Tracking the social capital generated by commons through the ricochet effect

A proposed theoretical framework for moving towards a caring city

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To develop a caring ethic, cities need to engage with citizens to enhance the ways they live together. Commons are valuable allies for city governments in creating social capital that feeds common sense of belonging. They have a ricochet effect throughout the population. This relationship between the commons and their environment helps to create linking-type relationships (Putnam, 2000) with the city. By adding

Within Canadian federalism, the creation of cities and municipalities is the responsibility of the provinces, which have historically regulated them through a series of laws without constitutional recognition (Chiasson and Mévellec, 2014; Patsias and Prévost, 2022). In Quebec, however, an update of the Cities and Towns Act in 2017 increased the responsibilities assigned to or shared by Quebec municipalities by granting them non-constitutional status as local governments. This recognition has allowed towns to move away from a concept that initially limited them to the utilitarian function of maintaining and providing 'basic' services to their populations (e.g., drinking water and water treatment, garbage collection, fire protection, road maintenance, and snow removal) (Breux and Mévellec, 2023). These municipalities have now been entrusted with new important responsibilities (Chiasson and Mévellec, 2014; Gouvernement du Québec, 2020; Breux and Mévellec, 2023). Although this is not unique to Quebec, they are encouraged to take responsibility and become au-

the ricochet effect to the forms of social capital developed by Putnam, this article proposes an analytical framework to explain how commons can shape our cities into caring cities. The proposal's effectiveness is illustrated by two initiatives run by the Solon Collective in the Ahuntsic-Cartierville district of Montreal (Canada): LocoMotion and citizens protrusions.

tonomous as a collective subject (Passalacqua and Celati, 2022). Quebec's major cities[1] have seized this opportunity to implement new approaches, policies and strategies that take care of themselves and their population, in the field of culture, social justice, resilience, food autonomy, civic participation, as well as the recovery of biodiversity (Durand Folco, 2017; Blanchette Vézina, 2021; Breux and Mévellec, 2023).

Institutions face challenges when maintaining or restoring public trust, and creating a sense of common purpose. Their ability to resonate with citizens remains limited in the face of narratives of corruption and governance practices that encourage cynicism and mistrust (Kanji and Tannahill, 2013; Patsias and Prévost, 2022). While the city government can implement policies and propose levers to care for its citizens, it cannot succeed alone. It must work (Gibson-Graham, Cameron and Healy, 2013) with its citizens to assume the new responsibilities it has taken on, to increase a sense of care amongst its citizens, and to find democratic solutions to the complex problems facing humanity and nature (Tronto, 2013). Without waiting for government action, driven citizens are taking action by setting up collective and local initiatives. They create commons and collaborate to claim territories and provide local solutions to social and environmental issues in their communities (Durand-Folco, 2015; Euler, 2018; Tronto, 2013). The result is a shared ethos among the involved citizens, which tends to create collective social capital around the quest for emancipation, justice, and inclusion (Healey, 2018; Brain, 2019). This contribution posits that the social capital generated by commoning practices creates a ricochet effect, which inmakes our cities caring. The aim of this article is to propose an analytical framework that links these concepts, explaining what ricochet effect is and how it operates. Its measurement, when combined with social capital, testifies to the vitality and effects of the commons on their communities. By recognising this contribution of the commons, cities are contributing to the development of an ethic of care

that fosters a response to the multiple crises they face as caring cities.

The article is structured into three sections. The first explains and defines the concepts of the caring city, commons, and social capital. The article will highlight the essential role of citizens who form a common for the care ethic within the city, and will define the different types of relationships within social capital. Second, the ricochet effect is proposed as the fourth type of relationship associated with social capital. Third, the ricochet effect, also considering other forms of social capital, will be described, as well as how its presence can contribute to the common through creating links with the local government. The case of Solon Collective, an active common in the district of Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Montreal, is briefly presented through two initiatives led by Solon: LocoMotion and the saillies citoyennes.

The conceptual links between the commons' social capital and caring cities

The Caring City

Tronto's concept of care offers a perspective that is not limited to issues of the invisibility of work and its predominant feminisation (Garrau and Le Goff, 2010 ; Tronto, 2013 ; Tronto and al., 2009). In fact, it goes beyond these boundaries to create tangible links between care and the importance of caring for our living environment and the beings that comprise it – with nature as the foundation. Tronto and Fisher define care as a complex network linked to "species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible" (Tronto, 2013, p. 19). In this definition, Tronto identifies five processes of care, which could be summarised as follows:

- caring about – the awakening of an unmet need that needs to be addressed;
- caring for – the ensurance that the need is taken care of or addressed;
- care-giving – the act of caring, or care activity;
- care-receiving – the response generated by the care activity. It generally involves a judgment about the content and sufficiency of the care provided;
- caring with – the validation that the care activity conforms to established ethics and standards. This last stage, which can be adapted to suit various contexts, confirms that the care provided is in line with the desired vision of emancipation, democratization or social justice. (Tronto, 2013, p. 23).

The vision of a caring city could be rooted in the conception of 'caring with'. Tronto allows us to rethink the world we live in through her 'caring with' contribution, while encouraging a shift towards actions that will have a positive impact on everyone's well-being (Garrau and Le Goff, 2010). On the spectrum of the city, Tronto allows us to envisage the creation of an ethic of care which goes beyond the work of caring and en-

courages a new perception of the city governments' roles and responsibilities. A caring city therefore strives to reduce inequalities and increase social justice. It should adopt strategies that promote inclusivity (Marois, 2021) and civic engagement (Passalacqua and Celati, 2022). It embodies these principles in its design and form (Davis, 2022), in addition to the policies and strategies it adopts to meet the individual and collective aspirations and needs of its present and future inhabitants—all without forgetting the essential role that nature has to play in sustaining the well-being of all. By rethinking its design, processes, practices and services, the city seeks to embody a relational space conducive to debate, conflict resolution, mutual support, emancipation and well-being (Healey, 2018; Kussy, Palomera and Silver, 2023).

Evidently, the concept of a caring city is utopian, so this ideal cannot be fully achieved. Nevertheless, if city governments want to regain the trust of their citizens and demonstrate their ability to be genuine local governments that reflect the values and ideas of their citizens (Tronto, 2013; Beuret and Cadoret, 2015; Healey, 2018), they must work towards this ideal and develop an ethic of care. This requires the implementation of ambitious strategies, both internally and locally, that will bring about positive change for citizens. In doing so, these governments provide services and resources tailored to the needs of their citizens and support initiatives that generate common sense in their territories, going well beyond simple awareness-raising campaigns. They can encourage the practice of governance based on discursive exchange. Like Healey (2018), it is believed that these spaces for discussion are essential to address the conflicts arising from the polarization of ideas, beliefs, ethics and values. In the absence of such spaces, which fall under the public authorities' mandate, citizens can demand them, or even develop initiatives or strategies to create them. Therefore, individuals regain their agency to act, to decide and to live together. By taking action, citizens give the city the assets it needs to become a caring city. In other words, it can restore the trust that citizens have in the democratic institution that it embodies, while supporting citizens' collective capacity to accept, embrace, contribute to and act on the collective future. This will enable institutions to develop initiatives to maintain, protect and care for their environment, their neighbourhoods and their city.

The Commons

Although they often operate in the background, *commons* are one of the most promising initiatives for creating a sense of community. They bring together citizens who are actively involved in their local areas. Commons allow them to unite around a common theme, a connecting object. Long studied as a way of managing resources that oppose private property and free use, commons first gained notoriety through

the work of Elinor Ostrom (1990). Over time, researchers have developed the concept to reflect the social importance of commons and their transformative potential. Whether natural (Ostrom, 1990) or urban (Huron, 2015; Mehan and Mehan, 2022), they are generally defined as an alternative to capital that requires the presence of three elements: a community that collectively determines the rules of its governance for the care, use and development of a resource –whether tangible or not (De Angelis, 2017; Bollier, Helfrich and Petitjean, 2022; Furukawa Marques and Durand Folco, 2023). This makes each common unique, as they operate according to different rules, in different contexts, and around different resources. It is therefore not unusual for citizens to come together and form commons around heritage features (Beaudet, 2014), wastelands to be protected (Chénier and Bélanger, 2023), public squares, community gardens and even landscapes (Foster, 2013). However, in an urban context, collaboration is made more difficult by the prevailing capitalist context, the difficulty of collectively reappropriating a resource to create commons, and the idea of collaborating with people who could be seen as strangers (Huron, 2015; Micciarelli, 2022). The survival of commons therefore depends on a political principle of coobligation (Dardot and Laval, 2014, p. 23) if they are to stand the test of time. The commoners involved will have to show solidarity in the face of adversity encountered in both the creation and the operation of the commons. In particular, they will have to share care tasks and ensure that the decisions, rules and sanctions adopted jointly are respected.

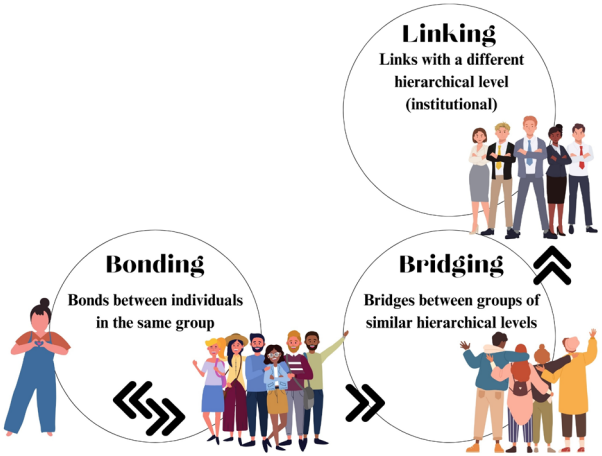
As a result, commons are inseparable from their *commoning* practices. Euler defines commoning as a set of activities organised between commoners voluntarily and inclusively, promoting mediation by and for peers. Commoning intends to satisfy the real individual and collective needs, not to satisfy the desire for accumulation (2018, p. 12). Thus, the production and reproduction (or produsage) of actions are supported by rules that the community organizes around both the common and the community itself, as well as their capacities and needs. Commoning aims to care for the community so that it can meet both the present and future needs of said community. This aim goes hand in hand with caring cities' desire to be 'future oriented' (Davis, 2022). However, the rules that ensure the proper use of commons and commoning practices will be created according to principles of self-organisation and self-determination. As such, commons are more than a response to individual needs; the commons become a collective action to lay claim to the city. They promote social practices based on mutual respect and trust, making the sustainability of the commons a shared responsibility. Commoning promotes mutual aid, reciprocity, participation and inclusion. These are the essential and foundational pillars that enable us to act, decide

and interact in common (Bollier, Helfrich and Petitjean, 2022). All these characteristics mean that citizens who act collectively adopt an ethic of care (Mandalaki and Fotaki, 2020), replicating everyday practices that foster a sense of belonging to the community. These practices are a response that contributes to making the city a better place to cohabitate. They concretise the idea of an ethic of care at the local level. Moreover, they enable social capital to form, impacting both the individual and organisational levels to benefit citizens and their environments.

The Social Capital

Social capital refers to the personal links and relationships that an individual or organisation can mobilise to obtain benefits that serve both individual and collective purposes. Its usefulness can be varied, ranging from simple influence to the acquisition of tangible benefits. We owe this concept to Alexis de Tocqueville, who, in 1830, used it to explain what led groups of citizens to become civically and politically involved in the United States. Social capital was later taken up by Bourdieu to explain its effects and causes on social class disparities; Coleman then used it to highlight its effects on public action (Ech-Chahed, 2022). However, it was Putnam (2000) who highlighted the three forms of social capital: *bonding*, *bridging* and *linking*, allowing a better understanding of the interweaving links that arise from relationships at different levels. For example, the relationships that an individual builds through a collective can manifest within the collective or extend beyond its boundaries. When an individual develops links with members of the collective with whom he or she shares similarities, it is referred to as a bonding relationship. On the other hand, when an individual or collective maintains relationships with a collective or individuals that differ from them, but still share similarities at a hierarchical level, it is referred to as bridging (Fig. 1). However, these networks must have the peculiarity of maintaining horizontal relations and therefore, a similar level of influence, hierarchisation or action (Baylis, Gong and Wang, 2018; Perras and Normandin, 2019; Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak, 2023). Conversely, when there is a connection between networks that do not belong to similar economic, ideological, social, cultural or political levels, Putnam describes these connections as vertical and uses the term linking. (2000).

These forms of social capital help us better understand the impact of commons and commoning. For instance, through commoning practices, an individual who joins a common will develop bonding relationships with the other members of the common. The common, as a collective, will be able to develop bridges with other commons at similar levels. These 'inter-common' links are called bridging. Several authors have shown that individuals are better able to satisfy their personal interests in bonding and bridging relationships (Ech-Chahed, 2022; Safarzyn-



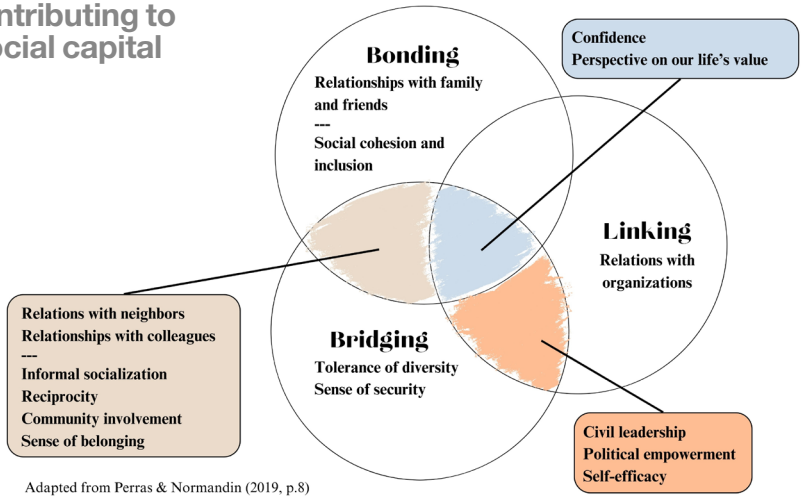
Adapted from Perras & Normandin (2019, p.7)

Interrelationships between the three differents forms of social capital
Fig.1

ska and Sylwestrzak, 2023). In order to develop linking-type connections more easily – and perhaps hope to have a systemic impact –existing models show that commons need to coalesce (De Angelis, 2017; Perras and Normandin, 2019; Ech-Chahed, 2022). Thus, in the context of a caring city, it would be easier for commons to maintain relations with their local government. These commons will then be in a better position to influence the development of policies or the deployment of certain actions that are favourable to them (Perras and Normandin, 2019, p. 11) and their community's goals. I will return to this aspect later.

Incidentally, social capital can be observed and even measured (Putnam, 2000; Baylis, Gong and Wang, 2018; Brain, 2019; Perras and Normandin, 2019; Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak, 2023). Where Perras and Normandin identify sixteen factors that contribute to social capital, at both an individual and collective level (2019, p. 9), it is considered more efficient to count twelve of them, which materialize through four different forms of relationships (Fig. 2). Perras and Normandin (2019, p. 8) point out that these factors can be linked to the different forms of social capital proposed by Putnam. This distinction and illustration allow us to distinguish between social capital derived from individual relationships and that derive at a collective level. For example, bonding relationships can be observed within a family or a group of friends. The same type of relationship can also be observed at a collective level, as exemplified by neighbours or colleagues. In the first case, social cohesion and inclusivity contribute to bonding. This may or may not explain why it is easy to join a new group: more attention needs to be paid to the integration of new members (Baylis, Gong and Wang, 2018; Perras and Normandin, 2019). Additionally, informal socialisation and associative involvement contribute to both bonding and bridging, through which a sense of belonging and reciprocal practices emerges. Bridging interactions are more likely to be observed in the context of relationships between neighbours or colleagues. Tolerance of diversity and a sense

Factors contributing to forms of social capital
Fig.2



Adapted from Perras & Normandin (2019, p.8)

of security contribute specifically to this form of social capital. For example, we can observe bonding in relationships between members of the same subcommittee, and bridging in relationships between colleagues on said subcommittee and members of other subcommittees within the same group. In both cases, the factors specific to bonding and bridging will reveal strengths or weaknesses in the relationships when prompted. These intensities may vary according to the contexts and actions undertaken by the commoners (Baylis, Gong and Wang, 2018; Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak, 2023).

Finally, the monitoring of linking relationships requires the creation of relationships with organisations or institutions at another hierarchical level. It is interesting to note that no single factor contributes to both bonding and linking. In fact, the factors that contribute to linking also seem to have an effect on bridging. This is the case for civic leadership, political empowerment and a sentiment of individual or collective self-efficacy. However, both trust and the perceived the value of one's existence influence all forms of social capital (Fig.2). Indeed, Putnam describes the presence of trust as essential for facilitating coordination and cooperation within a group (Putnam, 2000; Ech-Chahed, 2022).

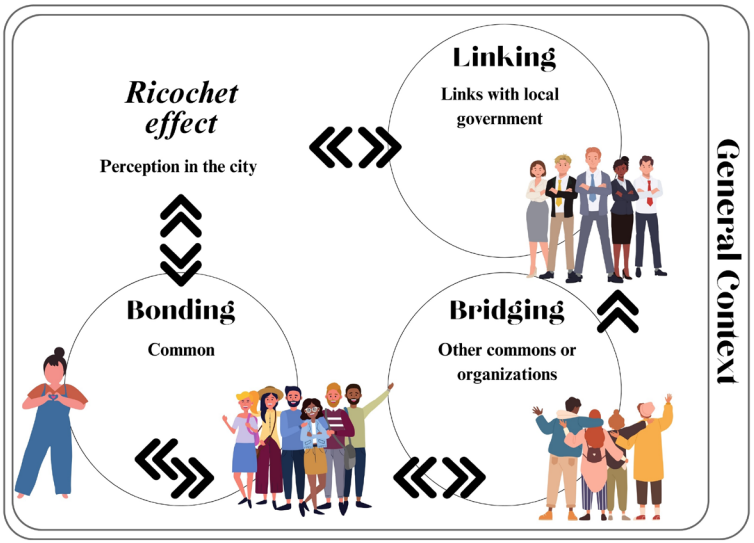
While we can see how an application of the above-discussed social capital might extend to commons in the city, its current definition is limited. Within the city, commoners transform their environment by caring for it and practising commoning in a way that makes sense to them. In doing so, they generate social capital that benefits both commoners and their partners, whether or not they are on the same hierarchical level. However, to fully understand how social capital links commons and the city, it is necessary to explore how it evolves through invisible links between commons and the rest of the population. When the changes that commons make to its environment are visible, invisible links' formation can be observed. These links contribute to the creation of linking between the community and its city at a collective level. To fully comprehend the role of social

capital in this context, a fourth element is proposed to explain the relationships of the commons through the prism of theories of caring in the city: the *ricochet* effect.

After bonding, bridging and linking: the *ricochet* effect

Social capital makes it possible to understand both the types of relationships that exist within a collective and the factors that influence them. This information is invaluable if it is known by organisations and communities. In fact, it makes it possible to inform and change the practices adopted within the collective, depending on the strength or weakness of the factors and forms of the targeted relationships. This is what several authors have called collective effectiveness (Brain, 2019). For example, a community with a low level of bridging could set up informal socialization activities alongside a project involving its own community and that of another community. In doing so, the two organisations would work on tolerating diversity, fostering a sense of security, helping to develop inclusivity and a sense of belonging between the two groups, and generally improving their social capital.

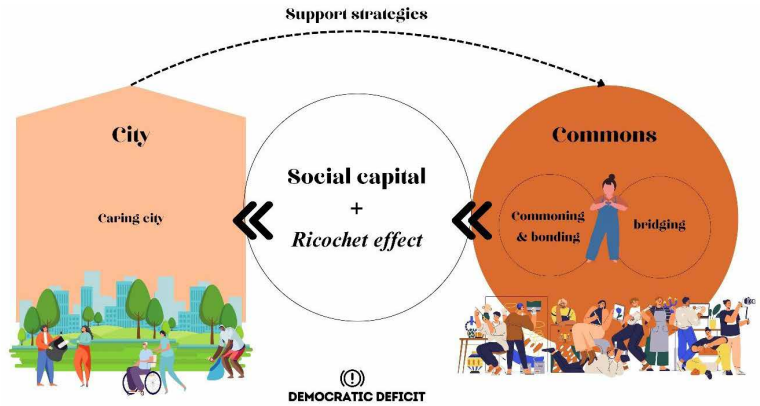
Putnam has been highly influential in recent literature pertaining to the effects of social capital on the management of pooled resources and commoning, such as research conducted by Baylis, Gong and Wang (2018), as well as Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak (2023). These authors have argued that bridging can contribute to a diminished sense of commonality. This is the case when a common establishes new relationships with other commons. These relationships become new alternatives for meeting the needs of commoners. As they become less active in commoning practices, commoners will see their sense of belonging diminish. Thus, commons with strong bonding but weak bridging would perform better (Baylis, Gong and Wang, 2018). Researchers have also shown that the precariousness of commons and commoners affects compliance with governance rules and propensity to cooperate (Baylis, Gong and Wang, 2018; Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak, 2023). This precariousness has the effect of reducing bonding within the group. However, in the case of bridging relationships, selfish and individualistic behaviour is reduced when the quality of commons is comparable, thereby making it easier to develop reciprocity and mutual aid (Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak, 2023). However, these studies focus mainly on bonding and bridging relationships. Very little work has been done on the factors that encourage the creation of direct links between communities and institutions. Yet, the creation of these links is necessary for many commons that wish to contribute to the well-being of people and nature by establishing transformative practices in favour of the socio-ecological transition. It is not unusual for these commons' actions to take place in public spaces or for them to claim the reappropriation



Incorporating the ricochet effect into social capital
Fig.3

of public goods. In such cases, the commons need to obtain, or at least secure political support if they are to respond sustainably to their own needs and intentions.

According to the existing literature and the models presented above (Fig. 1-2), if a community develops a network to demonstrate its relevance and capacity to act, it is more likely to develop an alliance with the city government (Perras and Normandin, 2019; Ech-Chahed, 2022; Micciarelli, 2022; Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak, 2023). This allows it to assert its value and build a relationship of trust, whether with this network or with the so-called hierarchically superior actors. However, if the community wishes to establish direct links without relying on bridging, it will have to explore other avenues. Among these, measuring a community's ricochet effect in its environment may be an interesting approach (Fig. 3). It is important to distinguish the ricochet effect from collective effectiveness. While the latter is directly linked to the organisation's activities and its impact on its members and beneficiaries, the ricochet effect is more latent. It could be defined as an indirect effect of the activities of the community, as perceived by a population for whom it is not necessarily intended. Although he uses it from a legal perspective, Jeuland notes that a ricochet establishes links between different concepts and that it can serve as a method for exploring social relations, whether between beings or with objects (2009). Nevertheless, on the spectrum of the city, the ricochet effect is part of a general context with specific social, economic, political, environmental and geographical characteristics. To illustrate this effect, here is a simple example: you are on a train and two people are having a friendly conversation about a seemingly innocuous topic. Suddenly, one of them bursts out laughing while the other continues the conversation in a joking tone. If you start to smile too, you have just ex-



Model for articulating the social capital of the commons in a caring city
Fig.4

perienced a ricochet effect at a local and individual level. In the context of collective action, a ricochet effect is part of a desire for social change and can be perceived positively or negatively depending on the context and the impact it has on its environment. Whether positive or negative, this collective action will generate reactions and opinions from a community outside the collective for which the action was originally intended. These reactions will then influence the community surrounding the collective, helping to create a favourable context for bonding and bridging within the collective – particularly by facilitating the recruitment or involvement of new citizens, or the desire for association between collectives with a similar vision. If the general public's perception is overwhelmingly positive, it will have an exceptionally favourable effect on the creation of links, thus enabling the creation of direct links between the collective and hierarchically superior organizations, without the need for the collective to join forces.

If strong social capital is beneficial to the well-being of communities (Perras and Normandin, 2019, p. 11), the addition of the ricochet effect amplifies this contribution and should be monitored (Igras and al., 2021). Knowing its full content makes the ricochet effect a powerful argument for the collectives that use it. It makes it possible to highlight the relevance of the collective's impacts, not only within the community itself or the organisations with which it has relationships, but also at the operational level of the general population and local governments. By making its social capital and ricochet effects visible, a community can demonstrate its relevance and contribution to a neighbourhood, district, or city, and develop linkages. In doing so, it benefits from greater recognition from funders in its ability to govern itself (Ostrom, 1990). These collectives develop direct relationships based on trust, thereby influencing and proposing strategies to support commons, or contribute to developing public policies that

are potentially beneficial to them. These support strategies enable commons to increase their collective effectiveness and thus have a greater anticipated ripple effect on the population (Perras and Normandin, 2019). The development of doing, deciding, and living together is then made possible. As this phenomenon grows, it will go beyond the personal accumulation of resources or the simple friendship that characterises a bond (Brain, 2019, p. 174). Thanks to its knowledge of its social capital and its ricochet effect, the community is able to increase its capacity to act in the city. It thus helps generalize the implementation of an ethic of care across the territory and increases confidence in the city as a government of proximity (Fig. 4).

Whether through bonding or bridging, commons have an effect on the population that creates an invisible relationship: a ricochet effect. When this effect is perceived positively, it adds to the created social capital, anchoring it in the city and enhancing the latter's overall well-being. These effects, if measured, can be captured by the city or can help create or consolidate relationships with the community. If the city deploys strategies to support commons in their practices, the social capital and ricochet effect generated by commons will increase, forming a virtuous circle that will increase the ethic of care in the city. The collaborations and synergies thus created will restore trust in the city, which will also enable it to reduce its democratic deficit as a local government. On the other hand, without support for the commons, the city will not be able to join forces with the driving forces of social change in its area, and nurture the process of doing, deciding and living together.

The *ricochet* effect illustrated in the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough in Montreal

To illustrate the utility of this framework, two projects involving the Solon Collective were examined. Legally constituted as a non-profit organisation, Solon was set up in 2009 by a group of neighbours who wanted to facilitate action-taking to support socio-ecological transitions. In April 2020, after launching a number of promising projects in its borough, Rosemont-Petite-Patrie, the group extended its activities to the borough of Ahuntsic-Cartierville[2]. Over the years, Solon's self-managed governance has enabled several initiatives to be set up by and for local residents (Solon Collectif, 2020). Such is the case with LocoMotion (Solon Collectif, 2023b, 2023a). In March 2024, LocoMotion became an autonomous Solon community, sharing bikes, trailers and cars aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the number of cars on the roads. It did not take long for residents of the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough to see trailer bikes and cargo bikes in the LocoMotion colours appear in the neighbourhood streets. Based on observations and anecdotal exchanges within the community, this research project has found that many residents use these shared vehicles to take their children

Photos from left to right (1 to 4): Happy citizens on bikes ; Shared-access trailer on a citizen's property; Trailer parking on sidewalk; Locomotion bikes lockers in a borough park.
Photo credits : 1. Audrey MacMahon (2022); 2.Marie-Anne Perreault (2023); 3. Solon Collectif (2023); 4. Marie-Anne Perreault (2024)

Photos from left to right (5 to 8) : Four civic protrusions in the streets of the borough Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Montréal, Canada
Photo credits : 5. Ahuncycle (2023), 6. Comité citoyen Youville (2023); 7. Marie-Anne Perreault (2024); 8. Comité citoyen Youville (2023).

to school, deliver food to local organizations, or simply do their shopping. Without necessarily taking part in the common, many residents have changed their lifestyles to include public or active transport, demonstrating the positive impact this initiative has had on the neighbourhood. Many residents have not yet joined the scheme but are positive about this new way of getting around our streets. I am one of them. The positive ricochet effect has attracted the attention of the borough's elected representatives and civil servants and increased their collaboration with Solon. So, while the first shared bikes and trailers were stored on the land and in the homes of residents involved in the project, relations with the Ahuntsic-Cartierville borough have enabled Solon to gain access to public property (Fig. 1-4); it. It is no longer unusual to see trailers or bicycles made available to residents from parks or pavements. Some structures have even had to be adapted by the city to facilitate access. By making LocoMotion's actions visible to the population and demonstrating an active social capital within its commons, Solon has created a ripple effect in the neighbourhood. This positive effect has encouraged the borough's elected representatives and civil servants to work with the community and implement strategies that are firmly rooted in the urban landscape. In this way, the city demonstrates its support not only for LocoMotion, but also for initiatives that encourage sharing, solidarity and togetherness – essential elements of a caring city.

The trust built up between the municipality and the Solon Collective has also led to oth-

er projects. The case of the *saillies citoyennes* (citizens curbstone – Fig. 5-8) is an example of this. This project was set up in partnership with the Ahuntsic-Cartierville community on the initiative of Solon and two local citizens' groups: the Ahuntsic-Cartierville Active Mobility Association and the Ahuntsic-Cartierville Environmental Mobilization. These community groups predate Solon's arrival in the community. They sought to address mobility and road safety issues in the area. While the municipality's budget and administrative procedures limited the use of curbstone extensions in areas identified by residents as problematic, Solon facilitated collaboration between residents and the city so that solutions could be heard and developed to reduce vehicle speeds and make intersections on busy roads safer. This collaboration enabled the rapid installation of vegetated citizen projections for a fraction of the price during the summer of 2023 (Maison de l'innovation sociale, Arpent and Solon Collectif, 2023; Solon Collectif, 2023c). These changes in urban design have been welcomed by residents, who can use these structures to rest while walking, to enjoy a sheltered area while crossing an intersection, or to see the speed reduced on their streets on a daily basis. It has created a positive ricochet effect, evidenced by the many positive comments posted on social networks in the neighbourhood. The enthusiasm shown by the public following this pilot project's roll-out reinforces the feeling of belonging and the safety of citizens in their living environment. Many residents would like to see other citizens' protrusions set up near their parks and schools before the borough installs a permanent structure.

This project shows residents that by coming together as a community, they can address issues that affect them, improve their living environment and work hand in hand with their city, thereby strengthening their sense of belonging and confidence in the city. However, many residents are unaware that these curbstones are the result of their neighbours' initiative, and that they were made possible through a collaborative ecosystem (Micciarelli, 2022). Nevertheless, a positive ricochet effect emerged from it, which, when added to the social capital generated by the parties involved in this project, can be mobilised by elected officials and civil servants to improve services across the spectrum of the city. Although these measures have not yet been announced by the municipal representatives, they should take concrete form in two ways: through more support strategies (e.g., funding, access to materials or expertise) or a review of the city's internal processes to facilitate the creation of projects in collaboration with citizens' groups and commons in the future. Of course, it is still too early to assess the choices that the municipality will make following the deployment of citizens' initiatives on its territory, but these two tactics will lead to a strengthening of the care ethic to improve the way we do, decide and live together.

Conclusion

By generating social capital that has a ricochet effect in the city, commons can have an impact on their living environment. This impact can be perceived positively by the population and institutions that occupy the same urban areas. If the ricochet effect is perceived positively, these commons can create a favourable context of nurturing initiatives, intentions and demands on institutions in positions of authority. The commitment of commoners increases participation within the community, nurtures bonding relationships, and provides opportunities for bridging and consolidating links with local governments. The social capital creates a virtuous circle that helps foster an ethic of care within the city for its inhabitants and the surrounding natural environment. Of course, this positive ricochet effect remains closely linked to a political, social and economic context that is favourable to the commons, the involvement of citizens in collective initiatives and the search for a generalised ethic of care within the city.

Nevertheless, if they are to retain their collective effectiveness and maintain high levels of participation and civic leadership, commons must remain vigilant against the erosion of links between commoners to the detriment of other organizations. If such an erosion of participation were to occur, it would be necessary to review the cooperation within the community to strengthen the sense of belonging and the bond between commoners. The introduction of such rules will be to the detriment of bridging. However, the intention is to maintain the ricochet effect of the community and its link with the institutions.

By structuring the analysis around a combination of the concepts of commons, social capital and the caring city, it has been possible to explore how social capital can enhance commons and the commoning they generate as a means of extending the reach of a city that aspires to be a caring city. In doing so, it has been demonstrated that by monitoring their social capital and the ricochet effect, commons can establish themselves as allies of local authorities and build collaborative relationships with the latter. Commons become guarantors of shared intentions by seeking to establish an ethic of caring that promotes the long-term well-being of people and nature.

Nevertheless, the proposed analytical framework needs to be further tested by researchers to explore its potential in an urban context in Quebec. Further case studies are also needed to adapt this proposal to other policies and regulatory contexts. Finally, other factors that may influence the occurrence of the ricochet effect or linking can be identified and documented in relation to urban commons. Understanding their impact on the ability of commons to persist over time, maintain community bonding, and expand a network of commons is essential. With the support of city governments, commons will be able to create a context conducive to solidar-

ity, mutual aid and sharing within social practices between citizens, thereby helping to increase care. There will be a greater ricochet effect felt by the population as a whole, leading to greater citizen involvement to promote collective action and coexistence. Both cities and commons will be able to benefit from such. Cities, as local authorities, will not be solely responsible for creating a sense of community; the caring city will become a shared responsibility of all citizens.

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Note

[1] According to the report L'organisation municipale au Québec en 2020, the ten largest cities in Quebec are Montreal, Quebec City, Laval, Longueuil, Gatineau, Terrebonne, Trois-Rivières, Sherbrooke, Lévis and Saguenay. They represent more than 47% of Quebec's population and 55% of employment (Gouvernement du Québec, 2020).

[2] Montreal is the French-speaking metropolis of Canada. It has nineteen boroughs, each represented by a borough mayor. Each of these boroughs is divided into electoral wards, each of which has a city councillor. All are elected by universal suffrage by the citizens of the district, which is given a budget and responsibilities by the Ville-Centre. While Rosemont-Petite-Patrie is located in the heart of the island of Montreal, the borough of Ahuntsic-Cartierville is in the north of the island. It is made up of four constituencies (Bordeaux-Cartierville, Ahuntsic, Saint-Sulpice and Sault-au-Récollet) and eleven historic neighbourhoods. Ahuntsic-Cartierville is also the author's borough.

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