



# City of Gothenburg

## Citizen Participation in Urban planning

In Gothenburg, all city planning is expected to take into account the social perspective and in particular effects that planning might have on children. Much of this work is inspired and co-ordinated by the city's unit for social sustainability, S2020. This focus has given rise to a number of physical and digital forums and tools. There has also been a concerted effort to strengthen citizen participation in a number of urban development projects in the city.

### *S2020 - support for socially sustainable development*

S2020 is a unit within the city's Administration for the Allocation of Social Welfare with the mission of promoting the social dimension in urban planning and in so doing supporting social sustainability. This unit has an important strategic and lobbying function but simultaneously offers hands-on support in existing development projects. Supporting the broad aim of addressing social inequality, it seeks to ensure that social issues are systematically considered in all planning within the municipality. Here are some examples of S2020's activity:

#### **Social Impact Analysis**

In order to promote the integration of socially marginalised groups, the City of Gothenburg has developed two impact analysis tools that can be used in planning processes. The one focuses on social impact the impact a development can have on children. The tools are based on a matrix developed by S2020 in which various social dimensions are considered from the perspective of levels of scale. For example, the impact of a development on cohesion (a social dimension) is considered on a local, neighbourhood, city and regional levels. It is expected that this analysis will accompany all planning processes in the same way that an environmental impact analysis is obligatory. The Road Transport Authority, a national body, has now started a project to integrate such analysis in their planning processes.

#### **The web site: [socialhallbarhet.se](http://socialhallbarhet.se)**

S2020 has created a web based interactive platform for social issues. The web site – [socialhallbarhet.se](http://socialhallbarhet.se) – offers a forum where groups can be formed to discuss issues and where networking is made possible. It is also a forum where advice can be sought and activities can be suggested. In addition to this forum the site contains tools that could be useful in working with the social aspects of urban development. This web-based platform is available for officials, professional planners, students, researchers, civil society and business – in short, anyone interested in working with social sustainability.

### *Dialog far beyond legal requirements*

In Sweden, citizens have the legal right to express their opinions at certain stages of the planning process. Experience shows that only a small percentage of citizens use formal, traditional consultation forms to influence planning decisions. To enhance citizens' possibility to exert influence,

the City of Gothenburg has embarked on a process of building capacity for and systematically using citizen dialogue. A number of major development projects have used citizen participation processes in recent years:

During 2011-2012 an extensive public dialogue was used in planning the development and expansion of Central Gothenburg - the River City project. The dialogue was a consultative process in which about 2800 people actively contributed with their views and ideas about life in the future city centre. It was conducted in all the city districts and sought to include a wide variety of groups. Various forms of public dialogue were tested in workshops, public meetings, walks, exhibitions, interviews and digital forums. The results of this public dialogue not only formed the basis for the vision and strategy for the planning of the new city centre, but resulted in officials, politicians and other actors learning about public participation in practice.

The first step in realizing the River City vision has commenced in the Free Port area and certain aspects of this project will be completed in time for Gothenburg's 400th anniversary, for example the Jubilee Park. In the future the Free Port area will comprise 15 000 new dwellings and provide office space for 15 000. A large part of the public dialogue in the Free Port area was conducted through participative activities. In this way citizens were able to discover the potential of the area and simultaneously be involved in a co-creative dialogue process.

Examples of these activities are: A roller derby outdoor track, a public "beach" area and floating pool, a collective sauna building project, monumental paintings made by 40 young, unemployed citizens and a sailing event for children. Open house events in different parts of the area have attracted several hundred people to give their views on the future of the Free Port.

### *Älvrummet*

Älvrummet is a building for information and debate on urban development. In Älvrummet there are exhibitions showing ongoing projects on urban and transport planning, and the room is dominated by a large 3D model of central Gothenburg showing existing and planned construction. The building has become a popular place for dialogue with citizens, including free lunch-time seminars. In 2014 there were over 95,500 visitors and 545 booked groups who visited Älvrummet.

### *Public dialogue on congestion tax*

This public dialogue process was part of an enquiry preceding a decision regarding controversial aspects of a newly introduced road tax system. A new iterative dialogue tool was used in this public consultation process where which 40 000 households were invited to contribute.

### *Tools for dialogues and analyses – "Min Stad" and Urbania*

"Min Stad" (My City) is a 3D map which gives you the chance to see Gothenburg from a realistic perspective. You choose from different categories and create proposals on how you would like to experience culture, sport, cycling, for example. Our goal with Min Stad is to inspire exchange of views and creativity with focus on the city's opportunities. Min Stad is a tool developed by the City Planning Authority to encourage a lively and open debate and to create a growing public meeting place.

The web-based and interactive social media dialogue tool "Urbania" is based on Google maps and users can leave their comments and pictures connected to different sites in the city. The tool will be used to facilitate surveying opinions and perceptions about perceived density and the heterogeneity

of urban functions in relation to the typology of built environment at the location directly on the maps in real-time.

### *Urban Development in the Northeast*

Utveckling Nordost AB is a municipal company for sustainable development in Angered and Eastern Gothenburg. The two districts have 90 000 inhabitants originating from more than a hundred different countries. Compared to Gothenburg as a whole the inhabitants are younger and income and education levels are lower. During 2011-2013 the company ran the largest urban development project in Sweden; Urban Development in the Northeast. The goal was to develop entrepreneurship, culture, urban environment and attractiveness in the northeast. More specifically, the goals were to create 220 new jobs, 16 new businesses and 5 investments. Examples of projects include the opening of Angered Park and focus on local production of food.

### *More information*

S2020 (automatic translation possible):

<http://goteborg.se/wps/portal/enheter/ovrigaenheter/s2020>

Social Impact Analysis (automatic translation possible):

<http://goteborg.se/wps/portal/invanare/bygga-o-bo/kommunens-planarbete/verktyg-for-stadsplanering-2/social-planering/barnkonsekvensanalys>

socialhallbarhet.se (in Swedish):

<http://www.socialhallbarhet.se/>

RiverCity (automatic translation):

<http://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&tl=en&sl=sv&u=http%3A//www.centralaalvstaden.nu/>  
<http://translate.google.com/translate?sl=auto&tl=en&u=http://alvstaden.goteborg.se/>

Free Port and Älvrummet (in Swedish):

<http://www.alvstranden.com/den-nya-staden3/omraden/frihamnen/frihamnen/>  
<http://www.alvstranden.com/alvrummet/>

Dialogue on congestion tax (automatic translation possible):

<http://trangselskattibacka.se/>

“Min Stad”

<http://minstad.goteborg.se/minstad/index.do?lang=en>

Urbania:

<http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/test-web-based-dialogue-tool>

Urban Development in the Northeast (automatic translation possible):

<http://www.utvecklingnordost.se/>