

URBAN COMMONS IN CERRO BARÓN, VALPARAÍSO, CHILE: NETWORKS, RESIGNIFICATION, AND PROVISION¹

COMUNES URBANOS EN EL CERRO BARÓN DE VALPARAÍSO, CHILE: REDES, RESIGNIFICACIÓN Y PROVISIÓN

RODRIGO CAIMANQUE 2
BELÉN SEGURA 3
ERNESTO LÓPEZ-MORALES 4

1 Article funded by ANID, through Fondecyt Postdoctoral Grant No. 3210089 and Fondecyt Regular Grant No. 1210972.

- 2 Doctor en Planificación Urbana
Professor Asistente, Facultad de Arquitectura y Urbanismo
Universidad de Chile, Santiago, Chile
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3020-3365>
rcaimanque@uchile.cl
- 3 Magíster en Urbanismo
Estudiante de doctorado en Geografía y Ordenamiento Territorial
Université Paris Cité, París, Francia
<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6139-1127>
belen.segura@ug.uchile.cl
- 4 Doctor en Planificación Urbana Investigador y consultor urbano
Santiago, Chile
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2878-7143>
fondecyt.pvivienda@gmail.com



El presente artículo analiza el surgimiento de comunes urbanos (CU) como alternativas de desarrollo en la ciudad y como respuestas a las limitaciones del Estado y del mercado en la provisión de mecanismos y medios de acceso colectivo a bienes. Se estudian tres casos en el cerro Barón en Valparaíso: un espacio de memoria y cultura, una sede de organizaciones comunitarias y territoriales y un huerto/comedor popular. Mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas a miembros de organizaciones, representantes institucionales e informantes de otros cerros, se revelan mecanismos de disputa, apropiación y resignificación de espacios urbanos barriales, la reactivación de áreas abandonadas y la conformación de una red de fortalecimiento comunitario con nodos “intercerros”, que permiten el intercambio de información y experiencias. La investigación aporta a la comprensión de la gobernanza y economía política de los comunes urbanos y pone en evidencia el rol y la escala en que las organizaciones barriales pueden incidir, no sólo en momentos específicos sino de forma permanente, en los procesos de toma de decisión y provisión en la ciudad.

Palabras clave: comunes urbanos, provisión, resignificación, gobernanza, nodos intercerros

This article examines the emergence of urban commons (UC) as development alternatives in cities and as responses to the limitations of the State and the market in providing mechanisms and means for communities to collectively access goods. Three cases are studied in Barón Hill (Cerro Barón) in Valparaíso: a space for memory and culture, a local space for community and territorial organizations, and a garden/soup kitchen. Through semi-structured interviews with organization members, institutional representatives, and informants from other hills, the results reveal mechanisms of dispute, appropriation, and resignification of urban/neighborhood spaces, along with the revitalization of abandoned areas, and the formation of a community-strengthening network featuring “inter-hill” nodes that facilitate the exchange of information and experiences. This research contributes to understanding the governance and political economy of urban commons, demonstrating that the role and scale of neighborhood organizations can significantly influence decision-making and provisioning processes in the city, both at specific moments and on a permanent basis.

Keywords: urban commons, provision, resignification, governance, inter-hill nodes

I. INTRODUCTION

The Western world is dominated by free-market logics in a structural crisis (Swyngedouw, 2018), while alternative forms of local governance based on solidarity and cooperation practices persist (Russell, 2019). The recent debates on the urban commons (Eidelman & Safransky, 2020; Cámara-Menoyo et al., 2021) build on Ostrom et al.'s (1999) contributions to the management of common resources outside property rights frameworks. At the institutional and organizational levels, Eidelman and Safransky (2020) propose that urban commons (UC) emerge as parallel lines of organization grounded in solidarity and new urban imaginaries, with networks that transcend neighborhood or local space. The transfer from rural to urban commons involves two aspects: the density of social relations within land-use diversity and the distinction between the public and private, with their interstices and unregulated spaces being relevant. On the other hand, for Bollier and Helfrich (2012) and Olin-Wright (2014), from a provision perspective, UC are practices that solve concrete and daily subsistence problems for those dispossessed by the capitalist system.

UC are local practices whose imaginaries move from place to place, expand and articulate in a network through repertoires of collective action and appropriation of space. However, UC in Latin American cases changes when it is interrelated with ideas of "self-management" (Scheingart, 1991; Vieta, 2014) and the "social production of habitat" (Zapata & Díaz Parra, 2020; Meza & López-Morales, 2024). In this way, a dimension of socio-spatial justice is incorporated that differs from the European perspective, which is focused on the shared use of urban resources. Community gardens or orchards in Hellinikon, Greece (Apostolopoulou & Kotsila, 2022) or in Mexico City (Borbón & de la Torre, 2020), building occupations in Sao Paulo (de Carli & Frediani, 2016) or in various parts of Europe (Burgum & Vasudevan, 2023), express similar urban insurgencies and alternatives, whose materialization processes require a specific revision according to the context in which they unfold.

Little is yet known about the articulation of communalization practices in Latin American cities, especially in contexts of urban inequality and territorial disputes. Therefore, a first objective of this study is to describe how these practices seek to generate urban production alternatives and collective forms of provision, while defining their own governance mechanisms. A second objective is to observe whether this governance extends beyond the immediate territory of the urban common and is configured as a network within the city. These objectives are put to the test in Valparaíso, a city where the self-managed production of urban space is intertwined with conflicts over land and new forms of local governance.

For the analysis, three cases are taken: (1) the Memory Site and former-Barón police station (colloquially called "Ex Comi") community space, (2) the former Barón Market, and (3) the Lui-Mongo Amphitheater. All were abandoned spaces that were later occupied and re-signified by citizen organizations. It shows how meeting and community support spaces are configured, and how their relational character configures nodes of an "inter-hill" network beyond the neighborhood, which define their own logics of efficiency and distributive justice. In this path, it is identified how the self-managed governance of the UC is related to formal institutions that, in practice, are not entirely separate (Vieta, 2014).

Valparaíso, a port city with a long political and social tradition, and the cradle of the anarchist movement in Chile at the beginning of the 20th century (Del Solar & Pérez, 2008), is characterized by social organizations that have recently contested large urban projects (Caimanque, 2023; Caimanque & López-Morales, 2024). Barón Hill is a historic and emblematic sector of the city, with a strong collective sense of belonging and community identity, closely associated with the railroad's activities. Its privileged location and views of the Bay of Valparaíso give it real estate appeal, as evidenced by the proliferation of high-rise buildings, lofts, and high-standard housing over the last decade. However, the expansion of the housing stock in Barón does not necessarily address the hill's problems: the shortage of housing, the overcrowding of families under the same roof, and, paradoxically, the loss of population have persisted (INE, 2024).

The section below addresses theoretical debates on urban commons, followed by the study's methodology. The following sections explain how the UCs have been built on Barón Hill and discuss the networks of collaboration, response, and provision that emerge from these cases.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The analysis of urban commons has gained relevance due to criticism of unequal development and the search for alternatives to state or market provision, such as housing (Meza & López-Morales, 2024), as well as radical community approaches (Chatterton, 2016). These goods are seen as insurgent practices and open, inclusive social relations that dispute the logics of urban mercantile reproduction (Zapata, 2024) and are opposed to regulatory and privatizing State perspectives (Schlack & Araujo, 2022). From a legal perspective, Foster and Iaione (2016) view urban commons as managed through models of co-governance among citizens, the State, and the private sector to handle resources such as public spaces and infrastructure.

From an institutional and organizational logic, UCs should be understood as relational practices around the use, consumption, and appropriation of spaces within the city, as a form of solidarity and protection for dispossessed communities, and as a response to an exclusionary model (Pusey & Chatterton, 2016). The UCs promote the generation of new knowledge based on socio-spatial practices and “localized initiatives that have as a reference, practices of dignity and strengthening a collective social doing” (Aguiló & Sabariego, 2019, p. 75). The appropriation and resignification of vacant urban spaces constitutes a direct and concrete action of claiming control of these (Apostolopoulou & Kotsila, 2022) as places of resistance, experimentation, and learning, democratic management (Blanco & Gomá, 2019), and as an emancipatory political resource (Swyngedouw, 2018).

The concept of “self-management” associated with the right to the city (Purcell, 2014) becomes relevant when the UC debate is situated within the practices and experiences of the Global South (Zapata, 2024). Bollier and Helfrich (2012) propose that commons are living social systems maintained through cooperative practices grounded in care and co-responsibility. Housing cooperatives, community gardens and the occupation of uninhabited buildings represent a way of exercising the right to the city, a form of non-mercantile urban self-production (Zapata & Díaz Parra, 2020) and of emancipatory urban life (Lefebvre, 2003), an opportunity to produce goods and opportunities from within, occupying the fissures and opportunities of the capitalist system, and, at the same time, beyond it (Olin-Wright, 2014).

The theory of provision developed by Schafran et al. (2020) offers a powerful perspective for rethinking UC in collective access to essential goods such as housing, transport, health, energy, or education. Beyond distribution or participation, it focuses on the institutional, material, and social infrastructures that sustain urban life. To provide, in this framework, is not simply to offer services, but to articulate stable and democratic systems of collective access to what is necessary to live with dignity. For Schafran et al. (2020), urban planning must be understood as a policy of provision, which addresses questions about what to build or where by moving towards how and for whom urban goods are provided, and what institutional, economic, and social arrangements sustain them, thereby overcoming the state-market binomial.

In the Global South, many forms of urban life depend on informal, communal, or hybrid collective arrangements that constitute infrastructures of the common (Velásquez et al., 2020), although they are not always recognized; the theory of provision helps to make these practices visible as legitimate and viable forms of urban organization.

However, the disconnection of the UC from State and economic power may be relative in practice. Harvey (2012) notes that communalization alone fails to serve as a counterweight to dominant capitalist relations because it is inserted into existing

economic frameworks, such as collective consumption (Eidelman & Safransky, 2020). However, if it operates as an alternative, its relationship with the State matters for scaling local projects and achieving relevant changes (Cumbers, 2015).

In summary, the analysis of UC can be structured through three complementary approaches: (1) The legal-institutional approach that understands them as co-governance arrangements between citizens, the State, and the private sector (Foster & Iaione, 2016). (2) The insurgent or relational approach, associated with communalization and self-management practices that dispute the commodification of urban space and promote inclusive and cooperative forms of production and appropriation of territory (Stavrides, 2016; Chatterton, 2016). (3) The theory of provision (Schafran et al., 2020), which recognizes them as social and material infrastructures that sustain urban life and allow planning to be thought of as a policy of collective provision.

These approaches show that urban commons are systems of access, care, and maintenance of essential goods that act as infrastructures of the commons, challenging property regimes and opening paths to democratic urban alternatives, especially in contexts of the Global South.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is part of a broader research on community governance strategies in three hills of Valparaíso, in which 38 semi-structured interviews were conducted between 2021 and 2022. This specific study analyzes in depth three of these strategies on Barón Hill. The interviews considered representatives of organizations from this and other hills of the city, as well as actors from local and regional institutions and the private sector. Access to these informants was achieved through the creation of a map of key actors, based on previous research, from which emerging participants were identified through “snowball” sampling, until the saturation point of the information obtained was reached.

The primary information was triangulated with local media and social networks of the participating organizations (Instagram and Facebook). The interviews were coded with Atlas.ti software, from which key concepts emerged from the theory and were complemented by emerging themes from fieldwork. The process resulted in the following categories of analysis:

- Solidarity.
- Urban imaginaries.
- Appropriation/resignification.
- Networks/re-scaling.
- Provision.
- Institutional support.

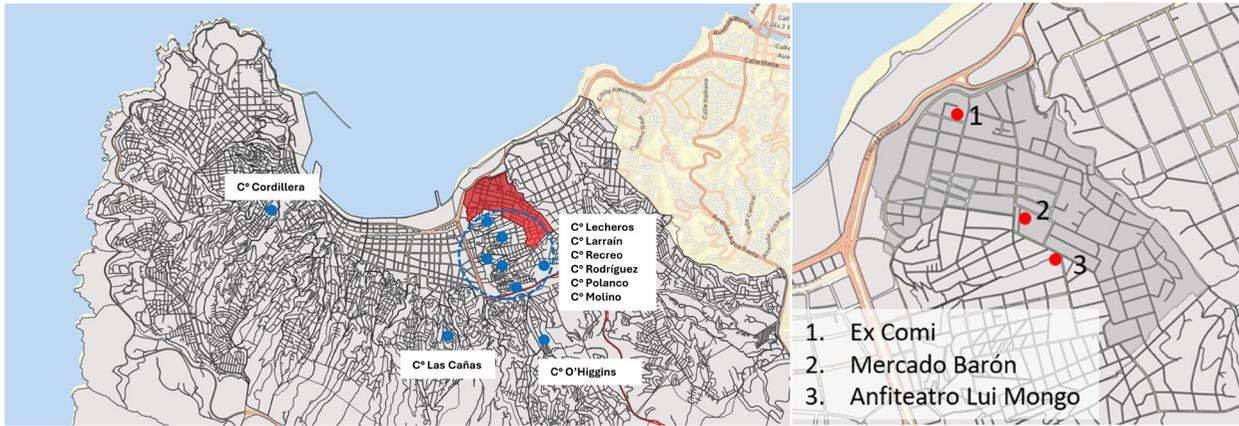


Figure 1. Location of Barón Hill and its urban commons (UC) under study. Source: Prepared by the authors.

The article's limited length prevents a detailed discussion of all methodological aspects. Therefore, a synthetic description was chosen that prioritizes the overall coherence of the argument. The "snowball" sampling was appropriate to the community and exploratory nature of the study, although it may imply biases. However, these were mitigated by the aforementioned triangulation. The coding followed an inductive approach, with categories emerging from the data and then contrasted with the literature, without considering the findings. Demographic data were used as context, although greater detail was not considered, given the exploratory nature of the research, which is focused on relational processes rather than statistical measurements, and serves as a basis for future comparative and larger-scale studies.

BARÓN HILL IN CONTEXT

Of the 44 hills that comprise Valparaíso's geography, Barón Hill is among the most significant for its history as a hub for railway workers, fostering a strong sense of community identity. It has a population of 7,630 inhabitants, 998 fewer than in 2002⁵, and a gross density of 94.10 inhab./ha, ranking fourth among the commune's districts in terms of density. It is located close to the coast and the city's central area. Figure 1 shows the location of the citizen strategies to be analyzed: the former Barón Police Station Space, the Former Barón Market, and the Lui-Mongo Amphitheater.

Barón Hill has undergone changes in its urban morphology due to a strong process of verticalization, which was halted

by modifications to Valparaíso's communal regulatory plan between 2004 and 2005. The change of the modality of real estate development to lower-rise buildings has increased the value of leases on the hill, with the high-standard real estate project Mirador Barón standing out. According to a former councilman of Valparaíso, this phenomenon is associated with a gentrification process:

... there is a low-scale real estate policy that has managed to gentrify the sector. All terrain has raised the price standards in that sector impressively, and those who can access those lands are real estate companies that build low-rise buildings and displace the historical inhabitants (Interview August 2021).

As can be seen, preventing the construction of high-rise buildings does not ensure stopping gentrification; in fact, the opposite is true in many cases: height-controlled buildings are preferred by high-end residents and investors (López-Morales & Herrera, 2024). When reviewing the property purchase and rental websites, it can be estimated that the sale price of apartments on Barón Hill ranges from 50 to 70 UF/m², amounts that, according to interviewed leaders, are out of reach for people from the sector⁶. The Mirador Barón project raises this further still with prices rising to 90/110 UF/m².

When crosschecking data from the 2002-2017 census, the database of the Internal Revenue Service (SII) and Form N°2890 on the Transfer and Registration of Real Estate (López-Morales et al, 2025), in Valparaíso, the communal population has remained relatively frozen for decades and even decreased

⁵ The census tract is taken as the area.

⁶ The UF or development unit is an inflation-indexed unit of account used in Chile

Espacio Comunitario ex Comisaría Barón



Ex mercado Barón



Anfiteatro Lui Mongo



Figure 2. UC of Barón Hill. Source: Authors, Instagram of Excomi, Lui-Mongo, and Municipality of Valparaíso.

according to the last census of 2024, but, between 2002 and 2022, the stock of apartment units has increased by 132%. In the Barón Hill census district, the stock has increased by 215%, accompanied by an average increase in apartment prices of 129%, the most significant variation in Valparaíso, well above the communal total of 49%. While the density of the commune (Inhab./ha) increased by 8% between 2002 and 2017, the density of Barón Hill has done so at a negative rate (-12%) in the same period, suggesting the presence of a second home market.

In this changing real estate context, the UCs on Barón Hill emerge as an alternative way of inhabiting urban space, aiming to strengthen the community networks that historically characterized them. These common goods are not strictly a response to the effects of the real estate market, but it is recognized that the self-managed recovery of unused spaces does contribute to disputing speculative land processes. The cases studied are shown in Figure 2 and are detailed in the sections below.

Memory Site and former Barón Police Station (Ex-Comi) Community Space

The compound is a former police station dating back to 1870, and was also a detention and torture center during Chile's

civil-military dictatorship (1973-1990). The building, which has undergone successive extensions, is located on a 1,900 m² plot in the center of Barón Hill. The "Memory Site and former Barón Police Station Community Space", hereinafter Ex-Comi, is located near public facilities and next to the Mirador Barón Building, high-rise buildings, and studio apartments that are under construction (Figure 3). The Ex-Comi building was abandoned after the 2010 earthquake, and in 2018, a group of residents occupied it to launch cultural and community activities. The land belongs to the Ministry of National Assets, which in 2020 ordered the eviction because the lot would be put out to tender, along with two other sites, for urban regeneration projects. The threat of a speculative project, such as the Mirador Barón building, added to the recognized shortage of public and community spaces on the hill, was a trigger for organized mobilization and a negotiation process with the government to formalize the building's use from 2021 onwards. Given its recent past as a detention and torture center, its occupation has been resignifying it as a memory space along with its new cultural role.

Former Barón Market

This is a historic building built in 1950 and abandoned in the late 1980s. The building has a 1,000 m² plot of land that includes

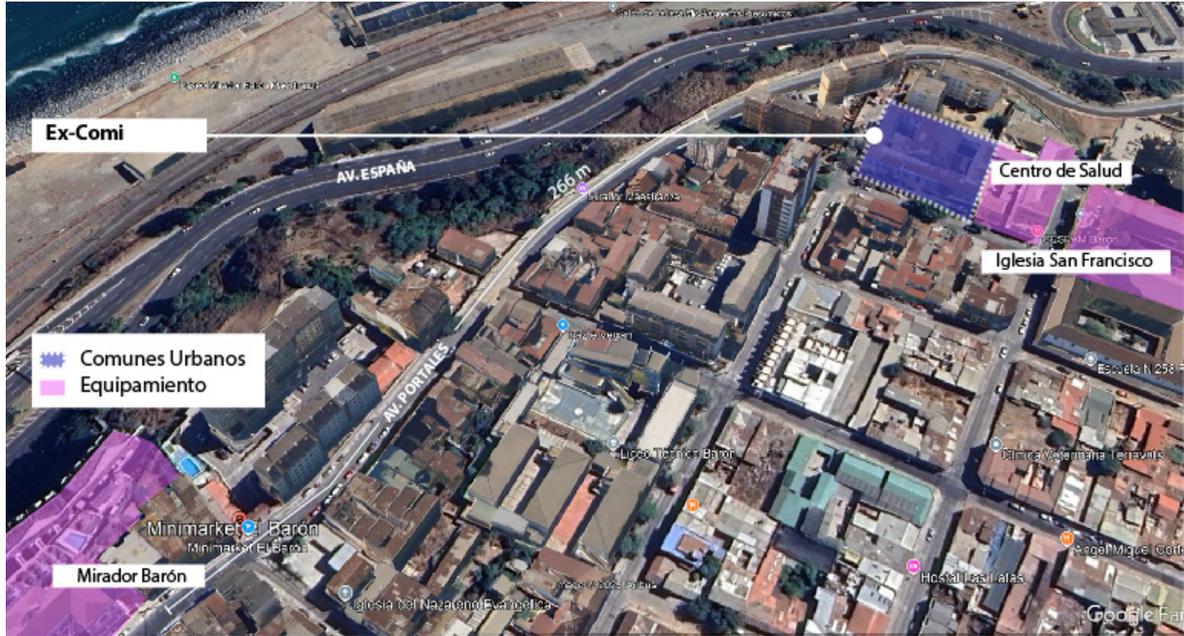


Figure 3. Ex-Comi and its immediate surroundings. Source: Prepared by the authors based on Google Earth.



Figure 4. Former Barón Market and Lui-Mongo Amphitheater and its surroundings. Source: Prepared by the authors based on Google Earth.

	Ex- Comi	Former Baron Market	Lui-Mongo
Solidarity	Mutual support mechanisms (funds and use of space) Coordination of the community kitchen	Support for the struggles of other hills Coordination and collaboration in the community kitchen	Coordination of the community kitchen Community soup kitchen
Urban imaginaries	Open space for communities Preventing speculation Allows collaboration Historical memory	Improvement of the area Collaborative use of the place Strengthening community ties	Consolidation as an artistic, cultural, and food center Multifunctional space
Appropriation/resignification	From occupation to formal use Preventive action against real estate speculation Community and memory place	From occupation to formal use Community place Rehabilitation of the space	From occupation to formal use Rehabilitation of an abandoned and unsafe space Community place
Re-scaled networks	Organizations of different scales, 7 Hills Chain (Molino, Polanco, Recreo, Rodríguez, Larrain, Lecheros, and Baron Hills), and Las Cañas Hill	Collaboration with other hills of the city, 7 Hills Chain, Cordillera (Cooperatives), and O'Higgins (resistance to real estate projects) Hills	Collaboration with other hills (Community Kitchen), 7 Hills Chain
Provision	Space that promotes education and memory (neighborhood/national) Space that accommodates different political, environmental, and cultural organizations	(Rehabilitated) space shared between organizations for community activities, community kitchens, and training	Training space in food matters. Space that encourages instances to share (soup kitchen) based on food
Institutional Support	Municipal Support Ministry of National Assets/Culture	Direct municipal investment	Temporary municipal support (community kitchen)

Table 1. Urban Commons of Barón Hill. Source: Prepared by the authors based on interviews.

San Martín Square and is close to the Lui-Mongo Amphitheater, forming a spatial unit of community interest within the hill (Figure 4). It was initially occupied by the Baron Youth Center (*Centro Juvenil Barón*), a local community organization focused on education, and later by Neighborhood Group N° 4. The building began to be used in 2011, and two years later, the municipality requested the eviction of the property for a project that was not materialized. A 'precarious use' permit was obtained in 2014, allowing organizations to manage and use the site for community purposes. The space was remodeled with municipal funds, with an investment of 180 million pesos, and formally opened in 2024.

Lui-Mongo Amphitheater

The place was originally an unfinished municipal educational project, located next to the Manuel Guerrero football field and the Carpa Azul Circo Cultural Center (Figure 4). The space was an unsafe area between Barón and Larrain hills, due to several incidents that had occurred there. In 2019, a group of young people occupied this area of approximately 2,600 m², some

for shelter and others to build a community space. The group cleaned up and created a community garden, spurred by Chile's 2019 social uprising. The amphitheater was formalized as a community center in 2020, with the site receiving a commodatum in 2021. Most of the center's activities are based on self-management, including growing part of its vegetables in its own community garden and operating community kitchens that proliferated rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The trajectories of Barón Hill's UCs exhibit both organizational and spatial differences, yet they share a set of common features: they are all nodes anchored in the local territory, with collaboration networks and "inter-hill" learning. Solidarity, the central theme of the UCs, shows that the Ex-Comi, the Former Barón Market, and Lui-Mongo become the home of local struggles and initiatives, identifying different mutual

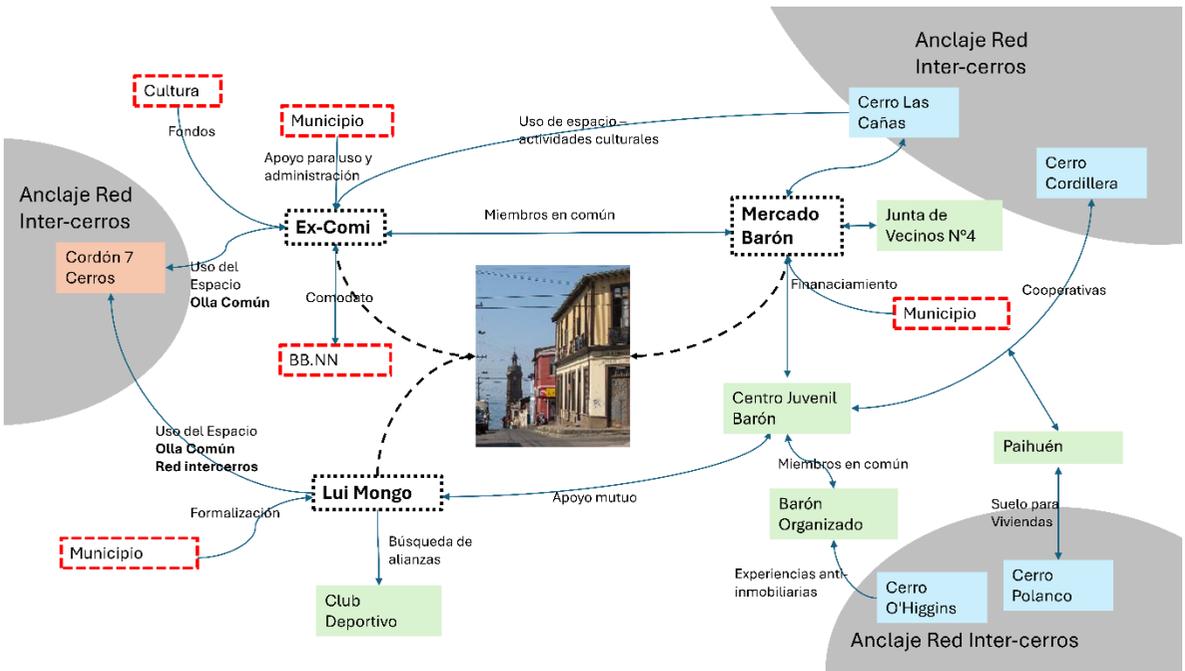


Figure 5. Networks and relationships linked to the UCs. Source: Prepared by the authors based on interviews.

support mechanisms for the use and improvement of the places. In the three cases, the “community kitchen” created an opportunity to build stronger ties and coordination among organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic, as Lui-Mongo has managed to scale the community kitchen into a permanent soup kitchen.

Table 1 below provides a synthesis of the similarities and differences between each of the cases:

The three cases are open spaces, albeit with differences in their urban imaginaries, which produce diverse forms of provision. The Ex-Comi seeks to be an open community space linked by collective memory, which, by virtue of its strategic location near the coast, indirectly counters real estate development (Figure 5). The former Barón Market proposes the collaborative use of the space, fostering community formation by organizing cultural activities that create space for campaigns to defend the neighborhood against real estate development. Finally, Lui-Mongo seeks to transform an abandoned place into a multifunctional space with a community garden, creating ties with the neighboring football pitch to strengthen joint activities. Unlike the Former Barón Market, which managed to secure public funding for its remodeling, the Ex-Comi and the Lui-Mongo amphitheater are not formally remodeled; instead, through collaborative improvement mechanisms, they contribute to the appropriation and resignification of their spaces.

Figure 5 shows a graphical representation of the capabilities of the analyzed organizations to generate collaboration networks within and between hills. The network shows high levels of mutual exchange and collaboration, which scale its scope to “inter-hills” relationships by contributing to the effectiveness of community practices. Ex-Comi and Lui-Mongo share their links with groups outside Barón Hill, particularly with the so-called 7 Hills Chain, an inter-hill organization created during the social uprising of 2019, focused on food issues (community kitchens), supply, and the creation of workshops of various kinds. The Ex-Comi space has allowed collaboration with organizations from other hills, such as Las Cañas, on the outskirts of the city, with its community center for community education with children and adolescents, being key in the mega-fire of 2014, as well as Cordillera Hill, with Espacio Santa Ana, a recognized self-managed group and trainer in cooperativism. This logic of joint work in collaboration networks ‘beyond the hill’ is a practice that has gained strength over time:

I would say that this exercise of hills working with other hills is something that has been growing recently (...), this breakthrough and link-up as Rodellillo Hill does with Barón, with Placeres, with other neighborhoods, has emerged recently: the ties of these leaders, these organizations with others from other hills. (MINVU official, interview August 2021).

The former Barón Market has sheltered movements such as 'Barón Organizado', which, in its opposition to the construction of the Mirador Barón project, has generated ties with the 'Movimiento Defensa Parques Barrio O'Higgins' from the namesake hill, which succeeded in stopping a real estate project in a green area of the city (Caimanque & López-Morales, 2024). It has also been a space where housing cooperatives have been formed, ties have been established with organizations from Cordillera Hill, and it has been relevant in the formation of the Paihuén Cooperative, which has inhabitants of Barón Hill who have made progress in obtaining housing. This housing-associated network has been an example of the relevance of these UCs and their multiscale and reticular character:

From Barón Hill, when I started links here, I saw that Barón Market had linked up with organizations from here. When I learned about cooperativism at Barón Market, I started building ties with another hill, Cordillera, and, after a while, with Santiago (...) and with other South American practices, such as housing and cooperativism... (Neighbor of the hill and municipal official, interview September 2021).

The three commons have rehabilitated abandoned places. The recovery of Lui-Mongo has brought about positive changes compared to the previous unsafe use of the land. The former Barón Market has been rehabilitated with municipal funds, which give space to two organizations that operate on the site, expanding the community network: the Barón Youth Center, with greater similarities with the Ex-Comi and Lui-Mongo, and the Neighborhood Group, which has built collaborative ties with other territorial organizations of the city.

Regarding institutional support, although the cases operate under self-management, public support for their initiatives is recognized, although with varying degrees of intensity. As mentioned above, the local government helped the recovery of the former Barón Market through municipal investment. The Ex-Comi, in addition to local-level support, also has regional institutional support that collaborates with the Ministry of Culture to consolidate itself as a place of memory. The Lui-Mongo amphitheater has received municipal support, mainly through the community kitchens during the pandemic, but has so far kept its distance from public institutions.

Our criteria for working with the municipality are clearly aligned with the understanding that the municipality's job is to support initiatives such as the one we are carrying out, regardless of the mayor's political color; we had the same ties. (Ex-Comi Leader, interview January 2022).

Although different relationships with public institutions are recognized as the basis for configuring the UC, informants present them as spaces that go beyond the functioning of the State and the capitalist system (Bollier & Helfrich, 2012). The economic support generated by the associativity and cooperation between organizations and institutions has enabled the development and consolidation of the spaces. However, the fundamental objectives of the cases studied remain faithful to their origin: to act as resignified collective mechanisms and reconverted spaces that allow goods and services to be provided beyond the State-market binomial (Schafran et al., 2020).

V. CONCLUSIONS

The research analyzes three key factors in the conformation and scalability of Urban Commons (UC) on Barón Hill, Valparaíso: resignification of space, provision, and governance. The spatial dimension implies urban exchanges with territorial relations and networks that go beyond local boundaries. Barón Hill experiences housing deficits and depopulation, influenced by urban changes and real estate interests. The Hill's community responses seek to rebuild collaborative networks and provide for their communities. Barón's UCs, with their agendas on culture, memory, food, the fight against gentrification, and cooperative housing, offer an alternative vision of the city, beyond traditional growth. The defense, resignification, and provision of fragments of the territory strengthen the community and open new forms of territorial and relational governance.

The post-social uprising context of 2019 and COVID-19 in 2020 eroded the strength of several organizations that had previously been strengthened through struggles for structural change, weakening collaborative and solidarity practices. However, the organizations studied have managed to remain in force as nodes of collective action and the provision of goods for their own communities, as permanent and networked spaces, which may explain their durability over time, although political contexts and institutional support also matter. The latter raises sustainability challenges, given that the UC studied developed in progressive local political contexts, a condition that could eventually shift towards new municipal authorities closer to business approaches.

Although this exploratory study presents methodological and scope limitations, at the theoretical level, it contributes with evidence to the international literature on urban commons in the Global South, where communal practices combine informality, self-management, and links with the State, which configure hybrid provision arrangements that sustain urban life beyond the market and the state bureaucracy. This approach allows us to think of the UC

not only as spaces of resistance but as active social infrastructures that produce value for collective use. The notion of “inter-hill nodes” opens a field of research on the scales of communal articulation. Its potential to weave metropolitan collaboration networks poses a future agenda: to understand how the localized practices of the UC can be consolidated in broader systems of democratic governance and collective provision.

VI. CONTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS CRediT:

Conceptualization, R.C.; Data curation, B.S.; Formal analysis, R.C.; B.S.; E.L-M.; Acquisition of financing, R.C.; Research, R.C.; Methodology, R.C.; Project management, R.C.; Resources, R.C.; Software, R.C.; Supervision, E.L-M.; Validation, R.C.; Visualization, R.C.; B.S.; Writing - original draft, R.C.; B.S.; E.L-M.; Writing - revision and editing, R.C.; B.S.; E.L-M.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aguiló, A., y Sabariego, J. (2019). Hacia un municipalismo cosmopolita: Posibilidades de traducción desde las epistemologías del Sur. *Utopía y Praxis Latinoamericana*, 24(86), 73–100. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3370655>

Apostolopoulou, E., y Kotsila, P. (2022). Community gardening in Hellinikon as a resistance struggle against neoliberal urbanism: Spatial autogestion and the right to the city in post-crisis Athens, Greece. *Urban Geography*, 43(2), 293–319. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2020.1863621>

Blanco, I., y Gomà, R. (2019). Nuevo municipalismo, movimientos urbanos e impactos políticos. *Desacatos. Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 61, 56–69. <https://doi.org/10.29340/61.2132>

Bollier, D., y Helfrich, S. (2012). *The wealth of the commons: A world beyond market and state*. Levellers Press. <http://wealthofthecommons.org/>

Borbón, D. S. U., y De La Torre, J. M. O. (2020). Huertos urbanos como estrategia de resiliencia urbana en países en desarrollo. *Vivienda y Comunidades Sustentables*, (8), 81-102. <https://doi.org/10.32870/rvcs.v0i8.143>

Burgum, S., y Vasudevan, A. (2023). Critical geographies of occupation, trespass and squatting. *City*, 27(3-4), 347-359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2023.2223854>

Cámara-Menoyo, C., Ribera-Fumaz, R., y Elias, P. V. I. (2021). Problematizando los comunes urbanos: hacia una aproximación “provincializada” urbe. *Revista Brasileira de Gestão Urbana*, 13, e20190185. <https://doi.org/10.1590/2175-3369.013.e20190185>

Caimanque, R., y López-Morales, E. (2024). Social movements’ struggles under new municipalism: Confronting the neoliberal Parque Pümpin megaproject in Valparaíso city. *Human Geography*, 17(3), 323–338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/19427786231199765>

Caimanque, R. (2023). The life and death of the ‘Baron mall’: The shifting politics of urban regeneration in Valparaíso. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space*, 41(5), 884–902. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23996544231163072>

Chatterton, P. (2016). Building transitions to post-capitalist urban commons. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 41(4), 403–415. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12139>

Cumbers, A. (2015). Constructing a global commons in, against and beyond the state. *Space and Polity*, 19(1), 62–75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562576.2014.995465>

De Carli, B., y Frediani, A. A. (2016). Insurgent regeneration: Spatial practices of citizenship in the rehabilitation of inner-city São Paulo. *GeoHumanities*, 2(2), 331-353. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2373566X.2016.1235984>

Del Solar, F., y Pérez, A. (2008). *Anarquistas: Presencia libertaria en Chile*. RIL Editores.

Eidelman, T. A., y Safransky, S. (2020). The urban commons: A keyword essay. *Urban Geography*, 42(6), 792–811. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2020.1742466>

Foster, S. R., y Iaione, C. (2016). The city as a commons. *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 34, 281. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2653084>

Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution*. Verso Books. <https://doi.org/10.1111/juaf.12081>

Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE). (2024). *Censo 2024*. <https://censo2024.ine.gob.cl/>

Lefebvre, H. (2003). *The urban revolution*. University of Minnesota Press.

López-Morales, E., Caimanque, R., Herrera, N., y Garrido, O. (2025). Politics of Vertical Densification in Chile: Bridging planning, Contestation, and Housing Welfare under Progressive Municipalism. *Urban Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980251377714>

López-Morales, E., y Herrera, N. (2024). (Dis)connecting rent gap and gentrification in verticalizing cities: The cases of Iquique and Antofagasta, Chile. *Cities*, 150, 105084. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2024.105084>

Meza, D., y López-Morales, E. (2024). Chiles Pobladores movement: redefining a neoliberal housing policy from its margins in K. Jacobs, K. Flanagan, J. De Vries & E. MacDonald (Ed.), *Research Handbook on Housing, the Home and Society* (pp. 567-584). Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Olin-Wright, E. O. (2014). *Construyendo utopías reales*. Ediciones Akal.

Ostrom, E., Burger, J., Field, C. B., Norgaard, R. B., y Policansky, D. (1999). Revisiting the commons: Local lessons, global challenges. *Science*, 284(5412), 278–282. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.284.5412.278>

Purcell, M. (2014). Possible worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the right to the city. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 36(1), 141–154. <https://doi.org/10.1111/juaf.12034>

Pusey, A., y Chatterton, P. (2016). Commons in M. Jayne & K. Ward (Eds.), *Urban theory: New critical perspectives* (pp. 63–73). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315761206>

Russell, B. (2019). Beyond the local trap: New municipalism and the rise of the fearless cities. *Antipode*, 51(3), 989–1010. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12520>

Schafran, A., Smith, M. N., y Hall, S. (2020). *The spatial contract: A new politics of provision for an urbanized planet*. Manchester University Press. <https://doi.org/10.7765/9781526152718>

Schlack, E., y Araujo, K. (2022). Espacio público: registros alternativos para pensar y construir el espacio público en ciudades de Latinoamérica. *Revista Invi*, 37(106), 1-23. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5354/0718-8358.2022.68886>

Schteingart, M. (1991). Autogestión urbana y derechos ciudadanos. *Nueva Sociedad*, 114, 133–142. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=4018615>

Stavrides, S. (2016). *Common space: The city as commons*. Zed Books. 10.5040/9781350219267

Swyngedouw, E. (2018). *Promises of the political: Insurgent cities in a post-political environment*. MIT Press. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/10668.001.0001>

Velásquez, O. C. A., Moor, C., Briano, F. R., y Rodríguez, F. V. (2020). De la ciudad informal a la ciudad común. *Revista Planeo*, (84), 1–11. <https://revistaplaneo.cl/2020/02/13/de-la-ciudad-informal-a-la-ciudad-comun-el-caso-de-los-cerros-urbanos-de-santiago/>

Vieta, M. (2014). The stream of self-determination and autogestión: Prefiguring alternative economic realities. *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization*, 14(4), 781–809. <https://ephemerajournal.org/contribution/stream-self-determination-and-autogesti%25C3%25B3n-prefiguring-alternative-economic-realities>

Zapata, C., y Díaz Parra, I. (2020). Producción social del hábitat y comunes urbanos: Llamamiento a un diálogo crítico. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 19(3), 600–609. <https://doi.org/10.14288/acme.v19i3.1995>

Zapata, M. C. (2024). Territorios en disputa ¿la autogestión de hábitat como estrategia de reapropiación de comunes urbanos? *Revista de Estudios Andaluces*, (47), 28-52. <https://doi.org/10.12795/rea.2024.i47.02>

VIII. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the organizations and movements of Valparaíso, and in particular to Barón Hill, for their generous support for the research that culminated in this article, and for being an example of resistance and the reconstruction of the city's urban and social fabric.