

## Marseille CVPT-Appui-CNRS FvL's Methodology

Authors: CVPT, Appui, CNRS

Un Centre Ville Pour Tous (CVPT) questions the notion of the right to the city and right to housing and as such, carefully looks at the consequences of urban projects or urban renewal, particularly in terms of eviction of the working class in urban centralities. CVPT supports inhabitants and collectives that collectively analyze or interrogate urban planning or decision making. By creating bonds with other collectives in struggle and following the energies mobilized, by accompanying and supporting actions: workshops, public meetings, press releases, etc.

### First contacts with different partners

As activists, within the beginning of the Fairville project, we have been in contact with three associations or collectives, all of them pre-existing partners and concerned by potential demolitions. However, conditions were difficult to meet in order to co-produce a common Fairville project (weak mobilization, diverse agendas or temporalities, complexity of the local context such as drug traffic).

After these first attempts, we intensified our exchange with another neighbourhood collective, the "Collective of Organized Inhabitants of the 3th district" (CHO3) and notably its « right to the city » campaign. We are collaborating since several years. For example, in June 2022, the CHO3's "right to the city" group prepared a "Atelier populaire d'urbanisme" (APU) within the program of the "Development Partnership Project" (PPA), co-constructed with the support of CVPT and students from the national school of architecture (EnsaM), Marseille.

## Exploring and defining the demands

The idea of working with the CHO3 within the Fairville-Lab took shape, reinforced by a seminar during the summer as well as the participation of two members of the CHO3 at the “open citizen meeting” in Brussels last November reinforced this cooperation.

In order to collectively identify the issues and develop proposals for action, the Fairville lab team participated regularly in meetings and assemblies of the CHO3. Building trust relationships, discuss common goals and strategies, reflect on methods and approaches: as a result, our Fairville lab is an ongoing co-production process.

## Having a common agreement on goals and methods

A general method of our FV-Lab is to participate in a series of meetings and working sessions set up by our partners. Basing on an approach of "observant participation" (observation, note-taking, informal discussions, photography of working documents, etc.), it enables us to identify the issues of social inequality, urban planning and local politics that are at stake in the Belle de Mai district. Going back and forth between our partners on the one hand, and the whole "Fairville team" on the other, these methods helps to engage a collective dialogue on the Fairville-Lab.

The aim of this dialogue is (1) to establish a shared diagnosis of the lab's context, issues and social threads. The next step, which has not yet been completed, is to (2) define common objectives and agree on the action-research methods to be used. Setting up a timetable should enable us to plan this co-production over time, and to coordinate it with other partners and events (ENSAM school; PPA urban project, etc.). The third step (3) is designed to get the project up and running by working on the topics and issues identified collectively (example of public workshops further down). Finally, (4) restitution events (along the way and/or at the end of the project) have a dual purpose. Firstly, the reciprocal transmission of knowledge and skills (local resources and “urban tacit knowledge” ⇔

technical and academic knowledge). Secondly, to make visible problems and solutions, to open up a public debate on the issues at stake while supporting our partners and/or to intermediate between opposed positions.

## Central topics and urban issues in the district Belle de Mai

The different meetings and exchanges with the CHO3 and its local partners highlighted three central issues related to the topics of the Fairville project. They are linked to current urban projects, whether Quartiers Libres, an urban project which enabled the purchase of the Levat site mentioned below, to the PPA whose scope includes the majority of the district Belle de Mai and tackles public and green spaces, run-down housing conditions and transport.

### Housing conditions

Bad housing conditions were particularly highlighted after the collapse on rue d'Aubagne (2018), numerous buildings were evacuated in Belle de Mai and more widely in the 3rd arrondissement. The CHO3 made visible the difficulty for undocumented people to obtain decent housing and escape the influence of slumlords (marchands de sommeil).

Furthermore, the demolition of several social housing complexes in the neighboring district "Saint Mauront" (Parc Bellevue, E. Pottier) is programmed by the National Agency of Urban Renovation (ANRU). These operations put even more at risk the the housing situation in Marseille in general and in La Belle de Mai in particular.

### Conflicts around Levat

This garden is located in a property purchased by the city and whose occupation by a street art association has never been the subject of consultation since 2017, while many associations lack premises. The only concession granted to the residents was access to the garden and separate management since 2022.

### Public space

Public spaces and their facilities are a key issue in this neighbourhood where the size and difficulties of housing on one hand, the heat in summer on the other, makes the need for accessible public and green spaces more pressing. The reception conditions in public spaces need to be questioned, particularly in this dense urban environment, the presence of heat islands.

As part of an urban development project based on PPA, a local public development company of national interest (SPLA-IN) was created in 2021. A first meeting took place on February 14 with 2 professionals from SPLA-IN and CHO3 members. A workshop will be organized by this public company with others associations and inhabitants in April.

### Transport

Finally, in terms of transport, the neighbourhood suffers of a rudimentary infrastructure consisting of three bus lines. The public institutions plan to build a tramline crossing the narrow La Belle de Mai. However, they avoid attentively to communicate their plans to the inhabitants, especially the impact (destruction of several houses). The CHO3 and its partners, fearing as main consequence effects of gentrification, are very critical to this project and asked the Fairville Lab to involve in informing the local population.

## Starting the Fairville Lab: A series of Ateliers populaires d'urbanisme

The original intention of the Fairville-team was to work on these three topics according to the graph below. However, this "holistic" approach is quite ambitious, as it depends on the implication and support of a wider range of partners (ENSAM, Compagnons Bâisseurs, etc.). Furthermore, this proposal did not meet the unanimous support of the CHO3 so far.

## Fairville-Lab Marseille - Belle de Mai

Principal Local Partner : Collective "CH03"

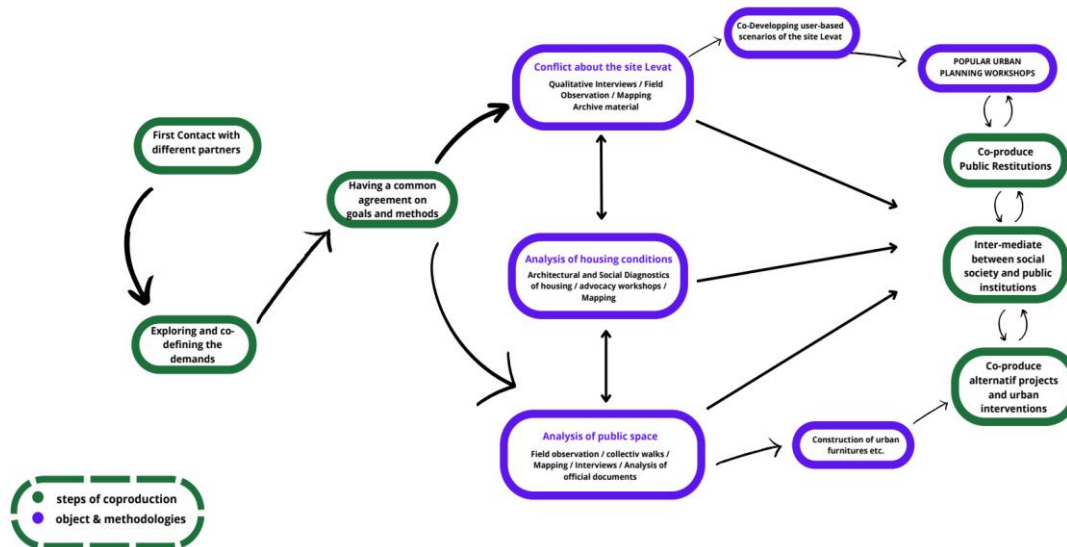
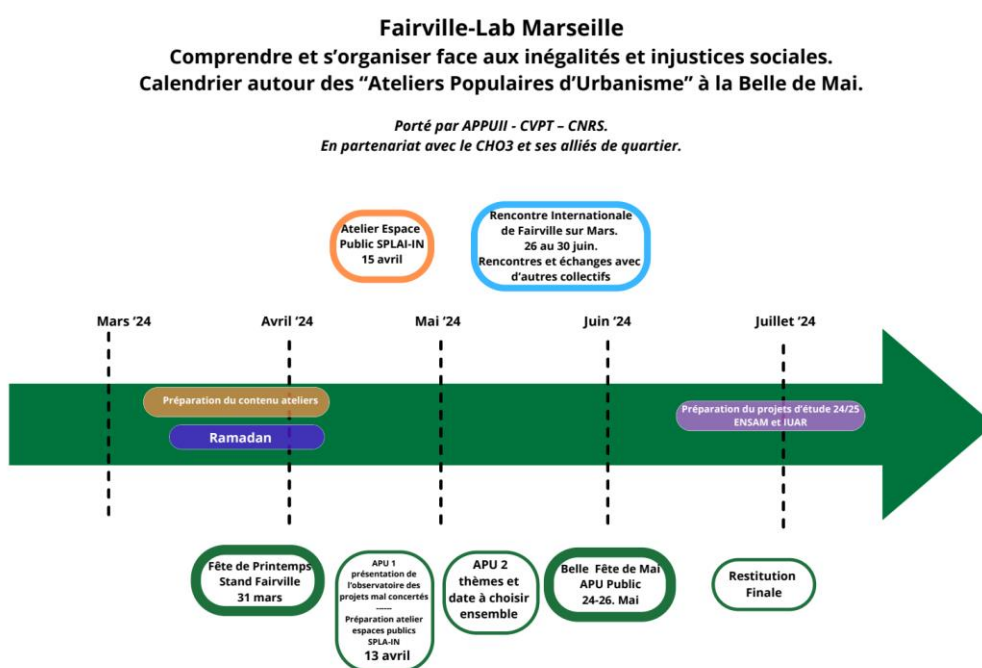


Figure 13: Marseille CVPT-Appuii-CNRS FvL's Methodology V1, Source: Marseille CVPT-Appuii-CNRS FvL

As a result, our renewed proposal focuses on the co-organisation of a series of Ateliers populaires d'urbanisme (APU) around these topics (and the impact of a planned new tramline crossing the district). The central ambition of this proposal was formulated as such. "We are convinced that the knowledge and understanding (beyond a small circle of experts) of the dynamics and objectives of urban policies on the Belle de Mai is a fundamental issue in the collective defense of a working class neighbourhood. It makes it possible to (partially) anticipate ongoing public and private interventions and to organize oneself collectively. Create new alliances within and between neighbourhoods. Supporting certain urban interventions, or, on the contrary, confronting public authorities with unfulfilled promises, demanding consideration of issues and needs that have not been taken into account.". The by-standing calendar illustrates our proposal over a three-month period. The

discussion in June or July intends to evaluate this series of workshops and to discuss a wider process of co-production starting in September 2024, possibly enlarged to the National School of architecture.



18 mars 2024

Figure 14: Marseille CVPT-Appuii-CNRS FvL's Methodology V2, Source: Marseille CVPT-Appuii-CNRS FvL