Temporarily Pedestrianised Street in Hong Kong: Governmental Strategy of Implementation and Tactics of Appropriation.

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Abstract: International organizations promote the equitable provision of open public spaces (OPS) as a strategy for healthy cities planning. In the context of high-density Asian cities, the densely built environment, constraints generated by mobility infrastructures and the limited distribution of OPS pose challenges to the implementation of equitable OPS provision. Pedestrianisation –the conversion of a vehicular street for pedestrian uses– is emerging as an effective policy to increase the supply of OPS. Nonetheless, the temporary or permanent space conversion strategy –from mobility infrastructure to OPS– lacks a comprehensive implementation framework. This paper reviews the governmental policies for the supply of pedestrianised streets (PS); it investigates the *tactics* of PS appropriation drawing upon the case of Hong Kong, one of the densest and more socially polarized Asian cities. The unconventional use of the short-term OPS can provide insights into *tactics* of informal use of OPS and it can contribute to evaluating the need for pedestrianisation and for additional planning measures. This study comprises documentary analysis and primary data collection and analysis. The method adopted for policy review is content analysis. The methods adopted in fieldwork involve unobtrusive observations. Results are presented in the forms of policy review and Structured Direct Observations.

Keywords: open public space, planning, pedestrianisation, stationary activities, Hong Kong

Introduction

The equitable provision of urban open public spaces (OPS) is increasingly recognized as a strategy to promote social wellbeing in the form of social interaction, communal sharing and cultural expression in cities (Carr *et al*., 1992; UN-Habitat, 2015). As OPS has become a further contested resource among different uses and ownership-domain in cities, current academic research, international organizations, urban planning, and public discourses give particular attention to the function of urban streets as public space (UN-Habitat, 2013). Specifically, academic research urges to incorporate the mobility uses (pedestrians, bicycles and motorized vehicles) as well as stationary uses (as social functions and cultural expression) in the planning of urban streets (Agyeman and Zavestoski, 2015; Von Schönfeld and Bertolini, 2017). In addition, research on the variety of temporary, planned or unplanned uses of urban streets by organization of citizens and small-scale entrepreneurs suggests the need for a more flexible approach to planning of urban streets to accommodate these uses (Hou, 2010; Bishop and Williams, 2012; Lydon and Garcia, 2015). Pedestrianisation, a transport planning measure for the temporary or long-term conversion of a vehicular street for exclusive pedestrian uses (Hass-Klau, 2015), epitomizes this dynamic struggle to incorporate a multiplicity of uses (pedestrian, cyclist

and partially vehicular mobility and pedestrian stationary uses) and the need for a flexible approach to planning of urban streets (Von Schönfeld and Bertolini, 2017).

The objects of this study are the planning framework for long-term and temporary pedestrianisation, and the stationary uses -consolidated over time- of the first pedestrianised street-space in Hong Kong. In this high density and compact urban environment, the quantity and quality of OPS are severely limited, and the issues related to the competing uses that public space needs to fulfil are exacerbated (Tang and Wong, 2008; Siu and Huang, 2015). A recent measure to re-open a pedestrianised street to vehicular traffic after 20 years over complaints about long-term stationary uses (Hui, 2018; Transport Department, 2018a), suggests there might be the need to reconsider the pedestrianisation planning framework and to integrate the stationary uses in the planning for pedestrianisation.

Drawing upon De Certeau's theory of strategies –policies generated by the government– and *tactics* – the powerless individuals' creative act of negotiating strategies to meet their needs– the paper revisits the conflicts between formal pedestrianisation planning and the informal stationary use of space (De Certeau, 1984). This paper first discusses the need of seeking a balance between mobile and stationary functions in planning for pedestrianisation, by illustrating the rationale behind competing and complementing roles of mobile and stationary functions in pedestrianised streets. Secondly, it discusses the logic underlying pedestrianisation policies and planning in Hong Kong. The question investigated in this second part is: to what extent planning for pedestrianisation in Hong Kong considers mobility and stationary uses? We sought answers to this question through the content analysis of the purposes and objectives of pedestrianisation policies and planning strategies. In the third part, this article focuses on the evidence of consolidated stationary uses within the first implemented case of temporary pedestrianisation in the central business district (CBD). The final section of the paper focuses on how the limitations of the pedestrianisation policy and planning strategies could be overcome by considering the empirical evidence emerging from behavioural research. It also sets indications for further work.

Pedestrianised streets: stationary and mobile uses

Urban OPS play a vital function, they contribute to social inclusion, communal sharing, cultural integration, democratic and political expression in cities (Carr *et al*., 1992; Gehl and Gemzøe, 2004; Cattell *et al*., 2008; Madanipour, Knierbein and Degros, 2013). They have a role as well for environmental and economic sustainability of cities (Chiesura, 2004). OPS can be places for exchange and interaction with a great variety of population (Bertolini and Dijst, 2003). So that the equitable provision of accessible and varied OPS is considered a strategy to promote the health determinants (facilitating social cohesion, supportive social networks, healthy lifestyles) that relate to the physical environment of cities, under the WHO Healthy Urban Planning Initiative (Barton and Grant, 2013).

OPS refer to different spatial forms that include public parks, squares, space between buildings, markets, transport stations, streets and sidewalks (Jacobs, 1961; Bertolini and Dijst, 2003; Chiesura, 2004; Mehta, 2013). These spaces integrate a wide variety of mobility flows as flows of pedestrians, bicycles and increasingly of personal mobility devices. At the same time OPS play the vital contribution of enabling a wide variety of stationary activities in urban environments as allowing people to linger, stand, sit, socialise, read and share food (Cattell *et al*., 2008; Mehta, 2009; Gehl, 2011). Urban planning research and practice is increasingly showing how these activities can be

encouraged through temporary, flexible, planned or unplanned initiatives as in Copenhagen (Christiania occupation and Stroget Street pedestrianisation), London (Camden Lock pop-up market), Bogotà (Ciclovia, Highway pedestrianisation) and Hong Kong (temporary seating in urban neighbourhoods) (Bishop and Williams, 2012; Lydon and Garcia, 2015; Rossini, 2019).

OPS in the form of urban streets accommodate wider mobility functions. Urban streets are at the same time networks for private, public and shared means of transportation of people and goods, this constitutes a significant part of the functioning of urban environments. So that urban streets are often only associated to this mobility function (Von Schönfeld and Bertolini, 2017). The contribution of streets to the function of public space is equally important. Jacobs (1961) argues that "Streets and their sidewalks, the main public spaces of the city, are its most vital organs. Sidewalks, their bordering uses, and their users, are active participants in the drama of civilization… " (Jacobs, 1961, pp. 29–30).

Pedestrianised streets might represent an extreme case of these mobility and public space dynamics. Pedestrianisation is one traffic control policy that is devised to reduce the environmental and safety drawbacks of the motorized vehicles, to reallocate space for non-motorised vehicles and pedestrian mobility and activities, and, more essentially, to improve the urban environment as a place in which to stay (Brambilla and Longo, 1977; Yuen and Chor, 1998). Research on the benefit shows that pedestrianisation can lead to a significant increase (20-40%) of pedestrian flow (Hass-Klau, 1993) as well as stationary activities (sitting, strolling, socialising) (Gehl and Svarre, 2013). Pedestrianisation can involve the closure of one street or one entire precinct to motorised traffic.

Most of pedestrianisation planning have been established as a strategy to reduce automobile congestion in city centres or to stabilise downtown commercial activity, in the theory of De Certeau to "impose order" (De Certeau, 1984). According to De Certeau the "strategies" are the act of systematizing and 'imposing order' (idem). Strategies are imposed by structures of power- as institutional bodies- and produce a space "the city" (idem). Similarly, pedestrianisation policies and planning, promoted by the government and relevant departments produce the pedestrianised space according to specific rules.

Individuals act in the environments that are set by strategies performing "tactics". "Tactics" are the powerless individuals' ways to disrupt and negotiate the strategies that are imposed to them (De Certeau, 1984). These imply a creative effort to negotiate the environment in order to meet individuals' needs. The pedestrian that takes a shortcut in the imposed rational grid of the city is an example of tactic (idem). Similarly, in the case of the pedestrianised space produced by strategies of traffic control or commercial revenue increase, pedestrians apply "tactics" to meet their needs. Specifically, through *tactics* of pedestrianised space appropriation pedestrians negotiate the environment to perform their stationary activities that otherwise cannot find spaces elsewhere.

Pedestrianisation planning in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong road infrastructure occupies the 3.7% (compared to 2.3% for private housing) of the 270 km2 of the city built-up area, serving a population of more than 7 million. In comparison to other high-density Asian cities as Tokyo and Singapore, in Hong Kong the public transport modal share is high (about 90% of journeys) and the car ownership is low (74 per 1000 people). At the same time because of its high density, Hong Kong's roadway system is the world most heavily used (Murakami and He, 2018). The

planning of urban streets as high-circulation or car parking infrastructure, the functional segregation of the urban environment (Siu and Huang, 2015), and the privatisation and the commercialization of public space heavily impact on both quantity and quality of the OPS (Tang and Wong, 2008; Xue, Ma and Hui, 2012). The OPS standard is set by the Planning Department to a minimum of 2 m2 per person. On average the quantity of OPS is 2.7 m2, compared to the 7.4 m2 per person in Singapore (Lai, 2017).

Hong Kong transport policy goal is to ensure the efficient, safe and environmentally sustainable mobility of people and goods. The railway is set as backbone of the transportation system and road safety and traffic congestion and related vehicle emissions reduction are high priorities. Since the late 1990s, a range of strategies has been implemented -including pedestrianisation-in the attempt to mitigate the conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Pedestrianisation is promoted at the government level as a traffic planning policy. The department involved in planning is the Planning Department or in some cases, the planning is directly initiated by the Transport Department (Planning Department, 2001). The implementation is carried out by the Transport Department and Highways Department. Other than one pedestrianisation project in the CBD, most of the pedestrianisation projects were completed by the second half of 2000. These are of three types (Transport Department, 2019):

- Full-time pedestrianisation: In these streets, pedestrians have absolute priority. Vehicular access is restricted to emergency services only, but service vehicles may be allowed in specific periods, for selected locations.
- Part-time pedestrianisation: In these streets vehicular access is only allowed in specific periods. In these streets there is no on-street parking space.
- Traffic Calming Street: In these streets there is no restriction to vehicular access, but vehicles are slowed down, and sidewalks are normally widened.

The purposes and objectives of pedestrianisation changed through time, the next section examines the pedestrianisation policies and planning strategies of the last twenty years since pedestrianisation was first introduced.

Policy review: Purposes and objectives of pedestrianisation planning

Since the late 1990s, the Hong Kong Government started a city level study on pedestrianisation planning. The analysis of twenty years of policies shows a gradual change in the planning approach, from safety and mobility oriented to a commercial and later accessibility focus. In order to have an in-depth review of the relevant pedestrianisation planning approaches, this section will examine the purposes and objectives of the governmental planning policies in Hong Kong through content analysis (Gaber and Gaber, 2007). The data sample consists of policy addresses, planning strategies and legislative council papers from 1997 to 2016. The main intended function, the purposes, and objectives of pedestrianisation are summarised in Table 1.

The *Third Comprehensive Transport Study* (CTS-3) (HKSAR Transport Department, 1999) conducted by the Transport Department (TD) is the first planning strategy to put forward the concept of pedestrianisation at the city level. The planning approach of CTS-3 (HKSAR Transport Department, 1999) and later of 1999 *Chief Executive Policy Address* (HKSAR, 1999) shows a major focus on the mobility objectives of pedestrianisation. The purpose of CTS-3 is to update Hong Kong's transport infrastructure policy framework upon considerations of population increase and traffic-related air pollution increase. Pedestrianisation, increase in access to public transport and grade-separated pedestrian links are considered measures to promote walking as a short-distance transport mode. This significantly influences the mobility function in the planning for pedestrianisation. In addition, the purpose of pedestrianisation is a purely

traffic control resolution, that is to improve road safety by minimising the conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. The three types of pedestrianisation (permanent, partial and traffic calming) are firstly here delineated. The decision on the implementation of a specific type of pedestrian scheme is linked to traffic management requirements, assessed by a study on the impact on local district traffic. The suggested implementation of part-time pedestrianisation is supported by a traffic management motivation: the unavailability of loading and unloading alternative access routes. This makes evident that the mobility function (concern about the access of vehicles in specific time periods) is a main issue.

These directions are represented in the 1999 *Chief Executive Policy Address* (HKSAR, 1999) where three streets in high priority urban areas (Causeway Bay, Mongkok and Tsim Sha Tsui) are selected. Russell Street, one of the most crowded streets in Hong Kong, is also set for pedestrianisation implementation in the same year. This selection of high priority streets is based on heavy pedestrian flow and pollution levels. The 2000 *Legislative Council panel on transport* further developed the pedestrianisation implementation plan in three phases: trial, traffic impact assessment and, eventually, in case of positive result the scheme would become permanent (HKSAR Legislative Council, 2000). From 2000 to 2005, the TD has extended pedestrian schemes to seven urban locations (Central, Wan Chai, Jordan, Sham Shui Po, Stanley, Yuen Long and Shek Wu Hui) other than the three priority locations. The mobility function as main objective of pedestrianised streets can be here observed in the traffic impact assessment as the only evaluation tool before implementation.

In 2001 *The Study on Planning for Pedestrians* was commissioned by the Planning Department (PD) (HKSAR Planning Department, 2001) and marks a shift in the approach to pedestrianisation planning. The objective is to formulate a more comprehensive planning and development framework for pedestrian planning at different levels (HKSAR Planning Department, 2001). In this document the concept of public space explicitly includes streets, footpaths and pedestrianised streets. It promotes planning for pedestrian mobility and safety purposes (linkage, safety, accessibility), but also for social gathering and leisure activities (stationary activities), stressing the possibility of commercial purposes and private sector involvement. In existing urban areas pedestrianisation is envisioned as a strategy to provide open public spaces. The new purpose of pedestrianisation is "[t]o provide pedestrians with a safe, healthier and more convenient street environment by giving more sympathetic consideration to pedestrians over vehicles" (HKSAR Planning Department, 2001). The objectives of pedestrianisation are widened and focus on the enhancement of the shopping environment and the provision of open public space in congested urban areas. Although this document envisions pedestrianisation planning for stationary uses, the main purpose of pedestrianisation planning is related to the additional commercial opportunities and retail viability given by pedestrianisation. These directions are embraced and updated in the *2016 Hong Kong 2030+: Planning and Urban Design for a Liveable High-Density City* (HKSAR, 2016), that promotes planning and urban design directions to enhance the quality of living and sustainability of Hong Kong. In this planning strategy, the purpose of pedestrianisation is shifted to the accessibility of the walking environment. Location of pedestrianisation projects should be explored in station precincts and walking environment enhancement plans should be part of a broader district-wide urban design plan. Drawing from Singapore covered passageways near transportation nodes, a further objective is to emphasize the provision of shading facilities and public seating. The focus shift on the accessibility of the walking environment through traffic calming streets (instead of pedestrianisation) can also be seen in the higher number of traffic calming projects implemented from 2005 to 2011 (HKSAR Transport Department, 2018b).

The analysis of twenty years of pedestrianisation policies shows that there was a gradual change in the planning approach, from safety and mobility to a commercial and later accessibility-oriented objective. Therefore, pedestrianisation objectives were mainly related to two aspects: mobility function and

commercial viability opportunity of pedestrianised streets. At the planning level, the increase of stationary activities in public space has never been highlighted as the main purpose of pedestrianisation, as this measure is mainly conceived as a traffic planning measure and implemented by the Transport Department. Therefore, pedestrianisation was initially planned to promote the mobility function of pedestrianised urban streets recognizing walking as a transport mode. The focus on the mobility function in the planning of pedestrianised urban streets can also be seen in the selection criteria of priority locations (focus on pedestrian flow), the type of scheme to be planned (based on vehicles loading access), the assessment criteria for implementation (traffic management requirements). All in all, the pedestrianisation strategy of the governmental bodies is related to the mobility function of pedestrianised street.

Table 1: Summary of main information related to Pedestrianisation planning in Hong Kong

Title	**Type**	**Year**	**Function**	**Purposes of Pedestrianisation**	**Objectives of Pedestrianisation**
Third Comprehensive Transport Study (CTS-3)	Planning Strategy	1997-1999			
The 1999 Policy Address: "Quality People Quality Home"	Chief Executive Policy Address	1999	Mobility function and safety function	1. To promote walking as a short-distance mode of travel 2. To enhance road safety 3. To reduce pollution caused by vehicle emissions and associated air pollution	1. To consider needs of pedestrians in transport and land use planning 2. To recommend planning for pedestrians' guidelines in new areas and redevelopments 3. To designate high priority pedestrian streets based on heavy pedestrian flow 4. To enhance road safety through traffic diversion to periphery and by minimizing conflict between pedestrians and traffic
Legislative Council Panel on Transport "Pedestrian Schemes"	Legislative Council Paper	2000			
Study on Planning for Pedestrians	Planning Strategy	2001	Mobility function and stationary commercial use	1. To provide pedestrians with a safe, healthier and more convenient street environment by giving more sympathetic consideration to pedestrians over vehicles	1.To minimise conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles 2.To provide a better environment for pedestrians 3.To improve pedestrian flow and provide a more favourable shopping environment 4.To increase open space provision and upgrade the quality of the environment in congested urban areas
Hong Kong 2030+: Planning and Urban Design for a Liveable High-Density City	Planning Strategy	2016	Mobility function and accessibility function	1.To create a safe, inviting and accessible walking environment	Refer to Study on Planning for Pedestrians (2001) in addition: 1. To explore location in station precincts 2. To incorporate walkable street plans as part of a district-wide urban design plan 2. To emphasize provision of facilities and shading and public seating

Chater Road pedestrianisation and public space appropriation

The analysis of the temporary pedestrianisation of Chater Road aims to provide an in-depth investigation into stationary uses practices-the *tactics*- in this pedestrianised street and shed light on the spatial characteristics as shape, shading facilities and seating availability that will generate insight for further discussion. Chater Road was the first implemented temporary pedestrianisation project, the precursor of the pedestrianisation schemes planned in the late 1990s and is a widely recognized cultural meeting space for migrant workers in Hong Kong (Law, 2002; Constable, 2007; Lorenz, 2009). Chater Road is located in the Hong Kong CBD (Figure 1), linked to a network of streets, parks, square and elevated walkways in one of the most accessible areas by public transportation in Hong Kong. The part-time pedestrianisation at Chater Road (between Pedder Street and Jackson Road) and the perpendicular Ice House Street (between Des Voeux Road Central and Connaught Road Central) was implemented on trial between 24 January and 27 January 1982 and permanently from 7:00 a.m. to midnight on every Sunday and Public Holiday starting from 31 January 1982 (Transport Department 2019, personal communication, 30 April).

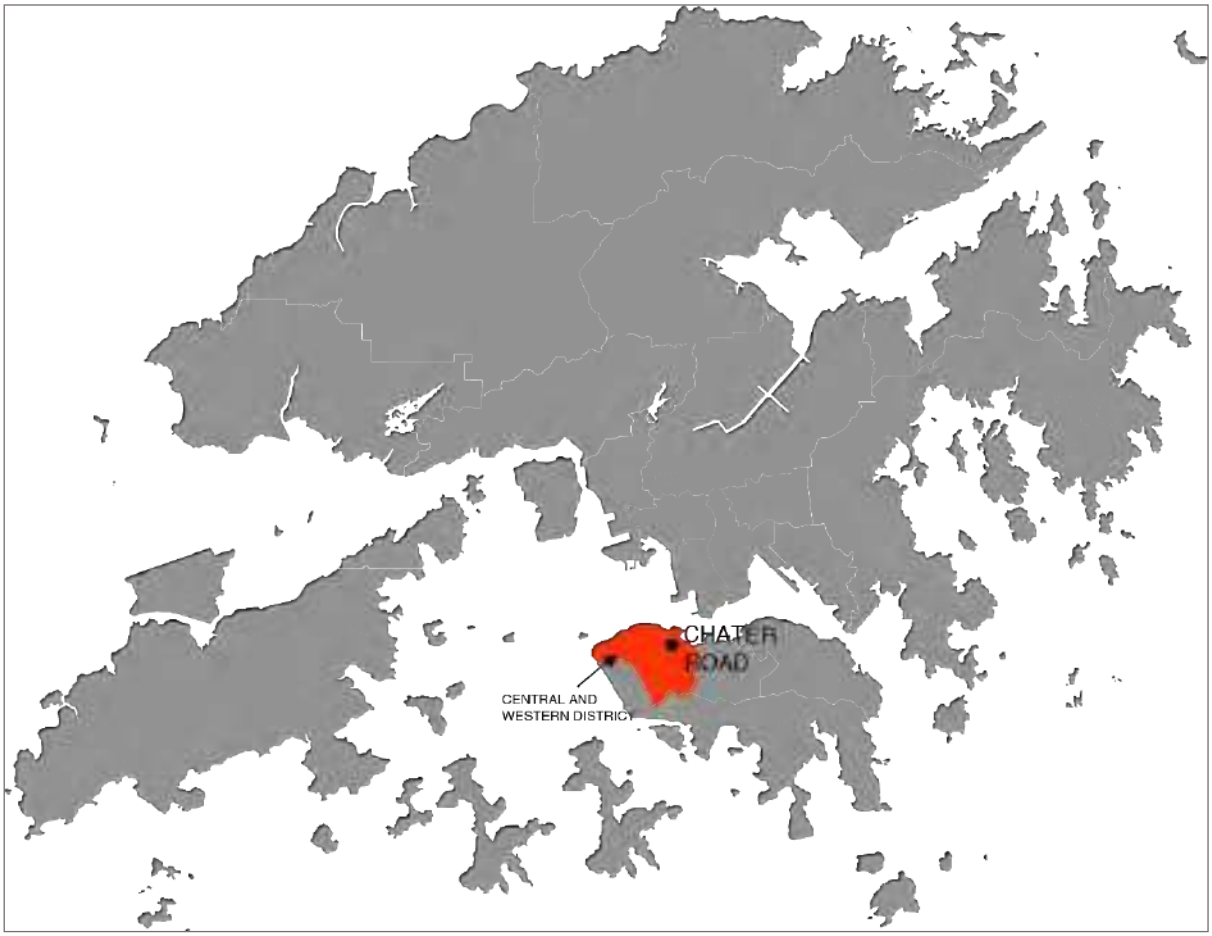

Figure 1: Location of Central and Western District and Chater Road

In 1982, Hong Kong Land, the leading central district landlord, proposed the closure of Chater Road to vehicular traffic during general public holidays. The strategy of pedestrianisation was related to commercial viability opportunity. In fact, the aim of the proposed project was to attract pedestrians to the high-end retail area and promote it as a shopping destination, organising concerts and cultural events attracting a wealthy public (Constable, 2007). While during the working days the walkways system provided greater accessibility to the connected Hong Kong Land's office and commercial properties, the CBD was empty at weekends, when offices were closed (Law, 2002). Once this street was pedestrianised, it attracted among others, migrant workers that found in Chater Road an accessible and well-serviced meeting point, near commercial facilities with shops (World Wide Plaza) and religious institutions (Law, 2002). During the weekly closure to motorised traffic in the pedestrianised streets emerge sedentary occupations as socializing, sharing food, sleeping, dancing, reading or praying (Figure 2). This temporary pedestrianisation in Chater Road and the perpendicular Ice House street has been going on since 1982 and gradually the area has become a form of open public space during vehicle-restricted hours. The experimental character of Chater Road use marks one high-density district in Hong Kong, with an average open public space quantity (2.1 m2) per person that is lower than the average city level (2.7 m2) (Lai, 2017). The stationary activities that take place in the pedestrianised streets can be conceptualised as *tactics* of space appropriation.

Figure 2: Chater Road temporarily pedestrianised street

Spatial characteristics of the pedestrianised street

Chater Road and Ice House Street were originally planned mainly for mobility functions (of motorized vehicles and pedestrian flow). The strategy of pedestrianisation planning enacted by the governmental bodies produced a space that is analysed in this section. The *tactics* -stationary uses- that emerge once the streets are closed to traffic suggest that the spatial characteristics of the streets might accommodate both mobility uses and stationary uses. The data here presented on the spatial features, design, land uses and establishments fronting the streets of the Chater Road pedestrianised area were collected through the on-site survey. This inventory was then recorded on geographic information system (GIS) and integrated with a dataset drawn from the Outline Zoning Plans. This plan is prepared by the Town Planning Board and the Planning Department and illustrates the designated land-use (commercial,

open space, road) and transportation patterns in every planning area (Chapter 131, Laws of Hong Kong).

The pedestrianised area consists of a 300m long by 22m wide street (Chater Road) and a 140 m long by 15m wide street (Ice House Street) that are closed to vehicular traffic during general holidays from 7 am until midnight. The area consists of two to three one-way traffic lanes plus loading bays in Chater Road and one-way traffic lane plus loading bay in Ice House Street. The street space is allocated for about the 53% (4558 m2) to motorized vehicle mobility with a concrete surface, while the remaining 47% (4095m2) is planned for pedestrian mobility with a paved surface. When no motorized vehicles move through this area, a total of 8653 m2 (more than a football pitch) become a space that unites functions of non-motorized mobility and public space.

The function of non-motorized mobility is determined by the pedestrian flow generated by and from the three-mass rapid transport (MTR) exits located in the area and the bus stops and taxi stand in the streets surrounding the pedestrianised area, as well as street-level pedestrian flow from the surrounding area. The entrances to the commercial buildings and the luxury retail shops fronting the streets are additional pedestrian flow generators. During the motorized access times, this is channelled through the sidewalks and constrained by railings that do not allow pedestrians to randomly cross the roadway. When the area is closed to motorized traffic, pedestrians can potentially walk in any location of the street, making the railings lose their primary function. Similarly, the curb that separates the elevated sidewalk from the roadway loses the primary function of discouraging vehicles from driving on the sidewalk and makes this step open to multiple functions, other than mobility ones.

The pedestrianised area is characterised by two additional spatial characteristics that once motorized traffic is not allowed in the street, might contribute to the emergence of multiple uses of the streets (as stationary uses). The trees and landscaped areas that are planted in the pedestrianised streets can create shading and this condition can create favourable settings for sitting eating or any other stationary uses. In addition, the 621 m2 elevated walkways that connect the commercial buildings, the MTR exit and bus stop canopies can provide shading and protection under adverse weather. These elements were purely planned with the aim of facilitating mobility functions, in one case to facilitate the pedestrian flow between commercial buildings and in the second case to ease the transition from a mobility area. Eventually, once the streets are closed to motorized traffic the shading and weather protection created by the skywalks and transport stop canopies can create wide weather protected areas for multiple uses.

Stationary activities in the pedestrianised street

In order to examine the *tactics*, stationary uses that emerge in the pedestrianised area, the purpose of this part of the study is to investigate the space occupation pattern of people in the street. The method applied is behavioural mapping, this links the design features of the setting with the behaviour of the occupants in both time and space (Bechtel and Zeisel, 1987; Mehta, 2009). This was based on three phases: on-site Structured Direct Observations, on-site video recordings of stationary activities along the full length of the area and geolocation of the activity points on Geographic Information System (GIS). Stationary activities data are information on the location where people gathered and socialized. All data were geolocated on GIS maps as points and added to the pedestrianised area dataset described in the previous section. Data were collected for one pilot study on Sunday, as pedestrianisation in-

place day, for one time-slot (1 pm) on January 2019. Observations were made during a day with moderate temperatures and climate conditions.

The Structured Direct Observation allowed to identify multiple stationary activities emerging in the pedestrianised streets (Figure 3). The main activities are socializing, sharing food, playing, talking on the phone, dancing or singing, taking a selfie, sleeping, reading, eating individually or using the phone. The average population density of 0.1 people per m2 in the entire area is not quite indicative of the clustering of activities in a specific setting.

The Structured Direct Observation allowed to identify some general pattern of use of the space. Firstly, the street space is mostly dedicated to active behaviours as singing, dancing or distributing flyers. Secondly, the sidewalk area is appropriated by people that occupy the space, sometimes sitting with cardboards and gathering in groups. The specific area of the sidewalk where stationary activities are observed is in the area near the railings and the area near the curb. It is observed that the railing is used as a seatback while the curb is used as seating space. These two specific areas might be used as incidental seating space when the street is closed to traffic and they lose the primary function of directing a (pedestrian or vehicle) traffic flow. Stationary activities cluster in a few main areas of the street. These correspond to the shaded areas created by the three elevated skywalks and the public transport canopies. This suggest that when the access to the street is closed to motorized vehicles, the shaded space under the walkways or under the public transport canopies can accommodate stationary uses.

Figure 3: Stationary activities in Chater Road pedestrianised area

Discussion and conclusion

Based on current academic research this article set out one key question for pedestrianisation planning in Hong Kong: to what extent does planning for pedestrianisation consider mobility and stationary uses? we tried to answer it with the content analysis of the purposes and objectives of pedestrianisation policies and planning strategies. This highlighted that the increase of stationary activities in public space has never been considered as the main purpose of pedestrianisation. This was initially planned to promote the mobility function of pedestrianised urban streets recognizing walking as a transport mode. In the pedestrianisation policies the selection criteria of priority locations based on high pedestrian flow, the type of pedestrianisation to be planned based on vehicles loading

access and the assessment criteria for implementation based on traffic management requirements are parts where the focus on mobility function is evident.

Drawing upon De Certeau theory of strategies and *tactics* (De Certeau, 1984) this article presented Chater Road temporary pedestrianisation as a case study. It highlighted how the strategy of the pedestrianisation policy and planning are related to the commercial viability of the area and the mobility function in the design of the street. These strategies are negotiated through *tactics* based on the needs of users. This article shows the empirical evidence of stationary uses emerging from behavioural research of Chater Road temporary pedestrianisation. This area unites the function of moving through the pedestrianised streets as well as lingering and interacting between user. Although the spatial characteristics of the area have not been planned to encourage public stationary use, once the streets are closed to motorised vehicles, these becomes setting of multiple *tactics*, stationary activities as socialising, dancing, sleeping or sharing food. In particular the behavioural mapping shows that activities cluster on the curb of the sidewalks, near railings and mostly under the skywalks that become shading devices. Through the evidence of this case it is possible to inform how pedestrianised streets can be potential spaces where people can move through the city as well as have social interactions, communal sharing and cultural expression, in one-word social wellbeing.

This study reported one pilot-study observation of the pedestrianised area. Further research needs to extend the analysis to a wider number of pedestrianised streets cases. In addition, the total occupancy and the observations that emerged from Structured Direct Observation investigation can be further integrated analysing the occupancy related to specific spatial attributes of the pedestrianised streets (for example curb area occupancy and shaded area occupancy). This can highlight some directions for a planning agenda aiming at increasing the social wellbeing in similar contexts.

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