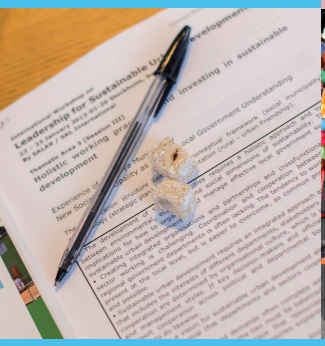
GET STARTED, MOVE FORWARD!

Leadership in Sustainable Urban Development

A GUIDE FOR DECISION MAKERS



EDITORIAL NOTES

MANUSCRIPT Gunnar Andersson, Ordbildarna AB

CONTRIBUTORS Paul Dixelius, Klas Groth, Annakarin Lindberg and Lena Nilsson, SALAR International; John Roux, Ordbildarna AB, David Young, OnRecord

ENGLISH EDITING John Roux, Ordbildarna AB

GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATIONS Viera Larsson, Ordbildarna AB

CONTACT DETAILS

SALAR International, Stockholm, Sweden

website www.salarinternational.se

TELEPHONE + 46 8 452 70 00

E-MAIL info@salarinternational.se

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FOREWORD

TAKE THE LEAD!

Mayors, city managers, governors, wherever you are … It is time to take the lead! Positive change does not happen by itself. Creating change means being bold. Leadership and development is about taking uncomfortable decisions, 'thinking outside the box', and proposing innovative ideas that challenge people to move out of their comfort zones. In order to realise a bold vision, you sometimes need to challenge not only your opponents but also your followers.

Cities can be wonderful places, and they should be embraced. However, urban challenges are coming at us, and at high speed. Evidence shows that experts sitting around tables do not solve urban problems. Good planning is necessary, but in order for solutions to be implemented and have an impact, broader involvement is needed. Cities that have managed to reverse negative trends have succeeded in making citizens the drivers and owners of the change process. This happens through innovative and visionary leadership that reaches outside the municipal offices and beyond the drawing boards of the urban planners and engineers.

This publication has brought together a group of leaders from cities in my home country, Sweden, and from around the globe, to share their experiences on how to stimulate change towards a more sustainable urban environment. Please take their ideas and recommendations as an inspiration! The need for bold and innovative leadership has never been greater. Get started, move forward, take the lead!

Anders Knape
President, Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

THIS PUBLICATION PROVIDES GUIDELINES for city leaders on facilitating sustainable urban development, based on a thorough process of research and consultation.

The Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) commissioned the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) to develop the S*ymbioCity Approach* as part of a comprehensive programme by the Swedish Government to promote the development of sustainable cities and towns. This includes training programmes, publications and training material and, most importantly, practical cooperation between Swedish municipalities and cities in developing countries.

The *SymbioCity Approach* is an integrated and holistic approach to urban development, which improves the quality of life for urban citizens.

Experience has revealed that political leaders and decision makers play a key strategic role in leading communities towards sustainable development by inspiring, convincing and involving all stakeholders. This publication aims to strengthen leadership of sustainable urban development initiatives by providing practical advice and inspiring examples that support action.

The publication has six main themes, which urban development leaders need to master:

- Develop and realise a shared vision
- Mobilise stakeholders to share ownership
- Bridge boundaries and ensure continuity
- Raise awareness and communicate for results
- Promote integrated working
- Ensure shared financing.

WHOSE ADVICE IS THIS?

THIS PUBLICATION IS THE RESULT of interaction with a wide range of local politicians and decision makers, particularly at two Leadership and Urban Development workshops, for Swedish representatives in April 2012, and mostly international delegates in January 2013.

People who deserve particular acknowledgement are listed below. Their experience, collective wisdom and recommendations have made an invaluable contribution to this guide. However, the views and conclusions presented are those of the authors, based on their learning from these valuable contributors, and from other people and sources.

Abdirizak Sheikh Abdullahi, Town Clerk, Machakos Municipality, Kenya

Magnus Edström, Deputy Mayor, City of Västerås, Sweden

David Escobar, General Manager of Autopistas de la Prosperidad, Medellin, Colombia

Bo Frank, Mayor, Växjö Municipality, Sweden

Stig Henriksson, Mayor, Fagersta Municipality, Sweden

Magnus Johansson, Deputy Mayor, Eskilstuna Municipality, Sweden

Gustavo Molina, General Consul of Sweden, Medellin, Colombia

Zukiswa Ncitha, Mayor, Buffalo City Municipality, South Africa

Mary Jane Ortega, former Mayor of San Fernando, Philippines, and Secretary General of CityNet

Ilmar Reepalu, Mayor, City of Malmö, Sweden

Federico Restrepo, Director, DE Consultores, Medellin, Colombia

Ato Abebaw Sinte, Planning Bureau Head, Addis Ababa City Administration, Ethiopia

Bülent Tanık, Mayor of Çankaya Municipality, Ankara, Turkey

Lars Thunberg, Deputy Mayor, Helsingborg Municipality, Sweden

Kristina Zakrisson, Mayor, Kiruna Municipality, Sweden

Åsa Ögren, Chair of the Building Committee, Umeå Municipality, Sweden

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1 LEADING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE CITIES

LEADERS ARE CRUCIAL in moving things forward. Good urban governance requires effective management of financial, technical, human and other resources, but sustainable urban development depends on committed, inspiring and capable leadership.

Leadership goes beyond management of plans, people and tasks. Leaders envision an improved and sometimes very different future for an organisation or community, which managers then need to realise. Successful leaders inspire and mobilise others with their foresight and enthusiasm, enabling people to reach challenging goals.

As urban areas grow, municipal and other leaders face new environmental, economic and social challenges, which require new levels of understanding, competence and cooperation.

The leaders we need

Sustainable urban development is a long-term process that requires leaders who

- think and work holistically
- transcend political and other limited interests
- facilitate collaboration across boundaries
- balance immediate and long-term needs
- act in the interests of current and future citizens
- take difficult decisions, and responsibility for implementing them
- value feedback for learning and improvement
- promote participation and shared ownership.

If everyone is responsible for everything, no one takes responsibility for anything!

Leaders play a critical role

It is crucial that political and other leaders recognise the importance of sustainability, and inspire and mobilise all sectors, stakeholders and citizens to work together to create a more sustainable society. Elected politicians and municipal officials need to lead transformation by

- helping people understand sustainable development and why it is essential
- facilitating the development of an inspiring shared vision
- developing strategic programmes and projects
- involving communities, civil society, the business sector and the media
- assigning financial and other resources.

The political room for manoeuvre and the nature of initiatives depends on the context and specific features of a country and city, e.g. levels of decentralisation, economic development, and political and organisational cooperation.

Such factors determine how prepared people and organisations are to engage in developing sustainable cities. However, whatever the situation, politicians and leaders must take up the challenge of improving it.

Leading questions

Leaders need to consider the following questions when promoting urban development

- Which main stakeholders need to collaborate?
- Who supports sustainable urban development?
- What political and professional resources can be harnessed?
- What are the main needs and challenges?
- What factors are crucial for success?
- How can we inform and involve others?
- What successful examples can we learn from?

Urban development is a dynamic and complex process involving many interacting dimensions and factors, so it is crucial for leaders to think and work in dynamic, living and comprehensive ways. Decision makers of today take over from previous ones, and development never starts from scratch. Good existing initiatives and projects need to continue, while less successful ones can yield lessons for improvement. Unexpected problems occur, but so do opportunities for creative initiatives, cooperation and achieving successful results.

Managing urban development challenges

Although cities often face significant environmental, spatial and socio-economic challenges, urbanisation has many positive aspects. With good governance and planning, urbanisation can enhance opportunities, living conditions, access to services and social cohesion. Opportunities for the poor are usually better in towns and cities in terms of

- education
- employment
- housing and services such as water, sanitation and electricity
- public transport
- social and cultural interaction.

PHOTO City of Malmö

Urban development involves all groups in society and should be an inclusive process. It is important that elected politicians take the lead in this work.

However, rapidly growing urban areas in developing countries are often characterised by the relative lack of these benefits for the poor, compounded by environmental degradation and other risks in overcrowded slums and informal settlements.

In all cases, the environmental impact or footprint of cities is considerable in terms of natural resource consumption and the production of waste and pollution, due to their demographic weight. It is now essential for cities to reduce their ecological footprints and negative environmental impacts, e.g. on the global climate.

Urban environmental impacts

The huge environmental footprint of cities includes emissions from energy required to

- transport goods globally
- commute and travel
- heat or cool buildings
- produce food and other products.

The use of fossil fuels for energy emits hundreds of millions of tons of CO_2 annually, while mostly distant and therefore 'invisible' production processes result in other huge waste streams and often highly toxic pollution.

Climate change due to CO_2 emissions is a critical challenge. Its impacts will increase urbanisation and the magnitude of existing urban challenges, but also necessitate the development of renewable energy and low-input, non-polluting technologies and lifestyles.

In developing countries, where rapid urbanisation generally results in poorly planned, overcrowded informal settlements and slums without proper services, the primary challenge is to alleviate poverty. However, it is crucial that this is done in sustainable ways, which requires a long-term and all-embracing perspective such as the *SymbioCity Approach*. Leaders in these contexts must ensure that spatial, economic and social development is well planned and in balance with current and future environmental resources and constraints.

The many dimensions of sustainable urban development

As cities are complex and dynamic systems with multiple dimensions and subsystems, sustainable urban development requires a cross-sector and multi-dimensional approach. The *SymbioCity Approach* involves the integrated consideration and planning of spatial, social, cultural, economic, environmental, and technical dimensions and factors.

The *SymbioCity Approach*

Spatial, environmental, economic and socio-cultural dimensions must be addressed in ways that are mutually supportive and synergistic. The sustainability of the whole system depends on all dimensions, as they are interdependent, e.g. deteriorating eco-systems damage economic and social sustainability.

Urban sustainability requires a multi-disciplinary approach to development which encompasses economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Environmental sustainability requires protection of biological and ecological systems and resources, so that human activities do not overburden the carrying capacity of the environment. Promoting ecological resilience requires economic resources, but also generates economic activity and creates jobs that support social sustainability.

Social sustainability requires meeting human needs via basic services and adequate employment opportunities, human rights and social inclusion. Citizens also have the right to participate in civic processes that affect them, such as urban development planning. Disadvantaged and marginalised groups in particular should be considered and included.

Essential aspects of social sustainability

- education and culture
- access to health services
- safety and security
- sport and recreation
- public transport
- a pleasant, green and diverse environment.

Social sustainability is informed by education and culture, as the sources of ideas, ideals, values and social awareness. Leaders thus need to work creatively to facilitate the development of an aware and caring social consciousness and civic culture.

Economic sustainability requires development that is in balance with available resources, and does not damage the environment. Developing the built environment promotes economic growth, employment and social well-being. A diverse and mixed urban environment promotes creativity and social interaction, which contribute to economic development.

Different dimensions of sustainability may vie for attention and resources, and leaders need to balance competing demands, and develop creative win-win solutions. For example, housing may

be more of a priority than protecting the green environment, but a well-designed development can enhance the built and green environments by integrating them in creative ways.

In developing countries, poverty alleviation, economic development and environmental protection are competing priorities, and leaders need to develop synergistic solutions. Well-planned upgrading can transform divided cities, making them more inclusive, equitable and resilient.

PHOTO Camilla Svensk

As urban development is dynamic and complex, it is crucial that leaders think and work in dynamic, living and comprehensive ways.

SAN FERNANDO – A MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

EXAMPLE

Mary Jane Ortega, former Mayor of San Fernando in the Philippines, and current chair of the city's Multi-Sector Governance Council.

WITH A POPULATION of just 120 000, the City of San Fernando is not an obvious candidate for a place on the world stage as a model of sustainable urban development. Yet, Mary Jane Ortega found herself addressing G20 foreign ministers alongside Nelson Mandela, World Bank President James Wolfensohn and the mayors of Barcelona, Montreal and Bonn at the inaugural meeting of the Cities Alliance in 2000. She also took part in a pioneering World Bank project on City Development Strategies.

Among concrete achievements in San Fernando are a 20-hectare botanical garden, one of the first reengineered landfill sites in the country, and a health programme that considerably reduced the rate of maternal mortality. According to Mrs Ortega, an open-minded approach to finance is one of the keys to success. Municipalities should take advantage of soft loans if these are available. If funds are used properly, they often generate additional grants or investments.

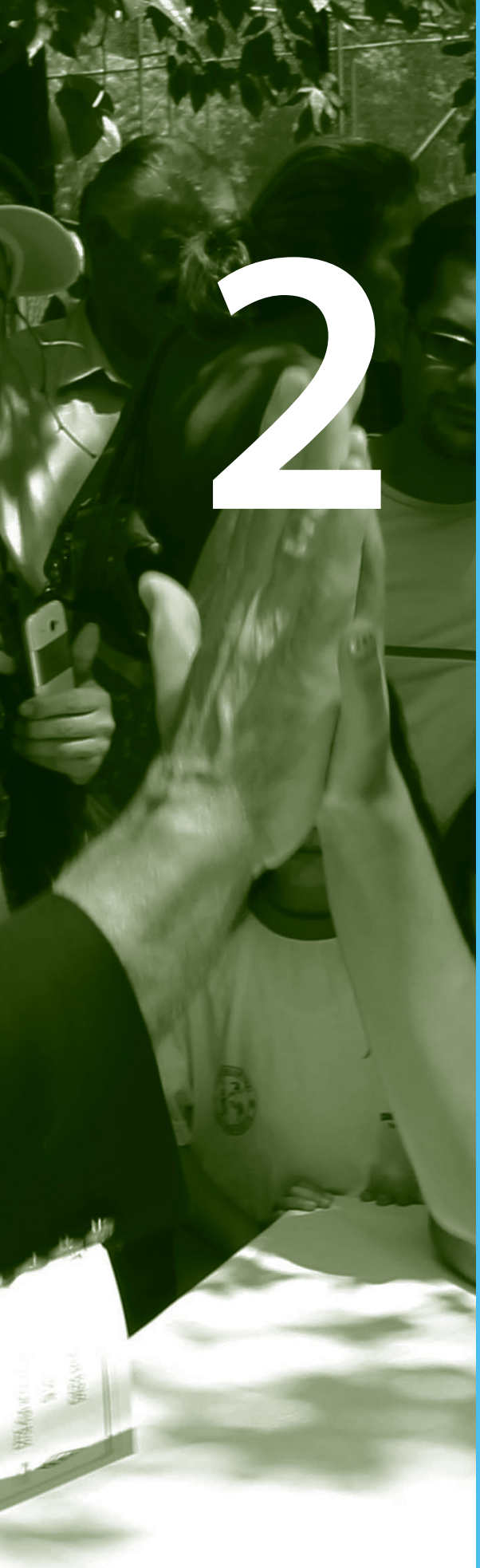
Communication was a hallmark of her three terms in office. »Nothing is better than face-to-face meetings,«, she says. For example, she helped to phase out two-stroke engines in the city's three-wheeled taxis by talking to drivers about their negative effects on air quality and health, rather than by attempting to pass an inevitably controversial law. When Mrs Ortega visits schools, she is greeted by students singing and dancing to jingles she helped to compose, including one expressing the vision of the city, and another that teaches the children (and their parents) to sort household waste for recycling.

As the first female mayor in a city with a traditionally macho culture, Mrs Ortega had to overcome expectations that she would bring little more than culture to the table. Some were surprised at her focus on sustainable development and her willingness to borrow money. Yet her support rose from 65% to over 90% in her second and third terms. One lesson that she learned early was the importance of participation – »A mayor should not talk about my vision, but rather our vision«.

PHOTO City of San Fernando

PHOTO City of San Fernando

San Fernando, popularly known as the 'Christmas capital of the Philippines', is centrally located in the Pampanga Province. The agricultural areas surrounding the city are significant for the production of crops such as rice and sugar.



2 DEVELOP AND REALISE A SHARED VISION

> *Look at best practices around you – there is nothing wrong with being a copycat, as long as what you copy is good and adaptable to your environment.*
>
> *Mary Jane Ortega,*
> *former Mayor of San Fernando, the Philippines*

SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT requires an overall vision as a common guiding star for decision makers, stakeholders and communities. A vision is a picture of the desired future situation, and leaders need to develop and communicate a positive and inspiring vision for their city or town.

A shared vision should motivate cooperation and guide long-term strategic planning. A vision should be far enough from the current reality for people to want to go there, yet close enough for them to believe that it is possible. A good time frame for a vision is 25 years, i.e. a generation, which reminds us that our children will inhabit this future.

Many visions remain wish lists or dreams of an ideal future. A long-term vision thus needs to inform medium-term (3 to 5 years) strategic plans with specific goals, objectives and targets.

Unplanned growth and reactive, ad hoc urban planning often exacerbate problems, e.g. widening streets to address traffic congestion, or building cheap high-rise apartment blocks. Comprehensive planning considers how people should ideally live and commute in 25 years' time, which generates creative, coherent and enduring solutions.

Ask questions about the vision

Developing a vision is one thing, making it happen is another. A key role of leaders is to be ambassadors who communicate the vision and why it is important, both internally and externally.

When political leaders are committed to the vision, officials will embrace it and act. It is also crucial to communicate the vision to external stakeholders and citizens, so that it becomes widely known and shared.

Vision questions

- What is our vision?
- Is it appropriate to the challenges we face?
- Who was involved in developing it?
- Who knows about it, who shares it and who is involved in realising it?
- How can we best communicate our vision?

A vision may not be perfect, but this is an opportunity to involve others in developing it. When leaders discuss the vision with them, other stakeholders start to share it. Participation generates shared ownership and commitment.

> *It's not only what the vision is, but what it does that matters!*

Many citizens and officials don't fully understand sustainable urban development or why it is urgently needed, so it is necessary to create awareness and promote solutions in practical ways that people understand and find attractive. This is a vital public education and communication task for leaders.

Leaders have a key role in developing, nurturing and communicating the vision. If you don't believe that it is possible, no one else will. If you don't lead the way and demonstrate commitment in your decisions and actions, the vision won't be realised.

Plan and organise

The vision must inform strategic, programme and project plans and budgets, so that sustainability becomes the coherent focus of all municipal development efforts. The vision and plans must be approved by the municipal council, which should also guide implementation. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress should be formal, systematic and ongoing.

Defining performance indicators and setting targets helps to make things happen. For example,

if a municipality decides to reduce its fossil fuel consumption by 10% per annum, staff will work together to achieve this.

Effective performance management promotes responsible and accountable administration, and ongoing learning and improvement. Every individual, team and department should have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to the vision and strategic results. The overall municipal KPIs will also be those of the council.

Politicians need to communicate municipal, programme and project KPIs and results to citizens and stakeholders, as a core aspect of transparency and accountability. Citizens elected you to act on their behalf, so you need to tell them what and how well you are doing.

SMART performance indicators

Performance indicators should be

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable (have targets)
- **A**greed
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime based

Set priorities

Developing a resilient city or town involves changing society in major ways. This can be overwhelming, so you need to focus and prioritise. Consider the essential human needs of present and future citizens as a starting point.

Involve community and stakeholder representatives in deciding priorities before departments plan programmes and projects, and involve them in planning and joint initiatives wherever possible. Discuss the criteria for setting priorities, which should be economic, environmental and social, and try to achieve synergies between these dimensions wherever possible.

> *Prioritisation facilitates the transition from wish list to short list.*
>
> *Urban Planning for City Leaders, UN-Habitat, 2012*

Setting priorities

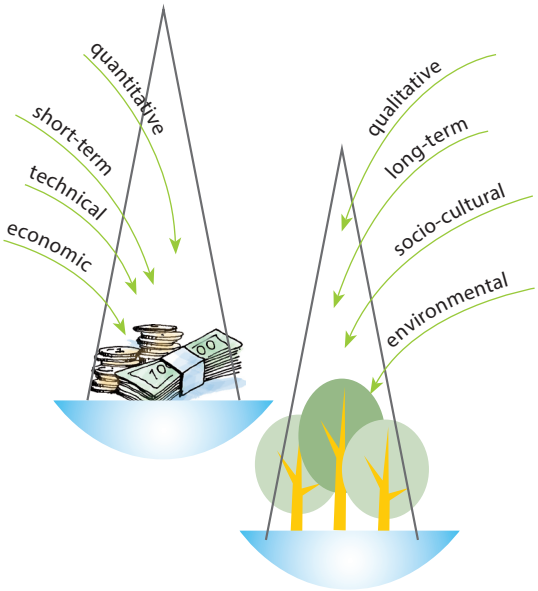
Setting priorities is an essential aspect of planning. Consult citizens and stakeholders regarding their priorities, and criteria for selecting projects, e.g. projects that

- are tangible and visible
- involve citizens and other stakeholders
- address urgent and high risk problems, e.g. lack of access to clean water and adequate sanitation
- are innovative, with potential for replication
- maximise synergies between economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Good projects meet a number of the above criteria, which are not mutually exclusive.

Sustainable development involves introducing new approaches and reducing unsustainable behaviours and activities. Target those that are most harmful and unhealthy. Not everyone will favour this, so leaders need courage to discourage what is harmful, alongside introducing alternatives.

Balancing different dimensions



Maintain a balance

Creating sustainable cities involves balanced development of environmental, social and economic dimensions. There is also a need to balance short, medium and long-term needs, and tangible projects that convince people by achieving results with less tangible socio-cultural changes. Changes in energy consumption or use of public transport are easy to measure, but it is also important to include qualitative social indicators such as inclusion, equality, well-being and human development.

Social indicators

Indicators of social well-being include

- Human rights protection
- Health and nutrition
- Access to health and other services
- Public safety/low crime rates
- Access to social benefits
- Access to education.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

In your own city or town and municipality

- What is your vision for sustainable urban development?
- How can your vision be developed or improved?
- How much support is there for the vision, from which stakeholders, and why?

A key role of leaders is to be ambassadors who communicate the vision and why it is important, internally and externally.

PHOTO Camilla Svensk

SOCIAL URBANISM AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF POLITICS IN MEDELLIN

Federico Restrepo and David Escobar, Municipality of Medellín, Colombia

PHOTO Municipality of Meddelin

Medellin is Colombia's second largest city, with more than 2.7 million inhabitants. After suffering from a long period of extreme violence and other consequences of civil war, the city has since the beginning of the 21st Century regained its dynamism through progressive development policies, improved education and investment in urban public transport systems.

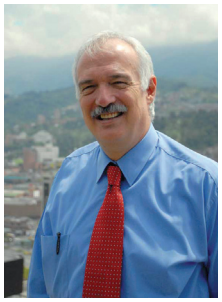
EXAMPLE

ANYONE WHO DOUBTS the potential for renewal through local politics should look at the recent history of Colombia's second city. Ravaged by drug wars and paramilitary conflict at the end of the 1980s, Medellín is now a model of community-based urban development. Federico Restrepo and David Escobar were key members of Sergio Fajardo's team. As Mayor of Medellín from 2004 to 2007, his background outside traditional politics helped the city to break with its past, and Alonso Salazar, Mayor from 2008 to 2011, continued his good work.

Education was a central element in the city vision, and learning was promoted at all levels, from pre-school to university, and in public parks and cultural centres as well as formal institutions. A policy of building high-quality schools and libraries in the poorest neighbourhoods improved opportunities for young people, diminishing the influence of criminal gangs and fostering community ownership of public spaces.

Rebuilding trust in a population resigned to corruption and patronage was the key, according to Mr Escobar. He stressed that this was a political challenge that could not be met by technical means. Mayor Fajardo built his political platform on networks of representatives from business, civil society, academia and culture. When his Citizens' Commitment Movement took power in 2004, these stakeholders were ready to assist, e.g. with educational programmes. Putting development tools in the hands of citizens, including through participatory and results-based budgeting, helped to build trust.

One of the main obstacles to success was premature expectations. During the first 12 to 18 months, as the new administration planned how and where to implement its programme, some began to lose faith. It was important to keep them on board, while adhering to the strategy of careful planning rather than improvisation. According to Mr Escobar, few would have bet a single peso on the relatively inexperienced Fajardo team in the beginning, but part of the secret was that »We just kept on going, and nobody ever talked about how difficult it was«.



David Escobar (above) and Federico Restrepo (right) both worked with Medellin Mayor Sergio Fajardo in developing the strategy to reduce violence and address the city's complex problems. This included a package of social interventions coupled with a comprehensive programme for public communication and dialogue.

Medellin's leaders focused on improving education and economic equality for the long-isolated »comunas«, to include them in a new, knowledge-driven era.

PHOTO Municipality of Meddelin

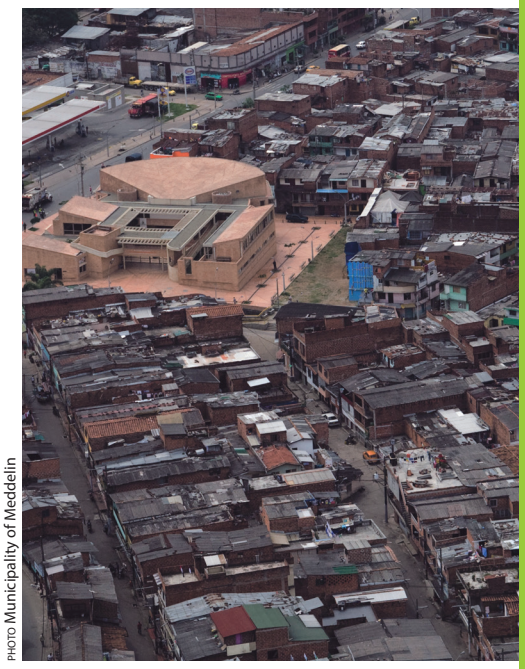


PHOTO Municipality of Meddelin

3 MOBILISE STAKE-HOLDERS TO SHARE OWNERSHIP

> *We should strive in all of our municipal work to promote a sense of citizenship – people's belief in themselves as active citizens and in what they can do. A city is not a building complex, it is a social occurrence.*
>
> *Bülent Tanık,*
> *Mayor of Çankaya Municipality,*
> *Ankara, Turkey*

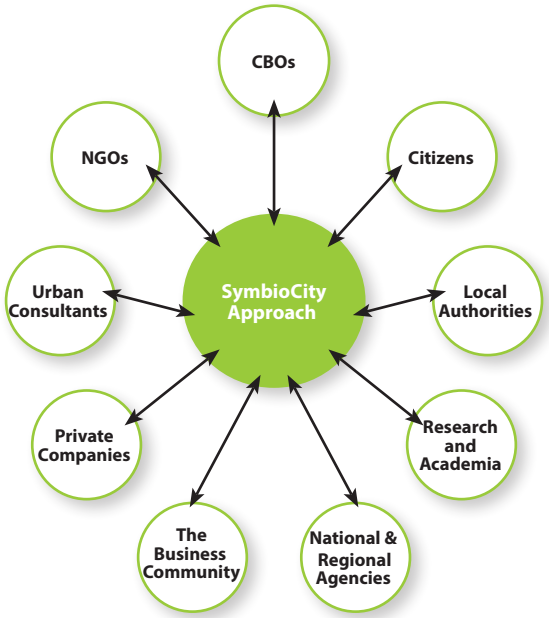
Although elected local leaders have a key role in moving cities towards greater environmental, economic and social resilience, this responsibility must be shared, as it requires the cooperation of many organisations in all sectors.

Gaining support for the vision is important during its development and implementation. A living vision is not a static endpoint, but can be updated periodically, e.g. every five years. This provides an opportunity to involve new leaders and stakeholders in the process, and gain valuable resources, including skills and expertise, technology, funding and investment, and community commitment.

Comprehensive urban development is a multi-dimensional, complex and large-scale social change process which requires inspiring leadership, good communication, and participation by those involved and affected. Citizens and other stakeholders must be part of the process from the start, and contribute to formulating a shared vision and strategic plans.

Resistance to change is a natural reaction, as change challenges people to abandon the comfort of habitual behaviour. Even when plans are discussed and agreed, resistance can still occur when it comes to implementation. This requires that leaders are open and honest, listen to concerns, explain decisions and reiterate reasons and benefits.

The key to successful development is participation. It is essential to involve citizens and relevant organisations in understanding the need to transform the city, in diagnosing the problems, in developing plans and in implementation.



The SymbioCity Approach involves the inclusion of different stakeholders acting as decision-makers, partners, participants, contributors, etc.

Identify change agents

The first step is to identify key local, regional and national stakeholders in urban development. Include local marginalised groups and ensure balanced representation. Create enthusiasm for the vision by emphasising its benefits, so that people want to get involved in realising it.

Participation questions

- Which individuals and organisations need to be involved?
- What can they contribute?
- Who should participate in implementation?
- Who represents communities and vulnerable groups?
- How can we get them on board?

Cooperation is the key

Collaboration among stakeholders is the key to successful urban development. Rate cooperation between the following stakeholders in your situation on a 1 to 5 scale (1 is very poor, 5 is excellent), and elaborate in the comments column.

STAKEHOLDERS	RATING	COMMENT
political majority and opposition		
politicians and officials		
municipal departments		
municipality and communities		
municipality and business		
municipality and academics		
municipality and civil society organisations		
municipality and the media		

Identify and involve those who can lead and inspire others, and act as change agents and facilitators. When influential leaders in the private sector and civil society drive issues together with municipal leaders, this is much more effective than just politicians talking about sustainability. Network and get to know influential people in education, business, political groups, civil society, religious organisations, the media, etc.

Be concrete

Most people won't engage with something they see as abstract like a vision or plan, unless they realise how it will affect or benefit them. Explain and illustrate the need and vision using concrete, tangible examples of local problems and solutions, e.g. a new bicycle path to decrease local air and noise pollution. Tangible improvements attract interest and involvement, while large, complex and abstract ideas tend to get stuck at the 'talking stage'.

Pilot solutions and test innovative measures to address problems. If they work, scale up or replicate; if not, discover why and develop a better solution or process. Be aware that when change threatens immediate individual or group interests, it often becomes less attractive, unless people are convinced of the need for change and committed to the long-term benefits.

Recognise, acknowledge and communicate progress towards the vision and goals. Sharing real success stories will interest and motivate people to become involved and adopt new behaviours and solutions.

Examples of local sustainability initiatives

Many citizens are already involved in local sustainability initiatives, often for their own benefit, e.g.

- supporting box schemes supplying locally grown organic vegetables
- school environment improvement projects, including food gardens and tree planting
- lift sharing to reduce costs
- household water and energy saving
- waste recycling
- buying or supplying ecological products.

Municipalities should acknowledge and support citizen's initiatives, and positive media coverage can raise awareness and inspire others to get involved.

Invite and include

Many sustainability initiatives cannot succeed unless people participate. Involve stakeholders in identifying and defining problems and needs, and in developing solutions. Even when you think you know the answers, engage people in the process rather than telling them, as no solution will work without their commitment and active participation.

Expert and authority-driven processes are often alienating and demotivating, while participation is creative and exciting. Don't prescribe, facilitate and negotiate! The key question is »How can *we* change things together?« Become skilled in building cooperation and partnerships with other stakeholders.

In public meetings, there is usually a handful of talkative people who dominate discussions, unless you create small groups where everyone can contribute, which then feed into plenum discussions. Think about *how* you involve communities and stakeholders in dialogue. What are the best means and processes for facilitating inclusive two-way communication and participation in decision making and planning?

However, it is important to clarify where and when politicians have the responsibility for decisions which citizens should not try to renegotiate (unless they are clearly bad decisions).

Inclusion must be non-discriminatory and as representative as possible. The needs, views and priorities of marginalised groups are by definition under-represented or excluded, and special efforts should be made to involve them.

PHOTO Viera Larsson

PHOTO Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, South Africa

Marginalised groups

It is usually necessary to make special efforts to include marginalised groups such as

- women
- youth
- the aged and disabled
- people living in poverty
- ethnic or religious minorities.

Youth are the long-term future stakeholders, but they need to be interested and involved now, not in 25 years time, when the vision should be well on the way to realisation!

It is necessary to include stakeholder representatives in formal consultation processes, meetings, surveys, reference groups, etc., but it is also important to interact in less informal ways that facilitate getting to know and trust one another, as a basis for cooperation. Social activities, study vis-

its, seminars, etc. are safe, neutral and interesting opportunities for meeting and learning together, and discussing difficult issues in an unthreatening environment.

Encourage community initiatives

An important aspect of social sustainability is to support and learn from local initiatives and projects in communities. This builds relations with community stakeholders and facilitates dialogue and participation in planning processes. Promoting citizen-led initiatives strengthens ownership and commitment.

Identify situations where the municipality should step back and let others take the lead. If you try to take responsibility for everything, stakeholders in other sectors will tend to be passive, or resent intrusion on 'their territory', which may generate unnecessary tensions.

Communities, the business sector and civil society often organise themselves to deal with problems, or are willing do so as partners with the municipality.

Acknowledge and support positive initiatives by other stakeholders, and work with them to learn, develop synergies and promote successful innovation. A municipality can often provide enabling policies and regulations, incentives or additional resources, and facilitate links to other stakeholders and resource providers.

Work to stimulate a civic culture of shared responsibility for urban development. Without aware and active citizens, a city can never change for the better. Facilitate a positive culture of active participation, giving and doing, as opposed to passive waiting, expecting to receive, blaming the authorities, or destructive protest.

Green business initiatives

Businesses are increasingly involved in triple bottom line approaches, often because these save costs and/or appeal to and attract customers, (which both enhance profits), e.g.

- renewable energy use and production
- waste and energy reduction in production processes
- Fair Trade and green procurement
- promoting local and ecological products
- green buildings
- green vehicles and fuel efficiency.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

In your own city or town and municipality

- How have citizens and stakeholders been mobilised to date?
- Which key stakeholders do you need to involve and how best to do this?
- What community or stakeholder sustainability initiatives can you support, and how?

ECO-CITY AUGUSTENBORG, MALMÖ

Creating a new neighbourhood together

> *We attempt to connect different issues and actors, both authorities and businesses, so that they interact and reinforce each other. Often it is easier to solve many different issues at the same time!*
>
> *Katarina Pelin, Environment Director, Malmö City*

EXAMPLE

THE CITY OF MALMÖ in southern Sweden has changed dramatically over the past decade. In the 1990s, it faced a serious crisis due to a long period of economic decline and stagnation. But ten years ago, visionary leadership and new developments enlivened the economy and turned Malmö into an international model of urban renewal and sustainability. One of many successful developments is the transformation of the Augustenborg neighbourhood.

Eco-city Augustenborg is a programme started in 1998 to make Augustenborg a more sustainable neighbourhood. Today the area is an attractive, multi-cultural neighbourhood and a shining example of ecologically and socially sensitive urban renewal.

The district was established in the 1950s and had suffered serious decline. The challenge was to get a successful change process started together with the residents to revitalise and develop the area as a sustainable neighbourhood.

A main objective of the programme is to involve residents as much as possible in the design and implementation of projects. Residents, especially youth and people working in Augustenborg, have been involved in practical surveys and research activities, in development planning and in designing the physical environment. About 400 of the 2000 residents have been actively involved in dialogue and implementation efforts.

Parks and roads have been rebuilt and yards and facades renovated after joint planning with residents. Their ideas have also designed the whole recycling system and initiated the city's first car pool, among many other things. The result is an attractive, multi-cultural neighbourhood where relocation has decreased by 50%, as have negative environmental impacts!

PHOTO Hamin Mousavi, Malmö

Malmö now has one of the youngest populations in Sweden, with 53 % of residents living as singles. Changing family life and life styles mean changing demands on housing services.

PHOTO City of Malmö

Improved greening has contributed to greater biodiversity, cooling in hot summer months, traffic noise reduction and better surface water management. 90% of storm water is collected in gutters and channelled into 6 km of ditches, canals and small ponds.

4 BRIDGE BOUNDARIES AND ENSURE CONTINUITY

> *For any city, it is important to live in harmony with surrounding areas. We have to understand that we are dependent on each other. If trees are cut down or water is overused by our neighbours, we will be affected! We need to develop more collaborative and fair ways of working.*
>
> *Zukiswa Ncitha*
> *Mayor, Buffalo City Municipality, South Africa*

The political landscape of cities changes, but time frames for urban development are longer than other planning cycles, which often follow election cycles. This requires thinking beyond short or medium-term political interests.

Political unity is very important when working for sustainable urban development. The majority and opposition need to work together. This doesn't mean agreeing on everything, but at least sharing a common vision for the future. Disagreements can block decisions and progress, so it is vital to negotiate agreements. This may involve compromises, or combining solutions proposed by different parties.

A vision or long-term plan that does not survive the next election is a waste of time and energy. Populism that appeals to short-term interests or group prejudices undermines complex, long-term visionary work. Citizens thus need to understand the larger issues, and how proposed long-term development plans also address current local problems. Citizens expect delivery, and many don't care who is in power, so long as the municipality addresses key problems effectively and delivers tangible improvements and benefits.

The relationship between politicians and officials is especially important, and a professional, non-politicised cadre of officials will ensure the continuity of programmes, despite political changes at elections. Politicisation of local officials only hinders performance and progress.

Look for common ground

For a vision to inspire broad and enduring commitment, there needs to be broad political agreement on essential elements, while the details and methods can be discussed and debated. Different and even conflicting views and interests must be recognized, and need not be polarising. If dealt with in fair, transparent and creative ways, different views can lead to more balanced and realistic solutions that are more widely supported.

It may not be possible to convince or please everyone, but it is essential to build common ground among a broad majority of key stakeholders, so that reactionaries lack the support to undermine positive developments.

One approach is to take the spirit of the city or town as a starting point, and discuss questions of identity and core values.

Questions for developing the spirit of your city

- What kind of people are we?
- What is unique about us?
- What values do we hold dear?
- What are we proud of?
- What are our ideals?
- What would we like to be recognised for?

Recognising shared human values and ideals creates common ground and a basis for social agreement and cohesion beyond differences. Tolerance of diversity should be a key shared value. Always start with the positive and what is appreciated, and focus on possibilities and opportunities rather than problems.

There is a risk of diluting the vision if everyone can include everything. Leaders thus need to facilitate consensus on a set of key outcomes, rather than compile extensive wish lists. A vision should highlight positive results and benefits, and be concise and inspiring. It is nevertheless important to invite and consider all contributions, and to welcome debate and critical feedback on initial drafts. If necessary, negotiate and use

incentives to get key stakeholders and interest groups on board.

Organise joint workshops where politicians, senior managers and other stakeholders discuss and agree on the vision and overall strategy, and their roles in developing the whole city. This will foster holistic thinking and promote collaboration among departments and with external stakeholders.

Collaborate

A vision and long-term strategy can be sustained beyond election periods when many external stakeholders are involved and committed to it. It is difficult to change a vision and strategy that business, civil society and other levels of government all support. If programmes are successful, new politicians will also be less likely to change them.

Collaboration creates positive expectations and accountability. Those who have been involved will expect politicians to honour agreements and deliver on promises. Inclusive and transparent processes should include open monitoring and evaluation, and public reporting on urban development. Transparency and participation increase people's trust in local government, and foster cooperation.

Cooperate horizontally across sectors and political boundaries, and vertically with other tiers of government. No matter the extent of decentralisation, it is necessary to involve national, regional and other government agencies in the process. This facilitates cooperation and support, and minimises interference or restrictions.

Any city or town exists in a regional economic, social and environmental context which affects it. This mutual interdependence should be recognised, and lead to proactive regional collaboration.

Acknowledge contributions

In developing sustainable cities and towns, leaders must work together and involve many stakeholders in contributing to a better future. Discuss issues and promote initiatives with others wherever possible, and share the credit for achievements with all contributors. It is strategic to give credit generously, including to those who are not fully convinced, but whose support is needed in order to achieve success.

Recognition is a great motivator, so publicly acknowledge shining examples of individuals and organisations that make significant contributions. The stories of these heroes should be shared as an inspiration to others. However, don't forget the value of good practice examples from other cities, for both inspiration and learning.

The required experience and expertise cannot be found in the municipality alone. Reliance on internal resources also increases vulnerability to staff turnover and political changes. Independent expertise is an invaluable resource, so involve universities, businesses and other organisations with relevant competencies.

You will know that you have achieved ownership beyond the political sphere when people in other sectors and communities promote the vision themselves. Identify innovative lead projects that attract attention and generate interest and debate. There may be resistance in the beginning, but successful implementation and results will convince doubters and encourage support for replication and further innovation.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

In your own city or town and municipality

- How can you ensure that long-term strategies are not disrupted by political changes?
- Are there political agreements on urban development that involve all parties? If not, how could these be achieved?
- How can you improve collaboration among stakeholders?

STRIVING FOR SOCIAL COHESION IN ANKARA

Bülent Tanık,
Mayor of Çankaya Municipality, Ankara

PHOTO Çankaya District Municipality

Çankaya is the central metropolitan district of the Turkish capital. It has a population of over 800 000, which increases to 2 million during working hours.

ÇANKAYA MUNICIPALITY is part of the Turkish capital with 4.5 million inhabitants, with its presidential palace, foreign embassies and government departments. But surprisingly, its strategy for sustainable urban development rests partly on agriculture, as the southern part of the municipality is largely rural, and includes seven villages with 2 000 or fewer inhabitants.

Stemming the flow of migration from these areas is a challenge for the city as a whole, says Mayor Tanık. Empowering the villages to continue farming is good not only for balanced development, but also for food security – a real concern when regional conflicts threaten an increase in oil prices and thus the cost of transporting food from further afield. The main victims would be the poor and unemployed in urban areas, says Mr Tanık, highlighting the social as well as economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

Çankaya has launched pilot projects to develop village farming technology and marketing of meat, milk and other organic products, with the help of agricultural and veterinary experts from local universities. The municipality facilitated investments that the villages could never have obtained alone, such as drilling for geothermal energy for use in agriculture, and potentially for domestic heating.

A city planner by trade, Mayor Tanık says he is conscious not only of buildings but also of the people inside them. Although municipalities provide services, he regards them not as enterprises, but as social organisations. He believes that the most important thing a mayor can do is to foster a sense of citizenship. Running and developing a city is hard work, and it is essential to get the people on board.

In 1934, the writer Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu described the area as »a wooden bridge, a dirt road, and when you come round the hill you see a hillside, green in gentle contours. That's Çankaya«. Today Çankaya is one of the largest central districts of Ankara with a built environment consisting of a mix of Ottoman style and modern buildings.

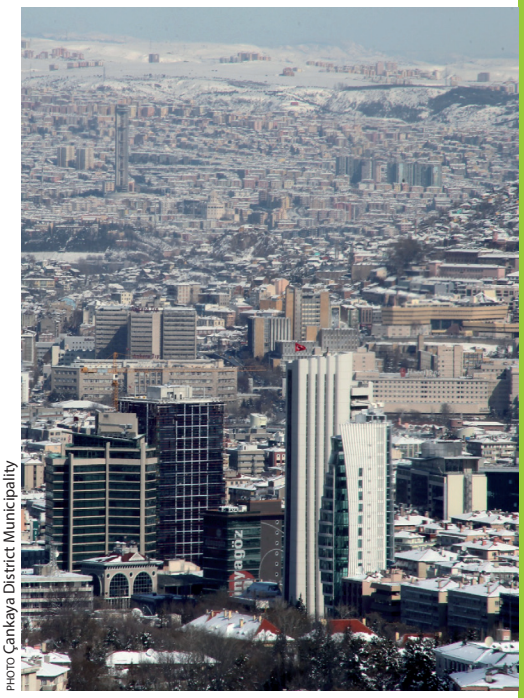


PHOTO Çankaya District Municipality

EXAMPLE

5 RAISE AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATE FOR RESULTS

> *This city is what it is because our citizens are what they are.*
>
> *Plato*

Don't assume that people understand or share the same view of sustainability. If politicians, officials, citizens and other stakeholders are to participate in sustainable urban development, they first need to be aware of why it is necessary and what it entails. Then they need to be involved in two-way communication regarding plans and actual initiatives, so they can give input and feedback, and actively participate.

The development of more sustainable lifestyles requires concerted public education and action. The overall issues are global, complex and long term, but the connections to local ways of living need to be understood. Otherwise, people may support distant ideals, but not make the real changes and investments that are required. It is thus crucial to raise awareness of global issues and local programmes and projects, and their intended benefits.

Communicate to educate and involve the public and specific stakeholders, not as a public relations exercise. This means being open about difficulties and challenges. Good two-way communication is the key to building relationships and cooperation in learning, planning and working together.

The objectives of communication may vary in specific situations, e.g. to promote awareness and understanding, gain agreement and support, or plan and organise action. Effective communication is a key responsibility of leaders. You need to communicate well in order win support, build partnerships and motivate active involvement.

Be strategic and open

Communicating about urban development, internally and externally, needs to be planned, and a communication strategy and programme should be an integral component of the overall strategy from the start. A range of media and forms of communication should be used on a regular basis to inform and involve different stakeholders.

Developing a communications strategy

- Whom do we need to communicate with and why?
- What will be the best means of communicating internally and externally?
- How can we enable two-way communication?
- What are the intended outcomes of our overall communication strategy?
- Who will be responsible for what?
- How will we monitor, evaluate and improve communication processes and outcomes?

It is important to understand the needs of different target groups in order to communicate effectively with them. Consider their prior knowledge, level of education, information needs, and whether they are sceptical and hostile or open and supportive. Transparency is a basic principle of democracy, so it is essential to be honest and open, and not provide partial information, downplay real concerns or difficulties, or raise expectations that cannot be met.

Always be open and clear about 'the rules of the game', and what stakeholders can and cannot influence. It is very demotivating to engage in a public participation process, believing that you can influence decisions and plans, only to discover that you cannot. In relationships, trust is built by being open and honest. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so, and offer to find out and get back to them.

Attract attention

Sustainable urban development needs to be communicated using practical examples that awaken understanding and engage people's feelings. It is not enough to talk about a vision and goals as abstract ideals. Share success stories, good

practices, and facts and figures in a graphic way to attract attention and real interest.

People often prefer more visual and imaginative presentations using pictures, diagrams and illustrations, which make any presentation more interesting and easier to grasp. The reading of PowerPoint presentations consisting of lists of points is boring and ineffective. Rather use slides that illustrate problems and solutions graphically, with as few key words and phrases as captions.

Use a variety of media

Using a variety of media is more effective and engaging, e.g.

- workshops and seminars
- site visits
- interactive presentations
- exhibitions and posters
- articles and advertisements
- documentary films and case studies
- websites.

An exciting way to explore alternative futures and their costs and benefits is to workshop different scenarios. Include 'no change' and 'decline' scenarios, to highlight the negative consequences of doing nothing.

Climate change targets rarely draw attention. They are simply not much fun. But symbolic events such as testing electric cars attract interest, including from the media, and provide a good platform for public education. Symbolic actions can also be used to communicate key messages, e.g. clearing snow from bicycle paths before roads sends a much clearer message than an official statement.

Schools and youth organisations can organise ecological projects, discussions, scientific experiments and artistic communication. They are *the* future stakeholders, who can also involve and influence their parents and families. In fact, doing so should be part of projects.

Be Green Umeå – helping people and businesses to a greener life

Studies have shown that most people in Europe are aware of the problem of climate change and its effect on the environment, but many are not changing their own behaviour. Umeå Municipality and other partners in the project *Green Citizens of Europe* develop solutions such as car sharing, bike renting at travel centres, and energy efficiency and waste recycling in residential areas.

The aim is to motivate citizens to adopt sustainable behaviours in local and individual actions. The *Be Green Umeå Project* uses innovative communication techniques to promote understanding and motivate citizens to participate in municipal sustainable development initiatives. They use campaigns, competitions, exhibitions and road shows to communicate and involve a broad range of urban citizens.

Their website offers a wide range of communication services and tools to citizens and businesses. In 2011, *Be Green Umeå* won the Marketer of the Year Award of the regional Market Association, for creative campaigns that effectively linked the big issues to individual behaviour change. An example was *Trash the Musical!* – used to initiate and promote new trash bins, recycling stations and ashtrays to combat littering and promote recycling. The musical was performed for three days around the city at new trash bin and recycling sites. This creative campaign drew significant positive interest and attention to the trash bins and recycling.

Talk and listen

Apart from formal communication, leaders should interact informally with citizens. No sophisticated methods or technology are needed, just go out and talk and listen to people in public places.

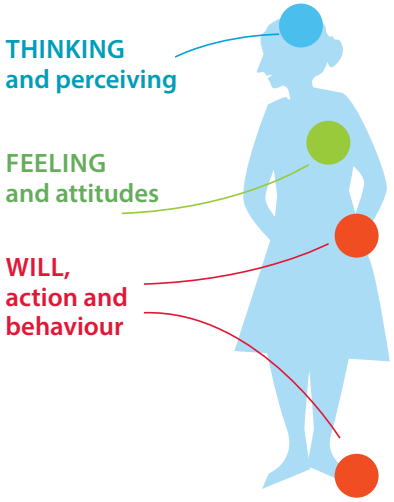
Participate in forums and discussions and make presentations on urban development issues whenever possible. The number of invitations that a leader receives to such events is a good indicator of their visibility as a champion of sustainable development.

It is of course important not only to talk, but to 'walk the talk'. For example, if you are promoting walking, cycling and public transport, but arrive at events in a large car or motorcade, you undermine your message and credibility.

Always be positive when communicating – acknowledge diverse views and accept critical feedback as an opportunity for learning and improvement. Acknowledge successes and be positive, even about challenges. Encourage citizens to believe in and be proud of their city!

Coffee and tea – a link to everyday life

When Bülent Tanık, Mayor of Çankaya Municipality in Ankara entered office he continued the practice of his predecessor by meeting citizens in his office to listen to their concerns. But after a while, he felt that he was spending too much time discussing the problems of individuals. So he decided go out and proactively meet people in the coffee houses! Nowadays, the Mayor changes his office for different coffee houses in his district twice a week. He takes key staff with him to listen and discuss how to address challenges and solve problems. They also explain what the municipality is doing. »I see it as a process of transferring our policies«, says Mayor Tanik. By listening to people on a continuous basis, common issues and social problems emerge, that can then be addressed and solved.



Listening is not only about hearing the words that are said. We can learn to listen consciously on three levels:

»Head listening« hears facts, concepts, perceptions, assumptions, arguments, ideas

»Heart listening« senses emotions, values, attitudes, mood and temperament

»Listening for the will« intuits the person's intentions, motivation and commitment (or the lack thereof).

Communication is not only about talking to impart information or a particular message, but listening in order to understand different stakeholder perspectives and needs. Citizens need to be able to give feedback and voice complaints via accessible, user-friendly feedback mechanisms, e.g. a dedicated citizens' service line, SMSs, emails, on the municipal website and in face-to-face meetings. Respond systematically to all feedback, and use it to make improvements.

The media are particularly relevant for communication and awareness raising. Invite media representatives to events and briefing, and support them in communicating with the public. Be proactive in media relations. Don't wait for them to approach you, take the initiative and invite them to events and to visit projects, so they can share key messages and successful examples with citizens. This promotes good relations with the media and creates more opportunities to tell the ongoing story of your city's development.

Use the power of art

There are numerous tools and channels for communication and awareness raising, few of them as powerful as art. Art can communicate messages and foster awareness, highlight important events that unite people, and create symbols and landmarks which become part of a city's identity. Beauty is also an important aspect of urban environments, which contributes to individual well-being and social harmony.

Art that communicates

All of the arts can be used to communicate meaningful social messages

- posters and murals
- theatre and street theatre
- sculpture and landscaping
- poetry and music
- films and documentaries
- photographic exhibitions.

Singing together is a good way to create peaceful relations between people, and music, like sport, can be instrumental in keeping children and youth 'off the streets'. Art can be used to illustrate problems and solutions in the urban environment. Exhibitions and street art often express popular dimensions and interpretations of urban development not found in official documents or discourse.

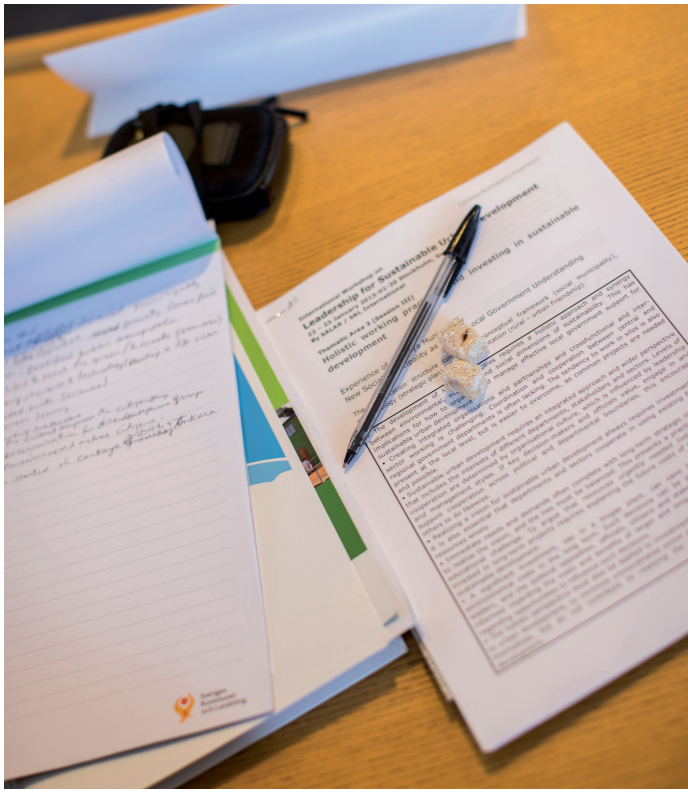


PHOTO Camilla Svensk

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

In your own city or town and municipality

- What is the level of public awareness regarding sustainable urban development?
- What are the opportunities for two-ways communication?
- What key messages need to be communicated?
- How effective is your communication strategy, and how can it be improved?

SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION FOSTERS SHARED UNDERSTANDING

EXAMPLE

> *Instead of talking about the forest or about contaminated water – we plant trees and purify water!*
>
> *Miljöverkstaden*

HELSINGBORG is a comparatively large municipality with 130 000 inhabitants on the south west coast of Sweden. About 90 000 people live in the city itself, or nearby.

In 2010, the municipal council adopted a new environment programme for 2011–2015, towards realising the Helsingborg Vision 2035. A key principle of the vision is that all municipal employees should understand and assume responsibility for the environmental impacts of their work.

The first strategic goal of the environment programme is 'The City of Helsingborg has high environmental competence.' This is realised through different measures, including obligatory training on environmental and sustainability issues for officials and politicians. About 8 000 people will be trained by 2015.

Training is provided by Miljöverkstaden (The Environment Workshop), where children of all ages learn about the environment and human impacts on it by participating in discussions, experiments and games. Now politicians and officials will have the same opportunity.

The training involves some standard presentations, but most of the time is spent on structured discussions among participants. Before leaving, everyone writes down how they can improve sustainable practices in their own workplace. These ideas are then used to develop municipal environmental programmes and indicators.

Outdoor educational activities link children's experience to important environmental issues.

PHOTO Richard Svensson, Helsingborg

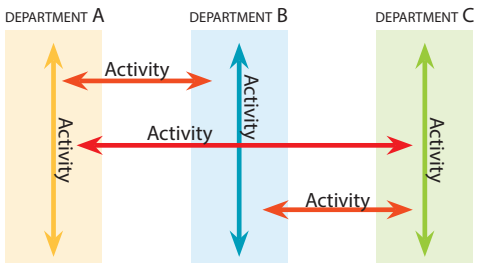
6 PROMOTE INTEGRATED WORKING

SUSTAINABLE CITIES can only be developed using a comprehensive approach that integrates resources and efforts to achieve synergies and enhanced results. Environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability must be coordinated and mutually supportive. This has significant implications for how municipalities work internally and cooperate with external stakeholders.

Creating integrated organisations and processes is not easy when people are accustomed to working in departmental 'silos'. This lack of coordination starts at national level, but cross-functional cooperation is easier at local level, where municipal departments often share the same building and have practical reasons to cooperate.

An integrated approach does not mean changing the organisational structure, but understanding the whole system as the basis for enhanced cooperation. This can be realised via partnership projects managed by joint project teams, and improved ongoing communication to facilitate cross-functional coordination and cooperation.

Successful integrated working depends on developing an open learning culture and a developmental approach to leadership and management. If leaders and senior managers work with others in a flexible and creative way, officials will learn to cooperate across departmental and organisational boundaries. Interacting and working with others towards a shared vision is exciting and challenging, and presents significant opportunities for learning and development.



An integrated approach does not mean changing the organisational structure. It can be realised via activities or projects managed by joint task teams.

Cross-functional project teams

In order to be effective, cross-functional and inter-organisational project teams teams need to

- clarify their purpose and objectives
- define roles and responsibilities
- establish meeting and working procedures
- plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on their joint project or cooperation
- learn together to improve results.

In addition, each member needs to represent their department or organisation and ensure its contribution, and report back on progress and support needed.

Start small

An effective way to promote cooperation is to initiate projects with representation from several departments, and if possible other stakeholders. Participating departments may each contribute funding, which will enhance commitment, and/or funding may be obtained from other sources. Additional funding can also be an incentive to participate.

It is important that joint projects are given high status by having prominent members, official recognition and political support. They should not be seen as a 'sideshow' or distraction outside of normal operations. Make sure that all joint initiatives are clearly linked to the overall vision, and contribute to key goals and performance indicators.

Another approach is to assign integrated responsibilities to departments, e.g. a specific target in the municipal environmental programme. This makes everyone jointly responsible for the environmental programme results, whatever their specific function.

Besides establishing cooperative working practices, it is important to continuously engage people from various departments in meetings to share and discuss plans, project implementation and results, and to learn together how to do better.

Avoid limited interests

In traditional organisations with strict boundaries between departments, staff tend to protect their own interests, budgets and status in relation to others. However, politicians and senior managers are responsible for the totality, and should work to minimise sectional interests.

Some politicians enter politics to tackle a specific issue, which is part of their personal profile. However, once elected, they need to embrace the concerns of the whole municipality. Leaders who talk in terms of *my* district, *my* sport, *my* group, *my* business sector, etc. need to transcend this and develop the holistic thinking needed for sustainable urban development.

An integrated approach can be supported by a municipal council having a budget for urban development projects which is not distributed to specific departments. Criteria could be strategic long-term investments, multi-sector cooperation, addressing several dimensions of sustainability, etc. This creates flexibility, direct council responsibility and the need to facilitate cross-functional and inter-organisational cooperation.

Ensure accountability

Accountability is essential, and requires specific people being formally responsible for joint projects and other forms of collaboration. It is important that a municipality is transparent and accountable to citizens and stakeholders, which also enables them to see where and how they can participate and contribute.

Organisation in 'silos' makes accountability easier, and there is a danger that 'if everyone is responsible for everything, no one takes responsibility for anything'. It is thus important to establish clear performance indicators and responsibility for outcomes linked to the vision and the strategic goals, and to acknowledge and reward joint working and mutual support.

In an integrated organisation, each department is still responsible and accountable for results related to its specific function, but also for cooperating with other functions to achieve these results, and shared results in joint projects.

Develop trust and competence

Collaboration requires increased trust between people, departments and organisations, which depends on professional, competent and incorruptible management, and clear working principles and values that are understood and practised by all.

Municipalities must be credible and effective in working for the common good. Officials need to see themselves as, and act as public servants. Where a culture of self-interest or indifference exists, this must be proactively transformed by inspiring leadership and tough management that ensures performance. A municipality needs a healthy and positive organisational culture in order to successfully lead and facilitate positive and innovative social development.

Developing collaborative and cross-sector working is challenging in a bureaucratic organisation, and requires developing a new consciousness, culture and competencies. However, people and organisations can change remarkably quickly when motivated by inspiring leaders, and appropriate support for learning and development.

Citizens, customers and other stakeholders will soon recognise and welcome positive changes, which should be clearly communicated. Positive feedback then motivates further organisational development and performance improvement.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

In your own city or town and municipality

- What examples are there of cooperation across departmental and organisational boundaries?
- Why were these successful or unsuccessful?
- How can you promote integrated thinking and cooperation?

MONITORING SUSTAINABILITY IN VÄSTERÅS

EXAMPLE

VÄSTERÅS, with approximately 140 000 inhabitants, is Sweden's sixth largest city, and one of the oldest. To keep track of its long-term vision when working with detailed development plans, the municipality has developed a monitoring tool called *Hållbarhets-fyran* (Sustainability Four). This tool is used to analyse detailed plans from a holistic sustainability perspective and show the extent to which a specific plan is contributing to improved social, environmental, cultural and economic sustainability.

Project groups rate their plans using a set of statements for each dimension of sustainability. The total score indicates whether the plan needs to be revised to increase it contribution to improving overall sustainability in Västerås. Scores are shown on graphs, complemented by narrative explanations.

Once a plan has been implemented, *Hållbarhetsfyran* is used again to analyse the actual outcomes.

PHOTO Clifford Shirley, Västerås

Västerås has long been a home for heavy industries in the area of electricity and power generation.

Västerås aims to become the leading cycling city in Sweden by 2014, and cycling issues are a priority in many areas of municipal work.

PHOTO Clifford Shirley, Västerås

7 ENSURE SHARED FINANCING

> *The quality of buildings such as schools and health centres is important. We provided the best, most beautiful infrastructure for the poorest people, as another way to build trust and a sense of ownership.*
>
> *Federico Restrepo, Municipality of Medellin, Colombia*

Urban development requires significant capital investments, and it is essential that these yield optimal social, environmental, economic and financial benefits. A key aspect of sustainability is optimising the use of all resources, including money, while minimising negative impacts. This requires intelligent design and the optimum performance of organisations and networks of organisations as complex and integrated systems.

However, there is a constant tendency for selfish, sectional interests and immediate needs to overshadow social, overall and long-term needs. It is thus important to find an appropriate balance between resource allocation to address both.

This is an intellectual and strategic, but also a political and social challenge. Leaders need to show why resources should be invested in efforts that will only bear results in a decade or two. This requires presenting the projected future costs of not making strategic long-term investments, and the future financial and other benefits of doing so.

It is helpful to distinguish between investments and expenditure. An investment by definition should yield significant future returns and savings, which may be financial, environmental, social and economic. Leaders need to understand and be able to argue this case in general and in specific instances, and financial managers have a key role to play in providing facts and figures that justify strategic but politically difficult decisions and investments.

It is essential to communicate effectively with all stakeholders, so that they understand the logic of investing in sustainable development programmes.

The *SymbioCity Approach* is cost-efficient

Intelligent, resource-saving design coupled with technological innovation, as promoted by the *SymbioCity Approach*, increasingly enables doing 'the right thing' in ways that are not only more cost-effective in the long run, but also cheaper in the present, e.g. decentralised renewable energy sources.

A long-term and holistic perspective must be applied to investing in sustainable development, or the full costs will continue to be externalised and shifted into the future, with potentially disastrous environmental, social, economic and financial consequences, e.g. apparently cheap fossil fuels resulting in global warming, climate disruption and extreme weather events.

Municipalities need to adopt an integrated, strategic approach to investment and expenditure, and invest in projects that contribute to sustainable urban development. There are increasingly examples of such projects that yield surprising returns and benefits fairly quickly, stimulating new investment and further positive developments. Use these, with the actual figures, to argue the case for investing in good quality urban upgrading in your municipality.

Explain the broader picture

The first step to obtaining financing is to cost and budget for planned urban development programmes and projects. Plans and projects without budgets don't get funded.

To help people understand long-term investment proposals, communicate a broad picture of city finances and how past and current urban development has been financed from public and private sources. Significant capital expenses usually require borrowing and repayment of loans over time.

PHOTO Gustaf Asplund

Public work programmes can provide employment for those unable to find jobs, improve public infrastructure and stimulate economic growth.

Many municipalities can also access grants or soft loans from higher levels of government or public finance agencies. Good investments should generate income and/or save costs over time, both of which can fund repayments and even generate profits. Show the costs of continuing unsustainable practices, which should be offset against the costs of replacing them with sustainable alternatives.

Where municipalities lack expertise in complex financial planning, external expertise is essential to help develop a comprehensive financing plan.

Make the right tough decisions

Some necessary sustainability measures may be unpopular, so political leaders need to explain why they are essential, why they make long-term sense in financial and other respects, and implement them in spite of opposition and short-term economic costs.

Politicians have to balance different interests and priorities, and sometimes make tough decisions. According to the old saying, »You can please some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time.«

Multi-dimensional thinking such as the *SymbioCity Approach* and concepts like creating a green economy involve all sustainability dimensions and create synergies between them. For example, environmental investments can stimulate the local economy and create jobs, resulting in economic and social benefits.

Cities can stimulate sustained economic growth and inclusion of poor and disadvantaged communities by promoting labour-intensive environmental and construction projects. Start with what is possible and effective in generating momentum – you will never find the funds for everything that is needed.

Make statements with money

Investments are never neutral. What you finance sends a message about what is important. Developing cycle paths rather than upgrading roads says, »We need more cycling and less driving around in cars«.

> *We want the most beautiful things for the most humble people. We do not want to invest for the rich only.*
>
> *David Escobar,*
> *Municipality of Medellín, Colombia*

Investments in infrastructure and buildings can be very symbolic and send clear messages. Putting considerable funding into public schools and parks in poor neighbourhoods shows that the municipality values quality education and recreation for all, and cares about the disadvantaged.

Strategic investments can foster social cohesion and reduce socio-economic inequality, e.g. upgrading housing, services and safety in poor communities promotes mixed areas, or building a shared cultural centre promotes integration between a poor and better off area. Such develop-

ments win popular support and encourage people to behave and interact in positive ways.

Show the price tag

People will always ask »What will it cost?«, and politicians need to have the answers. Share estimated and budgeted project costs, and have the facts and figures to argue that it is a good investment. Additional investments to increase sustainability are often more cost-efficient over time, e.g. improved thermal performance of buildings, or solar water heating to reduce energy consumption have extra initial costs, but result in considerable future savings.

Be clear about the financial viability and full costs, savings and benefits of what you are proposing.

Show externalised and future costs

Show the full costs of not investing in the right things now, and people will be more inclined to accept long-term investments in sustainable solutions. Include the externalised and delayed costs of unsustainable practices, e.g. the negative impacts of pollution on public health, buildings, cultural heritage, quality of life and tourism. The costs of car traffic and congestion include the costs of increased stress, reduced well-being and health, and a huge waste of valuable time, quite apart from the escalating costs of climate disruption due to CO2 emissions.

The benefits of sustainable investments include saving a portion of future costs that will otherwise be incurred. For example, improved conditions for cyclists and increased cycling decrease health expenditure, and road construction, vehicle insurance and road accident costs. Densification decreases the costs of travel, transport and other services, while improving social interaction, business conditions and safety and security, which all have positive economic impacts.

Clearly, such costs and benefits are not only financial but also environmental and social. In business, adopting a *Triple Bottom Line Approach* means taking responsibility for economic, social and environmental results.

Transport in particular has increasing potential for saving money as well as the environment, as fuel prices escalate, e.g. municipalities can limit and coordinate vehicle trips, invest in more fuel-efficient, less polluting vehicles, and use public transport wherever possible.

Social investment – spending now to save future costs

Social investment is a new concept and way of looking at economics, developed by economists such as Ingvar Nilsson in Sweden. Its starting point is that social exclusion and poverty have a high cost, and there is thus substantial value, both human and economic, in investing in poverty reduction.

Nilsson calculates the costs of social exclusion versus early prevention and successful rehabilitation, and shows that timely investments result in major long-term savings. Social investment is based on a long-term, integrated perspective, and interventions involve coordination between concerned parties.

From this perspective, initiatives for vulnerable children and youth should not be regarded as an expense that is charged to the operating budget, but as a social investment in human capital assets. As with a physical investment, this should be funded by the capital budget and depreciated in the operating budget. Initiatives to prevent marginalisation, rehabilitate people and improve education are all social investments that nurture and develop a community's human capital, which will add future value and save significant future costs.

> *An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.*

Share costs

An integrated approach to urban development requires an integrated approach to financing. Municipalities and the public sector usually cannot fund larger urban upgrading and development projects alone, and public-private partnerships with other stakeholders are necessary.

Identify stakeholders who will gain from sustainable developments as co-investors, including private developers, businesses, apartment owners, etc., who can finance different aspects of development in different ways. Other levels of government may provide grants, loans and subsidies, and donor agencies often provide grants to fund innovative social and environmental projects. Projects that are visionary, inspiring, environmentally sustainable and cost-efficient from a long-term perspective generally attract funding.

Common goods such as streets and services can be co-funded by developers, if this is included when assigning land and making development agreements. Municipalities can also support environmental protection and worker health and safety by promoting green procurement.

Doing the right thing and investing wisely in sustainable urban development often attracts investors, tourists and new residents, creating a 'virtuous cycle' of urban renewal, which attracts further investment and generates ongoing development. The profile of a city is an international 'brand', which is either attractive because it is associated with positive development and new opportunities, or unattractive, if associated with stagnation, decline, and social, environmental and economic problems.

All stakeholders have a vital interest in contributing to and sharing the success, rather than getting caught in the trap of failure. This is powerful message that leaders need to convey. Sustainable urban development is no longer a 'nice to have extra' – it is essential for cities and towns that wish to survive and thrive in the 21st Century.

PHOTO Johanna Enochsson, Helsingborg

It is important to adopt an integrated approach to urban financing and to help people understand the logic of investing in sustainable development programmes.

A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

In your own city or town and municipality

- What examples of cost sharing and co-financing exist?
- To what extent is an integrated, strategic and multi-sector approach applied to urban investment?
- To what extent are concepts such as a green economy, green jobs, green procurement and the triple bottom line gaining ground, and how can they be promoted?

INNOVATIVE BUDGETING IN VÄXJÖ MUNICIPALITY

EXAMPLE

IN VÄXJÖ Municipality in southern Sweden, decision makers concluded that how they budget is crucial for sustainable urban development. Mayor Bo Frank says, »Discussions always end up with the question of money.«

The council adopted a way of budgeting that helps people not to get stuck in silos or vertical thinking, but to cooperate, which is essential for developing a more sustainable municipality.

Växjö develops an eco-budget as part of its annual budget, based on targets for the ten indicators of their environmental programme. The eco-budget is allocated to various departments and municipal-owned companies, each with its own action plans.

The indicators are

1. Proportion of procured food items that are ecological and/or locally produced
2. Proportion of individual sewers with adequate purification capacity
3. Reduction of electricity use per inhabitant
4. Reduction of use of electricity per inhabitant
5. Increase in number of bicycle paths per measuring point
6. Increase in number of trips on city buses per city inhabitant
7. Increase in number of trips on county buses per county inhabitant
8. Decrease in amount of energy provided per inhabitant
9. Decrease in fossil fuel emissions from municipal transport and services
10. Decrease in amount of energy used per m² on properties owned by the municipality and its companies.

The above indicators are all expressed as percentages, which enables setting of specific objectives and easy tracking of improvements.

VÄXJÖ
The Greenest City in Europe

In 2007, a BBC report identified Växjö as the Greenest City in Europe.

PHOTO Mats Samuelsson, Växjö

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR INSPIRATION AND LEARNING

A Convenient Truth: Urban Solutions from Curitiba, Brazil
Documentary film directed by Giovanni Vaz Del Bello, 2006

The SymbioCity Approach: A Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Urban Development
SALAR International, 2012

The SymbioCity Website
www.symbiocity.org

Medellín: Front Line of Colombia's Challenges
Article in Americas Quarterly by Abraham F. Lowenthal and Pablo Rojas Mejía
www.americasquarterly.org/node/1310

The Shareable Future of Cities
Alex Steffen, talk at TED conference 2011
www.ted.com

Tools for Integrated Sustainability Management in Cities and Towns
Uppsala Center for Sustainable Development, 2008

Urban Leadership for the 21st Century: Scaling Up and Reaching Out from the Neighbourhood Level
Janice E. Perlman and Elwood M. Hopkins, 1998

Urban Planning for City Leaders
UN-Habitat, 2012

Urbanized
Documentary film directed by Gary Hustwit, 2011

Websites of example cities

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www.helsingborg.se
www.malmo.se
www.medellin.gov.co/irj/portal/medelliningles
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