI, 2022a), yet it could not be featured in this case study.

Moreover, the data generated through e-mail interviews with municipal employees and a 4H representative exhibits limitations with respect to its validity. Due to community gardening being a form of activity situated at the intersection of community work, environmental activism, local food production, horticultural education and others, there is no one civil servant who would be responsible for handling matters related to community gardening in Tampere. Instead, as can be inferred from the collected data, all but one interviewee considered community gardening in the context of their specific position, rather than holistically with all its benefits, and could thus only partly answer the questions asked in the interview. Due to this very aspect of community gardening, there is a possibility that it is indeed featured in existing policy or strategy documents outside the spectrum of ecological sustainability or community action. Such documents were not located in the scope of this study, however. This may also be due to a language barrier since most of the municipality's policy documents are available only in Finnish language.

#### 4.2. Data analysis method: qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis is conducted in research to systematically outline the meaning of qualitative material (Schreier, 2014). According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), there are three different types of content analysis, one being directed content analysis. This method is often chosen to study a phenomenon for which prior research or theory exist and which may require further description. Often, the researcher's aim is to conceptually verify and expand previous theory. In a directive approach, it is common to use existing research findings and theory to

derive central concepts for initial codes. (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) Codes – as used in qualitative content analysis – are categories which help to classify segments of words in research data (Miles & Huberman, 1984). They allow the researcher to easily spot and cluster segments of data which relate to a specific theme or concept and thus, to organise one’s research data (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Classifying different written descriptions with a single category or code entails a loss of specific information. At the same time, however, it facilitates the comparison between different segments of data (Schreier, 2014) and in this study the contrast of individual experiences and perceptions across the five subcases.

#### 4.2.1. Coding in content analysis

The coding frame constitutes the centre piece of content analysis and features all relevant themes for description and analysis of the data (Schreier, 2014). The definition of the categories for the codes are established using theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Such a theory-driven approach can allow for predictions about variables of interest and their relationships, hence support the development of a coding scheme. The code categories also inform the creation of interview questions in directed content analysis. In this research, code categories were derived from the central themes in Public Administrations literature on cross-sector collaboration and research findings on collaborations between CBIs and local authorities. These are accountability, legitimacy, trust, power, shared vision & goals, joint responsibility and support & motivation (see table 4). Interview questions for research participants were phrased to produce answers and reveal insights concerning these themes. A first batch of codes corresponding each category was defined based on the literature and theory chapters of this thesis. The software ATLAS.ti was used for coding in this study.

One strategy for coding, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), is to start coding a text instantly with predetermined codes. Pieces of data which cannot be coded may later be identified to represent a new code category or a subcategory for an existing code. They can refine the original theory or even offer a conflicting perspective on the phenomenon under study. (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) This is consistent with Eriksson and Kovalainen’s (2008) observation that most social studies are not exclusively deductive but entail deductive and inductive reasoning throughout the same research project. In line with this, several new codes were added to existing code categories and existing codes were modified during the coding process of the first interview. Adjustments to codes, e.g., renaming, deleting or merging one or

more, continued to be made during the coding of the remaining interviews. The earliest stage of this process is recorded in the appendix of this thesis. In the final analysis, seven code groups remained with a total of 22 modified codes.

Some of the codes developed for the in-depth interviews with the gardeners could also be applied to the interviews with the municipal staff and 4H employee. As these interviews were considerably shorter than the interviews conducted with gardeners, the amount of data was easier to organise. Thus, there was no necessity to expand the existing coding frame. The answers given by representatives of the municipality served to confirm, contradict or expand the data generated from the in-depth interviews. The following analysis will hence be guided by the coded data from the gardeners' interviews and complemented by the interview data from municipal representatives.

As opposed to the e-mail interviews, the official municipal documents consisted of a vast quantity of data, of which yet only a small fraction was relevant for this study (see Olson, 2010). Relevant passages in over 100 pages of documents were detected, searching for keywords related to community gardening/farming, such as community-based activism, urban biodiversity, urban nature etc. Beyond this, some of the chapters of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap – the longest of the documents – were manually scrutinised for any possible mention of community gardening or closely related concept. As the pertinence of the sources for this study is confirmed (see above), the validation of authenticity, a step of document analysis (Olson, 2010), is given by the circumstance that all documents were the City of Tampere's official website.<sup>15</sup>

#### 4.2.2. Main code groups and codes of the study

##### 1. Trust

The most prominent conceptual criterion for cross-sectoral collaboration identified in the theory chapter of this thesis is that of trust. In Bryson et al.'s (2015) extensive review (above), most of the presented academic frameworks for collaboration with the public sector feature trusting relationships (see e.g., Thomson & Perry, 2006; Ansell & Gash, 2008 and Provans & Kenis, 2008 in Bryson et al., 2015; see also Forrer et al, 2014). *Trust* is also mentioned as a requirement for co-production by Bovaird (2007), in the literature on partnerships for sustainable

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<sup>15</sup> www.tampere.fi

development (Van Huistee et al., 2007) and in Nevens et al.’s (2012) Urban Transition Labs approach. Frantzeskaki and Rok (2018) highlight generating trust in particular with respect to CBIs’ collaborating with local policymakers. *Trust* is therefore the biggest code group of this analysis.

Apart from the code “community gardeners’ trust” which literally covers respondents’ answers to the question of whether there is trust in their relationship with the City of Tampere, the code “municipality’s trust” emerged during the analysis as some interviewees made remarks indicating a display of trust by the municipality towards gardening CBIs. Statements from the municipal staff also fall under this code. In addition, indirect variables of trust are reflected in the codes “previous relations” and “uncertainty”. Previous relations between the administration and its collaboration partner have been known to affect trust (Bryson et al., 2015), particularly in cases where there is a history of strained relations (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). Considering the general risks which may come with a collaborative endeavour (Bovaird, 2007 and Van Huijstee et al., 2007), the wording “uncertainty” best expresses interviewees’ voiced perceptions of risk. The four codes of this code group and their relations which are briefly described here are depicted in figure 1.<sup>16</sup>

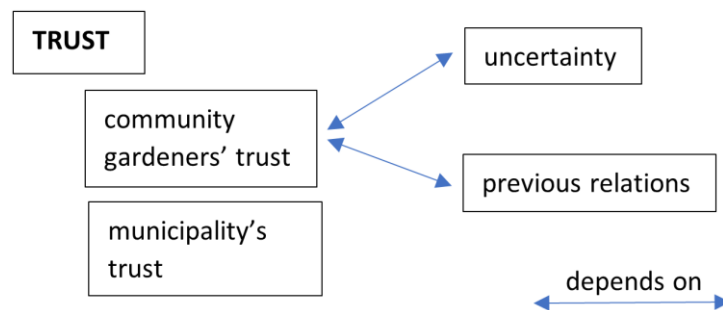


Figure 1 - Code group: Trust

<sup>16</sup> For a general understanding of the figures in this section, the blue arrows pointing in one direction generally stand for “reflected in” and illustrate a one-sided relation between codes or the main theme of the code group and an individual code. E.g., in the code group *accountability*, accountability is reflected in the formality of arrangements, the bureaucratic barrier and the municipality’s terms. The two-sided arrows stand for “depends on” and demonstrate that one code depends on another. In the example of code group *trust*, community gardeners’ feelings of trust (“community gardeners’ trust”) depend on their feelings of uncertainty in the collaboration and on previous relations between CBIs and the municipality (codes “uncertainty” and “previous relations”). Other (bold) arrows or shapes depict other relations between codes which will be specified in the text.

## 2. Accountability

Accountability is a central logic of public administration; hence, it is crucial in collaborations involving an administrative body (Forrer et al., 2014). When emphasis is put on traditional accountability mechanisms, collaboration agreements may be more formal and entail specific goals (Babiak & Thibault, 2009). To assess the degree of accountability, the codes “formality of arrangement” and “municipality’s terms” were derived. Moreover, in the CBI context, accountability requirements may contradict the grassroots logic of community activism (Dinnie & Holstead, 2018). The code “bureaucratic barrier” covers sequences of text in which collaboration with the City of Tampere was expressed as difficult due to bureaucratic requirements, such as rules concerning the organisational form of the community garden groups or complicated application processes for (financial) support from the municipality. These three codes which reflect different aspects of accountability are depicted in figure 2.

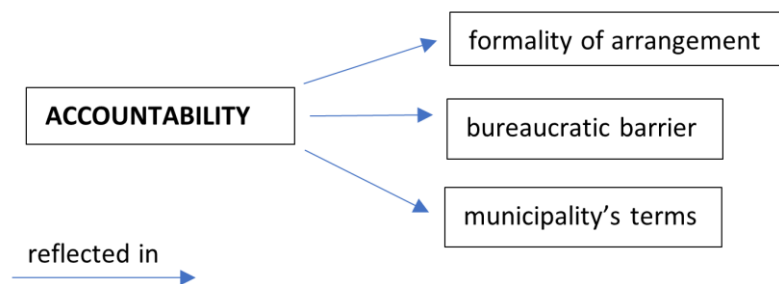


Figure 2 - Code group: Accountability

## 3. Legitimacy

The legitimacy of intersectoral partnerships is not self-evident. Perceptions of legitimacy might differ depending on organisational rationale (Bryson et al. 2015), especially in cases where CBI/grassroots values meet public administration. Internal and external legitimacy alike matter, particularly in the public sector (Human & Provan, 2000). While there are reasons in favour or against collaborations from the point of view of public governance bodies<sup>20</sup>, non-governmental groups, such as CBIs, may risk their legitimacy when engaging with a traditional antagonist (Van Huijstee et al., 2007). This is a valid concern, considering the critique of collaborative CBIs as contributing to neoliberal governance (see Rosol, 2010 in Hou, 2020 and Frantzeskaki et al., 2016) and often conflicting views on financing and politicisation within CBI niches (Holstead et al., 2017); in the context of this study, confrontational past relations between community activists and the City of Tampere are to be considered. Other risks of collaboration

for CBIs, reducing internal legitimacy, could be the loss of support if collaborative inertia (Huxham & Vangen, 2004) occurs.

Based on this, the code "desirability of collaboration" reflects if the community gardeners or municipality, internally, view their collaboration with the other as legitimate when asked directly. The code "collaboration risk", twinned with the code "uncertainty" in the code group *trust*, is meant to capture negative statements by CBI activists, indicating risks as limits to legitimacy. The code "disapproval" covers the expected lack of external legitimacy of collaboration i.e., how other community activists view the partnership. The code "collaboration risk" is connected to the code "co-optation" below in the section on *power* as experiences or a fear of co-optation weaken the legitimacy of collaboration for the CBI. Lastly, the code "perceived collaboration" displays if community gardens in which citizens and the municipality are jointly involved are considered collaborations in the first place by the CBIs (and the City of Tampere). The relations of these four codes are illustrated in figure 3. "Disapproval" and "collaboration risk" directly affect the "desirability of collaboration"; "perceived collaboration" stands somewhat apart as the very existence of collaboration precedes the discussion of its legitimacy.

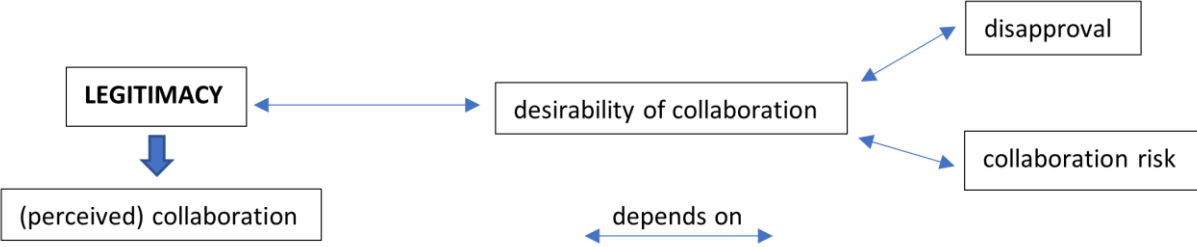


Figure 3 - Code group: Legitimacy

**4. Shared vision and goals**

According to Van Huijstee et al.'s (2007) definition of inter-sectoral partnerships, a common sustainability goal between or among collaboration partners is at the core of joint action for sustainable development. One reason for often troubled relations between sustainability CBIs and local government bodies is seen in the circumstance that the former tend to strive for structural, fundamental change whereas the latter often pursue their own policy goals, with a merely superficial contribution to CBIs' objectives (Henfrey & Penha-Lopes, 2018; Celata & Coletti, 2018b). There are, however, examples of shared goals between city administration and community activists leading to successful collaboration (see Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017).

As the interview data shows, in most cases in which the City of Tampere is involved in communal gardening, there are no clear specific goals articulated. Hence, the code “municipality’s goals” refers to the official objectives of the City of Tampere according to its policies and strategy documents, as well as community gardeners' descriptions of which (legitimacy) goals they believe the City of Tampere to pursue by engaging or *not engaging* in collaboration with gardening CBIs. The code “shared vision” summarises gardeners’ believes of how the City of Tampere shares their ideas for a future city with communal gardening activity implicitly covering community gardeners’ goals. In the depiction of the codes below (figure 4), there is no separate code for community gardeners’ goals as these are covered in gardeners’ opinions of whether goals and visions are shared; “community gardeners’ goals” are merely an implicit counterpart to the “municipality’s goals” and hence displayed in faint framing.

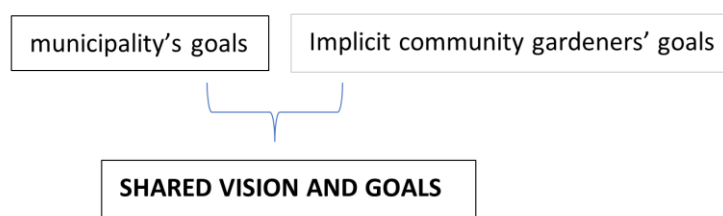


Figure 4 - Code group: Shared vision and goals

## 5. Joined and perceived responsibility

According to Lelieveldt et al. (2009) the defining feature of co-production is found in the shared responsibility between the governance body and the civil-society actor in the generation of public services (see Voorberg et al., 2014). Building on the idea of shared responsibility, Klausen and Sweeting (2005) state that participants in governance (here CBIs) may - going beyond mere interest – display responsibility regarding a public issue. Furthermore, a sense of ownership of the collaborative initiative and responsibility is considered decisive (Talsma & Molenbroek, 2012 in Voorberg et al., 2014). This code group, therefore, contains the codes “perceived responsibility” labelling text about how much responsibility community gardeners themselves perceive for their CBI and the public service they deliver - and “joint responsibilities“ which covers gardeners’ impressions of how the municipality displays responsibility for their community garden project. As figure 5 shows, a feeling of perceived

responsibility by the community gardeners precedes any notions of shared responsibility with the municipality.



*Figure 5 - Code group: Joined and perceived responsibility*

## **6. Power**

While power had best be shared among collaboration partners (Forrer et al., 2014 and van der Jagt et al., 2017), co-optation may occur when one collaboration partner is less powerful than another one (Purdy, 2012). In the case of municipal-CBI collaboration, the municipality holds power in terms of authority and resources in the form of decisions over land use and grant aid (see framework in Purdy, 2012). The literature on CBIs, especially, highlights the risk for community activities to be co-opted by local governments or administration (Frantzeskaki et al., 2016; Henfrey & Penha-Lopes, 2018; Celata & Coletti, 2018b; Blanco, Griggs and Sullivan, 2014; Rodríguez & Di Virgilio, 2016). Different values and levels of power among co-producers may also lead to inequalities among service users (Bovaird et al., 2015) which in the case of urban communal gardening are mainly the gardeners themselves – they are service co-producers and users.

Related to this, are vulnerability and power imbalances within a community (McNamara & Buggy (2016)) - such as the wider urban gardening community. Power imbalances can also weaken cross-sector collaboration in a situation where a more powerful partner ignores a less powerful one due to their position of control and authority over the other (Bryson et al., 2015). Co-optation and exclusion as symptoms of inequality in cross-sector collaboration, thus, adversely affect the less powerful partner's ability to participate and raise their voice (Purdy, 2012) and consequently, their ability to influence the conditions or the direction of the collaboration. This also contradicts the idea of the empowerment of citizens in Nevens et al.'s (2021) vision for innovative governance in sustainable cities or Henfrey and Penha Lopes's (2018) concept of CBIs as an 'empowered niche'.

Hence, the first code in this code group is "co-optation" relating to gardeners' experiences of being somewhat exploited for political purposes by the municipality. The possibility of

inequalities among the gardening actives in relation to collaboration with the municipality – because of favouritism, exclusion or other - translates to code “unequal treatment”. Both these codes reflect the municipality’s power over the CBIs as depicted in figure 6 in the shape of an implicit code. Lastly, the code “gardeners’ influence” pertains to CBIs’ impression of having a say in the collaboration with the City of Tampere and thus of holding some (negotiation) power. It is thus a form of CBIs’ power vis-à-vis the municipality (present in figure 6 as an implicit code for illustration purposes). The relations of the codes are illustrated just below.

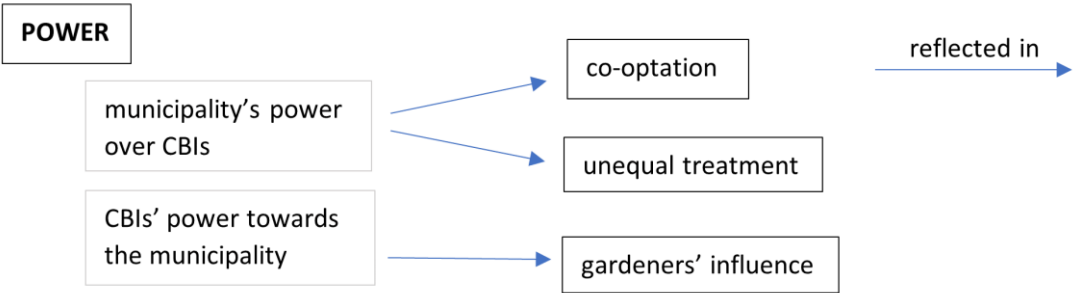


Figure 6 - Code group: Power

**7. Support & motivation**

Related to community gardeners’ perceptions of municipal involvement in their CBI and the impression of collaboration (see above), is their perception of support from the municipality. Nevens et al. (2012) note the value of non-monetary support from policy actors and public administrators – e.g., know-how or networks - in their Urban Transition Labs approach. Mutual support between the municipality and CBI impacting perceptions of empowerment and fulfilment is a pillar of the MiT’s framework for collaborative municipal transitions (Macedo, 2019a). Fruitful co-production can thus motivate and mobilise communities’ and citizens’ potential for further collaborations (see Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017). A representative, impartial and fair design and process of collaboration motivates actors to seek partnerships (Purdy, 2012) whereas strict enforcement of rules by the administration might temper the collaboration partner’s motivation (Ferrer et al., 2014). Collaborative inertia (Huxham & Vangen, 2004) may be the very result of a lack of motivation by collaboration partners due to a lack of tangible outcomes or unsatisfactory operations.

In this code group, the code “municipal support of community gardeners” serves to sum up community gardeners’ feelings concerning genuine support from the City of Tampere towards them and related CBIs. With respect to fair collaboration approaches, interviewees’ opinions on which other actors outside the gardening/CBI sphere receive public funding and support are captured under code “municipal support of other activities”. As can be seen in figure 7, these two codes are in contrast to each other. To gain insights on community gardeners’ general motivation for municipal collaboration in their gardening activities, the code “motivation in relation to support” was developed. Lastly, based on Crosby and Bryson (2010), Bryson et al. (2015) and Forrer et al.’s (2014) mention of formal or informal leaders who motivate and contribute to cross-sector collaboration, the code “municipal leader” deals with passages about municipal staff who proved supportive for community gardens. A municipal leader hence affects community gardeners’ motivation and perception of support. All these codes and their relations are depicted in figure 7 below.

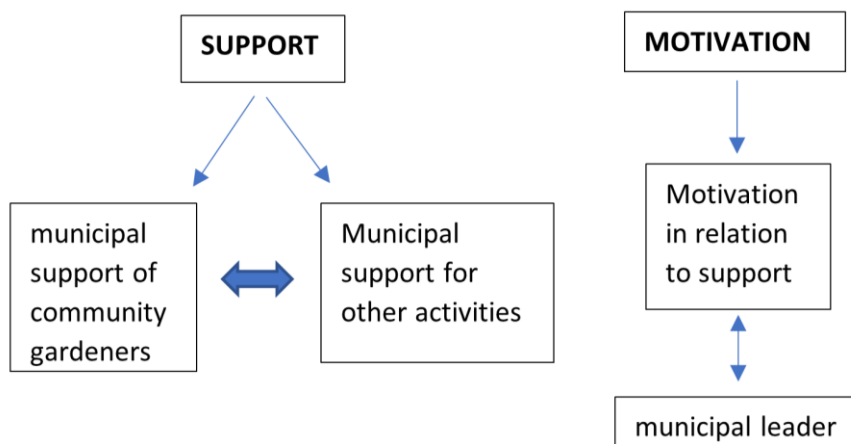


Figure 7 - Code group: Support & Motivation

#### 4.2.3. Relation of codes

These code groups and codes, based on which the data from interviews and documents is analysed, do not form any hierarchical order per se. *Trust* and *power* probably form the biggest groups due to a broad literary basis. Whereas trust is central in the literature on cross-sectoral collaboration, issues of power appear frequently also in CBI research. Accountability and

legitimacy are key concepts of Public Administration and impact municipal-CBI partnerships in various ways. *Shared vision and goals* as well as *joined and perceived responsibility* are smaller codes groups due to a smaller literature foundation - despite their importance for a successful CBI-municipal collaboration. The last code group, based on authors from different areas, combines the topics of (perceived) support and motivation for the collaborative endeavour.

It is important to note that many codes could be listed under more than one group and may overlap with or are connected to other existing codes. For some codes, this is already mentioned above and will become more evident in the presentation of case study findings. A list of all the codes in this content analysis is presented in figure 8 below. Moreover, some codes which appeared relevant according to the literature transpired to be insignificant for this case study<sup>17</sup>; inversely, topics which did not correspond to an existing code emerged during the analysis. This, specifically, is elaborated in the last chapter.

<b>Code groups and codes</b>	
<p><b>Trust</b>  municipality’s trust  community gardeners’ trust  uncertainty  previous relations</p> <p><b>Accountability</b>  formality of arrangement  bureaucratic barrier  municipality’s terms</p> <p><b>Legitimacy</b>  collaboration risk  desirability of collaboration  disapproval  (perceived) collaboration</p>	<p><b>Joint and perceived responsibility</b>  perceived responsibility  shared responsibility</p> <p><b>Power</b>  co-optation  unequal treatment  gardeners’ influence</p> <p><b>Support &amp; motivation</b>  municipal support of community gardeners  motivation in relation to support  municipal leader  municipal support for other activities</p> <p><b>Shared vision and goals</b>  municipality’s goals  shared vision</p>

Figure 8 - Overview of the code groups and codes

<sup>17</sup> One such code which is not even listed here due to its superficial mention in Public Administrations research and low relevance is “actor networks“. They did not seem to exist between gardeners and the municipality or only marginally among the gardeners alone.

### 4.3. Overview of the subcases and other sources of data

#### 4.3.1. Background information about Tampere

Tampere, located 160 km north of the Finnish capital Helsinki, is the second biggest urban center in Finland with a growing population of approximately 240,000 inhabitants. The city emerged during the industrial area (in 1779) as one of the industrial centers in the country. Nowadays, its economic cluster is characterized by the ICT sector, service provision and knowledge. (Kankaala et al., 2018)

As for urban gardening, one of Finland's oldest allotment gardens, established in 1916, is located in the district of Hatanpää, Tampere (FUSILLI, 2022a). In recent years, interest in urban gardening has risen among city residents, also in Tampere. This can be seen, for instance, in high demands for allotment plots (see FUSILLI hanke, June 2022) and more and more residential gardens where people living in apartment buildings cultivate food together in their yards (see e.g., FUSILLI, 2022a or TOAS, n.d.). However, rising temperatures in Tampere's boreal intermediate climate affect the quality of the soil negatively. Simultaneously, extreme weather events like heavy precipitation or long heat periods damage crops and hence lower gardeners' yields. (Roviomaa, 2018) According to Finland's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022, such weather events are expected to become increasingly common in Finland (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2014). The growing season for edible crops, generally, lasts from May to September and is therefore relatively short. There is (usually) no cultivation for the remaining months of the year which might impact the social dynamics of community gardens, making them as a mere summer activity.

#### 4.3.2. The subcases

##### **1. Kalevanharju community garden**

*Kalevanharjun yhteisöviljelmä* is a community garden located in the district of Kalevanharju, nearby the city centre of Tampere. It has been around for approximately seven years<sup>18</sup>, and is run by a small group of active urban gardeners. Gardening activity in Kalevanharju started after the group which had previously gardened in another place discovered a plot of unused, partly littered land on the grounds of the Lutheran Church. When asked about the space, the Church

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<sup>18</sup> The two interviewees were not sure about the exact age of the garden but believed it to be around seven years old.

granted the gardeners permission to use the area for their purposes, even giving them access to its water supply and some gardening equipment. Although somewhat hidden from street view, the garden is potentially open for anyone who is interested and willing to contribute. The gardeners are free to experiment with new crops by themselves or with others, yet everyone takes care of everyone's plants. Bigger maintenance work or other events are carried out as a group. Internal communication happens via a Facebook group which – equally – anyone can join. The number of people who are actively gardening varies each season; in summer 2021, there were fewer than 10 gardeners who actively took part. The image below shows Kalevanharju community garden on a summer evening.



Figure 9 - Kalevanharju community garden in summer 2021

## 2. Kurpitsaliike and communal gardening in Tahmela

Another subcase of this study is *Kurpitsaliike* (“pumpkin movement”), a non-profit association which runs a public community centre, known as *Kurpitsatalo* (“pumpkin house”)<sup>19</sup> in the district of Tahmela. The building is located next to a large area covered by individual garden patches. The latter can essentially be rented by any Tampere citizen for a low price per season via the managing association 4H.<sup>20</sup> Although cultivation can be done individually, Kurpitsatalo

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<sup>19</sup> More information about Kurpitsaliike's activities is available on its [website](#).

<sup>20</sup> In practice, there are long queues as the number of applicants exceeds the number of available patches according to Tampere's 4H plot manager.

supports the communal aspect of gardening in the area by offering a space for gardeners to meet on its premises. In the community building, Kurpitsaliike runs a public café and a library stocked with literature on gardening. The association also lends gardening tools to people cultivating the patches and organises farmer’s markets in which harvested produce can be exchanged among the gardeners or sold to other people. In this sense, gardening activity in Tahmela constitutes a mix of allotment and community gardening (see Bell, 2016) as community involvement is possible and encouraged but not necessary. Kurpitsatalo also hosts school classes and teachings about horticulture. While it is hard to say how many gardeners exactly use Kurpitsatalo’s space and services for communal activities, there are approx. 200 gardeners per season to whom the place is open.<sup>21</sup> In Kurpitsaliike itself, there are between 10-20 active volunteers per year. Figure 10 shows Kurpitsatalo (the yellow building in the background) and a group of gardeners in the midst of lush greenery.



Figure 10 - Gardening in Tahmela close to Kurpitsatalo in summer 2021 (Kurpitsatalo Kesäkahvio, 2021)

### 3. Hiedanranta’s Floating Gardens

A more recent community garden in Tampere’s developing district Hiedanranta, *kelluva puutarha* (“Floating Garden(s)”), got its name from its location on a concrete pier on lake water

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<sup>21</sup> One gardener impressively narrates on his personal experience on a patch in Tahmela [on his blog](#), referring also to the communal dimension of gardening in the area.

which made it literally float. The garden was created in 2016 along with its Facebook group and had a varying number of gardeners throughout the years, between approximately 10 and 30 individuals. The active gardeners were comprised of new gardening enthusiasts and people that used to garden in other public spaces in Tampere before. One part of the gardening boxes in place was designed for private purposes by gardeners, the other part was used for growing crops together in summer 2021. Therefore, the small garden displayed features of both prevailing types of community gardening according to the definition by Okvat & Zautra (2011, above) - at least at the time of data collection. Some gardeners are also active in other gardening-related activities and events run by the municipality in Hiedanranta, such as Hiedanranta's *syötävä puutarha* ("Edible Garden") or *Hiedanrannan Puutarhajuhlat 2021* ("Hiedanranta's Garden Festival 2021"). Any interested gardener could reach out to the group, e.g., via its [Facebook page](#). The Floating Gardens were no longer active in summer 2022 due to the dilapidation of the pier and a new building project by the City of Tampere in the very same area. The image below was taken on the pier in Hiedanranta, depicting remaining gardening boxes at the end of the growing season in autumn.



Figure 11 - Hiedanranta's Floating Gardens in autumn 2021

#### 4. Community gardening in Hirvitalo

*Hirvitalo* ("Elk house") is a public cultural centre in the district of Pispala in Tampere. It was established in 2006 by Pispala Cultural Association ("Hirvitalo - Pispalan nykykaiteen keskus",

2022). Mostly known for art exhibitions, Hirvitalo has also been a place for people to practice gardening for at least 10 years. In 2020, one community member initiated a more organised gardening project on Hirvitalo's premises and a new urban garden for the Hirvitalo community started taking shape. Gardening there has recently been done by a few committed volunteers together. In fact, the harvest is often used for Hirvitalo's weekly communal cooking events – thus, the garden constitutes a part of Hirvitalo's activities. As a public space, the Hirvitalo community is open for anyone who wants to participate in creating culture, such as communal gardening, and can be contacted via its [website](#) or [social media page](#). The image below shows part of the community garden and an explanatory welcome sign.



Figure 12 - Hirvitalo's community garden in summer 2020 (Hirvitalo Pispalan Nykyaiteen Keskus, 2020)

## 5. Communal gardening in elderly home Kuusela

A maybe less known case of community gardening which serves as the last subcase in this research can be found at elderly home Kuusela in Härmälä, Tampere. Gardening on the grounds of the elderly home started a few years ago (when exactly is unknown) and was meant to involve the retired residents of the place as well as anyone living nearby and interested in gardening. The idea of bringing together the elderly and other people in the area to engage in urban gardening marks the communal aspect of this garden initiative. The staff of the elderly home can be considered the driving force in raising a garden for the residents of Kuusela's elderly home and the district.

In total, there are eight interviewees who are all practitioners of community gardening. Most of them are active in only one of the subcases, yet some of them have a broad knowledge of urban gardening activism in Tampere and have been involved in more than one community garden throughout the years.

#### 4.3.3. Municipal documents

One of the documents employed in this thesis is the official *City Strategy 2030* (“The City of Action”) which was approved by the City Council in November 2021 and which is a fundament of contemporary city management. As its name states, the strategy document contains development goals until the year 2030, thus extends beyond the City Council’s office term. Yet, in each term, the new Council decides over land use planning and contents of the strategy are defined continuously for the city administration (City of Tampere, 2021). As highlighted in the strategy’s preface, the city’s vision for 2030 was developed in cooperation with municipal staff, residents and other stakeholders. Referencing the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the strategy refers to ten SDGs which the city shall focus on (City of Tampere, 2021). Figure 13 shows the title page of the English-language version of the strategy paper.

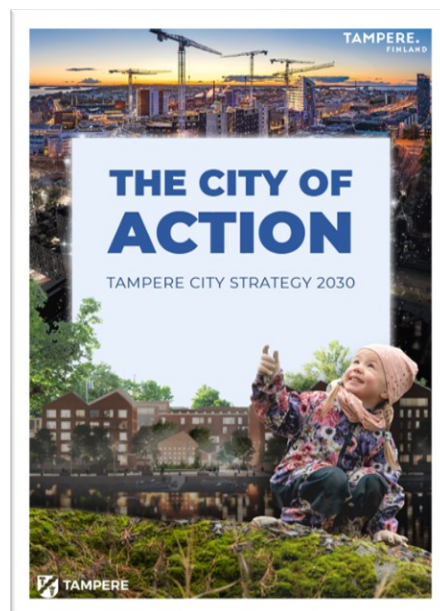


Figure 13 - Frontpage of the Tampere City Strategy 2030 (City of Tampere, 2021)

Notably in relation to sustainability, the City Strategy 2030 stresses Tampere’s ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030 (City of Tampere, 2021). Carbon neutrality, hence, is the key aim of the *Sustainable Tampere 2030 programme* which sought to reduce emissions in five major areas of city life and emissions capture through urban nature (Smart Tampere, n.d.). The programme mainly coordinated Tampere city’s climate actions which were pooled in the Carbon Neutral Tampere 2030 roadmap (below) (Smart Tampere, n.d.). Precisely, the Sustainable Tampere 2030 programme provided guidance for the “Sustainable Tampere 2030 – towards a carbon-neutral city” policy (Smart Tampere, n.d.). This policy is publicly accessible through a booklet whose titlepage is depicted in figure 14. It goes together with a set of guidelines for achieving the official strategy’s sustainable development and environmental objectives (see Committee for City Planning and Infrastructure Services, City Council, City Board, 2018). The first page of a presentation of these guidelines in English can be seen in figure 15. The Sustainable Tampere 2030 policy (City of Tampere, n.d.) and guidelines document are both used as sources of data in this thesis.



Figure 14 - Frontpage of Sustainable Tampere 2030 (City of Tampere, n.d.)



Figure 15 - Presentation of the guidelines for Sustainable Tampere 2030 - Towards a carbon-neutral city (Committee for City Planning and Infrastructure Services, City Council, City Board, 2018)

More concrete than the previously described documents, the *Carbon Neutral Tampere 2030 Roadmap* compiles the city's projected climate actions. It was created jointly by the *Sustainable Tampere 2030* programme with the city's service areas and units and approved by the City Board in August 2020 (Smart Tampere, n.d.). The roadmap encompasses 236 actions to spur the city's reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The objective is to decrease the city's greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent compared to 1990 levels. The city plans to compensate the remaining 20 percent with, among other things, the development of carbon sinks such as forests and green areas. (City of Tampere, n.d.) In addition to the climate impact, the measures are projected to create other benefits, e.g., an attractive environment, business opportunities or increased biodiversity (Tampere City Board, 2020). The roadmap's frontpage is shown in the figure below.

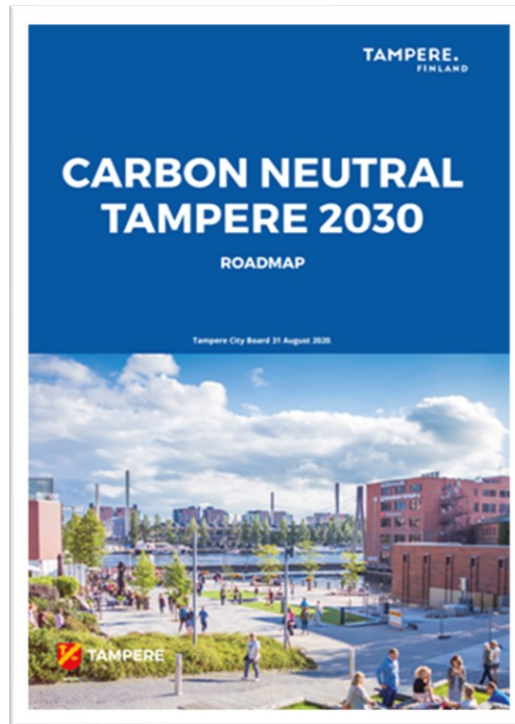


Figure 16 - Frontpage of the Carbon Neutral Tampere 2030 Roadmap (Tampere City Board, 2020)

#### 4.3.4. Further sources and interviewees

As several of the community gardening research participants mentioned relying on grant funding by the municipality, some public information about the availability and eligibility for grants served as a data source for this thesis as well (see Tampereen kaupunki, 2022). At least two CBI subcases of this research previously depended on funding from the City of Tampere's grant for self-motivated environmental protection in specific ([Avustukset omaehtoiseen ympäristönsuojeluun](#) in Finnish); this grant is sometimes referred to as “environmental protection grant” in this thesis. The environmental planner responsible for the administration of this grant took part in a short e-mail interview which forms part of the thesis data.

Another participant of this research is one of the municipality's coordinators of the FUSILLI project whose plan is to promote urban gardening both in city planning and in making it more accessible for citizens. The official EU-project logo is shown in figure 19 below. In the course of the project, at least one public panel discussion on the topic of community gardening in Tampere took place (see FUSILLI hanke, June 2022). These interviews are further

complemented by FUSILLI's website (FUSILLI, 2022a) and two online articles on community gardening activity which is initiated or actively supported by the City of Tampere.

Lastly, an e-mail interview was conducted with a representative of the association *4H Tampere* whose answers were complemented by a property manager of the City of Tampere who worked together with 4H Tampere. Nationally, 4H Finland organises various activities for children and youth to teach them new skills and provide them with opportunities for work experiences (Suomen 4H-liitto, n.d.). In Tampere, the local section is also in charge of tilling and renting parts of municipal land to residents for urban gardening. There are annual and perennial plots of land for rent in several different parts of Tampere. (Tampereen 4H-yhdistys, n.d.) Communal gardening in Tahmela (see Kurpitsaliike above), Hatanpää (a planned subcase which could not be accessed) and possibly other cases takes place on these allotments which are managed by 4H on behalf of the City of Tampere. The communal gardeners receive support from 4H in the form of gardening advice; gardeners on annual plots also receive organic fertiliser. (Tampereen 4H-yhdistys, n.d.) Figure 17 shows 4H Finland's logo.



Figure 17 - 4H Finland logo (Helppi.4H, n.d.)



Figure 18 - FUSILLI logo (FUSILLI, 2022b)

## 5. Analysis and findings

### 5.1. Forms of collaboration

A prerequisite for the selection of subcases in this study and thus also the applicability of the codes in this content analysis is the City of Tampere's involvement in community gardening initiatives. As a central feature of this research, the two major forms of municipal involvement in gardening CBIs in Tampere to emerge are the funding of community gardens through municipal grant schemes and the formal or informal use of municipal land by gardeners (depicted in table 7 below).<sup>22</sup> As for the former, grant funding, all gardening groups received funding from the City of Tampere to some extent. The gardening project in Kuusela, was funded by a municipal fund for elderly people's well-being, whereas Kalevanharju's community garden and Hiedanranta's Floating Gardens received funding from the municipality's environmental protection grant. Kurpitsaliike and the Hirvitalo community also rely, at least partly, on public funding and usually receive some from one of the municipality's grants for cultural activities.<sup>23</sup> Some of the subcases heavily depend(ed) on the municipality's annual grant decisions.

The research participants voiced very different views concerning the municipality's grants. On the one hand, some community gardeners seemed satisfied with the amount they received from the City of Tampere, describing their grant decision, for example, as "generous" (interviewee 3). One CBI, on the other hand, struggled to make ends meet whereby the municipal funding received each year was insufficient:

“[W]e get [a] little money to cover our expenses. But we don't get any money for our actual everyday [work]. [...] [M]ost of our time and most of our energy, unfortunately, goes [into] fund-raising because we have to survive. We have to pay those bills.”  
(Interviewee 4)

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<sup>22</sup> “Grant funding” and “land use” would be the corresponding codes which were initially thought to stand somewhat apart from the seven code groups as municipal involvement in community gardening initiatives is the very basic criterion of this research. If they had to be connected to a specific code group, this might be *power* – as the municipal administration holds power in the shape of resources and formal authority to decide over who is granted funding or land for (CBI) activities.

<sup>23</sup> Neither the interviewee from Kurpitsaliike nor the ones from Hirvitalo could specify which grant exactly they received from the City of Tampere.

Another finding relates to the City of Tampere's funding categories. One interviewee considered the division into types of activism - for instance, environmental or cultural activism - "problematic" (interviewee 2) as communal gardening covers more than only one of these categories. Another perceived the funding category their CBI is in as inadequate due to too small sums of granted funds; for them the category appeared suitable for CBIs with small financial needs, not bigger and more structured ones with many expenses to cover.

Land use describes communal gardening activities which happen on land owned by the City of Tampere. The municipality granting land to a CBI for non-profit purposes – usually at low costs or none at all – is considered a form of involvement or collaboration. According to the FUSILLI coordinator who participated in this research, it is a major way for the City of Tampere to take part in the creation of a sustainable food system: by supporting urban gardening. Three subcases operated on City-owned ground at the time of this research, whereas in the case of the garden in Kuusela, the arrangement was not clear due to the mixed private-public ownership of the elderly home. The community gardeners in Kalevanharju constitute an exceptional case as their activities are happening on land owned by the Lutheran Church (i.e., not municipally-owned land). The gardeners' feelings about relying on municipal land are featured below.

In the case of the Floating Gardens, visibility was also given to the community garden along with other urban gardening activities organised by the City of Tampere in Hiedanranta (see the introduction of the subcase above or further analysis below).<sup>24</sup> Promoting a CBI's activities through visibility can be another form of municipal involvement and support; yet, no other subcase expressed that their group had gotten any (additional) visibility through their collaboration with the City of Tampere. The availability of allotment garden parcels is communicated by 4H, yet no visible links to existing gardening communities are drawn in their communication. However, one of the project goals of FUSILLI in Tampere involves creating a map of existing local community gardens as part of an urban gardening data base i.e., making community gardens more visible for citizens. The forms of collaboration between gardening CBIs and the municipality in this case study - as elaborated above - are summarised in table 7 below.

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<sup>24</sup> The website which mentioned gardening activities in Hiedanranta, including the floating community garden no longer exists.

	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>Forms of collaboration between City of Tampere and community gardeners</b>	<p><b>Grant funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Municipal grant supporting the well-being of elderly people</li> <li>o Municipal grant for cultural activities</li> <li>o Municipal grant for self-motivated environmental action</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Land use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Gardens (and associated buildings) located on City-owned land or property</li> <li>o Garden located on premises of a mixed public-private residence</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Other forms of collaborative involvement</b></p> <p>Advertising of community garden on City’s website</p>

*Table 7 - Description of identified forms of collaboration*

**5.2. Trust**

To start with the municipality’s side, some community gardeners noted that the City of Tampere’s behaviour indicated trust towards the CBIs that received grant money, recalling “quite small” (interviewee 1) control from the municipality over their garden or the provision of equipment without further interference. 4H and the civil servant responsible for the allotment areas confirm this impression also for land use, stating that community gardeners on the areas managed by 4H are considered very reliable.

As for trust on the community gardeners’ part, opinions among subcases vary greatly, from affirming answers to voiced distrust. While one interviewee mused if the municipality’s commitment to urban gardening was authentic or “just words” (interviewee 3), another explicitly stated that they “don’t [...] trust [the municipality] at all” (interviewee 8). The following may explain why there is no clear overwhelming trust in the City of Tampere as a collaboration partner.

Among the research participants who expressed a lack of trust towards the City of Tampere, interviewees explicitly mentioned what one described as “strange decisions” (interviewee 7) by the municipality with respect to community activism in the last decades on which their distrust is based. For instance, several gardeners were aware of Kurpitsaliike’s engagement in Tahmela where activists fought to preserve the area for gardening when the City of Tampere meant to sell it for the construction of housing. Other more recent decisions affected CBIs without ties to gardening where City-owned community spaces were under threat of being closed or sold. Moreover, gardeners from one subcase recalled ideas by the City of Tampere to promote the visibility of and collaboration with them which, however, did not lead to any outcome for their gardening group. Previous relations between local community activists and the municipality, thus, affect trust and the collaborative relation between community gardeners and the city administration today.

Observed patterns in the municipality’s behaviour concerning land given to CBIs for public activities further caused uncertainty for some community gardeners. This feeling becomes synonymous to the lack of trust that some gardening activists experience towards the municipality and overlaps greatly with the perceived risks in collaboration (analysed below). As one interviewee described the municipality’s actions:

“[...] they kind of support something that is really something good that people are making by themselves, and at some point, when people have done their job, then [the City of Tampere] just like take[s] the area and do[es] something else with it. That's like what has happened in different places [...] and that is the kind of threat.”  
(Interviewee 1)

Whereas for Kurpitsaliike, the threat is history, other community gardeners still faced the fear of losing their garden if the City of Tampere decided to use the granted land for other purposes - most commonly construction projects. Such future construction plans still exist, for instance, for Hirvitalo. In the case of Hiedanranta’s Floating Gardens, the gardeners were moved to another location in 2022.

### 5.3. Accountability

All but one gardening practitioner did not perceive bureaucracy as a barrier in their engagement with the City of Tampere. Specifically, applying for funding was described as easy and open to CBIs which are not formally registered. The process of applying for a gardening plot in one of the many areas managed by 4H seemed accessible and unbureaucratic as information about gardening patches is circulated on websites and social media. Only one interviewee commented negatively on “permissions and funding applications [as] very difficult to identify, locate and access” (interviewee 5). Related to this, the coordinator of the environmental grant could not be sure to what extent citizens are aware of this grant which is communicated (only) on the City of Tampere’s website and in a local newspaper.

Concerning the formality of arrangements, two CBIs mentioned a written contract with the City of Tampere which, however, did not contain many conditions or limitations for the community.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, none of the community gardeners remembered any particularly formal agreements. One of the municipality’s environmental planners confirmed that the reporting requirements for the environmental grant cannot be considered strict. Whereas the contracts - where in place - did not mention municipal terms with respect to any concrete goals of the collaboration, there can be quite specific terms for grant funding. One interviewee noted how the City of Tampere’s grant for environmental protection changed requirements from one year to the next, introducing a condition for invasive species removal:

“But this year, when we applied for it, we forgot that it was restricted for, what is it? To get rid of these foreign plants or something. So, we didn't get the money because we don't do that, so I'm not sure it has been always like that.” (Interviewee 2)

### 5.4. Legitimacy

Concerning the very existence of a collaborative relationship, research participants, again, expressed mixed opinions. 4H’s allotment coordinator, along with representatives from two subcases viewed the joint involvement of the municipality and CBIs in urban gardening as a form of collaboration. Some other community gardeners perceive the present collaboration as

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<sup>25</sup> Specifically, in the case of Kurpitsaliike, there are merely basic conditions, such that Kurpitsatalo as a public place may not be used for profit-seeking activities or that the association is responsible for covering all expenses in relation to the building. No terms with regard to the goals of the collaboration between community activists and the City of Tampere were mentioned.

insufficient, articulating, for instance, that “[t]here should be some more [...] cooperation” (interviewee 3), whereas in one subcase, there was no perception of any collaboration altogether. Henceforth, despite municipal involvement in all subcases, not all interviewees understood the relation between their CBI and the City of Tampere as a collaboration. Notably, one respondent mentioned a lack of compatibility regarding the municipality’s way of operating vis-à-vis a CBI grassroots logic in relation to the perceived lack of collaboration.

Yet, with respect to the desirability of municipal-CBI collaboration, all interviewees stated reasons in favour. Among these were that grant aid reduces the gardeners’ financial worries while maintaining their independence; this corresponds with the above findings on mostly loose requirements and formalities of funding support. In one subcase the statement was made that there are no reasons why it would per se be undesirable for a CBI to collaborate with the City of Tampere. Instead, a clear desirability of public over private funding was expressed:

“I still want to think that [Kurpitsatalo] would be [...] it would be a public place, open place, like open community house and then in that case, I think, as it is a public place, it should be also funded with money. [...] It could go, for example, [...] this kind of future for the house that instead of owned by Tampere, it would be [taken] over by [...] a private owner, and it would be a commercial place and survive in that way. But I still want to hope that [...] [Kurpitsatalo] can be this kind of public [entity].”

(Kurpitsaliike interviewee)

From the municipality’s side, officially, collaboration or partnership with and among communities, residents and businesses is a central value; the support of community activities and co-creation of services is explicitly stated in the Tampere City Strategy 2030. ‘The City of Action’ endorses vibrant communities and declares to strengthen and encourage community initiatives.

As for experiences of disapproval by other CBIs, surprisingly, no external legitimacy loss was perceived by any of the community gardeners i.e., none of them faced criticism for choosing to be involved with the City of Tampere. The desirability of municipal support for communal gardening, thus, seemed widespread, even beyond the subcases.

Lastly, when asked about possible risks of collaboration with the municipality, several interview participants identified a common risk of collaboration. As addressed above already, community gardeners pointed to the concern that any City-owned land which the municipality

may leave for community groups to garden on would not be safe for any long-term activity. This is due to the City of Tampere's history of planning to or eventually making land which CBIs had been using for their activities available for construction. Interviewees mentioned this for instance in the case of an urban gardening group which ceased to exist when their gardening space in Tampella, Tampere was converted to construction ground. The threat of construction to replace community buildings or parks has also been known in the cases of Hirvitalo or Eteläpuisto, Tampere (Airo, 2017). One other mention pertains to the sustainability of relations and implies that staff changes within the administration may occur at any point and might affect the amount of support a CBI receives negatively.

### 5.5. Shared vision and goals

As for “municipality's goals”, municipal documents like the *Sustainable Tampere 2030* policy (City of Tampere, n.d.) and the corresponding guidelines (Committee for City Planning and Infrastructure Services, City Council, City Board, 2018) reiterate, among others, the ambition to strengthen urban nature, i.e., urban forests and green spaces, referring to their importance for carbon sequestration, climate change action and the well-being of the human city population (City of Tampere, n.d.). The current city strategy (City of Tampere, 2021) also makes mention of biodiversity in relation to climate action. The municipality's endeavour to support the urban environment was reflected in a statement on the former city website which expressed that grants for community activity were with priority given to CBIs which engaged in environmental protection<sup>26</sup>. Nonetheless, edible urban gardens specifically, do not appear in any of the guiding strategy documents; neither in relation to urban nature, nor in connection to sustainable food consumption or any other goal community gardening may intersect with. However, it is among the official objectives of the FUSILLI project (FUSILLI, 2022a) to integrate a food systems vision into the Sustainable Tampere 2030 strategy.

From the gardeners' point of view, some of them saw a certain momentum for urban gardening which had become “a trendy thing” (interviewee 4) - and thus noted the city's willingness to dedicate some funds to this activity, whereas others observed the municipality's desire to support grassroots activities specifically in certain places:

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<sup>26</sup>A previous version of the website [tampere.fi/avustukset](http://tampere.fi/avustukset) on grant funding contained the referenced information. The city website was, however, updated in early summer 2022 and the note about special support for environmental CBI activity disappeared. For this reason, the website is not listed as an official source of the case study.

“So, [Hiedanranta is] going to be a carbon-neutral district [...]. So, they obviously wanted to support all kinds of sustainable grassroots activities in the area [...]. I think, it was part of [...] the public image change because this was a polluted industrial area. So, they wanted to bring some kind of fresh [...] activities here and also more like people-friendly, approachable activities.” (Floating Gardens interviewee)

Related to the latter citation, a gardener from another subcase equally addressed the municipality’s public image, yet they suspected it to be a reason for limited support from the City of Tampere for their CBI, articulating that their garden may “look too modest somehow” (interviewee 3) or “a little bit anarchist” (interviewee 3). This statement indicates that support may only be given to initiatives which mirror the municipal agenda or the administration’s ideas of what citizen activity is desirable. Officially, according to the city’s website informing about grant funding (Tampereen kaupunki, 2022), the City of Tampere supports any community activities which are aligned with the municipality’s services and values, as well as promote the implementation of strategic objectives. This will be touched on again in the section *power* below.

Despite communal gardening or edible gardens not being mentioned as a measure of sustainable city development in the City of Tampere’s official agenda, some community gardeners did acknowledge links - and somewhat a shared vision - between their activities and municipal sustainability goals. As one interviewee phrased it, their community gardening work put the official goals into practice:

“[A]t least [the municipality has its] own strategy and [...] say[s] lots of things about sustainability and I think that's what we're doing, [it's] like sustainability in practice [...]. We don't just talk about these things, but we actually do things that are sustainable. And we, together, we share these skills about the sustainable ways of living.” (Interviewee 4)

Participants from other subcases, however, voiced doubts about a shared vision, e.g., whether the municipal sustainability goals were authentic or “just words” (interviewee 3), i.e., mere rhetoric.

Specifically, when asked about a shared vision for community gardening, some interviewees made remarks about other focus areas the municipality may have, e.g., that the City of Tampere showed more interest in grass-covered areas than urban farming. Indeed, the language used in Tampere’s official policy documents is somewhat imprecise, mentioning e.g., green areas, as

indicated above, yet lacking details about the design of urban green spaces; these could take the shape of grass-covered parks or public vegetable gardens. According to a FUSILLI coordinator, the municipal administration recognises the value of community gardening with respect to citizens' well-being and their relationship with food, attributing it indirect value for the local food system. Both the environmental planner responsible for the environmental protection grant and the 4H coordinator saw potential for programmes in which community gardens could be linked to public services such as wellbeing and health or education; yet no further information could be given about existing projects or policies.

### 5.6. Joint and perceived responsibility

As for community gardeners' own perceived responsibility for their garden and initiative, this may have different causes. For instance, some value their garden as a means of mirroring their experiences and feelings, indicating a personal connection. For others it is (also) a form of "soft activism" (interviewee 2) or a meaningful tool showing how an aesthetically appealing garden can grow edible crop plants – and counterbalance "fancy" (interviewee 7) types of gardens in a modernising neighbourhood that is poor in biodiversity and traditional flora; hence, the garden may be seen as a political statement. Other implicitly or explicitly stated values attached to urban gardening, explaining gardeners' perception of responsibility are sustainable and local food production, the learning and teaching of horticultural skills and the accessibility of community spaces. The feeling of responsibility for the gardening CBI became most evident in the continuous work performed by volunteers, as one interviewee described:

“So, [...] how we can survive all these years, is that we have so much of volunteering. Almost all this work is done by volunteering, our fundraising is done by the volunteers, and it's all about volunteering.” (Interviewee 4)

With respect to a perception of shared responsibilities, only one interviewee mentioned the municipality as taking over joint responsibility in their project in which the City of Tampere was involved from the start. There were more critical voices among the other interviewees, such as impressions that the municipality might shy away from official involvement in community gardens so as not to be held responsible for providing equipment or other resources. Another group negated that there is any shared responsibility with the municipality in their own garden

altogether. There was yet some awareness that the City of Tampere is responsible for 4H-related plot gardening which creates a possibility for community gardening.

### 5.7. Power

The municipality holds power over CBIs most notably in terms of authority and resources: the authority to decide over how the city's resources, i.e., its financial budget and available land are allocated – and how much money or land is given to which CBI (here: community garden group).

Concerning co-optation from the municipality's side, none but two interviewees shared respective impressions when reflecting on the City of Tampere's behaviour towards their own community gardens and the wider community of Tampere-based CBIs. Whereas one remembered articulated support from the City of Tampere but did not see enough financial help following the municipality's rhetoric, another gardening activist criticised the low municipal support for artistic CBIs all by enjoying the city's good reputation concerning its cultural scene:

“[...] I think in Tampere, the city has used for its marketing purposes [...] a lot of these images [...] of Tampere as a place where like people [...] have really nice communal spaces, [...] doing things with low budget, [...] something fresh and interesting. [...] And then the reality might be that they are actually trying to take away all these [...] places. I understand this fear, this attitude [...]: “Don't use me for your marketing purpose if you're not actually being solidary”.” (Interviewee 7)

Similar to the topic of co-optation, only few of the interviewees commented on perceptions of unequal treatment in the municipality's involvement in CBIs. One interviewee suspected that the municipality prefers collaboration with resident associations and their gardening activity over community gardening on public land. This impression is likely based on the municipality's experienced reluctance to dedicate any public grounds to gardening CBIs permanently. Also, resident associations have been confirmed to be recipients of the self-motivated environmental protection grant, precisely for urban greening and farming activities. Yet, there is at least one case of a more organised, top-down city garden in Tampere. The above-mentioned district Hiedanranta contains the *Edible Garden* (or *Edible Park*) in which vegetable cultivation can be practiced communally and for free (Hiedanrannan Kehitys Oy, n.d.a). In summer 2022, a new

accessible opportunity for community gardening was created in the same area (Hiedanrannan Kehitys Oy (n.d.b) by the start-up *Blokgården* which sells urban gardening services and has cooperated with the City of Tampere before (6Aika, 2021, November 12).

The municipality, thus, has demonstrated its support of urban communal gardening, whereby these specific actions are located in a more peripheral district. Precisely this is what made some community gardeners believe that certain CBIs receive more support than others and that the municipal agenda for specific areas determines the public-sector involvement. Hiedanranta, in particular, was identified as a place where “mak[ing] the whole area inviting” (interviewee 1) was part of “the bigger plan” (interviewee 1) - and thus the City of Tampere’s focus lies on activities there (see findings above). Indeed, the FUSILLI project intends, among other things, to specifically develop urban gardening guidelines for Hiedanranta as it is the only city district which is explicitly mentioned in the project’s living lab plan. Moreover, Hiedanranta is prominently featured in the Carbon Neutral Roadmap as the only city district which is to be carbon negative; it is generally promoted as a sustainable neighbourhood (see e.g., the KIEPPI project in “Sustainable Tampere 2030 – towards a carbon-neutral city”, City of Tampere, n.d.).

It appears that the influence that community gardeners believe to have on the municipal administration ranged from possible but limited to negligible. Some interviewees, on the one hand, saw somewhat possibilities to influence administrative decisions, at least when their ideas were in line with municipal goals or the right person within the organisation is addressed. When, for instance, there is already an attitude in favour of urban gardening, the city administration is more likely to have an open ear for CBIs’ proposals and to acknowledge previous community efforts that are “good and working” (interviewee 1).

On the other hand, other interview participants described a feeling of being “a bit invisible to the city [administration]” (interviewee 2), and of the relationship between their CBI and the municipality as “kind of [...] hierarchical” (interviewee 3). Many interviewed gardeners highlighted inadequate communication: the circulation of information, e.g., was considered “tricky” (interviewee 6) with CBI gardeners as the last actors to receive news about developments in the city district. Other remarks displayed a lack of feedback concerning grant decisions or insufficient information on contacts within the City of Tampere which, according to one interviewee, are “extremely difficult to find” (interviewee 5). One comment which reflected community gardeners’ impression of little influence towards the municipality by themselves is the following:

“[M]aybe even more, we could try to influence like neighbours and people in the area or people in general. And, and then if there's a lot of people, like thinking that this garden is good [...] we could maybe affect city [administration] people. If we have a bigger group of people [...].” (Interviewee 8)

Their view especially demonstrates that the community gardeners alone do not see it in their power to influence the City of Tampere much.

### 5.8. Support & motivation

Concerning municipal support, a single gardener perceived the City of Tampere as willing to support “any ideas that are not too expensive and are practical and [without] legal obstacles or anything about public safety [...]” (interviewee 6) including their own initiative. Another participant acknowledged more overall municipal support of cultural CBIs in Tampere than in other comparable cities contradicting the above-mentioned view of a co-opted cultural scene causing distrust towards the municipality. In line with the latter, other interviewees were of the impression that the municipality’s support was insufficient. While one group “hardly survive[s]” (interviewee 4) and would need considerably more funding to dedicate itself to communal gardening, another interviewee judged the municipal support as too little:

“[The municipal administration] support[s] a lot of construction and building projects, as well as medicine and medicalised healthcare, but the quality of food in the city lacks diversity and [...] is quite poor (compared to their tech, construction and medical investments). And their efforts to support urban farming [are] negligible and very disappointing.” (Interviewee 5)

Regarding the motivation gardeners felt in relation to received support, one interviewee emphasised the immense workload of their group’s volunteers. With more financial support from the municipality, all volunteers could focus on the group’s core activity and the CBI “could much more flourish” (interviewee 4). Instead, the group felt forced to pool all available resources for fundraising which led to burnouts and volunteers quitting the initiative. Nonetheless, some of those interviewees whose CBIs received enough support recognised that their own motivation was positively affected by the municipal support they received; some even described municipal funding as giving the gardeners the opportunity to explore communal gardening, sustaining their motivation. A lack of motivation of community gardeners due to

strict rule enforcement by the City of Tampere could not be inferred from the interviews which corresponds to the municipality’s low accountability measures (above).

References to supportive municipal leaders, however, were rare. One interviewee mentioned having met interested municipal staff on one occasion; yet, like most other interview participants, they could not think of any specific individuals. As previously covered, the issue that generally, the success of CBI-municipal collaboration is vulnerable to staff changes, was addressed. Only one person, the development manager of Hiedanranta, was named explicitly as a supporter from the City of Tampere by the interviewee representative of the Floating Gardens. Thus, the general absence of a ‘sponsor’ on the municipality’s side who advocates for gardening CBIs could affect some of the community gardeners’ motivation.

5.9. Illustration of the findings

The following table contains a summary of the perceptions and opinions of the research participants regarding the features of collaboration between the municipal administration and community garden initiatives in Tampere. As can be seen in the left column, the code groups overlap again as several experiences - voiced especially by community gardeners - pertain to more than one factor of collaboration and could be covered by more than one code. The code groups these findings are listed under in the text are in bold; the themes which some findings overlap with are listed on the same level in table 8. In the right column, the main findings follow a black bullet and are specified or elucidated by the text in hollow bullets.

CODE GROUP	PERCEPTIONS AND VIEWS CONCERNING THE COLLABORATION
<p><b>Forms of collaboration</b></p> <p>Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed opinions on amounts from extensive to insufficient granted funds</li> <li>• some critical remarks about inadequate funding categories for community gardens and changing funding criteria</li> <li>• Advertising of a community garden by the municipality only in a single case, desired by (only) one other case</li> <li>○ FUSILLI plans data base for community gardens (□ visibility)</li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TRUST</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low control and high trust from the municipality towards community gardeners</li> <li>• mixed perceptions of trust and distrust among community gardeners towards the City of Tampere</li> <li>○ distrust based on history of the municipality taking public land or spaces away from CBIs for building development, sale etc.</li> <li>○ uncertainty about longevity of collaborative arrangement for some community gardeners</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Support &amp; motivation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application processes viewed as simple by all but one participant (gardener) - despite specific funding criteria to be followed</li> <li>• no formal or restrictive reporting or conditions once arrangement is in place, confirmed by most community gardeners and municipal representatives</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LEGITIMACY</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Joint responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overwhelming approval of and desire for collaboration</li> <li>• no disapproval among CBIs generally for collaboration with municipality</li> <li>• mixed opinions about existing collaboration, from acknowledgement to denial</li> <li>○ disappointment in collaboration due to risks: <i>unreliability in land use</i>, possibility of staff changes, incompatibility of administrative system with CBI operations</li> <li>○ joint responsibility in collaboration perceived by only one subcase</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SHARED VISION AND GOALS</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Perceived responsibility</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Legitimacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vague overlap of municipality's and community gardeners' goals concerning sustainability, urban nature / environment and community activities</li> <li>• lack of precise urban gardening vision possibly to be addressed by FUSILLI's food systems vision</li> <li>• perception by some subcases that City's focus is on specific (types of) green spaces or garden areas (--&gt; no equal support of all)</li> <li>• potential for links with other public services identified by some</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POWER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shared vision and goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One individual and one general observation of co-optation, no experience from other subcases</li> <li>• few experiences of unequal treatment among CBIs but for residential gardens and particularly (communal gardening) activities in Hiedanranta</li> <li>• mixed perceptions of influence on municipality's decisions by community gardeners from possibility to influence to generally low impact</li> <li>○ feeling of being overlooked, viewed as not important enough by the City of Tampere</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of communication from municipality towards community gardeners perceived by many (□ municipality: seemingly unaware of the issue)</li> </ul>
<p><b>SUPPORT &amp; MOTIVATION</b></p> <p>Perceived responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed answers about level of municipal support for community gardeners, openness to CBIs vs. too little support (no interest or too little funding)</li> <li>○ low municipal funding harms motivation, high financial support motivates community gardeners</li> <li>• high intrinsic motivation for engaging in CBI by community gardeners per se</li> <li>• hardly any leaders in favour of community gardening in the administration according to subcases</li> </ul>

*Table 8 - Depiction of collaborative experiences between community gardeners and the City of Tampere*

## 6. Discussion and conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between urban community gardens and the City of Tampere with respect to features of collaboration between community-based initiatives and the public sector, specifically municipalities. The broader context of this research is community activism for climate change adaptation and/or citizen initiatives aiming for a sustainability transition (especially in urban spaces). The research question guiding this case study was the following: **How can the collaboration between the City of Tampere and community gardening initiatives as a type of community-based sustainability initiatives in Tampere be characterized?** Based on existing literature on cross-sector collaboration in Public Administration, the research question was refined to analyse the relation between communal gardening initiatives in Tampere and the city administration according to the features **accountability, legitimacy, trust, power, shared vision/goals, joint responsibility and support & motivation**. The research question was answered with a case study, employing qualitative content analysis of the case data. The latter consisted of in-depth interviews with local community gardeners, shorter interview questionnaires answered by public servants and an affiliated garden coordinator, official municipal policy documents and topic-related websites.

In this last chapter, the research question will be answered by concluding the case study findings from the previous chapter and by discussing their significance for the collaborative relationship between community gardens and the municipality in Tampere by means of existing CBI literature and collaboration research. Furthermore, the following sections contain a critical outline of the shortcomings of this research, as well as its contributions for both academia and practitioners in Tampere. The chapter will end with concluding remarks about Tampere's community gardens and their impacts on a local sustainability transition.

### 6.1. Conclusion of the analysis

The findings of this case study are illustrated in table 8 above. The most striking observation in the analysis of this study pertains to the diversity of opinions among research participants. The attitudes of the representatives of the city administration concerning urban communal gardening largely correspond to each other – despite the lack of mention of community gardening in policy

documents concerning sustainable development. Yet, the experiences of community gardeners – in part – varied greatly. This shows how individual the situation of each gardening group still is, despite the common feature that all operate in the same administrative municipal environment. At least one reason for the varying perceptions of the City of Tampere’s involvement in community gardening is the difference in structure, size and other features of the individual CBIs, such as previous relations with the City of Tampere. As described above, some groups have few active members, may be relatively new and possess little structure. Others are (part of) a more organised initiative with a longer history, different regular activities and thus different needs for, e.g., funding.

Although there were many different, at times even conflicting views among community gardeners as well as discrepancies comparing city staff to gardeners’ opinions, there are a few points on which all or most research participants could agree. Regarding bureaucracy and formality in collaboration agreements, all but one community gardening practitioner shared a perception that applications are accessible, contracts simple to follow and that paperwork is manageable if basic criteria are followed. Exclusively all research participants agreed that collaboration itself between the municipality and CBIs or community gardens is desirable. Corresponding to that, none of the community gardeners had faced criticism for collaborating with the City of Tampere which also indicates a widespread legitimacy of local public-sector collaboration among CBIs. These are the clearly positive aspects in the collaborative relationship between the City of Tampere and local community gardens that were identified in this thesis. Other features of collaboration which produced mixed or mostly negative views are discussed below in relation to the literature employed in this thesis.

## 6.2. Shortcomings of the analysis

A shortcoming of this study can be identified with respect to the diversity of attitudes among community gardeners. Although research participants were asked to describe their initiative(s) and/or their role in the communal gardening scene in Tampere, there was no question concerning each group’s political aims, i.e., such goals which resonate with ideas of critical urban gardening and which transcend urban gardening as a mere hobby. Having more clarity about the level of politicisation of the subcases might have helped to interpret community gardeners’ positive or negative opinions on the quality of collaboration - especially since some worked significantly closer together with the municipal administration than others. Better

insights about political motivations would also allow for more concise conclusions about if and how Tampere's community gardens seek to contribute to climate change adaptation or a sustainability transition. Nonetheless, there are several statements in the data revealing participants' political views regarding urban community gardening which conclusions could be drawn from (below).

Furthermore, in the process of analysis, it transpired that there were themes occurring in the data which had not been considered during the previous stage of coding. One of them relates to the topic of communication and/or exchange of information as a success factor in collaborative action, the other to the compatibility of the administrative system with CBI collaboration. Although both are addressed in the literature (see Bryson et al., 2015; Voorberg et al., 2014; Nevens et al., 2012 concerning the former; Särkilahti, n.d. for the latter) - no codes were created to cover respective statements by gardeners. Some community gardeners questioned the City of Tampere's operational compatibility with the bottom-up rationale of CBIs; several others addressed a deficit in communication and the flow of knowledge from the municipality to the CBI gardeners. Remarkably, on the City of Tampere's side, there seemed to be no awareness that some information might be difficult to find or that the general communication is perceived as insufficient by many community gardeners.

## 6.3. Discussion of the findings

### 6.3.1. Evaluation of co-creation and co-production in the case study

As the experiences of the collaborative relationship between the City of Tampere and community-based garden initiatives included both positive and negative perceptions, it is necessary to assess how especially for the latter, the collaborations in place failed to meet standards of co-production and co-creation.

Cases of shortcomings in communication or rather the sharing of information by the municipality – a fundamental feature of collaboration according to Bryson et al (2015) - can be identified as one barrier for co-production. Another noteworthy deficiency is found in the absence of a lasting, sustainable relationship between community gardens and the City of Tampere. Consistent, long-term relationships are at the core of co-production according to Bovaird (2007); yet funding decisions for community activities are decided on annually, rather than for longer periods of time (as recommended by McClymont Peace & Myers, 2012, see

also Seyfang & Smith, 2008) which does not guarantee a long-term relation. The situation of granted land to garden on is even more complicated as arrangements are short-lived or temporarily limited, causing uncertainty among CBI actives. This issue is of high significance - both in this case study and in the literature on community gardens - and is discussed again below.

Related to the sustainability of relations is also the presence of municipal and community leaders to maintain the collaborative vision for both sides, according to Bryson et al. (2015). Whereas all community gardens have at least one 'champion' organising activities and collaboration, municipal 'sponsors', known for being vocal about urban communal gardening, are rare. In the one context where such a sponsor was named, the vulnerability of CBIs to staff changes was raised as those are common inside the administration and prevent a possible lasting bond between community gardeners and sponsor. The absence of a municipal leader, likewise impacted the perception of support, apart from financial aid or gardening land.

Furthermore, the relations between community gardeners and municipal administration – although fruitful and motivating in some cases – did generally not meet criteria of social innovation according to Voorberg et al.'s (2014) approach to co-production and co-creation or Macedo et al.'s (2020) framework for collaborative transformation: as most community gardeners viewed their influence in the collaboration with the municipality as low while, at the same time, they perceived the city administration to take over little or no responsibility in their relationship, the collaborative experiences in Tampere generally failed to display an integral change of governance relations and logic concerning CBIs, disruptive of the status quo. Measures for such a change based on Mäenpää and Faehnle's (2018) ideas on citizen hybrid governance is delineated in the last section of this chapter.

Most of the shortcomings of co-production and co-creation in this case study were attributed to limited involvement by the City of Tampere in the community gardeners' endeavour. Remarkably, one subcase of the study denied the existence of any collaboration with the City of Tampere altogether, despite an existing arrangement and relation with the municipal administration. Two other subcases acknowledged the existence of a collaboration to some degree, yet viewed it as insufficient. The reasons for these attitudes are rooted in the lack of co-creative and co-productive qualities, as outlined here, and further barriers to successful collaboration featured in CBI literature, as discussed in the next section. At the same time, these findings show how the very understanding of *collaboration* may be subjective and research

participants might not have had the same associations with the term as it is employed in this research framework.

### 6.3.2. Case study findings and CBI - public-sector relations

Some findings concerning grant aid for CBIs display a notable match with funding issues addressed in the literature chapter of this thesis. In this study, a certain criticism emerged with respect to limited and limiting grant funding categories: urban communal gardening easily transcends these categories due to its characteristic of covering various public services in one activity (see Hou, 2020 and others above). Moreover, some gardening CBI was found to receive too little funding despite its various services to the public while grant funding was tied to very specific biodiversity action in another case.

These findings resonate with Dinnie and Holstead's (2018) conclusion that dependency on municipal funding limits CBIs - especially when the municipality is the only source of funding (see McNamara & Buggy, 2016). This was the case for at least two community gardens in this study, whereas the City of Tampere still constituted a vital source of funding for the others. In this context, dependency on the municipality restricts CBIs' operation across different spheres of public service delivery or their ability to cover core expenses. The last example of funding being tied to specific actions, as well, suggests that conditions for grant aid may be meant to shape resource-dependent CBIs' activities as discussed in Becker et al. (2018) above. Yet, the organisational form of CBIs is not particularly impacted by funding criteria due to relatively low or informal accountability measures (see above; cf. Dinnie & Holstead, 2018).

Related to the politics of resource dependency, some findings about gardeners' perceptions of low support or a lack of shared vision with the municipality echo Celata and Coletti's (2018a) argument about local governments selectively supporting CBIs which are in line with present policy goals. This is acknowledged by the City of Tampere with respect to grant funding. Moreover, in the context of local sustainability transitions, the district of Hiedanranta is constructed and branded as a carbon-neutral centre of sustainable living by the City of Tampere. In line with this, the community garden in Hiedanranta received more support than any other subcase in this study which was reflected in an essentially successful collaboration with the municipality during the garden's active days. In addition, this case study's findings on the absence of urban community gardening in the official municipal agenda are consistent with van der Jagt et al.'s (2017) observation from their case studies across Europe: urban community

gardens are often only implicitly featured in public documents, for instance, in general plans for urban greening.

Resonating the uncertainty expressed by many research participants about the future of their garden, Hiedanranta's Floating Gardens were terminated in spring 2022 to make room for a new construction project. Confirming what is illustrated in the literature above (Rosol, 2012, Hou 2014 and Kirschbaum, 2000 in Hou, 2020), several community gardeners stated that the City of Tampere, as well, has a history of treating urban gardens as a form of interim use of temporarily available public land. At least two other community gardens in this study used to fight or still feared what van der Jagt et al. (2017) described as "the ever-looming threat of housing development" (p. 272).

Concerning the pattern pointed out by Henfrey and Penha-Lopes (2018, above) according to which local governments often pacify CBIs' demands with rhetorical support or superficial fixes, potentially co-opting CBIs and causing accusations from other CBIs, this was hardly the case for most community gardens in this study. Whereas there were few articulated doubts about the municipality's integrity with respect to environmental sustainability goals and minor experiences of co-optation concerning community gardens, the local community gardening scene widely favours collaboration with the city administration (see above) which indicates consensus within the CBI niche concerning municipal collaboration and public aid (cf. Holstead et al., 2017). Still, as opposed to Henfrey and Penha-Lopes's (2018) idea of CBIs as an 'empowered niche', not a single community gardener characterised their influence on the City of Tampere as extensive while the majority viewed themselves as rather powerless towards the municipality.

What is more, the community actives' convictions and desires around their gardens were expressed in their perceived responsibility, the amount of labour dedicated to the gardens and gardeners' intrinsic values (see Klausen & Sweeting, 2005 and Voorberg et al, 2014). These resonate aspects of critical urban gardening (see Certomà, 2015 and others above) and were expressed to be the promotion of urban biodiversity, sustainable and local food production, the learning and teaching of horticultural skills, the accessibility of community spaces and the garden(s) as a form of self-expression. These very benefits or services often emerge in relation to urban community gardening (see e.g. Hou, 2020). However, as indicated above, political motivations were not necessarily stated directly by gardening actives; they are generally more explicit in some CBIs than in others (see e.g., Holstead et al., 2017) as CBIs differ in size,

structure and goals - both in this study and in general (see Penha-Lopes & Henfrey, 2019 and examples in introduction).

### 6.3.3. Ideas for an alternative governance of CBIs in Tampere

As addressed in connection to social innovations above, Mäenpää and Faehnle (2018) explore governance models for a city to fully embrace and enable community-based activities. Some of their ideas seem particularly relevant in the context of CBI activism in Tampere, of which urban community gardening is part. Pursuing de-centralised co-production with local people, a flexible model of ‘hybrid governance’ can bring community actives and the administration closer together (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2018). In line with this model, a deeper hybrid governance is advised for community gardens in Tampere. The municipality should seek more long-term collaboration with community gardeners to improve trust and to reduce the perceived risks of the collaboration, especially concerning land use (but also for stable funding). What is more, there should be a general trend towards an integrated system of CBIs and city administration as the final level of collaboration in Mäenpää and Faehnle’s (2018) model.

Indeed, it takes new relations and roles if a municipality is to successfully make use of civil society as a resource for the city. According to this, active citizens should be viewed as community managers or service providers/designers (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2017); hence, the authors (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2018) advocate for a change in governance vocabulary to support the development of the administrative structure. Prominent examples of traditionally used terms include the words ‘residents’ and ‘participation’. This very terminology is employed in the City of Tampere’s official documents, above all the city’s current strategy (City of Tampere, 2021) in its sections on public services and community action. Whereas ‘residents’ implies that community members are restricted to their characteristic of being based in a certain area, rather than expressing their manifold relations with their environment, ‘participation’ is considered to indicate a top-down rationale whereby the public authority is the initiator of any activity (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2018). So as to emphasise people’s value and potential in creating communal activities and public services from the bottom-up, new vocabulary should be introduced in the municipality’s future communication in Tampere. Mäenpää and Faehnle (2018) themselves suggest the term ‘local’ (or *kaupunkilainen* in Finnish) instead of ‘resident’ and ‘crowdsourcing’ rather than ‘participation’.

Likely the most tangible suggestion with direct implications for urban community gardeners is represented in the administration's advocated shift to 'permissiveness communication' (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2018). An improved communication practice which makes deliberate use of social media can foster an enabling atmosphere, as outlined by the authors. As discussed above, many community gardeners in Tampere perceived their city administration's communication as deficient – regarding urban development in their area, feedback for or access to funding applications, or a public list of community gardens – and might experience less uncertainty concerning their arrangements with the City of Tampere if they felt better informed about urban planning or potentially supportive projects. While 4H used social media to communicate about the availability of gardening patches, information about the city's grants in support of community action can be found online only on the municipality's website. Hence, there is room for improvement and opportunity to include urban community gardeners in an extended communication flow. Mäenpää and Faehnle (2018) suggest social media trainings for public servants along with the needed support and time to run their social media channels effectively. Also, once decided, matters of city development need to be communicated from the beginning (Mäenpää & Faehnle, 2018).

#### 6.4. Limitations, implications and future research

Some limitations of this research have already been addressed in previous sections of this master's thesis. One of them derives from a gap in the design of data collection that led to limited knowledge about the political motivations and visions of community gardeners. Avoiding this data gap would have made better insights possible into why there may not be a shared vision in the existing collaboration or why certain tensions or disagreements emerged from the perspective of some community gardeners. Furthermore, not all known cases of urban community gardening in Tampere could be accessed for this thesis although a larger number of subcases and hence interview participants would have likely enriched the data on collaborative experiences with the municipality. Not least the language in which this research was conducted might have caused limitations for this thesis: While it is possible that potential knowledgeable interviewees shied away from participating in this research due to English as the interview language, it is even likely that there are municipal policy documents and/or previous research on CBIs or urban community gardens in Tampere in Finnish language which could not be featured in this thesis.

This case study of collaborative experiences of urban community gardens in Tampere with the local municipality did not produce findings with a high degree of generalisability. This may be regarded as a limitation; however, qualitative case studies do not need to aim for generalisable results but can instead produce contextually rich data. The knowledge generated here might be useful for current and future community gardeners in Tampere to further assess the conditions for community gardens in the city area and learn about the experiences of other gardening initiatives (although this most certainly happens in informal ways already). Yet, even more, this study can provide insights for the city administration as to how the collaboration is perceived by community gardeners and what improvements are possible from the municipality's side. The latter is particularly relevant as there appeared to be a lack of feedback and exchange between the City of Tampere and local community gardens. Stressing the value of urban community gardening for climate change adaptation and sustainability, this thesis also contains governance recommendations for the City of Tampere.

Despite limits to generalisability, the findings of this research still resonate with literature on the relations between CBIs and municipalities, confirming (or contradicting) patterns described by other authors (discussed in the previous section) and thereby further contribute to the body of literature on CBIs and urban community gardens. Indeed, future research could build on the findings of this thesis and use them to feed a comparative study of the relations between local administration and CBIs or community gardens specifically in different Finnish municipalities. Similarly, such research could also expand across the Nordic countries which are distinguished by their model of a welfare state. The presence of a welfare state is likely to have an impact on community activism, for better or worse, and might set cases of community initiatives for climate change adaptation and sustainability in the Nordic countries apart from those in other countries. This thesis contains indications for this, yet this topic could not be explored in the present context.

## 6.5. Concluding remarks: The potential of urban community gardens for Tampere

The multidimensional nature of urban community gardening became truly visible in this case study. What appeared to be the most acknowledged value of urban community gardens in the administrative context of Tampere is their community-strengthening function since 'active communities' and residential involvement are emphasised in the city's strategy and governance practice, specifically with respect to grant aid. The city's aspiration for carbon neutrality

includes the intention to promote biodiversity and urban green areas which urban communal gardens equally put into practice.

In addition to the communal and environmental dimensions of the gardens, the subcases revealed to cater to other public needs as well, many of which were discussed previously in this thesis. Best shown in the garden project in Kuusela, community gardening may engage the elderly and encourage the mingling of different age groups, brought together by a joint interest in or passion for gardening. Education and learning are other keywords that emerge in respect to gardening. In the example of Kurpitsatalo, the community house and garden offer a space for young and old to experience and learn about horticulture. Lastly, food is grown locally and organically for individual consumption or communal cooking - as in the case of Hirvitalo - which has conscious or unconscious implications for food security in cities.

Municipal representatives display limited awareness of the broad benefits urban communal gardening can have for the city population and of the inherent potential of community gardens to contribute to various different public services. Yet, urban community gardens are most conspicuously acknowledged in the FUSILLI project. Indeed, the project gives hope for future conditions of urban community gardens and collaboration with the City of Tampere: at the time of this study, it exhibited ambitions to comprehensively advance interest and access to urban gardening among the local people, to include urban gardens into the City of Tampere's strategy and Carbon Neutral Roadmap and to help locating and creating (public) spaces for community gardening. In respect of a sustainable transition with urban communal food production as a central element, this EU project coordinated by the City of Tampere is probably the most promising public-sector enabler for practitioners of community gardening in Tampere these days.

If the City of Tampere combines its existing Living lab projects, most prominently FUSILLI, with a progressive approach towards community hybrid governance, it will take a major step towards a sustainable transition of society - and maybe even become a real 'City of Citizen Action'.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Interview questionnaires

### 1) Interview questions for community gardeners

1. Can you tell me a bit about the gardening group(s) or projects you've been involved in? (E.g. How long have the initiatives been around? How many active members are there approx.?)
2. Do you know what arrangements there are concerning the land and the facilities used for gardening? (E.g. Who owns the gardening plots, who rents them?) If yes, what are they? Is there a local government/municipality involved?
3. *If the municipality (= the City) is involved with the gardening initiative*, what does the involvement look like? ...
  - a. Is there a **formal contract**? If yes, what is specified in there? Or is there an **informal agreement**? What are the **terms and goals of the City's involvement** in the gardening initiative?
  - b. How is the **responsibility** shared between the gardening group and the City?
  - c. Is there any financial or other active involvement from the municipality's side? (E.g. Does the City generate public visibility for the gardeners, provide networking opportunities or offer on-site engagement beyond agreements?)
  - d. Would you consider the City's involvement as a **collaboration** between the municipality and the gardening initiative and why?
4. Do you think the City as a whole supports urban gardening groups? What makes you think so? *If not*, does it support other community activities\*?
  - a. *If there is no or limited support*: is the City willing *or* able to support communal gardening initiatives?
  - b. [Does your group have supporters within the City administration or council? (E.g. individual City workers or council members)]
5. Do you think there is **trust** between your gardening group and the City?

6. *Depending on the City's involvement in this gardening project:* Do you feel like as a group you can influence the City's decisions concerning your gardening initiative *or* concerning the City's support of community initiatives more broadly?

=> What role does the City's support play for your motivation?

- a. *If there is collaboration:* Does the supportive attitude of the City motivate you to grow your initiative(s), expand your own gardening activities or encourage others to start theirs?
- b. *If there is no collaboration:* Would (more) support from the City motivate you to grow your initiative, expand your gardening activities or encourage others to start theirs? Do you feel discouraged due to the lack of support/collaboration?

7. *Based on the previous answers:* Do you have the impression that there is a **shared vision** by the gardening actives and the municipality for the City's future - especially related to themes like communal gardening and (other) community-based action?

*If there is collaboration:* How might the (long-term) goals of a collaboration differ?

8. Is a good partnership (collaboration) with the City desirable? If not, why?
- a. Are there any perceived risks in collaboration between gardeners and the municipality? From your own experience or that of others, have collaborations been known to cause problems?
  - b. Do you perceive the City to be acting in a fair manner concerning the equal treatment of community initiatives in Tampere?
  - c. *In case of collaboration:* Have you faced accusations for seeking collaboration with the City or do you know of such cases in other contexts?

## 2) Questions for the FUSILLI coordinator

- 1) (How) Is *communal gardening* featured in the FUSILLI project?
- 2) FUSILLI hosted an event about urban gardening in Tampere-talo on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022, correct? Was communal gardening as a practice in Tampere part of the discussion? If yes, were future possibilities for communal gardening explored?
- 3) How does communal gardening fit the Sustainable Tampere 2030 strategy?
  - a. Could it be integrated into the Carbon Neutral Roadmap?
  - b. Or is the action plan for a sustainable food system in Tampere a separate, new document? Could it feature communal gardening?
- 4) Do you consider the City of Tampere, overall, willing to support communal gardening and to collaborate with citizens concerning communal gardening?
  - a. Does the City of Tampere see value in community gardening as a central element of a sustainable local food system?
  - b. Or is there an exclusive focus on other measures of sustainable food consumption? (Like the promotion of vegetarian food and the prevention of food waste as the present official documents indicate)?
- 5) Are you aware of any involvement from the municipality in communal gardening, apart from the following:
  - gardening plot areas managed by 4H (e.g. in Tahmela or Hatanpää)
  - Hiedanranta's communal gardening
  - grant funding for several community activities which feature gardening (among others), e.g. Kurpitsaliike, Hirvitalo, Kalevanharjun yhteisöviljelmä?
- 6) In case you are aware: does the City of Tampere trust citizens to implement city goals in a bottom-up organised way?

### 3) Questions for the City of Tampere's environmental planner

Questions about the grant:

1. What are the criteria for applying for the grant? Can any informal group who protects or engages with the environment apply?
2. Would you say the reporting requirements are strict?
3. Do people generally know this grant exists? Where and how is it "advertised", communicated?
4. Do the grant receivers typically spend the money in the way they should or at least in a satisfactory manner? Are they reliable from the City of Tampere's point of view?
5. Are there many community gardens that apply for money from this grant? Are there many that receive money?
6. Are there other applicants or grant receivers that are involved in urban greening and gardening/farming somehow?
7. How important would you say is it for the City of Tampere to support civic activities for environmental protection?

More general questions:

8. How much willingness to support communal gardening as a form of environmental activism do you think there is in the City of Tampere (among the council or the administration)?
9. Are there any grants from the City of Tampere that are not tied to a specific area of civic activism ("environment", "culture", "sports", "art")? (Apart from participatory budgeting?)
10. Do you think community gardens could be integrated into public programmes, e.g. public health/wellbeing or education?
11. Are there other grants from the City of Tampere related to environmental action which may support community gardens (e.g. like the Unalab project)?

#### 4) Questions for the municipality's property secretary and 4H plot manager

Procedural questions:

1. Are most of the City's gardening patches rented out to individuals or to associations/groups of gardeners?
2. Are there any terms from the municipality's side? Any criteria the people renting a gardening patch need to fulfil?
3. How formal/bureaucratic is the process of renting a garden patch? (--> How accessible is it for interested people?)
4. Does everyone know about this option? Is it advertised on the municipality's or 4H's website?
5. Does the City or 4H support the people that are gardening on municipal land? (Providing e.g. tools, manure, advice, anything?)
6. Is this rental arrangement a good system from the municipality's point of view?
  - a. Are citizens considered a reliable partner? Do you trust citizens to take good care of public property?
  - b. Are there any risks or benefits in involving citizens in cultivating/maintaining City-owned land?

Strategical questions:

7. What is the City of Tampere's motivation for renting patches of land for gardening?
  8. Do you think the City of Tampere has an interest in making its citizens engage in urban gardening? Is there a strategy or are there any official goals for that?
  9. Could community gardens/urban gardening be integrated into public programmes, such as public health/well-being or education?
  10. Do you think this arrangement with citizens (renting gardening patches to them) is a form of collaboration between them and the City of Tampere? (This may depend on the City's motivation and goals.)
-

## Appendix B: Screenshot of ATLAS.ti project illustrating the coding process of the data

The screenshot displays the ATLAS.ti interface, specifically the Code Manager window. The top navigation bar includes File, Home, Search & Code, Analyze, Import & Export, Tools, Help, Codes, Search & Filter, and View. The Code Manager window is divided into several sections: Explore, Code Manager, Search Code Groups, and Search Entities.

The Search Code Groups section shows a tree view of code groups under 'Masters Thesis haz'. The Search Entities section displays a table of code groups with columns for Name, Grounded, Density, and Groups.

Name	Grounded	Density	Groups
CG's influence in City decisions	3		[Legitimacy of collaboration]
City's side of the arrangement(s)	4		[Trust (CG - City)]
City's support - how much and for w...	5		[CG's influence in City decisions] [Power]
Formality of arrangement(s)	3		[CG's influence in City decisions] [Power]
Joint responsibility	3		[CG's influence in City decisions] [Power]
Leader's mindset	3		[CG's influence in City decisions] [Power]
Legitimacy of collaboration	4		[CG's influence in City decisions] [Power]
Power	5		[Synergies (CG's motivation)]
Support + sustainable relations	4		[Synergies (CG's motivation)]
Synergies (CG's motivation)	4		[Formality of arrangement(s)]
Trust (CG - City)	8		[Synergies (CG's motivation)]
CG Trust~	10		[Trust (CG - City)]
CI - City's involvement	10		[City's side of the arrangement(s)] [Trust (CG - City)]
CI Grant funding~	12		[Trust (CG - City)]
CI Land use	8		[Trust (CG - City)]
City Trust	3		[City's side of the arrangement(s)] [Trust (CG - City)]
City's goals	7		[City's side of the arrangement(s)]
City's terms	6		[City's side of the arrangement(s)]

At the bottom of the interface, there is a 'Comment:' section with a text input field containing the instruction: 'Select a single item to show its comment'.

37 codes

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