

Innovative sport and leisure approaches to quality of life in the smart city

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Abstract:

Innovation in sport and leisure activities have recently become a popular subject of scholarly attention. The present article contributes to the academic exploration of the diversity of innovation in leisure by addressing how innovation, leisure and sport can be integrated in urban planning. We do so by using a Norwegian urban development project triggered by a critical juncture as an empirical case. In 2012, the Norwegian parliament made a resolution to relocate the national air force base located in Bodø. A result of this resolution was the withdrawal of the military from the city, implying extensive loss of jobs connected to the operation of the air force base. The resolution therefore led to a crisis state that became the catalyst for a substantive urban development project – The ‘Smart Bodø’ initiative. In this paper we examine five examples from the ‘Smart Bodø’ initiative that can be viewed as socially innovative approaches to in sport and leisure in the smart city. Separately and collectively, the empirical examples demonstrate how technology, leisure, sport and innovation can be interlinked in urban planning and contribute to quality of life for citizens.

Key words: smart city, social innovation, social inclusion, sport, urban planning, leisure

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Innovation in sport and leisure activities have recently become a popular subject of scholarly attention (San Salvador del Valle, Ortega & Cuenca, 2014; Tjønndal, 2018c). In this paper, we aim to contribute to the academic exploration of the diversity of innovation in leisure by addressing how innovation, leisure and sport can be integrated in urban planning. Within this context it is particularly interesting to address the rapid changes in technology that is shaping leisure in different ways, as even participation in sport is becoming increasingly digital through E-sports and Virtual Reality (VR) technology (Miah, 2017).

The physical and mental health benefits of being active, either through sport or other leisure activities, is thoroughly documented (Oja et al. 2015; Lubans et al. 2016). Yet, there is a substantial body of research demonstrating that sport is riddled with practices of social exclusion (Collins, 2014; Tjønndal, 2018a), rendering it unable to fulfill its foremost political goal as health-enhancing activities. Consequently, there is a need for further studies of how innovative approaches to sport and leisure interacts with public and private sector to create new and alternative modes of leading an active lifestyle. Here, the role sport and leisure has in urban planning represents an underdeveloped field of research. In Norway, the promotion of public health is stated as a guiding principle for sustainable urban planning (Hofstad, 2011). Despite social sustainability and public health being interlinked as concepts and policy goals, the social dimension of sustainable urban development has to a large degree been neglected, even in Norway (Dempsey, Bramley, Power, & Brown, 2011). Therefore, knowledge is still needed about the role urban planning plays in promoting participation in sport and leisure activity in the daily lives of citizens.

Today the concept of the smart city is at the forefront of innovation in urban development, and represents an increasingly popular topic for urban planners internationally (Nilssen, 2019). The growing focus on development of successful smart cities has yielded a notable surge in scholarly attention to the topic (Angelidou, 2015; Anthopoulos, 2017; Appio,

Lima, & Paroutis, 2018). The focal point of this research has to a large extent been dominated by technological innovations needed to make a city smart(er) (Caragliu, Del Bo, & Nijkamp, 2011), while limited attention has been given to the social innovations that occur *within* the smart city. Such social innovations in urban planning resemble what Montgomery (2014) refers to as the “happy city” – where quality of life is at the core of urban planning. Despite the effort to be an encompassing ideal in urban planning, leisure and sport participation is insufficiently addressed in the smart city literature. Here we connect ‘the smart city’ with ‘the happy city’ to describe and analyze how social innovation, urban planning, leisure and sport can be bridged together to create active and healthy citizens. We do so by using a Norwegian urban development project triggered by a critical juncture as an empirical case. In this paper, critical junctures are understood as “a period of significant change, which typically occurs in distinct ways [...] and which is hypothesized to produce distinct legacies” (Collier & Collier, 2002, p. 29). Specifically, our research question is: *how is social innovation in sport and leisure incorporated in the urban (re)development project ‘Smart Bodø’? And are these leisure projects truly ‘smart’ and socially innovative ?* Consequently, this paper offers useful insights for both practitioners, (e.g. public sector agents in urban planning), as well as scholars interested in smart city initiatives, urban studies and urban sport development.

In the following section, we will briefly describe our theoretical framework where we build on the smart city literature for analyzing urban planning. The concept of social innovation is utilized to examine new links between sport and urban planning as a way to ensure quality of life.

The smart city and social innovation

In recent years, there has been a notable surge in scholarly contributions about the smart city (e.g. Angelidou, 2015; Anthopoulos, 2017). Smart city initiatives are often considered to represent ideas of holistic and sustainable development (e.g. Caragliu et al., 2011). Furthermore, the ‘smartness’ has often focused on either technology, human resources, or collaborative governance, or the three features as a collective (Meijer and Bolívar, 2015). However, the conceptual definitions and practical applications of the smart city concept are still being examined, i.e. what is really ‘smart’ compared to other concepts (de Jong, Joss, Schraven, Zhan, & Weijnen, 2015). Moreover, the concept has also been under scrutiny for issues such as

attributing technology with exaggerated positive impact, the extensive role of experts, and issues of data privacy, to name some (Joss, Cook, & Dayot, 2017).¹

The understanding of smart cities has commonly been of a technological character, viewing smart cities as cities using new technologies (Batty et al., 2012). Such technological innovations could entail everything from the use of (new) medical instruments in health care, to (new) digital service provision for inhabitants (Hartley, 2005). It might also entail new practices originating because of technological innovation, e.g. an app to encourage the use of public transportation in urban areas (Nilssen, 2019). However, we build on a conceptualization of the smart city concept not pertaining just smart technology, as operationalized by Nilssen (2019: 100): “The smart city concept poses a multifaceted idea(l) in urban development, where information and communication technologies, human resources and participatory governance comprise an interplay of resources working together to increase both sustainability and quality of life”. Thus, our understanding of the smart city concept relates to more than the use of new technology; in order for something to be considered smart, it should also entail positive impact on existing urban conditions, and it is achieved through collaborative efforts.

The focus of this article is the quality of life in the smart city. The smartness of cities is therefore dependent on more than the use of (new) technologies, even if the latter is often viewed as a tool for improving urban condition. As mentioned, smart city initiatives are often considered to represent holistic and sustainable ideals for urban development, either focusing on technology, human resources, or participatory modes of governance (Caragliu, Del Bo & Nijkamp, 2011; Meijer & Bolívar, 2015). Even if the background of the ‘smart’ label is connected to the development of ICT in the 1990s (as in “smart technology”), the concept has developed since then. Smart cities now pose a wide-ranging ideal in urban development, where ICT, human capital and participatory governance constitute a pool of resources that combined have the potential to enhance both sustainability and quality of life in urban areas (Nilssen, 2019).

Emphasizing quality of life in the smart city, innovations are only ‘smart’ if they include technology, human capital, and (participatory) governance collectively (i.e. if the city takes a holistic approach to ‘smart innovations’). We therefore view the *combination* of these elements as what differentiates smart cities from other innovative initiatives. We believe that it is the

¹ For further discussions of the content of the smart city concept, see e.g. Appio, Lima, and Paroutis (2018); Shelton, Zook, and Wiig (2015).

multifaceted character that gives the smart city concept its appeal. Appio et al. (2018: 1) emphasize that smart cities as a collective aspire to “*increase the competitiveness of local communities through innovation while increasing the quality of life for its citizens through better public services and a cleaner environment*”. When understanding the smart city concept as an ideal for holistic societal development, it comprises a compilation of existing tendencies, i.e. the ‘smart city’ as the label that connects the dots for a variety of already existing activities. This understanding also entails a more elaborate approach to the social aspect of smart cities. Empirical contributions applying a social innovation perspective to smart cities are scarce. For instance, Chatfield and Reddick (2016) apply social innovation as an explicit perspective. However, the authors only implicitly touch upon issues related to quality of life in the smart city when focusing on environmental sustainability issues, and do not incorporate a leisure perspective.

Technology is at the core of both the smart city literature and the innovation literature (Caragilu, Del Bo & Nijkamp, 2011; Tjønnedal, 2018a). Social innovation relates to two aspects of the smart city literature: 1) quality of life in the smart city, and 2) leisure in the smart city. While technological advancement is at the core of innovation, not all new technology constitutes social innovation. For instance, the development of the atom bomb is considered a significant innovation in modern day warfare, but it is not ‘socially good’. Other technological innovations are clearly social, e.g. the development of emergency alarm systems for the elderly, more advanced wheel chairs and prosthetic limbs. Social innovation differs from the established innovation literature because it incorporates changes that are not about creating new products or new markets (Nicholls, Simon & Gabriel, 2015). Rather, social innovation is defined by Murray et. al. (2010) as:

new ideas that work to address pressing unmet needs, that are both social in their ends and in their means. Social innovations are new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships and collaborations (Murray et. al., 2010: 14).

In other words, social innovation is a normative perspective. By this, we mean that social innovation concerns new ideas and improvements that are socially good (Mulgan, 2012). Hence, the concept of social innovation is often connect to improved services in public sector and healthcare (Willumsen, Sirnes & Ødegård, 2015).

In recent years, social innovation has also been connected to leisure and sport (Peterson & Schenker, 2018). While social innovation in general is about new ideas that work to address

unmet needs in society (Murray et al., 2010), social innovation in sport is about new ideas that work towards solving complex social issues in a sports context (Tjønnndal, 2018a). Examples of such social issues in sport and leisure relates to challenges of social exclusion (Collins, 2014), discrimination and gender equity (Tjønnndal, 2017), or ethnicity and racism (Massao & Fasting, 2010). In other words, social innovation in sport can be described as new ideas aimed at making sport more socially inclusive for people of all ages and abilities. In the next section, we describe our methodological approach and empirical context of our study: the ‘Smart Bodø’ initiative.

Methods

Our analysis is based on a descriptive case study (Yin, 2011) of a urban redevelopment project in a small town located in Northern Norway. The Smart Bodø project makes an interesting case for studying innovative approaches to sport and leisure in the smart city, as it is indeed a multifaceted initiative comprising different examples of social innovation. The project was triggered by a critical juncture (cf. Collier & Collier, 2002) which lead to an urban redevelopment project holding elements of new institutional practices. Our aim has been to analyze five different projects within the Smart Bodø case that are related to leisure and sport. The data sources are derived from (publicly available) texts produced by the municipality of Bodø. Analyzing the data available on the ongoing urban redevelopment project ‘Smart Bodø’, we were able to identify five empirical examples related to leisure: 1) Barnetråkk, 2) BUA, 3) STImuli, 4) E-sport and Digital Kveld and 5) Outdoor Skateboard Park. Before we analyze each of these empirical examples from our case, we will in the following describe our empirical context.

Empirical case: ‘Smart Bodø’

Bodø is a municipality located in the northern part of Norway with around 51 000 inhabitants. This small-town was subjected to a critical juncture (cf. Collier & Collier, 2002) that prompted a need for change and lead to a context of *carte blanche* for local authorities. This culminated in a large-scale urban (re)development project guided by a smart city development strategy.

In June 2012, the Norwegian parliament made a resolution to relocate the national air force base located in Bodø. A result of this resolution was the withdrawal of the military from the municipality, implying extensive loss of jobs connected to the operation of the air force

base. The resolution therefore led to a crisis state in the municipality of Bodø. This crisis became the catalyst for a substantive urban development project, consisting of two parts: 1) *The 'New City, New Airport' program*, and 2) *The 'Smart Bodø' initiative*.

The 'New City, New Airport' program was specifically concerned with the development of a new urban district on the soon to-be former air force base, and also the moving of the current airport in Bodø. The moving of the current airport would make an area of 340 hectares (the same size plot as the existing city center in Bodø) available for urban redevelopment..

The Smart Bodø initiative comprises an encompassing development strategy for urban planning in Bodø in the future. The smart strategy started out with the municipality's participation in several research initiatives aimed at developing (new) information and communication technology (ICT) solutions. Among these projects were initiatives focusing on: limiting carbon emissions, energy efficiency by using ICT, urban mobility indicators, and cooperative, connected and automated mobility.

However, the strategic focus in Bodø has shifted from the incremental to the radical since its initiation, and the smart city initiative is now a broad and encompassing vision (Nilssen, 2019). This means that the smart city vision is part of the overall municipal plan for Bodø (Bodø kommune, n.d.a.). Technological innovations are an integral element in the Bodø initiative, although it is now viewed as an instrument for ensuring efficiency and improvement. Still, empirical examples of social innovation in sport and leisure in the context of urban planning is, to our knowledge, unexplored in smart city initiatives such as the Bodø case.

Quality of life, innovation and sport combined? Five examples from Smart Bodø

To illustrate the link between the three aspects of social innovation, sport and quality of life in smart city initiatives, we will examine five empirical examples from Smart Bodø that can be viewed as social innovation in sport in the smart city, starting with Barnetråkk.

Barnetråkk: Digitally mapping children's movement in the city

Barnetråkk, or 'children's footprints' [our translation], is a digital tool developed to map children's movement and experiences with public spaces in urban areas. Barnetråkk is a digital platform developed to engage children and youth in urban planning, so that their opinions and experiences can be incorporated in urban development (Bodø Kommune, 2016). Barnetråkk

allows children to digitally map their daily routes walking to school as well as mark places along the route – or in the city in general – that they associate with joy (such as play, sport and leisure activities) and danger (traffic, scary places or areas with scary adults and/or animals). In other words, Barnetråkk allows urban planners, public sector agencies and local politicians to see how children use the public spaces in their neighborhoods, what they enjoy about their city and what they would like to change (Norsk design- og arkitektursenter, n.d.). However, Barnetråkk is not simply meant to map children's experiences with public spaces, rather the overall aim is to incorporate the results from the digital mapping into new and improved urban areas for local children and youth. This methodology can therefore be seen as innovative, as it makes use of the voice of children in urban planning through the use of new digital technology. Thus, local governments can incorporate children's participation in urban planning in a meaningful way (Hanssen, 2019).

In 2015, Barnetråkk was used in 14 different areas of Bodø to allow city planners a complete image of how children view Bodø. The results were sorted in three categories: 1) positive, 2) negative and 3) activity. The digital mapping process demonstrate that children generally categorize the city center as negative, due to scary people, trash and high traffic. The results also show that children mostly find their neighborhoods positive, along with sport facilities, school yards and public parks. For the activity category, Barnetråkk indicates that shopping centers, sport facilities and public parks are the biggest meeting places children associate with activity and play (Bodø Kommune, 2016). While Bodø municipality did extensive work utilizing Barnetråkk in all major areas of the city, it is unclear how the results from the digital platform has been incorporated in the urban development of the city and the new areas made possible by the relocation of the city's airport. Hence, it would seem that the Smart Bodø initiative have only been half way successful in taking advantage of the possibilities the social innovation of Barnetråkk provides urban planners.

BUA: A social entrepreneur in sports equipment

BUA is a volunteer organization aimed at making it easier for families to engage in sport and leisure activities by providing local communities with a library of sports equipment that is free to rent (BUA, n.d.). Bodø is one of (approximately) 80 Norwegian municipalities that have established a BUA rental office where families and youth can rent sports equipment for free. As an organization, BUA's core values nationally is to make sport and leisure activities more socially inclusive through reducing costs associated with participation, and secondly to make

sport participation more sustainable and environmental friendly by lowering consumer habits on sports equipment for youth.

BUA Bodø was established in 2017 and has been incorporated into the “Smart Bodø” initiative, to make it easier for families to engage in outdoor activities such as skiing, hiking, cycling and kayaking, and to make it easier for local youth to try new sports and leisure activities without having to invest in the expensive equipment often associated with organized youth sport (BUA Bodø, 2018). While this is not innovative or ‘smart’ on its own (Nilssen, 2019), the intention of the BUA methodology, i.e. lowering the bar for leisure time activity, and specifically for low income families, can be considered a new institutional practice for the municipality of Bodø, and therefore represents a new idea aimed at meeting social needs (Murray et. al. 2010) in a local context. BUA Bodø was started by the local Red Cross organization, and is partly funded by Bodø municipality as part of their investment in Smart Bodø. BUA Bodø is open year round and rents out equipment for both winter and summer leisure activities. In 2018, BUA Bodø made 10th place for most used BUA offices nationally with 2290 registered rentals of sporting and leisure equipment (BUA, 2019). Compared to Bodø’s size as a city, such a high ranking on the BUA national list demonstrates the need for these social entrepreneurs to keep the costs of youth sport participation and family leisure activities down, exemplifying the social innovation of incorporating BUA in Smart Bodø (Tjønnedal, 2018a).

STImuli: The ‘500 meters from home’ urban trail project

The STImuli project is aimed at upgrading existing trails and establishing new urban trails in Bodø. The project started in 2009, before the Smart Bodø initiative, but it was scaled up and gained further funding from 2012-2016 as part of the new urban development strategy in Bodø (Nordland Fylkeskommune, n.d.). The main focus of the STImuli project is to create short, accessible loop trails near every neighborhood in the city (Salten Friluftsråd, n.d.). In short, with this project, the aim was that no one should be more than 500 meters from the nearest trail. Specifically, the city lists four target points for the project: 1) contribute to an increase in active, healthy citizens; 2) strengthen a sense of belonging and knowledge about local nature; 3) increase the attractiveness of Bodø as a city to visit and live in, and 4) reduce harm caused to local environment due to leisure activities by making a sustainable option more readily available to the citizens

Additionally, a vital part of the project is ensuring that all trails are well marked and

advertised, ensuring that each trail is easy to spot for people who have little experience with hiking and outdoor activities. The trails included in STImuli are aimed at walking/hiking activities, cycling and off-road cycling (Bodø Kommune, n.d.). The project is part of Bodø's urban planning activities with aspirations of stimulating inhabitants to living a healthy, active lifestyle (Nordland Fylkeskommune, n.d.). The municipality's prospect is that the STImuli project will contribute to leisure and sporting activities that are environmental friendly, while simultaneously making Bodø a more attractive city to live in.

Esports and Digital Kveld: leisure goes virtual

In 2018, Bodø municipality introduced a new concept called Digital Kveld – or 'Digital Evening' in the city's public library. Digital Kveld is hosted every Wednesday and Sunday, it is free of charge, and is open to children aged 9-14. The purpose of Digital Kveld is to provide local children with a meeting place to play computer games or PlayStation, and to learn how to use different digital tools without having to buy expensive computer programs or gaming consoles (Stormen, n.d.). As an expansion of Digital Kveld, Bodø municipality hosted its very first E-sport competition in November 2018 (Digital Kveld, 2018). The E-sport tournament had over 150 participating local children with competitions being held in OverWatch, Golf with your Friends, Fortnite, Minecraft, FIFA, Mario Kart 8 and Super Smash Bros Wii U. Like Digital Kveld, entrance in the E-sport competition was free of charge.

Esports and events such as Digital Kveld has been met with some resistance in public media when discussed in relation to more traditional sports. The arguments against E-sports is often centered around the fact that these activities do not involve physical activity – and therefore is not considered to be health promoting in the same way as other sports. While it is true that most E-sports do not involve physical activity (the exception being games such as Wii Sports and new games using Virtual Reality (VR) technology) engaging children and youth in Research on leisure activities of Norwegian youth have demonstrated that Esports has some positive health benefits in terms of social and mental health (Hygen et al. 2019). For instance, playing games online with peers opens up a whole new world of possibilities in terms of digital friendships and digital communities (Arneberg & Hegna, 2018). In other words, gaming and Esports provides some Norwegian youth with increased feelings of belonging and acceptance among like-minded peers. While this research is still limited in Norway, the potential mental health benefits of playing Esports should not be overlooked when exploring social innovation and quality of life in smart cities further.

Outdoor Skateboard Park

While the other four empirical examples represent innovations implemented in practice, the case of the outdoor skateboard park is still in its planning phase in the Smart Bodø initiative. In general, skateboarding has been described as an ‘alternative youth culture’ (O’Connor, 2017), and an alternative to organized youth sport (Turner, 2013). As a different option to more organized youth sport, skateboarding has the potential to engage groups of children and youth in meaningful play and physical activity - children and youth that normally would not participate in organized sport. This contributes to making the local skateboarding club a new and innovative offer for local youth to interact with peers as part of an active lifestyle (Tjønndal, 2019). While the municipality of Bodø arranging to have an outdoor skateboard park is not a socially innovative initiative, the context of the placement for this skateboard park will constitute new ways of utilizing urban spaces – e.g. on the roof of a parking facility.

At the time of the initiation of the urban development project, the local skateboarding club in Bodø was outgrowing their indoor skateboarding facilities. With the urban spaces freed with the moving of the airport, the city council plans to use some of the new city areas to build an outdoor skateboarding facility for local youth, granting the club full funding to develop the new park in the city space (Bodø Skateboardklubb, 2018; Bodø Nu, 2018). While it is still undecided where in the new urban area the skateboard park will be placed, some of the more creative suggestions includes the rooftop of one of the new parking houses scheduled to be built in the city. Others have suggested a more traditional outdoor skateboarding facility as part of one of the new urban green areas. Either way, the municipality’s commitment to both fund the building of an outdoor skateboarding area and to delegate the public space needed for such a facility indicates an integration of new and youthful sporting activities in urban planning processes. Moreover, such practices of integrating new sporting activities, and also commitment to funding it, can be seen as a new institutional practice from the municipality of Bodø, enabling further involvement as part of their smart city strategy (Caragliu, Del Bo & Nijkamp, 2011).

Discussion and Conclusion

Separately

The five empirical cases related to sport and leisure in Smart Bodø we have described in this paper demonstrates that variety of projects urban planners incorporate as social innovation in leisure within smart city (re)development. First and foremost, these different cases show how

abstract and loosely the ‘innovation’ and ‘smart’ terms are understood among public city planners. Barnetråkk and Digital Kveld illustrates how technology, an important factor of the smart city framework, can be used to further social innovations aimed at improving the quality of life for youth in urban areas. Proactive projects such as Barnetråkk are meant to provide a new arena for citizen participation in urban planning. The development of Barnetråkk can thus be described as a social innovation that improves children’s possibilities of being involved in urban development in Norwegian cities. As new digital technologies play a vital part of both Barnetråkk and Digital Kveld, these are the best examples of ‘real’ smart innovations in Smart Bodø. Still, Barnetråkk did not originate in Bodø, and while some scholars advocate that social innovations are still innovative if they are simply ideas from other geographical locations modified to a new contexts (Murray et. al. 2010), one can question if such initiatives constitutes real innovation. Furthermore, as part of the Smart Bodø initiative, Bodø has done extensive work using the digital platform in all areas of the city. However, it is unclear how the results from Barnetråkk has been used in the urban (re)development of Bodø. This means that to this day, Barnetråkk is only partially successful as a smart social innovation because it is intended to be used to incorporate the needs and wishes of local children in urban development. The most extensive process - integrating the results into urban areas, remains elusive in the Smart Bodø initiative. This can be connected to the general critique of the smart city literature that just implementing new technological tools is hollow on its own, and not enough to ensure good quality of life for citizens. In this perspective, Digital Kveld is more successful as a smart social innovation in urban (re)development, as these events have become highly popular among local children and youth, attracting more participants than many volunteer sports clubs and other leisure opportunities for children. This, combined with the fact that Digital Kveld is free to participate in, makes it perhaps the best example from Smart Bodø of a real smart social innovation in leisure.

Out of the five empirical examples, BUA represents the most ‘classic’ example of social innovation in sport (Tjønndal, 2018a; 2018b). As a project, BUA has a clear aim of contributing to social improvement in a specific context (Murray et al., 2010). Incorporating the costs of running the BUA rental services into the public expenditures for urban development shows how social innovation, sport and urban development can be integrated as part of the public policy of the city. The number of children growing up in low-income families in Bodø is increasing (Pettersen, 2016). This increase in numbers, in conjunction with the high number of rental activity from BUA Bodø in 2018, indicates that there is a need for continued efforts to lower the cost of sport participation for children and youth locally. Another empirical example

similarly aimed at young people is the plans to create an outdoor skateboarding park in one of the vacant public spaces that will appear due to the moving of the airport. While both the outdoor skateboarding park and the BUA project specifically targets youth from low-income families, the STImuli project has a broader aim with its vision to ensure that all citizens have immediate access to urban trails and hiking paths. Despite the difference in demographic scope, BUA, the outdoor skateboarding park and the STImuli projects are similar in the way that they all represent new approaches to organize sport and leisure for citizens in Bodø. However, it is unclear how smart these leisure projects are, as there is little to no implementation of new technologies in these approaches. Without the element of new digital technologies, it is hard to argue that BUA, STImuli and the skateboard park are smart social innovations within the context of urban (re)development. For these projects, the question of whether or not they constitute real innovations is also relevant. They are all approaches that have been modelled after different geographical places and in this way, they are not true innovations. Still, we argue that this does not take away from the new approaches to organizing leisure for the citizens in Bodø that have emerged through these projects.

A central limitation of our discussion of these empirical examples is that the Smart Bodø initiative is ongoing. The airport in question has not yet been moved, and so, apart from BUA and STImuli, these examples represent cases that are still under development. Therefore, a central question in the Smart Bodø initiative will be to explore how Barnetråkk, Digital Kveld and the outdoor skateboarding park will continue to develop in the future. Will they still be prioritized in public expenditures for urban development in the future? The cases from Smart Bodø shows how urban planners are quick to use innovation and smart as phrases for new approaches to leisure in cities. However, in some of these cases innovation and smart appears to be merely a catchphrase to describe something new, and not something that truly reflects the many innovative possibilities that digital technology has for leisure in urban areas.

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