

1.4 Motivation and intended contribution

This chapter will outline the need for change we have experienced and the frustrating everyday-life that it originated from. While not being experts within the fields of urban planning or traffic-engineering it will also look at how the aspects that make us, as inhabitants of a city, still valid experts within this field.

Living within a dense neighbourhood in Zurich brings a lot of interesting, but also challenging faces with it. While being at the heart of an ever-changing and quickly developing hive of people it can also cause a lot of frustration. This mainly started with us, moving through this multipart system of streets and squares by bike. When riding a bicycle in Zurich many questions start to arise and the more one gets nearly overrun every second day, the more we asked ourselves, why is it that in a city where we might have the best public transportation system in the world, still the case that everything planned, is revolving around and for cars.

How many people do actually use that infrastructure and how should a neighbourhood be centred around the needs of its inhabitants or the needs of the people who drive through it? Once in our head we realised the sheer absurdity of the space that cars and its infrastructure occupy. If focussing solely on traffic one could argue that it serves as means of transportation and thus is needed e.g. for business and for commuting or the public transportation system. Even though it still is leading to a point where everything is, again circling around cars and one could only discuss the accessibility that is being provided to drive within a city, we started to look at another less productive and, in our opinion, more interesting part of car infrastructure, that is the parking space.

When looking at, especially the blue zone, parking-spaces , we realised that there is not only a strange system that allows for very cheap housing of cars, but also a big potential this space can provide for a street and a community. We started to imagine what else could be built, organised and changed in that space and also how this can help to transform a street and its social factors. After our first research we started to get a grasp of the potential this semi-public space can have and what interesting solutions it can provide to shape a neighbourhood and the interactions that happen within them.

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