Recht op de stad. Transitioning from local neighborhood protests to a city-wide collaborative urban social movement

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Summary

Recht op de stad (Rods) is an example of an urban social movement (USM) where several local neighborhood protest groups (NPGs) transitioned from protest to a collaborative city-wide movement. Rods emerged based on discontent with the prevailing multi-level housing policy in Rotterdam. Several local NPGs combined forces, together with individual urban professionals, creatives, and other engaged citizens. This master thesis provides insight in this complex transition by looking at the conditions that contribute to the process. A better understanding of these conditions is relevant as citizens are increasingly seen by the government as contributors to collectively tackle wicked challenges. Moreover, the aim of this thesis is to combine two streams of literature. By bringing the politically oriented theory on USMs and the governance-oriented theory on CBIs together, a contribution is made to an existing gap in the literature. Based on the insights of the literature a conceptual model was created consisting of five possible conditions that contribute to the process of transition: community leadership, social capital, organizational capacity, government support, and the policy context.

To gather data, an in-depth single case study was conducted, consisting of semi-structured interviews, observations of plenary meetings of Rods, and building on secondary sources such as newspapers and blogs. Through the method of snowballing, respondents were selected, which allowed a good insight in the process of transition. Three phases could be distinguished when analyzing the process of transition. From protest as the first phase, over transition as the second phase to collaboration as the third phase. The first conclusion is that the policy context is a stable condition that shapes the process of transition. Additionally, each phase is associated with its own combination of conditions. In the end, all these phases shape the process from protest to collaboration. Another conclusion is that the conceptual model, that was primarily building on governance conditions for CBIs, is also suitable to study other forms of citizen self-organization. However, the condition of knowledge has proven to be highly important for the emergence of the current collaborative attitude of Rods, thus adding knowledge to the conceptual model might be necessary although further research on this condition is required too.

Preface

With this preface I am finalizing not only the writing process of this thesis, but it also marks the end of my time at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Throughout the past year, I was able to enjoy the vibrant city of Rotterdam while at the same time being stimulated by numerous though-provoking scholars and fellow students on campus. I am happy that I could combine both in the research topic of my master thesis, as I studied an emerging urban social movement in Rotterdam from a scientific perspective. This combination stimulated my enthusiasm regarding the capstone of my education.

In this preface I would like to thank the people that contributed, in any way, to this master thesis. First, I would like to thank my supervisor Jan Fransen for the guidance throughout the past months. Through your comments, feedback and questions, I was able to keep course and obtain this result. In addition, I wish to thank Ingmar van Meerkerk and Bahar Sakizlioglu Uitermark for the guidance and feedback through the Research Design course. Many thanks also to all the members of Rods, who let me join their plenary meetings and welcomed me sincerely. Extra gratitude to all the respondents that were willing to contribute to my research, by making time for an interview. Lastly, I would like to thank all my fellow classmates, friends, and family for the ongoing support throughout the past months.

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1. Introduction

Current societies encounter fundamental challenges in governing themselves in a democratic way. Policy problems are increasingly wicked and multi-faceted (Ianniello et al., 2018), and policy areas, policy levels, and policy actors are increasingly interdependent. Moreover, modern societies are characterized by globalization processes and more skepticism towards government and the public sector (Torfing et al., 2012). Furthermore, present day government policies often result or imply declining the welfare state, policy decentralization, and austerity practices (Van Brussel & Boonstra, 2021). These developments provide triggers that result in citizen self-organization (Nederhand et al., 2016). Citizens are increasingly able to do so as they are empowered by technology and available information (Van Brussel & Boonstra, 2021), progressively higher educated, and willing and able to carry out their own initiatives (Edelenbos & Meerkerk, 2016).

Self-organization happens in a loose and hybrid collaborative way between citizens, artists, and community workers. Expansion in social, geographical, and thematic scope happens easily. Self-organization and citizen initiatives come in many different forms and shapes, from protest over temporal direct action to sustainable collaboration and co-creation (Van Brussel & Boonstra, 2021). This master thesis focuses on urban social movements (USMs), which are a form of citizen self-organization that is city-oriented and tries to affect structural social change and transform urban meanings (Castells, 1983). A distinguishment is made between USMs that protest specific policy or government plans and USMs that actively seek collaboration with other organizations or governmental actors. However, Meyer (2004) sees both as a type of political resource to intervene in public policy making, by those that are excluded or feel excluded by that same decision-making process.

Often, these initiatives do not assume a permanent form (Fainstein & Fainstein, 1985) and thus possibly encounter transitions within their organization. According to Hochstenbach et al. (2017), USMs that focus on protest are often easier and faster to set up, but sustainable changes and impact are harder to obtain through this mode of political action. Therefore, USM might undergo transitions aiming at achieving their goals, for example by embedding their local protest in larger and more global struggles regarding structural inequality. This evolution

from narrow, often local, protest to a larger movement is not uncomplicated. Urban activism by USMs is progressively considered a crucial element of urban governance processes, as local activists participate in urban politics as well as aim to influence decision-making (Domaradzka, 2018). Due to this expected potential and increased importance, a better understanding of USMs is relevant for both citizens as well as decision-makers as they will interfere during decision-making processes. Therefore, the research question of this master thesis is the following:

Which conditions contributed to transitioning from local neighborhood protests towards a city-wide collaborative urban social movement?

1.1 Societal relevance

The research question of this master thesis was developed within the context of the port city of Rotterdam, and at the background of what has many times been called a national housing crisis, especially in bigger cities of the Netherlands (Bolwijn, 2021). This does not surprise as cities are places where many social and urban challenges exist, of which housing is a perfect example. At the same time, cities are also places where many initiatives and people meet (Edelenbos et al., 2021). This is of course also true for the city of Rotterdam. Particularly in the housing domain, a lot is happening in the city, both top-down as well as bottom-up. The interplay between these two directions formed the starting point of this thesis. Rightly, housing can be described as a wicked problem. It is a complex challenge, with a variety of stakeholders, each with their own approach to, and definition of the issue and its possible solutions (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

Urban development in Rotterdam has a long tradition, with different directions and leading values throughout the years. The current context is shaped by the Woonvisie 2030 (Vision for living in 2030). The city aims at providing sufficient housing for all segments of society, with an explicit focus on middle-income segments as they currently have a hard time finding adequate housing. Moreover, the Municipal Executive Committee (MEC) actively wants to diversify some neighborhoods in Rotterdam South, since they mostly consist of social housing. The city believes that their socio-economic homogeneity is responsible for social problems and that current residents in social housing neighborhoods will benefit from a better social

mix (Liukku, 2016). These policies and policy goals are however threatening vulnerable segments of society. This has led to several bottom-up initiatives raising their voice. The discontent with prevailing national and local policy brought many people on the streets throughout the past months. As it is increasingly harder for a larger part of society to find adequate housing and as the first implications of the Woonvisie 2030 and the *NPRZ* or *Nationaal Plan voor Rotterdam Zuid* (National Plan for Rotterdam South) become visible, several neighborhood organizations arose or reinforced themselves, seeking changes to existing policy plans. The most well-known example is the demolition of the Tweebosbuurt in Rotterdam South. The national government even received a letter from the United Nations regarding the right on housing in the specific case of the Tweebosbuurt (Van Bockxmeer, 2021).

One of the biggest urban social movements (USMs) that arose in Rotterdam as a reaction to these events and processes was *Recht op de Stad* (Rods). This USM consists of several neighborhood protest organizations (bewonerscommissies), amongst others *Bewonerscommissie Tweebosbuurt*, *De Unie Van en Voor de Wielewaelers* and *Bewonerscommissie Behoud de Pompenburg*. Originally these USMs mainly took up the role of protesters, against what was happening in their own living environment. However, under impulse of a group of urban professionals from Rotterdam these neighborhood organizations joined forces and transitioned towards a more collaborative attitude. This initiative drafted the *Better plan for living in Rotterdam* (Het betere plan voor Rotterdam), in which they do several policy proposals and carry out fundamental principles regarding housing (Recht op de stad, 2022). The aim was to move beyond protest alone and use this plan to accelerate dialogue with the municipality, housing associations and other stakeholders.

1.2 Scientific relevance

The aim of Rods fits the new co-creation paradigm, as described by Igalla et al. (2019) very well. Instead of relying primarily on standardized ways of proceeding to change directions in the city, Rods believes that ad hoc gatherings of interested and knowledgeable players to frame problems in new and shared ways might be a better way to deal with the inherent wickedness of housing policy (Booher & Innes, 2003). As citizens and USMs are increasingly seen as contributors to collaboratively solve wicked societal challenges (Mees et al., 2019), it

is relevant to further explore the inherent complexity of USMs and urban activism. According to (Domaradzka, 2018) the complexity of urban reality is also reflected in the complexity of USMs and forms of protest. Factors such as place, scale, and local context are crucial to define USMs. Meyrowitz (2005) adds that next to the local forces, national and especially international forces need to be considered as well, since we live in so called glocalities. Each context is unique, but at the same time reciprocally influenced by global trends. This complexity, consisting of volatile USMs in a multi-layered glocal contexts will be explored in this master thesis. Thus, this master thesis wants to explore how the process of transition from protest to collaboration takes place within the complex urban context.

Another important objective of this master thesis is to contribute to the theory on citizen self-organization by combining two streams of literature. As USMs are essentially a concept that is embedded in the more political oriented literature, this study will make use of governance-oriented conditions to study the process of transition. In doing so, the conditions that contribute to good governance of citizen initiatives such as community-based initiatives (CBIs) will be used in a different context. By doing so, the aim of this explorative research is to explore which conditions contribute to the transition within USMs, where they transition from protest to collaboration.

This master thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter (*2. Theoretical framework*), provides an overview of the relevant literature on both citizen self-organization and citizen initiatives and CBIs, which results in a conceptual model that will be used to analyze the selected case study. In the second chapter (*3. Methodology*), the methodology is discussed, with attention for the case study, data collection, data analysis, and the operationalization of the variables. The third chapter (4. Results), the case is described and analyzed. The last chapter, (5. Discussion and conclusions) delves into the meaning of the results and provides the link with the literature and answers the central research question.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Sediment of paradigms

Since the 1950's in Europe, citizens expected government to provide welfare services and promotion of local development. Citizens, especially in North-west Europe, assumed that formal government would and should provide infrastructures, goods, and services which profit-driven market enterprises could not. This was also true for spatial planning and development work (Healey, 2015). During the 1970s, the idea of a strong public sector received more and more critiques. The image of the public sector shifted towards authoritarian, increasingly causing paternalistic disempowerment and *clientelization* of citizens. Supported by anti-authoritarian revolts in the 1960s, the asymmetric power relation between citizens and public authorities was challenged. The strong hierarchy needed to be turned around according to the newly evolving New Public Management paradigm. The wants and needs of the citizens needed to be the center of attention for public administration. The public sector was redefined, from legal authority to service provider. Contracting out of public services to private firms and free choice of service providers by end-users entered the realm of public administration. Consumer choice became the new mantra for neoliberal governments around the world (Torfing et al., 2019).

Throughout the past two decades this new paradigm was challenged again. Financial constraints and political ideology have cut public sector budgets. This resulted in problems with quality, coverage, and co-ordination of the public services (Healey, 2015). Moreover, societies are increasingly confronted with fundamental challenges in governing themselves in a democratic way. There is an enlarged complexity of policy problems and policy areas, policy levels, and policy actors are increasingly interdependent (Torfing et al., 2012). This fragmented policy environment needs to deal with wicked issues, that are multi-faceted (Ianniello et al., 2018). Furthermore, globalization, more active actors within civil society, and more skepticism towards government and the public sector from citizens are contributing to the complexity too (Torfing et al., 2012). As our current institutions seem to lack the ability to deal with this new context (Fung & Wright, 2001), public administration is shifting towards a new paradigm called New Public Governance. Here, the aim is transforming the image of the public sector from a legal authority and a service provider, to an arena for co-creation (Torfing et al., 2019).

Citizens and other service-users are identified by the government as part of the production process of policy and projects, and thus citizens are receiving more responsibility (Igalla et al., 2020). Citizens are encouraged to get involved in all kinds of community activities as local governments aim to involve citizens actively in providing public welfare services and in solving social and political problems and challenges. Co-creation breaks with the classical view that the public sector is the sole provider of public goods. Moreover, it no longer supports the idea that competition between public and private actors is the key to better public service delivery. So, co-creation swaps public service monopolies and public-private competition for multi-actor collaboration (Torfing et al., 2019).

While doing so, the entire perception of the public sector is transformed too. Government should take up a facilitative role and should participate in a constructive collaboration with relevant and affected actors who can help define and tackle shared issues and tasks (Torfing et al., 2019). This presumes a shift in responsibilities for public goods and services away from or in addition to governments and businesses, to citizens. Government roles do not diminish or become obsolete, but they do change. In addition to the collaborative stance, governments take up a responsive role while letting go their solely steering and regulating roles (Mees et al., 2019). The public sector as an arena for co-creation requires cooperation between public organizations and professionals, across institutional boundaries. This way, experiences, resources, energies, and ideas of users, citizens, civil society organizations and private firms can be shared. Yet, this is not easy. The different images of the public sector co-exist as a sediment, with public administration paradigms layered on top of old ones (Torfing et al., 2019).

Within this layered context, citizens are actively taking up a more present role. They organize themselves around prevailing issues, based on dissatisfaction or complaints about governmental policy and actions (Mayer, 2006). This self-organization comes in different forms and shapes: ranging from citizen initiatives protesting neoliberalist urbanization and mega-plans, social or niche innovation providing civic-driven, user generated, place based, and temporal direct actions reshaping urban space, to collectives such as urban commons and cooperative urban development (Van Brussel & Boonstra, 2021).

2.2 Citizen self-organization

2.2.1 Protest

Regarding the central research question, attention for the specific context of the city and prevailing urbanization processes is needed too. The world's population is increasingly urbanizing, which is accompanied by continuing social inequalities (Krieger et al., 2021). Currently, the largest wave of urban growth in history is unfolding, with huge social, economic, and environmental transformations as a result. Many prevailing wicked societal problems are centered around what happens in the urban fabric, often consisting of enclaves for the rich coexisting alongside neighborhoods where disempowered more poor people live. Hence, many of these urban wicked challenges are often centered around socio-spatial rights and needs. These struggles include the privatization of both services and places, gentrification processes that are pushing low-income groups out of the city, and the lack of adequate and affordable housing and public spaces. These processes led to the emergence of protests in cities around the globe (Domaradzka, 2018).

Protest is a set of means that are effectively available to a given set of people and which they can use to act collectively in order to make claims on individuals and groups. According to Mayer (2003), protest is a specific type of political action. Van Laer and Van Aelst (2010) define this type of political action as an *unorthodox* or *unconventional* sort of political behavior. The reason therefore is that protest actions are performed on the non-institutional side of politics, outside the realm of conventional or orthodox political participation. Examples of the latter are voting, being a member of a political party or lobbying. Important to stress however is that this approach to protest does not imply severe political crime like terrorism or guerilla warfare. Protest consists of a variety of potential protest actions or so called repertoires of contention (Hanna et al., 2016). Protests and their repertoires are as broad as there are social movements and activists, goals and causes, claims and grievances. Moreover, the wide variety of protest actions have their own specific threshold for protesters. The classic continuum of the action repertoires ranges from signing a petition which has a low threshold to participating in violent action such as the destruction of property, which has a high threshold (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010).

2.2.2 Urban social movements

Protest has always been one of the potentially useful political resources that could be used by citizens to influence policy making. Around many protests an extensive social movement grows to organize this kind of action (Mayer, 2003). A wave of urban social movements started to demand increased participation by the grassroots and democratization of urban politics (Mayer, 2003). Contemporary urban movements, according to Domaradzka (2018, p. 608), "seek social recognition by demanding a right to the city and by building democratic and solidarity-based spaces rooted in local cultures, in opposition to urban development models designed for the elites". These movements consist of a plurality of individuals, groups and/ or organizations that function in an informal fashion (Diani, 1992).

Social movements, from a wider perspective, are according to Lipsky (1968, pp. 1145-1146) "a mode of political action oriented towards objection to one or more policies or conditions, characterized by showmanship or display of an unconventional nature, and undertaken to obtain rewards from political or economic systems while working within the systems". Fainstein and Fainstein (1985, p. 189) similarly describe social movements as "emergent action groups that seek social transformation and depend for their success on the mobilization of social collectivities". Protest movements threaten, by definition, entrenched interests. This often results in resistance and conflict. Movements are the product of social collectivities consisting of individuals with shared values or social conditions. The aim of these collectivities is to convert certain common characteristics into perceived solidarities: creating an action group that recognizes common grievances, agrees on remedies, and incurs costs in achieving its program. Additionally, they address the alterability of social movements. Successes and failures in achieving goals directly affects their future size and capacity for further action. Thus, according to the authors social movements never assume a permanent form. Building on this changeable character of urban social movements, the next section will zoom in on urban social movements.

When defining urban social movements (USMs), the definition by Castells (1983) is essential. The author describes them as "city-oriented mobilization, affecting structural social change and transforming urban meanings" (Castells, 1983, p. 305). The definition by Fainstein and Fainstein (1985) builds on this, but adds that USMs are rooted in collectivities with a

communal base and/ or with the local state as their target of action. Common locations in real space or the organization of the build environment (e.g. public housing occupants, renters, …) often provide a mutual base for these USMs. The local state can be the object of USMs, but it does not necessarily have to be. However, in advanced capitalist nations with large welfare states and governmental penetration of civil society this is often the case. Obviously, the urban plays an import role when looking at USMs. The defining features of the city – density, size, and diversity – provide the basic elements for protest to develop. The micro interactions between large numbers of diverse people living in proximity are a base for protest to emerge. USMs sprout when people organize to collectively claim urban space, organize constituents, and express their demands (Uitermark et al., 2012).

2.2.3 Types of conflict within the urban

Expressing demands is based on what happens in the context in which USMs are embedded. Therefore, it is crucial to take all levels and scales in consideration (Meyrowitz, 2005). Fainstein and Fainstein (1985) do this by approaching the context of USMs from a political and economic perspective. USMs are shaped by the character of political institutions such as parties and existing pressure groups. Existing governmental programmes play an important role too. First, changes in the division of labor and location of production, altered patterns of migration and settlement occur. Second, new urban economic functions required the physical restructuring of the built environment. Throughout the past decades, former industrial cities were converted towards cities that accommodate the service city. These conversions relied heavily on private partners, building residential buildings or offices. The state often was the direct agent of change, for example by building transportation infrastructure or clearing land for urban renewal. Another possibility was a more indirect approach by the state through subsidizing or regulating activities of capital. Urban dwellers however resisted almost everywhere to these urban redevelopments. This resulted in strong urban movements and even broader political claims, often on an (inter)national level. Third, due to market forces, in some cities housing shortages were created which became politicized into a housing crisis. Economic and political forces, migration, and physical redevelopment together with low income and/ or insufficient private housing production resulted in inadequate housing for substantial segments of the urban population. Public support for this group was provided, but not sufficiently. Discontent led to rent strikes, squatting, and demonstrations which made

them important elements of social movements. Fourth, economic transformations threatened the fiscal capacities of state agencies that supported the social wage and collective consumption. This resulted in strong cutbacks in social expenditures.

Building on these insights on the context in which USMs thrive, three principal forms of protest within the urban can be distinguished. First, demands for territorial self-organization may give rise to USMs. This type of conflict arises because communities seek control, decentralization, and political participation in local policy- and decision making. This first form is thus about the institutional arrangements that determine relative shares of power. Second, USMs frequently make demands for more or better collective consumption goods, such as schools, public housing, and health care facilities. Third, social movements may arise around issues of communal defense related to a certain cultural and territorial identity and integrity. Examples thereof are urban renewal schemes or the construction of public housing in neighborhoods (Castells, 1983; Fainstein & Fainstein, 1985).

When talking about protest in the remainder of this thesis, the focus will be on urban social movements that set up protest against existing policies or developments plans (Domaradzka, 2018). These policies or plans possibly cause conflicts, in which three types can be distinguished: demands for territorial self-organization (institutional), demands for better or more collective consumption goods, and cultural and territorial identity (Castells, 1983). The actions that are undertaken by USMs are considered non-institutional, as they are a type of political action outside the realm of conventional or orthodox political participation (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010).

2.2.4 Towards collaboration

However, the USMs that collectively claim urban space, organize constituents, and express their demands (Uitermark et al., 2012) often realize that only opposition has limited effectiveness (Hochstenbach et al., 2017). To achieve real impact, the introduction of social consultation mechanisms and participatory planning tools can be considered necessary. Moreover, as USMs start to search for support, this contributes to the formation of wider coalitions. In the first place with other activist groups from for example different neighborhoods (Domaradzka, 2018). Though, seeking connection with other actors is possible

too. Especially so-called autonomous social movements aim to embark on institutional actions, including making demands to the government, using the legal system and seek help from political parties (Pruijt & Roggeband, 2014). Thus, USMs that used to focus on protest, may start to build up alliances. These involve (and reinvigorate) older and disparate movement groups. Moreover, links are also formed with non-movement partners such as unions, churches, and welfare organizations to name a few. Flexible action repertoires are being used, fighting both inside the negotiation rooms and in the streets, like globally active NGO's do. Both pragmatic and militant strategies are used, but always professional. Additionally, part of this more collaborative stance is a central role for media (Mayer, 2006).

Paradoxically to the fact that neoliberal urbanization is still widely present, repeatedly triggering conflict and uprisings (Mayer, 2016), governments increasingly realize that they are encountering fundamental challenges in governing themselves in a democratic way (Ianniello et al., 2018). Building on the new paradigm of New Public Governance, which involves a shift in responsibilities for public goods and services results in governments realizing they should take up a more collaborative and responsive role, rather than only a steering and regulating one (Mees et al., 2019). This paradigm shift, aiming at involving citizens to tackle wicked societal challenges (Nederhand et al., 2016) thus creates a more collaborative approach from the government side too. As USMs seek collaboration with other actors and don't mind institutional actions, the government might be a potential partner for USMs too. However, this question presents a dilemma for USMs and it might be a source of controversies too (Pruijt & Roggeband, 2014). Nevertheless, it is important to consider the interplay within the politically influenced policy context as an important condition for the process of transition.

In the remainder of this thesis, collaboration will be defined as USMs actively seeking alliances with new partners, ranging from non-institutional to institutional. These newly build coalitions arise based on the perceived limited effectiveness of protest. Collaboration is a more conventional type of political action, although there might still exist a combination of both unorthodox as well as orthodox action repertoires (Mayer, 2003; Pruijt & Roggeband, 2014).

2.3 Understanding USMs through community-based initiatives

Different phases, from protest to collaboration are described in the previous part on citizen self-organization. However, what remains unclear is which conditions add to the actual process of transition. As theory does not provide a clear answer on this rather political-motived transition of USMs, it might be interesting to build on governance theory. The broadly available literature on community self-organization can thus provide new insights in the shift that USMs undertake, keen on increasing their impact and reaching their objectives. Within the literature on community self-organization, the concept of community-based initiatives (CBIs) received a lot of attention in recent years. CBIs are strongly focused on service provision instead of policy or politics, so there is quite a difference with the definition of USMs (Igalla et al., 2020). USMs try to influence public policy making by protest or alliance seeking, often by providing (theoretical) alternatives (Domaradzka, 2018). CBIs are generally oriented on providing alternatives for public services themselves. To do so, relations with other actors are crucial (Mees et al., 2019; Nederhand et al., 2016) and thus can be seen as more collaborative.

When comparing CBIs and USMs, it can be noted that both types of organizations are a form of citizen self-organization with citizens in a leading role. Looking further at the characteristics of both CBIs and USMs will provide insights in both bottom-up initiatives. Edelenbos et al. (2021) describe CBIs as bottom-up initiatives where citizens take the lead and collectively initiate and implement projects or plans aimed at providing public goods or services for their own community. Often, they emerge due to budget cuts and state retrenchment in various sectors such as urban livability or energy. According to (Healey, 2015) citizens control the aims, means, and implementation of their activities. Similarly, to what drives USMs, CBIs are a reaction on processes like budget cuts, objection to or discontent with policies or conditions set up by the government. Thus, for both concepts, the policy context plays an important role. Yet, where protest movements keep the government in a central position, CBIs are taking up a more central role themselves (Edelenbos & Meerkerk, 2016). According to Mayer (2006) this central role can also be the result of citizen initiatives that want to avoid being marginalized as exclusively negative and driven by NIMBYism (Not In My Back-Yard). As a result, CBIs might launch alternatives to government proposals.

This happens in a context where citizens are no longer engaging in a traditional way within the existing structures, but rather in an informal and loosely structured manner. This might be the result of a decline in trust in governmental structures and procedures. Citizens consider government to be ineffective and no longer legitimate (Mayer, 2006), which puts pressure on many liberal and representative democracies in Western countries (Edelenbos & Meerkerk, 2016). Nevertheless, CBIs are often linked to government and other actors, such as funding organizations and traditional third sector organizations. Thus, CBIs and other citizen initiatives are operating within an institutionalized setting with regulations at numerous scales. Therefore, interaction with government is unavoidable. So, for CBIs it is not the absence of government or other helping hands that defines them but rather the fact that citizens are in control of the provision of public services. These citizens thus lead a hybrid network of support through bonding, bridging, and linking ties (Igalla et al., 2020). Here again, the importance of the policy context for citizen initiatives is stressed.

2.3.1 Conditions for the transition from protest to collaboration

The following paragraphs will outline the conditions that explain the performance of CBIs. As both concepts share relevant characteristics, the following conditions provide a new lens to study USMs. Moreover, it can be tested if the framework outlined underneath also works in a different context. This part strongly builds on Igalla et al. (2019), as the authors did a systematic literature review of citizen initiatives, including a broad range of studies, both in terms of disciplines and search terms. Where relevant, insights from the literature on USMs will be added to the set of conditions. By combining both streams of literature, a shared framework will be developed to approach the transition from protest to collaboration within USMs. Igalla et al. (2019) distinguished four conditions: organizational capacity, government support, social capital, and community leadership. The remainder of this part will dive deeper into these four conditions.

2.3.1.1 Organizational capacity

The first condition is organizational capacity. This concept deals with the ability of an organization to fulfil its mission, with financial and human resources as main elements. Financial resources are important as CBIs need them for various ends, amongst others to initiate and run services, implement new activities, invest in communication and exposure, or

mobilize volunteers. Next, sufficient human resources are very important too. This concerns volunteers participating in CBIs, which is important since CBIs often run on a voluntary basis. Committed volunteers provide resources of time and energy that increase the capacity of initiatives to achieve the desired outcomes (Igalla et al., 2020). Sufficient resources have a positive influence on outcomes of citizen initiatives. Igalla et al. (2019). Moreover, with regard to human capital, the motivation of citizens to join bottom-up organizations is both driven by personal as well as a collective rewards. Citizens should have the idea that they can make a more direct difference for their living environment (Van Meerkerk, 2019). Consequently, these two levels of motivation can be highly important for individual members to support processes of transition from protest to collaboration.

2.3.1.2 Government support

A second condition is government support for citizen initiatives. CBIs operate with a high level of control, based on the idea that government is no longer the most effective provider of certain public services (Edelenbos & Meerkerk, 2016). As CBIs deal with public issues, they have many encounters with the government and its structures, rules, procedures, regulations, and routines. Government policy and institutions influence the space CBIs get to take action, and the way they function (Edelenbos et al., 2018; Molenveld et al., 2021). To develop effective and successful collective actions over time, citizens need at least minimal recognition of the right to organize by the government. Additionally, government support for initiatives is useful to get started or to gain assets (Igalla et al., 2020). Even in the age of network governance, governments possess important resources and assets. This makes it relevant for bottom-up initiatives to collaborate with the state. Governments themselves can have different reasons to support CBIs too (Nederhand et al., 2016). Especially in the context of budget cutbacks and the shifted paradigm towards cocreation. Supporting CBIs can be of strategic interest to achieve policy goals. However, as mentioned earlier, close cooperation with the government might evoke internal conflict. Hence, government support can also be a source of internal conflict (Pruijt & Roggeband, 2014), which would not contribute to transitioning from protest to collaboration. Members of the USMs can fear closer cooperation with the government, as governments can limit the scope of the cooperation to their agenda which possibly limits USMs and their ambition to reach a specific goal (Igalla et al., 2019).

2.3.1.3 Social capital: bonding, bridging, and linking ties

A third possible condition is social capital. Initiated by Bourdieu (1986), and later further developed by Putnam (1995, pp. 664-665) who defines social capital as "features of social life – networks, norms, and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives". This is a key condition for durable citizen initiatives, and especially CBIs and USMs. Mayer (2003) also stresses the importance of norms of reciprocity and civic engagement, social trust, and networks of social relations as these can be mobilized for civic action. Based on these features citizens can act together. Hence, social capital helps to mobilize resources and coordinate action. The assumption can be made that high social capital will contribute to the transition from protest to collaboration, as this process requires members of USMs to work together too. In the remainder of this part, social capital will be studied more closely through examining the three types of the concept: bonding-, bridging-, and linking social capital (Igalla et al., 2020).

Bonding social capital

First, bonding social capital is further described. This type of social capital refers to trust and co-operative relations between members of a network who see themselves as being similar, in terms of shared social identity. This type of social capital is about having a core group of members within the initiative that all know each other and are connected through strong trusting and frequently maintained relations. Building on these relations, steps can be taken to achieve organizational and community outcomes and goals (Igalla et al., 2019). Consequently, trust is enabling members of CBIs and USMs to contribute resources to the organization, and is thus an important precondition for mobilizing the organization (Nicholls, 2008). Accordingly, this bonding social capital is expected to be highly important for USMs to engage in a process of transitioning from protest to collaboration.

Moreover, this type of social capital can contribute to building and maintaining organizational capacity. High bonding social capital results in a strong core group of members, which is crucial for organizing activities, mobilizing (other) volunteers and resources that are relevant for achieving organizational and community outcomes and goals (Igalla et al., 2019). Again, building on this, engaging in a transition from protest to collaboration would potentially

benefit from high bonding social capital too and can therefore be seen as an important potential condition.

Bridging social capital

Bridging social capital refers to relations of exchange, respect and mutuality between people who see themselves to be different in some social identity sense (Igalla et al., 2020). To be able to fully yield the resources that are inherently present in the city, weaker ties or bridges need to be built between different organizations or groups. Thus, the relevance of the city as so-called relational incubator, facilitating complex relational exchanges that generate a diversity of useful resources, is high and contributes to bridging social capital. When embedded in the community and access is provided to new resources such as volunteers, tacit knowledge or material and financial contributions (Igalla et al., 2019). Bridging social capital as a condition that potentially contributes to the transition from protest to collaboration is based on the potential access to new resources.

Linking social capital

Linking social capital refers to ties of exchange between actors who know themselves to be unequal in their power and access to resources (Igalla et al., 2020). Here, citizen initiatives try to connect themselves to formal institutions. These ties help bottom-up initiatives to gain access to different forms of government support. It is important for initiatives to invest in all three forms, aiming for good outcomes (Igalla et al., 2019). According to Pruijt and Roggeband (2014), when opportunities are visible for USMs, expectations for success rise, which encourages collective action. As indicated, this collective action is oriented towards political parties, other (civil society) organizations, and other institutional actions. However, cooperating closely with the local government can result in controversies and internal conflict, as indicated earlier. Nevertheless, linking social capital seems like a crucial condition for USMs making a transition from protest to a collaborative attitude.

2.3.1.4 Community leadership

A fourth important condition of durable citizen initiatives, that might be interesting to use for the exploration of the transitions within USMs, is leadership. Igalla et al. (2020, p. 607) define

the concept as "a set of dynamics occurring among and between individuals, groups and organizations". Leadership is thus strongly related to other conditions, especially social capital and organizational capacity. Community leaders typically act on two levels, namely the organizational level which is focusing on the intra-organizational processes, and the community level which is focusing on the external orientation and activity of leaders. This section will discuss both types of leadership and will focus on their potential contribution to transitions from protest to collaboration.

Transformational leadership

This type of leadership is focusing on directing and inspiring followers by stressing the importance of organizational values and outcomes. Transformational leaders are able to convey a clear and inspirational agenda of change, that express an appealing vision of the organization's mission and future (Igalla et al., 2019). Accordingly, transformational leadership is highly important to engage members of USMs to undertake a transition towards collaboration. Leaders should stimulate and encourage creativity and innovativeness of the people around them as well. These characteristics can be particularly useful in non-profit organizations because of their strong service- and community-oriented missions.

When looking at the relation with other conditions, the literature shows that transformational leadership is an important element for building up organizational capacity. Transformational leaders should articulate an inspiring vision and agenda that attracts people and organizations to invest their time, energy, and financial resources to achieve the collective goals. Related to social capital, transformational leaders affect the level of social capital with their leadership styles. Transformational leaders focus on developing an organizational vision and future. The underlying goal is to develop common ground and orientation between people, making them feel more connected with each other. Bonding ties can be strengthened this way. However, relying on only one leader is seen as dangerous for the durability of the initiative and can thus threaten the potential transition for USMs. Relying on a core group of members helps to prevent an unwanted collapse of the self-organization when leaders decide to leave the initiative (Igalla et al., 2019).

Boundary spanning leadership

This type of leadership is externally oriented. Boundary spanning leadership points at the importance of adapting to the environment for organizations to survive and enhance their performance. This is especially the case in contexts of interdependencies and scarce resources since boundary spanning activities can be used to gain the necessary resources and linking the organization to external developments that might in turn create opportunities for innovation and growth of the organization (Igalla et al., 2020). The literature highlights different boundary spanning activities: linking to potential partners and building sustainable relationships, managing information flows, and connecting to relevant external developments and processes. These are important, according to (Edelenbos et al., 2018), since many CBIs are dependent on acquiring external resources and support, especially from government. Boundary spanners are both organizers as well as institutional infiltrators as they know how to enter governmental institutions and find their path to people at positions who can help them. So, boundary spanning leaders become important in navigating the initiative through the governmental system, arriving at the right departments and people to generate administrative and political support for the community initiative. Boundary spanning leadership also contributes to social capital as leaders are important to develop and maintain new relationships, connecting different community members or institutions, thereby specifically oriented at creating linking and bridging capital. The focus on local issues can enhance the bridging links within the community. Additionally, boundary spanning leadership also strengthens linking ties since boundary spanners connect their goals with policy, needs, and agendas of others.

2.4 Conceptual framework

The theoretical framework provided an overview of relevant literature to study the process of transition from protest to collaboration within USMs. By drawing on the governance-oriented literature on CBIs, in combination with attention for the importance of the policy context, which is more politically orientated, the conceptual framework as pictured in figure 1 was created. This framework will be used to answer the research question of this master thesis, as it combines conditions that possibly contribute to the process of transition.
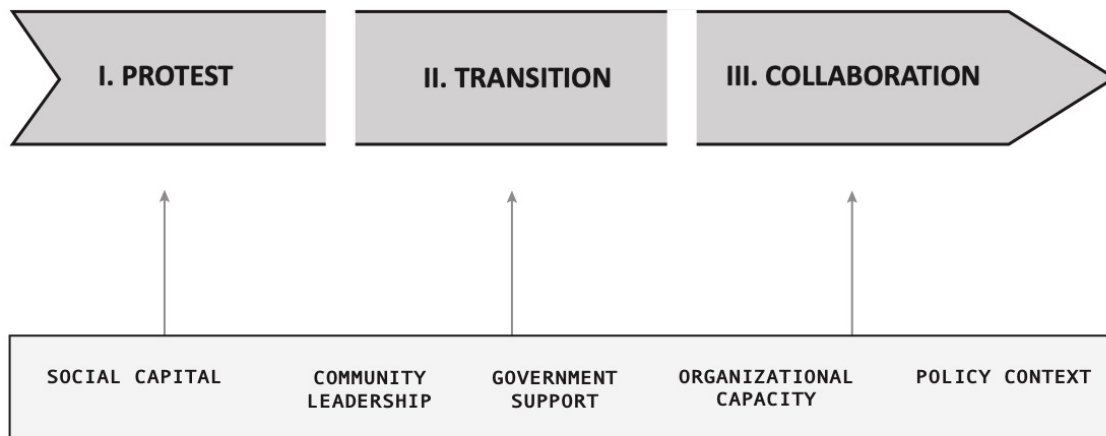
Figure 1 Conceptual framework conditions influencing transition from protest to collaboration

3. Methodology

3.1 Case study and research design

The aim of this thesis is to understand which conditions contribute to transitions that take place within urban social movements. In the theoretical framework, several conditions that possibly add to this transition were distinguished. To use these predefined conditions and approach them from a more dynamic perspective, qualitative research can add to the understanding of these factors. By making use of qualitative research instead of quantitative research the diversity of relations between the core concepts of the conceptual model that was discussed in the previous section, could be better explored, and understood. The explorative character of this qualitative research was chosen as the scientific literature on this process of transition, constituted by two streams of literature is relatively novel.

For this master thesis, a single case study was conducted. This allowed to closely examine the above-described phenomenon, where urban social movements encounter a transition from protest to collaboration. According to (Swanborn, 2013), a case can be seen as a demarcation of time, place, and circumstances in which the selected research phenomenon is studied. The choice of a unique case rather than a representative case implies that the results of the research will not be generalizable towards the whole population of urban social movements. Consequently, the reliability of the research is relatively low as it tries to gain in-depth knowledge on the specific case study. Therefore, this master thesis will provide a starting point for further research.

To explore how the transition from protest to collaboration within urban social movements unfolds, Recht op de stad (Rods) was selected as case study. Rods is an urban social movement advocating for "better and fairer" housing policy in Rotterdam (Recht op de stad, 2022). The USM is founded by a combination of neighborhood protest groups (NPGs), USMs and Rotterdam-based urban professionals and creatives. Based on the idea that current housing policy was insufficient and did not approach housing as a basic right, these organizations and individuals came together. Next to joining forces, they collaboratively drafted an alternative policy plan regarding housing in Rotterdam, *het betere plan* (the better plan). This plan fostered dialogue amongst the members of Rods on the one hand, while it functioned as a

visiting card for other protest movements or institutionalized partners like the government or housing corporations on the other hand. Many of the member organizations or individuals noticeably made, to a certain extent, a conversion from a more protest-oriented attitude towards a collaborative one.

3.2 Data collection

Within Rods, three NPGs were selected. All three NPGs made a transition from protest to collaboration. These can be seen as embedded case studies, providing insight in the process as they both share similarities and differences. Data was gathered in two ways. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of Rods and the three neighborhood protest groups. Through attending the plenary meetings of Rods, where all active members come together, neighborhoods were selected. Instead of making a rigid choice beforehand, the technique of snowballing was used to be able to interview the most relevant actors that are related to the case and its sub-units of analysis. After the initial interview with a gatekeeper, the respondents were asked who else was interesting to interview. This required relatively low planning efforts and made it possible to interview a wide array of people. However, the selection of the NPGs that are part of Rods, relied heavily on the contacts that were built up during the interviews and observations of meetings throughout May and June 2022.

Initially aiming for a minimum of 10 interviews, saturation occurred relatively quick resulting in only 8 in-depth interviews. The overall aim was to cover all possible voices related to the case of Rods, especially from the three NPG-perspectives. The process of snowballing contributed to this. All interviews had a duration between 45 minutes and 75 minutes. Table 1 provides an overview of the respondents. In addition to the interviews, two observations of plenary meetings of the members of Rods added to the data collection. Each meeting had a duration of approximately 2 hours. These observations were used for triangulation and refining the semi-structured interview guide. Adding to these manners of data collection, secondary sources such as newspaper articles and blogs were consulted providing an extra layer to the gather data.

Respondent	Organization
Respondent 1	Recht op de stad
Respondent 2	Recht op de stad
Respondent 3	Municipal administration
Respondent 4	Recht op de stad
Respondent 5	Bewonerscommissie Behoud de Pompenburg (NPG)
Respondent 6	Recht op de stad
Respondent 7	Unie van en Voor de Wielewaalers (NPG)
Respondent 8	Bewonerscommissie Tweebosbuurt (NPG)

Table 1 Overview respondents

3.3 Data analysis

Building on the causal-process tracing (CPT) approach, the analysis of the data will happen through thick description of critical moments and relations between the concepts. By analyzing the process dynamics, configurations of conditions or mechanisms that enable certain outcomes can be identified. Therefore, it is important to thoroughly gain understanding of individual perceptions and motivations of stakeholders (Beach, 2017). This way, the outcome that this master thesis is researching, namely the transition within urban social movements from protest to collaboration, can be explored and described. To analyze the data, a broad understanding of the process itself is necessary. Here, contextual factors need to be incorporated too. As process tracing is focusing on the sequence of events over time, the descriptive component is key. Therefore, a detailed description of the important characteristics of the case is crucial. By describing and explaining the important details of the case, a comprehensive understanding of what actually happened can be obtained (George & Bennett, 2005).

The collected data will be structured based on the grounded theory framework developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Within this framework there is ongoing comparison throughout the collection of the data. This allows for the construction of a theory that is grounded in the collected data. By bringing together a set of well-developed concepts, related through statements of relationships, an integrated framework will be constituted which can be used to approach the research phenomenon. To get there, three different stages of coding need to

be considered: open, axial and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Open coding is the process in which data is labelled in small parts. These labels give meaning to fragments of the collected data. Each code has theoretical relevance or is considered important by the respondents. The next step is axial coding, here codes are reduced by combining codes or eliminating irrelevant codes. Within the step of axial coding, codes can also be integrated by explaining the relationships between the codes further. Thus, within this step new overarching codes emerge. The third step is selective coding, which can be seen as a process of integration and refining the theory. Here, the most relevant concepts are selected and the relationships between these concepts are further elaborated upon. Here, attention is paid to contradictions and elements that are not fully clear yet (Mortelmans, 2020).

3.4 Operationalization

The conditions that influence the transition within urban social movements, that are discussed in the previous chapter are community leadership style, network structure (bonding, bridging, and linking social capital), organizational capacity and governmental support. These conditions are fundamental to explain the transition that is studied in this master thesis. The first step will be to examine if these concepts are present in the case, in a more deductive way. The second and more inductive step will be to check for possible other conditions that contribute to the transition. This also adds to the importance of open and semi-structured questions. This way the complexity of the relations between the core concepts of this research will be explored fully as sufficient room is provided for discovering new variables or new dimensions to existing variables. Table 2 gives an overview of the different variables and dimensions, as described in the theoretical framework. These core variables and dimensions will be used to structure the data gathering and thus form the starting point for the interview guide.

Variable	Dimensions	Indicators
Protest	Unconventional political action	• Which actions are undertaken within the neighborhood protest group? • Was there connection with the local government from your neighborhood protest group?

Collaboration	Conventional political action	• Which differences do you see between your neighborhood protest group and Rods? • Which alliances are important for Rods? • How would you describe the relation with the local government? • How would you describe the relation with local political parties? • Which actions of Rods contributed to reaching the goal of Rods?
Transition	Feeling of ineffectiveness	• What were your expectations about joining Rods? • What were the expectations about joining Rods for your neighborhood protest group? • Which concerns were brought up about joining Rods? • What are the differences between your neighborhood protest group and Rods? • Which differences do you see between your neighborhood protest group and Rods?
Policy context	Incentive for political action	• Which elements of the policy context contribute to protest? • Which factors can explain the emergence of your NPG? • Which factors explain the emergence of Rods?
Community leadership	Transformational leadership	• How would you describe leadership within Rods? • Who is important for motivation and enthusiasm in Rods?
	Boundary spanning leadership	• Are there actors that are important for the relations with other organizations? And with the government?
Social capital	Bonding social capital	• How would you describe the relationships between members of Rods? • Do you feel like there is room for your own ideas in Rods? Why (not)?
	Bridging social capital	• How would you describe the connections with other urban social movements (in the field of housing)? • Which collaborations add to the impact of Rods?
	Linking social capital	• With which organizations does Rods work together? And why?

Organizational capacity	Financial resources	• How is the internal organization of Rods financed?
	Human resources	• How are decisions made within Rods? • Do you have any suggestions for the decision-making process of Rods?
Governmental support	Recognition of USM	• How would you describe the position of the local government towards Rods? • Does the local government contribute in any way to sustaining Rods?

Table 2 Operationalization variables

4. Results

This chapter will explore which conditions might have contributed to process of transition within Rods and the three selected NPGs, by building on the conceptual framework as pictured in figure 1. To do so, this chapter is divided into three parts. First, the policy context in which Rods is operating will be explained. Second, an overview of the emergence of Rods will be provided, looking at the phases of protest in the selected neighborhoods, the phase of transition and the phase of collaboration. The third part will further analyze the process, by providing an overview of the explanatory conditions.

4.1 Policy context

In this first part, the policy context in which Rods is thriving will be (preliminary) described. Rods is strongly embedded in a multi-level policy context, consisting of a local, national and international level. It is important to consider this context as government policy and institutions shape the space that citizen initiatives get, which influences the way they function (Edelenbos et al., 2018; Molenveld et al., 2021). Moreover, there are many encounters with the government and its structures, rules, procedures, regulations, and routines. Rods focusses on the local government, as this level is primarily responsible for housing in Rotterdam. While writing this master thesis, a new majority coalition was being formed. When referring to the local government in this master thesis, the Municipal Executive Committee (MEC) that was in office from 2018 until 2022 is meant. If another MEC is meant, this will be clearly indicated. The MEC consists of Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb and 10 Deputy Mayors, from the following political parties: VVD, GroenLinks, D66, PvdA, CDA and ChristenUnie/SGP. The responsible Deputy Mayor for housing is Bas Kurvers (VVD).

4.1.1 Local level

4.1.1.1 Woonvisie 2030

The lowest layer within the multi-level context is the local policy level. This part will examine this level in relation to Rods and its member organizations. Important for the local context is the *Woonvisie 2030*, which shapes the policy context in Rotterdam strongly. The plan was established in 2016 by Deputy Mayor Ronald Schneider (Leefbaar Rotterdam), who was part of a majority coalition of Leefbaar Rotterdam, D66, and CDA. This coalition was in office from

2014 until 2018. The aim was to diversify the housing stock. This would make an end to "big concentrations of weak living areas", which would shift the socio-economic balance resulting in benefits for mid- and high-income groups within society (Schneider, 2016, p. 11). One of the goals of the Woonvisie 2030 was to demolish 15.000 houses and renovate 10.000 houses. Opponents of the Woonvisie 2030 brought up that this would result in a loss of 20.000 houses for low-income groups in the city of Rotterdam (Liukku, 2016). This strong focus on income and socio-economic position of citizens caused many protests in the city of Rotterdam, which eventually resulted in a non-binding referendum on the new *Woonvisie 2030*, in November 2016. The question asked was: "are you in favor or against the Woonvisie?", 71% of the voters voted "against", but due to a very high absence, the referendum was declared non valid. Schneider continued with his plan (NOS, 2016). Later, the Woonvisie 2030 was further pursued by the MEC, with Bas Kurvers as responsible Deputy Mayor. Again, the necessity of diversifying the population of Rotterdam was one of the principal arguments to maintain the Woonvisie 2030 and strive to a reduction of the social housing stock in the city (König, 2020b).

4.1.2 National level

4.1.2.1 Rotterdamwet

Next to the local policy plan, national laws are shaping the local policy context too. Regarding the case study, especially the *Wet Bijzondere Maatregelen Grootstedelijke Problematieken (Special Measures for Metropolitan Problems Act)*, which was nicknamed *Rotterdamwet* (Rotterdam Law). This law was established in 2006, but dates to 2003 when a local Rotterdam representative (dagelijks bestuurder) was alarmed by a report of the *Rotterdamse Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek* (Rotterdam Centre for Research and Statistics), which is shortened as COS. Back then, COS made a prognose for 2017 in which it stated that Rotterdam would become "younger, more poor and more colorful". The representative for PvdA, Dominic Schrijer, feared that the existing problems regarding livability and safety would worsen in its neighborhood Charlois, Rotterdam South. Back then he was one of the first politicians actively urging for a better mix in neighborhoods (and in the Netherlands in general) through giving priority to, for example higher educated people (Schrijer, 2003).

This idea was picked up by Deputy Mayor Marco Pastors (Leefbaar Rotterdam). However, to put this idea in practice, the national government needed to be convinced too, since freedom

of choice regarding where someone wants to live is anchored in the Dutch constitution. Nevertheless, the House of Representatives saw the potential benefits of this idea: more livable and safe neighborhoods in the Netherlands. Accordingly, a pilot project was set up in the city of Rotterdam in 2004, after which the House of Representatives eventually voted in favor of this new law in 2005. On January 1st, 2006, Rotterdam was the first municipality making use of this new law in 4 neighborhoods: Carnisse, Hillesluis, Oud-Charlois, and Tarwewijk. These neighborhoods are all situated in Rotterdam South. The Rotterdamwet is a means to create safer and more livable neighborhoods. Article 8 of the law states that people living on allowances by the state or living shorter than 6 years in the greater Rotterdam area can be banned out of the neighborhood. Initially, the Rotterdamwet was envisioned to be temporary for 4 years, but it has been extended up until 2022. Several legal institutions, like the Council of State and the European Court of Human Rights, already formulated their concerns as the law can lead to indirect discrimination. Later, in 2009, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations also send an official letter to the Dutch national government as well as the city of Rotterdam, expressing concerns related to the Rotterdamwet (El Maroudi, 2021).

4.1.2.2 Nationaal Plan Rotterdam-Zuid

In addition to the Rotterdamwet, another specific national policy plan was set up for Rotterdam South. The *Nationaal Plan Rotterdam-Zuid* (NPRZ) is another mainstay of the policy context in Rotterdam, implemented by the national government. Former minister for Housing, Neighborhoods, and Integration, Eberhard Van der Laan (PvdA) commissioned advice for the socio-economic problems that were present in the Rotterdam South area in 2010, which resulted in the NPRZ one year later. The aim was to bring Rotterdam within 20 years to the same level as the other so called G4 cities (Amsterdam, Utrecht and The Hague). This level was measured by average income, average score on the central exams and the value of real estate. So, while there was a decline in the national attention for local housing policy, an exception was made for Rotterdam due to the "intensity" of the problems as well as the "un-Dutch" nature of the issues. NPRZ is built upon three pillars, education, employment, and housing. For example, extra teaching hours are funded for primary schools or extra job guarantees for technical and care students of the neighborhood are provided. The third element, providing adequate housing is fundamental too and aligns with what was decided later in the Woonvisie

2030. The aim was to renew 35.000 houses, partly renovating, but mainly demolishing and rebuilding (*Over NPRZ*, n.d.; van Eijck & Naafs, 2019).

4.1.3 International level

Recently, in 2021 the Dutch national government received a letter from 5 Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations. In this official communication, the Special Rapporteurs expressed their concerns with "housing policies of the municipality of Rotterdam aiming to reduce the number of affordable homes, in an overall climate of predicted growing shortages of affordable housing and homelessness in Rotterdam" (Rajagopal et al., 2021, p. 1). They wrote this letter in response to the involvement of the city of Rotterdam, together with Vestia housing association, in the rushed implementation of a controversial project in Tweebosbuurt neighborhood aiming at the demolition of 535 social rental homes. The Special Rapporteurs believed that this development might be in violation of the human right to adequate housing, as the project was embedded in scheduled demolitions. In their letter they specifically address their concerns regarding the Rotterdamwet, NPRZ as well as the Woonvisie 2030. The Special Rapporteurs, point at the discriminatory features of these local and national policies (NOS, 2021; Rajagopal et al., 2021).

4.2 Recht op de stad

Within this multi-level context, neighborhood protest groups arose. Citizens and neighborhoods organized themselves, triggered by the tangible results of the above-described policy context. The neighborhood protests started off around claims for territorial self-organization, demands for better or more collective consumption goods, and cultural and territorial identity (Castells, 1983; Fainstein & Fainstein, 1985) in the Wielewaal neighborhood, Tweebosbuurt neighborhood, and Pompenburg flat. These local protest groups all joined Rods, indicating a new phase of collaboration. Rather quickly, a city-wide movement arose, advocating for, amongst other things, the right on housing and citizen participation in local decision-making. The remainder of this chapter will first introduce the three selected cases. Afterwards a descriptive timeline will be constructed, providing insight in the transition from protest to collaboration for each neighborhood protest group, as well as the emergence of Rods. Thirdly, an overview of the explanatory variables will be given.

4.2.1 Introduction neighborhood protest groups

The selected neighborhood protest groups (NPGs) are all in different stages regarding the redevelopment of their neighborhood, which makes it relevant to use them to explore and describe the transition from protest to collaboration. Where Wielewaal is still proceeding against the potential plans and nothing is set in stone yet, the demolition process in Tweebosbuurt already took off. In the Pompenburg flat, the final decision also still needs to be made but the plans for redevelopment are more recent. In this descriptive timeline, other NPGs are not incorporated, as there were no members present at the plenary meetings and collaboration through Rods was thus lacking.

Wielewaal

The first case is the Wielewaal NPG, the Unie Van en Voor de Wielewaalers (UVVW). During the post-war redevelopment of the city, the Wielewaal neighborhood was built as an emergency solution to provide sufficient, but temporary, adequate housing in the demolished city of Rotterdam. 545 social houses were constructed, in garden city style. Wielewaal is a neighborhood consisting of bungalows in a low-traffic and green environment. Today, more than 7 decades after the construction of this neighborhood, the 545 dwellings are still there. As the buildings were envisioned to be temporary, everybody agrees upon the need for redevelopment. However, there is disagreement regarding the way this redevelopment should happen. Woonstad and the city of Rotterdam started working on a redevelopment plan in 2009. Woonstad wants to demolish all current houses and rebuilt a mix of housing types, following the Woonvisie 2030. This would result in less social houses available in the Wielewaal, which is evoking protest in the neighborhood (*Wielewaal*, 2022).

Tweebosbuurt

The second NPG is the Bewonerscommissie Tweebosbuurt (BCT). In 2018, Vestia announced that the neighborhood would be redeveloped. The Tweebosbuurt neighborhood is situated in Rotterdam South and consists of 524 social dwellings. According to housing association Vestia, redevelopment of the neighborhood is needed as the houses are outdated. Vestia argues that no action would result in "social problems and a bad image of the neighborhood". In 2018,

Vestia presented a plan in which the 524 existing social dwellings would be replaced by 137 new social houses, 101 houses for market price rents, and 143 houses for sale at market price. This provoked protest in the neighborhood. As the redevelopment is a direct result of the above-described policy context, the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood and its residents quickly became the faces of Rotterdam housing policy. There was, and still is, international attention for the regeneration plans of housing association Vestia and the city of Rotterdam. Nevertheless, all 524 social dwelling are demolished by Vestia throughout the past months. The strong mediatization and many protest actions thus did not result in adaptation of the plans (Habiballah et al., 2021; Vestia, n.d.).

Pompenburg

The Bewonerscommissie behoud de Pompenburg (BCBP) of the Pompenburg flat, located in the city center of Rotterdam, is the third selected NPG. The Pompenburg flat consists of 226 social housing units, build around a green courtyard. In 2017 and in 2020 extensive renovations took place. However, in October 2019, residents of the Pompenburg flat found out that their homes were going to be demolished in the near future. It was not the housing association Havesteder that passed the news first, but residents had to learn about the demolition in the local newspaper. Similar to the Wielewaal and Tweebosbuurt neighborhoods, the Woonvisie 2030 is the driver behind the redevelopment issued by Havesteder, the municipality and project developer Powerhouse Company. This plan envisions three high rise towers on the Pompenburg site. The aim of the redevelopment plan is to rebuild all current apartments, but respondent 5 from BCBP fears that these flats will be smaller, more expensive, and that the building process will result in years of nuisance (Recht op de stad, n.d.).

4.2.2 Timeline: from protest to collaboration

The redevelopment processes in these neighborhoods mark a phase of conflict, characterized by local NPGs. The emergence of Rods indicated a new phase of transition, away from protest towards collaboration. The latter can be seen as the third, and current phase. Though, it is important to note that the limits of these phases are porous and do not imply hard boundaries. Dividing the process into phases helps to get grip on the process of transition. In the remainder of this part a descriptive timeline in which this transition is described will be set out. Here both

the overall evolution of Rods and rationales of the selected NPGs will be described and analyzed.

Phase I: Conflict (2009-2020)

Conflict in the Wielewaal neighborhood

The phase of conflict starts in 2009, when residents of the Wielewaal neighborhood first hear about the plans for the redevelopment of their neighborhood and homes. As everybody agrees upon the necessity of renovation or rebuilding, due to the bad shape of the houses, the plans are received positively, and relatively little attention was paid to these plans by the residents. Housing association Woonstad started conversations with the official committee of residents, which resulted in a covenant regarding the framework for the redevelopment in 2011. However, this covenant triggered protest amongst a group of residents (who were no part of the committee of residents) as they feared the demolition of their homes as well as losing the character of their neighborhood (van Veelen, 2019). Residents felt left out of the decision-making process. For respondent 7, the covenant was a symbol of the lack of information, leading increased attention for the process of redevelopment. Woonstad, provides a counter argument by saying that residents were informed, through the committee of residents of the neighborhood. In this agreement, the plan for the neighborhood was drafted in broad terms. Instead of a homogeneous neighborhood consisting of social housing, a mixed neighborhood was envisioned. By not only providing social housing, but citizens with a higher income can also be accommodated and attracted. Therefore, not everyone would be able to return, as the number of social dwellings would be lower than before (from 545 to 280) and the prices of the renovated dwellings would be higher (Otten, 2015; *Wielewaal*, 2022).

Type of conflict

Thus, some residents feared that they would not be able to return as no agreements were made about the price of the rents. Which resulted in 2014 in a protest group: the Unie Van en Voor de Wielewaalers (UVVW). This group started to oppose the plans for the redevelopment of the Wielewaal neighborhood. The political action that they undertook can be seen as a struggle over the provision of collective consumption goods, namely social housing. Moreover, in line with that primary type of conflict, the residents also united around the cultural and

territorial identity of their neighborhood in unique garden city style, aiming at preserving its unique character. Thirdly, the residents desired to participate in local decision-making, regarding their homes and thus express demands for territorial self-organization on the neighborhood level (Castells, 1983; Fainstein & Fainstein, 1985).

Conditions for protest

The protest took off based on high bonding social capital within the neighborhood. Residents started to self-organize and started to protest the proposed plans, from 2012 onwards. These actions included petitions, putting up banners, and organizing protest marches. The UVVW even started with the development of an alternative plan, for which the NPG received external support and expertise. One of these external actors was civil society organization Woonbond. Through bridging social capital, this organization reached out to the UVVW. As several residents in the neighborhood saw the relevance of these connections, a type of boundary spanning leadership arose. These boundary spanners started to approach other organizations and individuals to create an alternative for the redevelopment plans.

This plan was welcomed by Woonstad with mixed feelings, as described in a blogpost by program manager of the Wielewaal for Woonstad, Nico Ros. Woonstad perceived the plan as protest by a small number of residents, coming back on an agreed upon deal (the earlier signed covenant). Though, the housing association was eager to listen to the proposals and elements of the plan. According to Woonstad, several elements of the alternative plan eventually made it into the current plan for the redevelopment, but the conversations did not result in a jointly supported plan (Ros, 2015). Respondent 7, however, argues that good dialogue was lacking from the beginning and that the alternative plan was never considered seriously by Woonstad. When Woonstad sold the land of the social houses to a project developer in 2015, the UVVW brought the case to court which resulted in a long procedure. Currently, a cassation procedure is pending (*De Wielewaalers brengen verkoop van hun wijk voor de Hoge Raad*, 2020; Otten, 2015; Ros, 2015; van Veelen, 2019).

In this phase of conflict, regardless the conversations between Woonstad and the UVVW, there was no adequate linking social capital present. Conversations did not lead to jointly supported outcomes. In addition, the relatively low government support or recognition for

the bottom-up efforts, might explain the lack of agreement too. The issue was only discussed at the project management level, and the responsible Deputy Mayor or board of Woonstad never intervened. The case of the Wielewaal neighborhood illustrates a conflictual way of urban development, where protest as well as providing alternatives did not result in sustainable collaboration between self-organized citizens, Woonstad and the municipality.

Figure 1: Protest action in the Wielewaal (Aarnoudse, 2020)

Conflict in the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood

A second important event in this first phase of conflict was the envisioned redevelopment plan for the Tweebosbuurt, which was communicated to the residents in 2018. In this case, housing association Vestia did not consult or inform its tenants. Where the housing association started (contested) dialogue with the committee of residents in the Wielewaal, in the Tweebosbuurt dialogue was almost nonexistent. This vagueness resulted in residents protesting the proposed plans by Vestia and the municipality (Eaisaouiyen, 2020). An explanation for the extraordinary rush of this redevelopment project can be partly explained by the bad financial situation of the housing association. By quickly cutting a percentage of its property, Vestia wanted to revitalize the financial health of the organization.

Type of conflict

As in the Wielewaal, the residents of the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood did not agree with the proposed plans by Vestia and organized themselves around the objectives of the housing association. Amongst other things, residents feared to loose close social contacts and experienced the redevelopment as discriminatory based on their income or ethnical background (Eaisaouiyen, 2020). Clearly, the struggle for more collective consumption goods, in essence the pile of social housing in Rotterdam South, is the main type of conflict that can be distinguished in this case. However, another type of conflict can be distinguished too, namely the lack of participation in decision-making (Castells, 1983; Fainstein & Fainstein, 1985). These two types of conflict were also seen in the Wielewaal neighborhood.

Conditions for protest

With help from activists and local politicians from elsewhere in Rotterdam, residents started protesting the plan and united in the Bewonerscommissie Tweebosbuurt. This process was based on city wide bridging social capital. Where the Wielewaal was building on already existing bonding social capital, the Tweebosbuurt needed impetus from outside the neighborhood (Keunen, 2020). A big local NPG arose, with a diverse array of people. According to respondent 8, bonding social capital existed already but needed an external push. Broad protest actions were set up by BCT. Next to expressive political actions, such as sit ins, protest marches and banners, a group of BCT was actively seeking contact with oppositional political parties and the media. This way, the voice of the Tweebosbuurt residents became louder and louder.

However, the demand for attention and more participation did not result in constructive conversations between BCT and Vestia. As participation was lacking and the municipality did not recognize the demands of the bottom-up movement, there were no linking ties with the decision-makers. This resulted in a conflictual way of urban development as Vestia went to court, suing 11 tenants that were refusing to break their rental contracts. Vestia did win this first lawsuit. Later, when they sued a second group of tenants, they lost their case (König, 2020a; van Bockxmeer, 2021). The relation between tenants and housing corporation Vestia was strongly influenced by these judicial steps according to respondent 8. Where the case of the Wielewaal neighborhood is still partly covered in uncertainty, the demolition of the

Tweebosbuurt neighborhood is already completed, regardless of all the efforts of the bewonerscommissie. Even the official interventions of the Special Rapporteurs on the right to adequate housing of the United Nations, did not change anything to the redevelopment plans by Vestia, embedded in the policy context of Rotterdam (Habiballah et al., 2021; NOS, 2021; Poot, 2021; Slotboom, 2021; van Bockxmeer, 2021).

Figure 2 Protest banners in the Tweebosbuurt (Recht op de stad, 2022)

Conflict in the Pompenburg flat

Type of conflict

Similar to what happened in the Wielewaal and Tweebosbuurt, residents of the Pompenburg feel excluded from the decision-making concerning their homes. Several active residents organized themselves in the *Bewonerscommissie Behoud de Pompenburg* (BCBP) (Rijnmond, 2020). A design is made for the redevelopment of the Pompenburg, but the legal steps regarding zoning still need to be taken. Therefore, information is crucial in this phase. The type of conflict in the Pompenburg flat is primarily based on demands for territorial self-organization. Of course, the struggle over providing collective consumption goods and collective identity are present here too (Castells, 1983; Fainstein & Fainstein, 1985).

By collecting enough signatures, Havesteder was legally forced to officially acknowledge the new committee of residents. This way, they could also join the monthly meetings between the housing corporation and the already existing committee of tenants. For the members of BCBP, the committee of tenants did not sufficiently voice all questions or opinions of the Pompenburg residents (Recht op de stad, n.d.). Respondent 5 perceives the meetings with housing association Havesteder as mock participation and thinks that the association does not take the bewonerscommissie seriously. The information flow is insufficient, and questions are not always addressed directly. The attitude of housing association Havesteder is described as "tactical" by respondent 5, rather than conflictual or collaborative. The diffuse spreading of information leads to people getting exhausted of the uncertainty. By showing the new apartments that are "beautifully furnished, with nice curtains and nice views" residents are convinced to support the plan.

Conditions for protest

Thus with support from activists from elsewhere in the city as well as political party SP, a core group of residents started protesting the plans. Here again, bridging social capital on the city level plays an important role to set up protest in the neighborhood. Aiming to voice their opinions, connection with the (local) media also was part of the strategy. Moreover, they made big banners and protest messages oriented towards Havesteder and the MEC (Recht op de stad, n.d.; Rijnmond, 2020). As conversations are ongoing between BCBP and Havesteder, it is not true that there are no linking ties present. However, the perceived irrelevance of these meetings by BCBP due to the problematic information flow illustrates that linking social capital is low.

Figure 3 Protest action Pompenburg building (Open Rotterdam, 2021)

Phase II: Transitioning from protest to collaboration (2020-2021)

As highlighted, all neighborhood protest groups received support from engaged urban professionals and/ or local political parties from the opposition, which can be seen as a form of bridging social capital. Respondent 2 indicated that there was an existing informal network of (former) urban professionals and activists. The contacts between these people resulted in the creation of an overarching urban social movement, striving for amongst other things, the right on housing and the importance of citizen participation in local housing policy. This USM wanted to approach the Wielewaal, Tweebosbuurt, and Pompenburg neighborhoods from a city-wide perspective instead of a neighborhood level. The emergence of Rods can be seen as the starting point of the transition from protest to a more collaborative attitude towards the local government as well as other actors in Rotterdam civil society.

Emergence of Rods

Citizens self-organize based on a specific trigger. In all three selected neighborhoods, the trigger was the envisioned redevelopment of the neighborhood and the forced resettlement of the residents. Throughout the phase of conflict, the discontent about local policy choices grew. One of the selected neighborhoods, the Tweebosbuurt, provided the final trigger for the emergence of Rods. This redevelopment process, from 2018 onwards, was seen as the

first tangible outcome of Rotterdam housing policy. Respondent 8 talked about the purposed high mediatization, which implied strong local buzz, as well as national and international attention for what was happening in Rotterdam South. The judicial trajectory also added to the presence of the case in media and local public debate.

Process of emergence

At the same time, from the end of 2019 onwards, several events took place in Rotterdam. Here, a core group of people started to notice that more and more citizens from Rotterdam saw that what was happening in the Tweebosbuurt, was strongly embedded in the city-wide housing policy (the woonvisie) adopted in 2016. The most important were a screenplay of Push, the documentary by former Special Rapporteur on adequate housing Leilani Farha in Leeszaal Rotterdam West, as was clearly described by respondents 2 and 4. A second important event was a meeting of Rotterdam union FNV on housing where several members of Rods met each other, as described by respondents 1 and 7. These events were focused on housing and the interest by many made clear that people were highly concerned by housing policy in Rotterdam. According to respondent 4, it was clear that the topic of adequate housing was present (again) in Rotterdam civil society. Based on this feeling of urgence and attention, a group of people started to gather citizens around the strong disagreement with the local housing policy under the policy context. This happened by the end of 2020. Amongst others, one person with a professional background at civil society organization Woonbond was important for this process of bridging. Soon, people with different professional profiles were contacted, including (former) urban professionals, activists, artists and other creatives such as writers or graphic designers. Additionally, and fundamental for the emergence of Rods and its collaborative stance, this core group connected with the different neighborhoods in Rotterdam that were under pressure by the policy context. For this second step, both boundary spanning leadership and bridging social capital were crucial. The combination of these conditions was found in all three NPGs.

Thus, after these events the first big step was the creation of an informal mailing list, to accommodate communication between the gathered and engaged residents. Subscribing to this list had a very low threshold which resulted in a rather quick growth of the number of people that joined the mailing list. Eventually, this mailing list was primarily a communication

means. Local housing policy was discussed, and people started to think about the necessary changes in local housing policy. Members of the above-discussed neighborhood protest groups also subscribed to this mailing list. Respondent 5 stressed the feeling of trust that emerged, as the information flow in the mailing list seemed to contain a lot of knowledge. Respondent 5 also added that a feeling of connectedness emerged, as it became clearer that other citizens from different neighborhoods were encountering the same struggles in Rotterdam. The initial importance of bridging social capital resulted in growing bonding capital too. The knowledge of the members of the mailing list was crucial for this feeling of connectedness and trust.

The evolution from the mailing list, called *doei doei woonvisie* (bye bye woonvisie), to a more structured movement can be seen as the second step of the phase of transition. This process happened rather quickly, from the end of November 2020 to March 2021. The mailing list grew into a silent movement, consisting of several citizens with professional expertise or experience based on what happened in their own living environment. The initiators of the mailing list decided that next to (supporting) protest, providing alternatives was the way to spark dialogue, change the narrative and try to influence policy making. According to respondent 2, the idea to draft an alternative plan consisting of fundamental principles regarding housing arose rapidly. Respondents 4 and 6 added that the alternative plan came together easily. Every respondent highlights the loose and fluid way in which this happened. According to respondent 2, the aim was to put clear principles forward, while keeping it broad enough so the USM could stay as broad and diverse as it was. The plan consists of five fundamental principles: (1) housing is a fundamental right (2) participation for tenants, (3) no further reduction of the social housing stock, (4) building housing for everyone, and (5) protection of tenants. They named the alternative plan *het betere plan* (the better plan) (Recht op de stad, 2022).

Drafting this plan, together with a variety of loosely coupled members of Rods, was a first step to set up strong alliances. All three neighborhood protest organizations were connected to this first project. However, as described above, the impulse for this alliance building came from outside the three neighborhood organizations and was pushed by individual urban professionals or activists from Rotterdam. Respondent 5 for example illustrated this by saying

that the alternative plan of Rods "suddenly just was there" at a given moment, while also emphasizing that the BCBP was part of Rods from the start. The members of Rods that were not connected to a neighborhood protest organization were thus mainly the drivers of structuring the alliances between NPGs. The fact that these members possess relevant knowledge and insights on the topic can explain this tendency. Another driver of the steep growth of Rods were the upcoming elections. Rods wanted to launch itself one year before the local elections of 2022. Therefore, there was external pressure and urgency to group together. This has contributed to the high voluntary efforts by people from the mailing list to move forward and establish the USM. However, this process strongly relied on a few transformational leaders. These people, some with a lot of expertise and others with experience in urban activism, bundled powers and pushed to create the alternative plan.

Thus, the phase of transition relied strongly on social capital, community leadership and knowledge. In the first place, the bridging social capital, enforced by boundary spanning leadership was crucial to set up the mailing list and gather sufficient people and organizations. The available knowledge contributed to emerging bonding social capital, as trust increased amongst the members of the mailing list based on the expertise. Knowledge also rose support for a few transformational community leaders, who were able to combine expertise and experience when developing the alternative plan. These processes were accelerated by the desire to launch the USM one year before the local elections of March 2022, which enhanced motivation for all the voluntary work.

Transition in the Wielewaal neighborhood
As described above, the organization has a long track record of protest and even came up with an alternative, but dialogue never really sparked between the residents and housing association Woonstad. Respondent 7 described the situation as a point where you "cannot go further". New connections with other NPGs and urban professionals at the end of 2020 were welcomed by the UVVW, as this would result in a more collective approach through a broader network. Building on existing bonding social capital, residents were longing for extra bridging social capital too. Creating this network was strongly dependent on leadership skills by people not living in one of the redeveloped neighborhoods. Boundary spanning leadership played an important role in the phase of transition, as existing networks needed to be enforced and

contacts needed to be aligned to the new USM and its goals. As described, the low threshold of the mailing list was important in that regard. The present boundary spanners could quite easily connect potential members to Rods.

This boundary spanning leadership was also essential for the external image of Rods, as this image was expected to result in a new impetus for the UVVW too. This was important as UVVW felt that they were taken serious to a lesser extent by housing association Woonstad and the city of Rotterdam. According to respondent 7, there has been an active framing by the housing association, internally amongst the employees of the corporation as well as externally towards political decision-makers. By joining Rods, it was expected that the expertise of members would be considered more objective and less emotional. By leaning on present boundary spanning leadership, UVVW also wanted to improve linking social capital towards the housing corporation and the municipality. Thus, the combination of expected access to new knowledge and linking social capital pushed UVVW in the process of transition from a conflictual stance towards a more collaborative one.

Transition in the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood

Similar to the Wielewaal, boundary spanning leadership within a context of emerging bridging social capital can explain why the BCT engaged in Rods, and thus started the process to adopt a more collaborative attitude. The boundary spanner in this case could make use of the bridging social capital that emerged after the meeting with former Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, Laleini Farha. She visited Amsterdam at the end of 2019, specifically on November 24, to present her documentary on the financialization of the global housing market, called Push, at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam. She contacted Dutch civil society organization Woonbond and asked to speak tenants that were experiencing what she described in her documentary. The Woonbond, in turn, contacted several NPGs and other civil society organizations, including BCT. NPGs and engaged urban professionals came together to discuss housing policy in Rotterdam. In combination with the screenplay of Push in Leeszaal Rotterdam West and the meeting of FNV, a seed was planted for more integrated action in Rotterdam.

Adding to this boundary spanning leadership and growing bridging social capital, transformational leadership plays a crucial role too. The feeling of justice by respondent 8 provoked personal motivation to engage in city wide actions to prevent that what happened in the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood would happen in other parts of the city. This person felt connection with other neighborhoods experiencing the same, which can be described as perceived strong bonding social capital after a phase of mainly bridging social capital. Thus, the combination of transformational leadership and bonding social capital can be seen as a second driver for BCT to join Rods and adopt a more collaborative attitude. This bonding social capital and personal motivations also explain the high organizational capacity of Rods in this phase of transition, based on voluntary commitments.

A third motivation are the expected new linking ties based on the knowledge of members of Rods. As BCT was motivated to contribute to changing the way redevelopment processes in Rotterdam happen, joining Rods and its aim to look at housing policy from a wider perspective seemed a logical step. Moreover, the knowledge of other members of the mailing list were considered to add to the neutrality of the initiative. Where the neighborhood protests were rather emotional and local, the city-wide perspective of Rods made it easier to approach stakeholders like housing corporations or the MEC in a businesslike way. Thus, the importance of gaining linking social capital and knowledge through joining Rods was stressed by respondent 8 of BCT. Again, boundary spanning leadership plays an important role too. As several members of the mailing list knew how to contact and engage with political parties, other civil society organizations or the media, these boundary spanners were considered essential to start moving away from the conflictual relationships between residents and housing associations.

Transition in the Pompenburg flat
The first contact between BCBP and the initiators of the mailing list, happened via Twitter. Through boundary spanning leadership from within Rods, BCBP took the first step towards a more collaborative attitude. In addition, the strong bridging social capital was highlighted. Respondent 5 described the first contact very positive and especially the feeling of connection through the fact that other neighborhoods in Rotterdam were dealing with a similar issue. According to respondent 5, this process unfolded itself smoothly. For example, quickly after

the first contact, members of BCBP joined protests in the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood. By doing so, BCBP started to enter the network of Rods. Thus, bonding social capital can be seen as crucial for BCBP to further embark on the process of transitioning away from protest towards a collaborative attitude. Especially the feeling of trust is important here and was stressed multiple times by respondent 5.

This feeling was further enhanced as the activists that contributed to the protest actions in the Pompenburg flat, from 2019 onwards, were informally connected to Rods too. Two respondents of Rods, who are not living in the Pompenburg flat, acknowledged the role of 'external activists' who are not able to capture the momentum after the initial protest that they help setting up. According to respondent 4 and 6, they fail in setting up constructive conversations with the housing associations or decision-makers. However, there is mutual respect which enhanced the feeling of trust in the members of Rods for BCBP (Keunen, 2020). In turn, this mitigated the decision to join Rods. Moreover, BCBP expected that Rods would be more capable to reach out to other stakeholders. These expected new linking ties, with for example the housing association, the MEC or other relevant political parties, can be seen as a second important driver for BCBP to join Rods. Thus, linking social capital can be seen as a second driver for the process of transition in the case of BCBP. This was perceived as relevant as respondent 5 of BCBP felt that they were not taken seriously by the housing association and the MEC.

Phase III: collaboration (2021- now)

Collaboration through Rods

With the alternative plan as base, Rods launched itself with a demonstration in Rotterdam South. This moment indicates the start of the third phase of collaboration, evolving to a phase where the focus was on more conventional modes of political action. By launching themselves as an USM, with their own alternative plan, Rods wanted to present themselves to civil society organizations as well as to local political parties, the MEC, housing associations, and the media. Respondent 2 indicated that the alternative plan was also seen as a means to establish contact with external organizations. Nevertheless, Rods did not stop supporting or engaging in both local and national protests. Rods supported local neighborhood protests as well as participated in the national protest regarding housing in Rotterdam on October 17, 2021.

Through these more unconventional political actions, Rods could express its demands and make its voice heard. This was a way to get on the radar of politicians, other civil society organizations, other neighborhood protest groups and other residents of Rotterdam in general. According to respondent 4, this was also enforced by the increasing national attention for housing. Hence, Rods could surf on a wave of national protest and attention for what was happening on the housing market which also illustrates the relevance of the policy context. In the case of Rods, political action can be divided into two objectives. On the one hand Rods wanted to support the NPGs that became part of Rods. This type of action focuses on the local scale. On the other hand, Rods wanted to influence the local policy agenda and change the policy goals of the municipality, targeting a city-wide scale. In this part, first the supportive character of Rods will be explored. Afterwards, the agenda setting part will be explored.

Neighborhood protest group support

What became clear during the plenary meetings of Rods was the importance of supporting the NPGs. Members of Rods engaged in actions of support based on their expertise and experience. In that sense, Rods can be seen as a platform for knowledge sharing and support. For example, support was provided to follow up the judicial process in the Tweebosbuurt, input was given to write letters to Havesteder in the Pompenburg, and local protests were joined and documented by members of Rods in the Wielewaal, not living in the specific neighborhood. Respondents 5, 7 and 8 of the three NPGs indicated that it was not motivation that was lacking throughout the phase of conflict, but rather knowledge and tactics. The feeling of justice and the desire to share knowledge were important drivers for respondent 6 and other urban professionals to join Rods.

Agenda setting

A second important objective of Rods was agenda setting. By connection with the right organizations, political parties, and members of the MEC, Rods wanted to influence the public debate around housing and bring their principles under the attention. Several respondents indicated during the interviews that almost all members of Rods saw the relevance of a constructive and collaborative stance towards local government in particular, as it was perceived the way forward to change housing policy. With the alternative plan and the professional graphic design of the proposal, website and social media posts, Rods showed that

they possessed a lot of expertise and professional skills. When their plan was drafted, it was sent to all active political parties and members of the MEC. This resulted in an invitation for a first meeting with the Deputy Mayor in charge of housing policy. This would be the start of ongoing dialogue between the USM and the Deputy Mayor, consisting of several conversations about housing policy.

A specific action, aimed at influencing the agenda and in particular the election programmes of political parties, was the creation of a voting guide for the the local elections of 2022. Rods wanted to provide an overview for voters on which party they could vote, with special attention for housing policy. The objective was to spark debate on housing within Rotterdam society. By having one-on-one meetings with representatives of the political parties and members of Rods, the aim was also to introduce new elements for the election programmes of the participating parties. The voting guide thus functioned as an entrance ticket for Rods to start conversations about new policy measures, that could be adopted by the political parties in Rotterdam. Another important factor that contributed to the relevance of Rods, that came later, were the series of debate nights (doordenkavonden) organized by Rods. Here, citizens could interact with experts in certain fields. These debate events were important to spark the conversation about housing in Rotterdam. At the same time, these events were also important, according to respondent 2, to further sharpen the alternative plan and its proposals by Rods, as well as self-reflection about the propositions (respondent 4). Moreover, through this series of debate nights, Rods could also show its expertise to external organizations. This way, Rods quickly gained importance within Rotterdam civil society.

Organizational capacity versus administrations

Within this phase of collaboration, the local government also evolved towards the paradigm of NPG. Based on the interview with a respondent from the public administration of the city of Rotterdam, insight in the position of the city was gained. The MEC and the city administration have an open attitude towards new USMs in the city. Respondent 3 was especially intrigued by the expertise that is present in Rods. Thus, the expertise of Rods is both of internal as well as external importance. Respondents 2 and 8 indicated that the city was open to start the conversation with Rods. Throughout 2021 and 2022 there have been several meetings between the municipality and members of Rods, always more or less with the same

members, who can be seen as important boundary spanners. However, the city deals with some dilemma's regarding the position of Rods. Due to their expertise and loud voice, Rods received invitations to talk about aspects of the policy making process. However, questions of legitimacy and efficiency arose at the side of the municipality. At the same time, this issue of legitimacy was also present amongst the members of Rods. Important for many people was the connection with the NPGs, as this provided not only theoretical expertise but also practical experience. Thus, many members saw the diversity of Rods as a form of legitimacy said respondent 6.

For the municipality, another dilemma rose based on the informal structure of Rods. As the decision-making context is rather formal and inflexible, further collaboration between the local government and Rods might be hampered. An example that was provided by respondent 3 was the so-called social status (social statuut). Rods introduced this concept, and the municipality saw the relevance. However, to further expand the concept, it was not always easy to get hold on Rods according to the municipality. Thus, on the one hand the strength of Rods is its diverse character, consisting of a diverging array of knowledge. This strength opens doors, for both the NPGs on the local level but also for consultations and conversations with decision-makers on the city level. On the other hand, the organizational capacity is strongly relying on voluntary efforts by members of Rods. The highly time-consuming activities and the high efforts to follow up redevelopment cases puts this capacity under pressure.

Collaboration in the Wielewaal neighborhood

The phase of collaboration for the UVVW, thrives on increasing bonding social capital and the loose organization of Rods, in addition to the community leadership and the network structure characterized by bridging social capital. By attending meetings of Rods and showing up at other protests of neighborhood organizations, a wider movement was created. This city-wide bonding social capital complemented the existing bridging social capital.

A second important element here are the new linking ties. Woonstad invited Rods and the UVVW again for conversations regarding the redevelopment of the neighborhood. Unlike the previous conversations that took place from 2014 to 2015, the president of the housing association always joins the project manager. For the NPG, this feels like an acknowledgement

by Woonstad of the relevance of these conversations. A member of Rods, that does not live in a neighborhood that will be redeveloped, is also present during these conversations. This improves the objectiveness of the dialogue, which is appreciated by UVVW and Woonstad, as dialogue is still ongoing. However, since this is a rather recent development, no tangible outcomes can be noted yet. The image that Rods enjoys as a group of experts is opening the negotiation table again for UVVW and thus linking social capital is increased through its collaborative stance. Government support, in terms of recognition improved too.

Collaboration in the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood

When the threat of expropriation and demolition was already strongly present in the Tweebosbuurt, Rods emerged. Currently all 524 social dwellings are demolished, and thus the evolution towards a more collaborative stance of the BCT could not prevent the envisioned redevelopment. However, Rods as collaborative USM did support the members of the BCT by joining manifestations, providing expertise and support in the judicial process of several residents of the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood. Moreover, through the boundary spanning leadership of a member of Rods, the redevelopment process became internationally notorious as the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing picked up this process. The letter of the United Nations to the national government of the Netherlands, was welcomed by the residents of the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood as an acknowledgement of their situation. Thus, the boundary spanning leadership that lay at the root of this letter was very important for the moral in the neighborhood. Moreover, bonding social capital grew as support from other neighborhoods and other citizens was felt in the neighborhood. This increased the organizational capacity of the neighborhood protest group.

As the protest and collaborative effort did not result in changes to the redevelopment, it could be expected that the collaborative stance of BCT would fade away. The contrary is true. Due to the support by Rods, and thus the growth of bonding social capital as well as organizational capacity, one of the members of BCT engages strongly in Rods and grew to an important transformational leader as well as boundary spanner. This person is present at conversations with housing associations, the municipality and other civil society organizations both on a local and national scale. During the interviews, it became clear that emotion made room for ratio due to the city-wide character of Rods. For respondents 8, it was easier to approach other

redevelopment processes from a collaborative and constructive point of view as a member of Rods, instead of a neighborhood protester. Thus, the NPG is not carrying out protest anymore, but a collaborative attitude is adopted by one of the former protesters of the Tweebosbuurt.

Collaboration in the Pompenburg flat

The Pompenburg flat was the latest redevelopment process from the phase of conflict. The BCBP experiences no feeling of constructiveness from the side of the housing association during the monthly meetings between Havesteder and the committees of residents and tenants. Joining Rods was a means to increase the linking social capital and enforce the image and position of BCBP, due to their connection with Rods. Currently, conversations are still ongoing, but BCBP does not feel any changes regarding the attitude of the housing association. Information sharing is considered difficult and no new steps towards a collaborative agreement or adjustments of the plans are made. However, BCBP feels the wide support of Rods for the process of redevelopment in the Pompenburg flat. This increases motivation for the members of BCBP to keep following the process and striving to influence the redevelopment process through the monthly meetings with Havesteder. Moreover, the practical support with urban planning law or how to bring up questions at the city development committee of the city council are welcomed according to respondent 5. Thus, in the case of the Pompenburg, it is mainly the increased bonding social capital that is the results of the new collaborative stance by the NPG. But, the expected linking social capital is less present in the Pompenburg case which hampers further collaboration with the housing association.

4.3 Analysis: which conditions contribute to transitioning from protest to collaboration?

The previous part provided a description and preliminary analysis of the process from protest to collaboration, with attention for the conditions that contribute to this process. This part analyzes the relevant variables that explain the transition from protest to collaboration within the NPGs that are member of Rods. Figure 4 provides an overview of the three phases, each with the explanatory variables underneath.
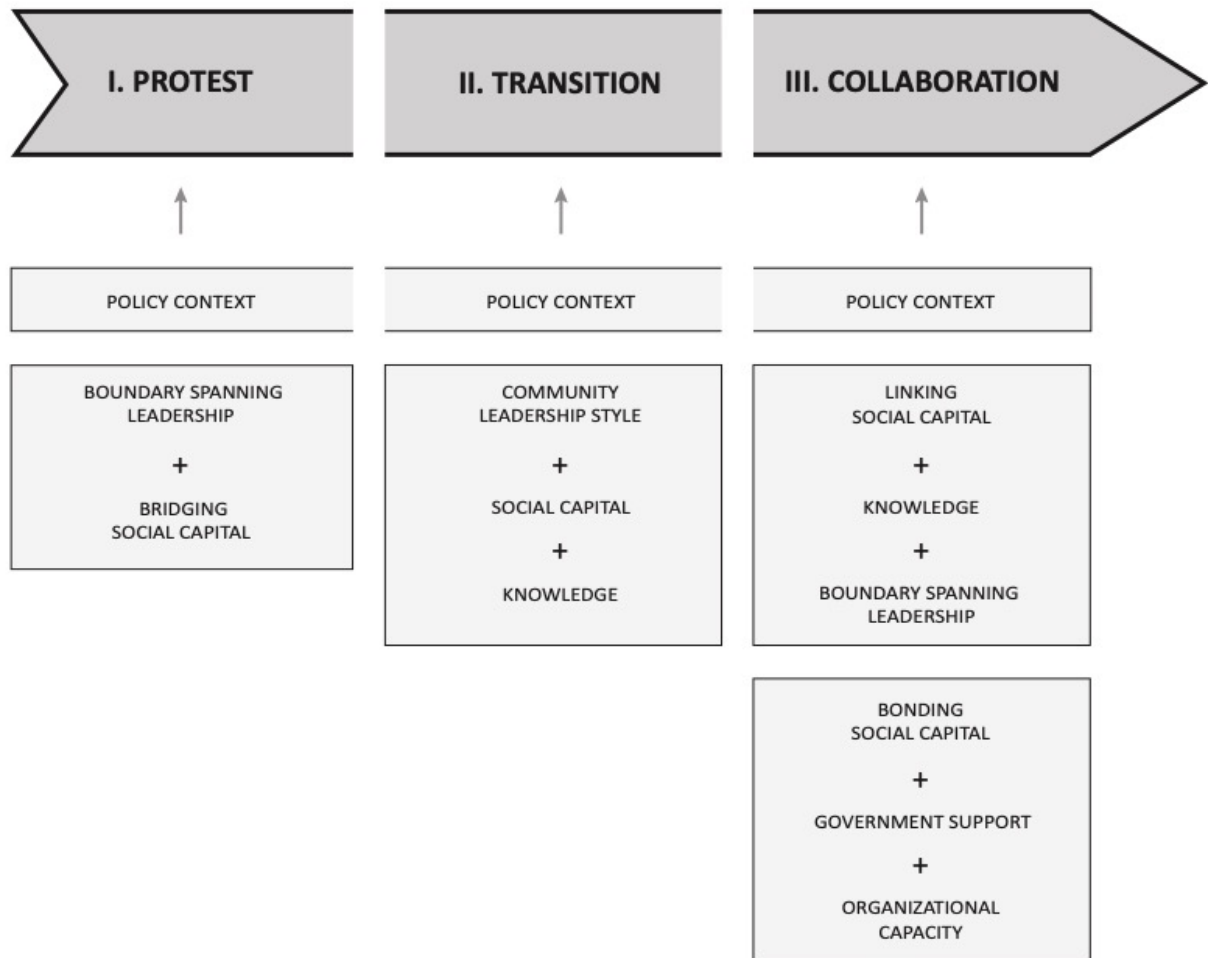
Figure 4 Overview contributing conditions process of transition from protest to collaboration

4.3.1 Stable contributing condition

Policy context

Not surprisingly, but what was stressed multiple times during the interviews was the interplay between the actions of the NPGs and Rods on the one hand, and the policy context on the other hand. This can be seen as a stable condition contributing to the process of transition. The Woonvisie 2030, the Rotterdamwet and the NPRZ did not change in recent years. Even the international attention for the local policy context did not evoke big changes, keeping the policy framework relatively untouched. In figure 4, the omnipresence of the policy context is illustrated by visually embedding the process of transition and its contributing conditions in the policy context.

In the first phase the policy context was especially relevant as it provided the trigger for NPGs to self-organize. As the policy context shapes the frame for the housing associations, determining the way they can execute their activities. The three different types of conflict that were distinguished in the neighborhoods are all a result of the decision-making process within the local policy context. The policy context is also relevant for the phase of transition as all three NPGs embark on the process of transition to collaboration as they feel that their local protest is not sufficient to change the policy plans for their neighborhoods, embedded within the policy context of Rotterdam. Here, knowledge, community leadership and social capital play an important role. By boundary spanning leaders that know how to use their knowledge on the topic of housing and the local policy process, trust emerged, and social capital increased. Knowledge thus strongly interplays with the prevailing policy context. This will be further elaborated upon in section 4.3.3.

In the third phase of collaboration, the so-far unchanged policy context still provides the raison d'être for Rods. Some novelties, such as the social statuut, are currently further developed by the municipality after Rods initiated the concept. As Rods grew into its role as important voice in the public debate, based on the knowledge they possess as well as their network within Rotterdam and beyond, the policy contexts thus keeps providing a reason for existing. Again, the interplay between knowledge and the policy context seems important for collaboration. Approaching the policy context from a city-wide perspective, based on knowledge, results in the ability to establish ongoing dialogue and provide alternatives that are considered achievable by policy makers and practionners.

4.3.2 Conditions for protest

Boundary spanning leadership + bridging social capital

The starting point and thus important condition for protest is the local policy context, as it provided the trigger for political action. However, as this phase was characterized by fragmentation and a lack of linking social capital, an external push was needed to actually set up protest. This push came from a group of Rotterdam based activists building on high bridging social capital in combination with boundary spanning leadership. Through this combination of variables, local neighborhood protests were started. In the case of the Wielewaal, however,

bonding social capital was already present to launch protest without external support. However, quickly after the launch of the UVVW, external support was welcomed when the alternative plan was developed. Thus, also in the case of the Wielewaal, boundary spanning leadership and bridging social capital were the main drivers of this phase of protest.

4.3.3 Conditions for transitioning from protest to collaboration

Community leadership + social capital + knowledge

In all three cases the combination of community leadership, social capital and knowledge contributed to the transition from protest to collaboration. In the first-place, boundary spanning leadership has proven to be crucial. Firstly, all three NPGs joined the initial mailing list, due to the efforts by boundary spanners. In the case of the Pompenburg flat, one of the founders of Rods contacted one of the members of the BCBP via Twitter, actively asking the neighborhood protest group to join the mailing list doei doei woonvisie. In both the Wielewaal and Tweebosbuurt, the boundary spanners thrived on the already existing informal networks. After an impulse from the boundary spanners, the neighborhood protest groups embarked on the transition towards collaboration.

Boundary spanning leadership was not only important to establish the internal network of Rods, but also to connect with external organizations such as the MEC, housing associations or political parties. As all three neighborhood protest groups indicated that two-way communication between them and the housing associations was lacking during the phase of conflict, this boundary spanning potential was considered as an important asset of collaboration. The expected constitution of linking ties with external organizations was thus a driver for transition amongst the NPGs. To a lesser extent, transformational community leadership was important for the process of transition towards collaboration too. All three neighborhood protest groups consist of relatively few people and rely strongly on a core group of informal leaders. It was the transformational leadership of these people that saw the opportunities in Rods and its collaborative attitude.

As in the phase of protest, bridging social capital was also vital to set up a city-wide collaborative USM, actively seeking members through boundary spanners. The feeling of support and the available expertise present in the mailing list and Rods contributed to

increased bonding social capital. This provided leeway for informal transformational leaders to make decisions and present ambitions or goals. All three neighborhoods stressed the need for expertise and tactics. By embarking on the transition towards collaboration with other neighborhood protest groups and individuals of Rods, the aim was to benefit and learn from the expertise that was present within the overarching USM. The perceived expertise was important for the establishment of trust. Another trust building element was the feeling of support that neighborhood protest groups felt. Through Rods, they no longer felt that they were dealing with their struggles alone. Knowledge can thus be seen as a highly important new condition for the process of transition within urban social movements. Hence, the combination of community leadership, social capital and knowledge is the primary driver of the transition from protest to collaboration for the three neighborhood protest groups.

4.3.4 Conditions for collaboration

Linking social capital + knowledge + boundary spanning leadership + government support

The lack of linking social capital, as perceived by all three neighborhood protest groups, triggered the impression among the neighborhood protest groups that they were not taken seriously by the housing associations and the MEC. However, all three NPGs expected to benefit from the knowledge of Rods and the present community leadership. One of the findings of this research is that through its collaborative attitude and being part of Rods, new conversations were set up and linking social capital effectively increased. Thus, the combination of knowledge, boundary spanning leadership and increased linking ties can be seen as an important condition for collaboration. The Wielewaal illustrates this perfectly, as new dialogue was started after UVVW joined Rods, after years of no conversations between UVVW and the housing association. Based on the expertise that is present within Rods, UVVW regained their seat at the negotiation table. So, although there is no tangible support from Rods, the acknowledgement by housing associations and the Deputy Mayor is an important result of the collaborative stance of UVVW. A similar story can be drawn for the Tweebosbuurt neighborhood. After the letter of the United Nations, housing association Vestia issued a mea culpa. This felt like an acknowledgement for members of the BCT. Based on this feeling of recognition, intrinsic motivation to prevent similar things to happen in other neighborhoods was nourished. In the Pompenburg, this stance towards the housing association is still

relatively skeptical, but the trust in the members of Rods results in ongoing support from BCBP for conversations with the Deputy Mayor or other relevant stakeholders.

Bonding social capital + Organizational capacity + government support

A second explanatory indicator that contributes to sustaining the collaborative attitude of Rods and its members is the informal character of the organization. An important reason is the diversity of the members of Rods. The voluntary contribution of time and energy by members of Rods is pushing the movement forward. As the loosely structured organization provided room for all members and their interests, the motivation stays high. Members of Rods see themselves as part of the same club, each with their own interests but all going in the same direction. Thus, Rods strongly builds on bonding social capital. Additionally, the relevance of the alternative plan comes into play as well. As described, this plan was rather broad and thus providing room, but still going in a clear direction. Human resources are crucial for the collaborative stance of Rods, which is enforced by the informal way the USM is organized providing sufficient room for all members and member organizations. Another important element here is the unimportance of financial resources. This is considered irrelevant by all respondents, which might be a consequence of the importance of the lose structure in which Rods is organized. Some respondents also stressed that this was a way to stay independent.

The above-described informality of the organization is important for all three neighborhood organizations as well as for the members of Rods. However, as one of the goals of Rods is to influence the agenda of political parties and the MEC in Rotterdam, this informality might endanger long-term interaction with these external parties. Hence, the informality can be seen as a condition for neighborhood protest groups to adopt a more collaborative stance, but at the same time this informality might endanger collaboration in the long run.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The main research question of this thesis was: "Which conditions contributed to transitioning from local neighborhood protests towards a city-wide collaborative urban social movement?" To explore this transition, the literature on USMs and co-creation was combined. By spanning a gap in existing theory on urban governance processes, further insight could be gained in urban development processes (Domaradzka, 2018) and a contributing to the existing literature was made. Rods illustrates that USMs increasingly participate in urban politics and aim to influence decision-making processes. This trend is partly welcomed, as citizens are increasingly seen as contributors to tackle wicked urban challenges within the paradigm of New Public Governance (Mees et al., 2019). The conceptual framework of this master thesis was built on the prominent framework by Igalla et al. (2019), focusing on the governance aspects of CBIs, mainly focusing on service delivery. A primary conclusion of this master thesis is that this governance-oriented framework is also useful to study more political oriented forms of citizen self-organization such as protest.

To answer this question, an in-depth single case study was conducted. The case, Rods, consists of three embedded cases, providing deeper understanding of the overarching USM. The conceptual framework provided a first steppingstone to analyze Rods but left space for other possible explanatory conditions. Based on the literature on USMs, the importance of the policy context came to the forefront. As Castells (1983) and others described, the type of conflict emerges from the policy context, which in turn provides the trigger for protest and the emergence of USMs (Mayer, 2003). This was true for Rods and the three NPGs, especially in the first phase of protest. However, it became clear that there is an ongoing interplay between the policy context and the process of transition from protest to collaboration. Thus, a first condition that contributes to the process of transition is the policy context. This stable condition interplays with the process of transition as well as with the other conditions that contribute to the phases of transition.

In addition to the policy context as stable condition, each phase of the process can be associated with different conditions that add to the ongoing process. In the first phase, external support through bridging social capital and boundary spanning leadership plays a key

role. Through a small group of external urban activists, protest actions were set up and self-organization was pushed. Building on their experience, NPGs arose, starting the uncertain process of protest within the context of neoliberal urbanization. This combination of conditions thus contributes to the first phase of protest, mainly consisting of unconventional modes of political action, performed on the non-institutional side of politics (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010).

Protests are easier to set up, but also have limited effectiveness (Hochstenbach et al., 2017), resulting in USMs setting up new alliances and making use of new action repertoires (Mayer, 2006) evolving towards more conventional modes of political action. Thus, in the second phase of transition, it was found that social capital and community leadership were important contributing conditions to evolve towards a more collaborative stance, away from (only) protest. This phase was also strongly associated with knowledge. Knowledge can be distinguished as a new condition that explains the process of transition within Rods. Understanding the contents of policies, the way decision-making processes take place or can be influenced are essential for USMs seeking a collaborative attitude. Knowledge in relation to the policy context is important to develop alternatives and start to engage in policy discussions, and embarking on the process of moving towards more conventional political action (Van Laer & Van Aelst, 2010). Thus, transition within Rods was steered by the combination of knowledge, strong community leadership, and present and expected social capital.

The third phase of collaboration is characterized by conditions that contribute to the ongoing collaboration. Here, increased linking ties, knowledge and boundary spanning leadership provide a first important combination of conditions to sustain collaboration. This resulted in ongoing conversations with the MEC, housing associations and other stakeholders. However, this also resulted in a dilemma regarding the second set of conditions that contribute to this phase of collaboration, namely organizational capacity, bonding social capital and government support. The informal structure of Rods increases bonding social capital, which is important for the voluntary efforts by the members of Rods, and thus the organizational capacity of Rods. However, this might endanger long-lasting cooperation with the government and other actors as these external organizations work within a formal and more rigid organizational structure.

The findings showed that the used framework can also be used in other contexts. However, it might be necessary to incorporate knowledge and the policy context into the conceptual model. A first recommendation is thus to further elaborate on these two conditions as they potentially can be useful to study other types of citizen self-organization. A second recommendation might be to further explore the overlap between the political oriented USM-literature and the governance-oriented literature on co-creation and CBIs. As was preliminary shown in this thesis, both forms of citizen self-organization are part of the decision-making process and show similar characteristics.

Additionally, it is also important to acknowledge the limitations of this research in this concluding part. Through interviews with 8 members of Rods information on the process of transition within the USM was gathered. Moreover, plenary meetings were attended, which was used for triangulation of the collected data, in combination with other secondary sources such as local newspapers. However, not all members of Rods or NPGs had time for an extensive interview. Finding a mix of the right respondents was not always easy, possibly because of the loose and informal way of the NPGs and Rods. Moreover, time restrictions made it sometimes difficult to establish contacts with the members of NPGs and other external organizations such as the Deputy Mayor or housing associations. Thus, the sample size was small, resulting in limited generalization. However, data was checked based on attending the plenary meetings of Rods and by building on secondary sources. Moreover, similar results were found in all three cases, which increases the robustness of this research.

6. References

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