# Architecture and Politics

## An architectural policy for Sweden, 2010–2015

Sveriges Arkitekter
Swedish Association
of Architects

# Architecture and Politics

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# Preface

**LET'S FACE IT,** architecture and politics belong together. Politics has the task of developing and improving the society we live in. Architecture makes important contribution towards that kind of social construction. And so a policy is needed for architecture, an architectural policy. Through its publication *Architecture and Politics*, the Swedish Association of Architects plots the bearings for such a policy. An architectural policy starts with a vision but is to no less a degree a tool for continous development. With this publication we seek to open a dialogue on how we in Sweden can develop the vision of a sustainable society with high quality of life. We hope too that this publication will help to define the steps along the way.

Sweden has had an action programme for architecture, form and design since 1998, when the Riksdag (Sweden's parliament) adopted the programme *Framtidsformer* ("*Designs on the Future*"). *Architecture and Politics* is both an elaboration and a concretisation of the national programme Designs on the Future. We want to show how we can – and should – plan, build, construct, furnish and procure in order to create a society and a physical environment affording the prerequisites of good living conditions. We make concrete solutions and show, by examples of quality-driven projects and processes, how the objectives can be achieved.

The programme *Designs on the Future* starts with the universal entitlement to a good environment. This individual right, or the civic perspective, is an obvious point of departure for architectural policy, but not the only one. Present and future challenges to planning and construction emanate essentially from the demand for sustainable development. Architectural policy, accordingly, must also be based on a sustainability perspective. Architecture creates value and generates growth, and so the value and growth perspective must also be taken into account when laying the foundations of tomorrow's architectural policy. The national aims of architectural policy need, in the light of this trio of perspectives, to be widely formulated and placed in a coherent context of social and urban policy.

The building of society is a long-term undertaking, and the results of what we do today will remain evident far into the future. During the next five years the Swedish Association of Architects proposes carrying out an annual review of architectural policy, showing, by means of best practice and examples, how our society's development can be successively moved forward.

We would like to see in this publication a source of inspiration and a basis of discussion for everyone tasked and concerned with the building of society in Sweden. Meaning you, who can politically define the agenda for the future and define policy frames. Meaning you, that plan, invest in and initiate projects, who develop and manage and who plan and build or construct. And, needless to say, we are also addressing you, John or Jane Citizen. You are the one who can insist on planning, construction and civil engineering being undertaken with the best quality of life in view.

*Architecture and Politics* covers a wide span of policy fields, as is only natural, given that architecture in the broad sense includes all buildings, interiors, structures, public spaces and landscapes which man has created. Architecture is about commodity, firmness and delight, but also about holistic perspectives and contexts. And, let it be said once again, about politics.

The Swedish Association of Architects, October 2009

Laila Strunke
President, architect SAR/MSA

Staffan Carenholm
Managing Director

# Quality of life and sustainable development

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**ARCHITECTURE IS ALL** around us, as regards both practical functions and experiences. A good physical environment cannot of itself make us happy. But one thing is certain: architecture and urban planning affect us and our efforts to achieve a good life and dignified existence.

Architecture is both concrete and visionary. It performs a task and looks ahead but is also something from which we can decipher our common history. It is people, not architecture, who create life, but architecture is capable of underpinning our aspirations and activities.

Our lives, aspirations and dreams hinge on the surroundings in which we act. High architectural quality helps to create good preconditions for our everyday living. Architecture is a vital civic interest. The whole of our physical surroundings – homes, schools, workplaces, buildings for nursing and care, buildings for culture, buildings for sport and recreation, cities, communities, streetscapes, parks, landscapes and all infrastructure for travel and transport – are in one way or another planned and designed. Architecture proceeds from small to large. Architecture provides daily experiences and at the same time creates enduring values. Architecture affects us all. There is no escaping architecture.

The nature of the environment in which we live and act impacts on our wellbeing. If we take pains with quality, adopt a long-term approach and work reflectively and carefully when creating our physical surroundings, we can help to improve the quality of life both for the individual and for citizens generally. If we plan and design well and if we use architecture as a tool for enhancing the quality of life, values will be created for the individual and society. We all want our surroundings to be permeated by high quality. We want a functional environment that is well designed, comfortable and sustainable. Architecture is a tool and a means to this end. Architecture is a key to quality of life.

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More and more environmental aspects and climate challenges are determining the preconditions for the planning and design of our physical environment. We all know that the consumption of finite resources cannot continue as it has been going on hitherto. This affects living patterns, the way we travel, modes of transport, the way we build and the way in which we consume energy. Building of society in future will proceed along better lines and with the need for sustainability as its starting point. By sustainability we mean a political focus and a choice of direction based on a vision of how we are to go about creating a sustainable society. Economic, social and environmental sustainability is bound up with questions concerning the way in which we plan our cities and communities and how we shape the daily environment in which we live. Sustainable development and architecture are closely interconnected.

*”Clearly sustainability and architecture are one. Good architecture is as rarely found without a sustainable perpective, as sustainability without stature”*

WALTER UNTERRAINER

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Architecture also creates new values and adds values to pre-existing ones. Cogent planning and quality-minded architecture create attractiveness, promote growth and enhance the value of buildings and structures. Well-designed environments in our cities and communities attract new residents. Cogently planned housing environments and efficient communication solutions make the city or community more attractive. A rich and varied range of services and cultural activities is what people wish for. In short, well-designed environments attract both people and enterprise. Buildings offering a good working environment, designed to accommodate changing needs and provided with energy-smart solutions make for sound property economics and guarantee value appreciation. Architecture generates value and lays the foundations of growth.

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# Value and growth

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**ARCHITECTURE IMPINGES ON** cultural and social values. But architecture is also concerned with purely factual economic values. It is when environmental engineering spearhead competence meets innovative architectural thinking in a fruitful partnership, when creative design comes together with innovative technical thinking, that future values are created. This applies at all levels from urban development in general, to the development of new products and materials.

The architect's contribution often lays the value-related foundation stone of a project by seeing the possibilities, finding the right location, achieving the smart solutions, creating the most attractive environment and finding optimal resource solutions. In this way, by several stages, new business opportunities are created for the project's owners and initiators and the future appreciation of the project's values is improved.

Opportunities for generating long-term appreciation are greatest during the idea and project development phase. Simplifying matters somewhat, cost apportionment in a construction or civil engineering project can be said to break down into 1 euro for programme development, 10 euro for planning, 100 euro for construction and 1,000 euro for management. From this we conclude that thinking projects through properly at an early stage is virtually free of charge, while failure to make the right deliberations at an early stage is expensive in the extreme. One euro extra spent on reflection and planning can yield a hundredfold payback later on. Thus the success or failure of a project may hinge entirely on the architect's analysis of its possibilities and his or her choice of solution.

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Clients and developers, therefore, have much to gain from using architects as strategic partners. Greater involvement and early collaboration can develop commercial possibilities for all concerned, enabling them to develop the full potential of a project, whether it be construction of something new or re-use of something already existing. Early stages of a construction or civil engineering project are concerned with managing complicated investment decisions. Competence and sharp analytical tools are needed, but above all, reflection is vital when the result can still be influenced at a negligible cost.

Insightful property owners adopt an architectural view and ascribe crucial importance to architectural design in connection with the development and valuation of their property stock. Permanently retained architectural advisers or an architectural advisory committee can help to further reinforce the work of creating attractive, value-generating environments.

Commercial properties and structures which are flexible and offer attractive workplaces appreciate steadily in value. Property owners with long-term, stable tenant relations incur less overheads than those with high tenancy turnover. Architecture makes a difference to real estate financial calculations.

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*“Each new situation requires a new architecture”*

JEAN NOUVEL

# Initiatives and responsibilities

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**AS CITIZENS WE** all want to have the joy of well-designed urban environments, streetscapes and parks. We want to be met by welcoming public buildings and we want to be able to move about in cogently designed outdoor environments.

We build our society layer upon layer, constantly developing and upgrading what has already been built and established there, in a process in which we repair mistakes made earlier, and adding new environments in the light of our knowledge concerning the future and our determination to offer people better environments than those we succeeded in creating yesterday.

Responsibility for the design of our common physical environment is shared between many agents. Politics, the market, architects and planners – all have their tasks and responsibilities for creating the common environments we are to live in, both today and tomorrow. Politics has an overarching, long-term responsibility for the physical framework of society developing in a responsible manner and in harmony with the demand for sustainable development. It is ultimately politics that defines the preconditions for society's long-term physical shaping. At the same time, urban development is a ceaseless balancing act between the needs and demands of property owners and investors, and society's demands for coherent and sustainable urban development. In order to achieve solutions with a holistic perspective and of long-term quality, an effective dialogue is needed between politics and the market concerning the encounter between the small context and the large one, and the way more short-term considerations interact with more long-term ones.

Architects and planners, with their professional knowledge and their competence, have a duty to help to strike these balances so as to achieve the best outcomes. Architects have to solve present-day problems and tasks while at the same time being able to see into the future. Good, carefully created environments are the outcome of a constructive interplay between committed politicians, knowledgeable clients and competent architects and planners. The starting point consists of mutual respect for each other's roles, responsibilities and knowledge. Public clients have a special responsibility. When the public sector plans, builds and constructs, it impacts heavily on us and makes an important difference to us. Investments in infrastructure and public buildings and works leave an imprint on their surroundings and, properly planned and designed, can enhance those surroundings. When the public sector leads the way with its quality stipulations, private players will follow its example. The actions of the public sector impact on the whole of society.

*"Architecture is politics"*

MITCHELL KAPOR

15.

The Riksdag has laid down that the State is to set an example through its way of building and procuring architecture. National building, civil engineering and property management authorities must be qualitative pioneers. The programme Designs on the Future calls on local authorities to set an example regarding quality aspects of planning, construction and procurement. The municipalities are encouraged to draw up local policies on architecture.

Regulatory instruments and processes for Swedish urban development need to be reviewed and developed. At present the law entitles people to build as they please, provided the result is not inferior to the statutory requirements. This is an insufficient level of aspiration. Instead, we have to ask ourselves whether what we are constructing is good enough in relation to stated objectives regarding sustainability and a good built environment.

National stipulations and codes, not least in the environmental sector, are based on ageneral, national perspective. At the same time, urban development today emanates from local conditions and is an expression of local political intent. Co-ordination is needed in order for local and national perspectives to converge. Present-day laws and statutory instruments, originating from different political sectors, are sometimes contradictory and not always amenable to co-ordination into a workable whole. Urban development is in great need of consistent, co-ordinated codes and rules. The sustainability objectives presuppose interactive strategies and processes transcending regulatory and departmental boundaries. The whole must always be allowed to take precedence over partial objectives. A paradigm shift is needed.

Mistakes in the shaping of our physical environment are not easily repaired. Less successful achievements are living proof of short-termism or of insufficient regard for quality and the environment. Care, reflection and a holistic perspective are needed to prevent things from moving too fast, to prevent economic short-termism or to prevent projects from materialising with no consideration for the context and the surrounding environment.

*"All fine architectural values are human values, else not valuable"*

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

16.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Look on architectural policy and sustainable development as transboundary issues and co-ordinate the resources and the responsibility which are divided between several ministries. Create a coherent platform for the accumulation of experience and knowledge, information and counselling.

**II.** Develop legislation on planning and construction in such a way that urban development can be based more on a holistic view. Give focal objectives priority over limited, detailed environmental targets. Make clearer stipulations concerning interaction between different sectoral interests.

**III.** Commission construction, civil engineering and property management authorities such as the Swedish Rail Administration, the Swedish Fortifications Agency, the Civil Aviation Administration, the National Heritage Board, the National Property Board and the Swedish Road Administration to devise quality programmes for architecture and design. Monitor and evaluate the work of these national authorities.

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**IV.** Interpret and present the national objectives for architecture in the form of guidance also for the benefit of other national authorities, companies and State-funded operations.

**VI.** Set up a national website for information, knowledge dissemination and inspiration concerning sustainable urban development and quality of architecture and design.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to local politicians in municipalities and on county councils

**I.** Devise local programmes and long-term strategies for sustainable development and architecture.

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# *The Arch*
# Jonas Bohlin

*My attention is caught by an orange-pink fluorescent domed tent in the distance. It is 5 o'clock on the morning of 10th August 2009.*

*The sunlight caresses the eastern slopes of the mountains. Glaciers, stone and snow mingle with rushing and gloriously thundering falls and rivers. The vegetation is like a palette of green, blue, yellow and red, black and white in every conceivable mixture, scattered and concentrated.*

*Thick clouds and translucent ones hover round mountain ridges and down in the valleys. Formations of air which my imagination seeks to interpret. The herd of reindeer, migrating, browsing, all in the same direction.*

*The Temple, the Castle and the Pyramid are the names of the three nearest mountains. They are named after architectural archetypes. The Temple, the Castle and the Pyramid in Nature's apparel. A balance of mass and air, light and shade, motion and stillness. A balance of sound and silence, inside and outside, fantasy and reality in an eternal landscape.*

*At the centre of my presence the orange-pink tent refulgently signals its existence, its function, its worth. The dome of the outside meets the arch of the inside.*

*Architecture as a membrane between landscape and mankind, as a membrane between heat and cold, as a membrane between the dark and the light, as a membrane between matter and soul.*

*Architecture as a mathematical structure between the exact and eternal.*

*The attics of the Castle, the mass of the Pyramid and the light of the Temple. Whoever is at home senses the landscape, the interior and the exterior as three dimensions of one and the same space.*

*The transitory, such as the orange-pink fluorescent domed tent, myself and this moment, meets the eternal.*

Jonas Bohlin, architect SIR/MSA, Jonas Bohlin Arkitektkontor AB
Former professor in Interior Architecture at Konstfack

# Near us

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**WE MEET IT** daily. Every minute, at all the stages of our lives, it is all around us. The built and constructed immediate environment, architecture on the small scale, is one of our most immediate conditions for living. People's activities and enterprises are a basic prerequisite of society. Everything we do, think and experience springs from needs, expectations and dreams. The success with which we provide for our needs, fulfil our expectations and realise our dreams hinges on spatial conditions. We shape architecture but are in turn also shaped by it.

All of us are affected by the immediate environment in our daily existence, and this makes architecture a question of influence and democracy, but also of power. Its characteristics and details help to satisfy practical needs and they also create experiences which communicate values and valuations. These are complex conditions in which a host of factors have to combine in satisfying our varying needs. This is true not least regarding the interior environments of our communities: schools, nursing facilities, libraries, municipal offices, buildings for the arts, railway stations, sports centres.

Consciously, competently and carefully fashioned, the common immediate environment is a support and a powerful contribution to our aggregate perceived quality of life. The immediate built environment becomes either an obstacle to us or a support, depending on how we shape it.

Many everyday examples can be quoted from public interior environments. Schools are vital, sensitive everyday environments in which young people lay the foundations of their own, but also our common, future. When classrooms, school libraries, corridors and gymnasiums are planned and shaped in keeping with the school's educational focus, this augments the prospects of the teachers achieving predefined objectives. When the playground, social area, study unit and pupil toilets are planned with knowledge and insight concerning the children's needs, the prerequisites are put in place for the pupils' health and study motivation. A school dining hall can be a place pupils shun because of the excessive noise level, but it can also be a place they home in on for a good chat over their meal.

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A carefully planned school environment gives the pupils a positive image of public space and shows the importance of having access to places where we can meet regardless of background. A valuable school environment shows the children that they themselves are worth something, that they matter, and that they have a responsibility towards the world around them.

Hospitals and other buildings for care and nursing are public environments for very intimate, private processes. In nursing facilities people are vulnerable and in need of support. A hospital can be a place where we feel safe and respected, but it could also be a place where we feel lost and not welcome. Layouts, flows, lighting, text-borne information and movable furnishings can be designed to enable patients and visitors to get their bearings both on the premises and in the caring process. Through careful, painstaking development, a more efficient work environment can be achieved for the staff and public care made more accessible. In this way the caring situation becomes more efficient, more humane, more available, redolent of superior quality of life and more flexible. The environment also plays a part in healing and recovery.

Present-day workplaces are related to a diversity of needs and expectations. They are meeting points for people with various backgrounds and experiences. An office is a place for working efficiently but can also be a cause of ill-health. A work environment which is planned and adapted to suit the needs of the individual provides work motivation, raises the quality of work and reinforces general satisfaction. To the employer it is crucially important for the workplace to be adapted to the organisation, its working methods and the identity of is operation. A workplace which is supportive and reaffirming, both practically and experientially, contributes towards economic growth, mental and physical health, happiness and sustainability.

Achievement of the goals we have defined for society hinges directly on our surrounding ourselves with carefully and perceptively designed immediate environments. There is no opting out of the impact on our lives of our immediate surroundings. Investments in the immediate environment pay dividends on all levels of social life.

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*"We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us"*

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Commission building, civil engineering and property management authorities to draw up clear plans of action, descriptions of needs and impact analyses for their interior environments and in general to set a good example when creating such environments.

**II.** Concentrate responsibility for the dissemination of knowledge and initiative, and conduct research into different aspects of interior immediate environments.

**III.** Train more interior architects and invest in research into interior architecture.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to local politicians in municipalities and on county councils

**I.** Devise clear action plans, descriptions of needs and impact analyses for municipal/county council interior environments.

**II.** Ensure that the municipality /county council makes use of interior architectural competence, not least so as to be able to commission and procure interior environments of high quality.

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# The city

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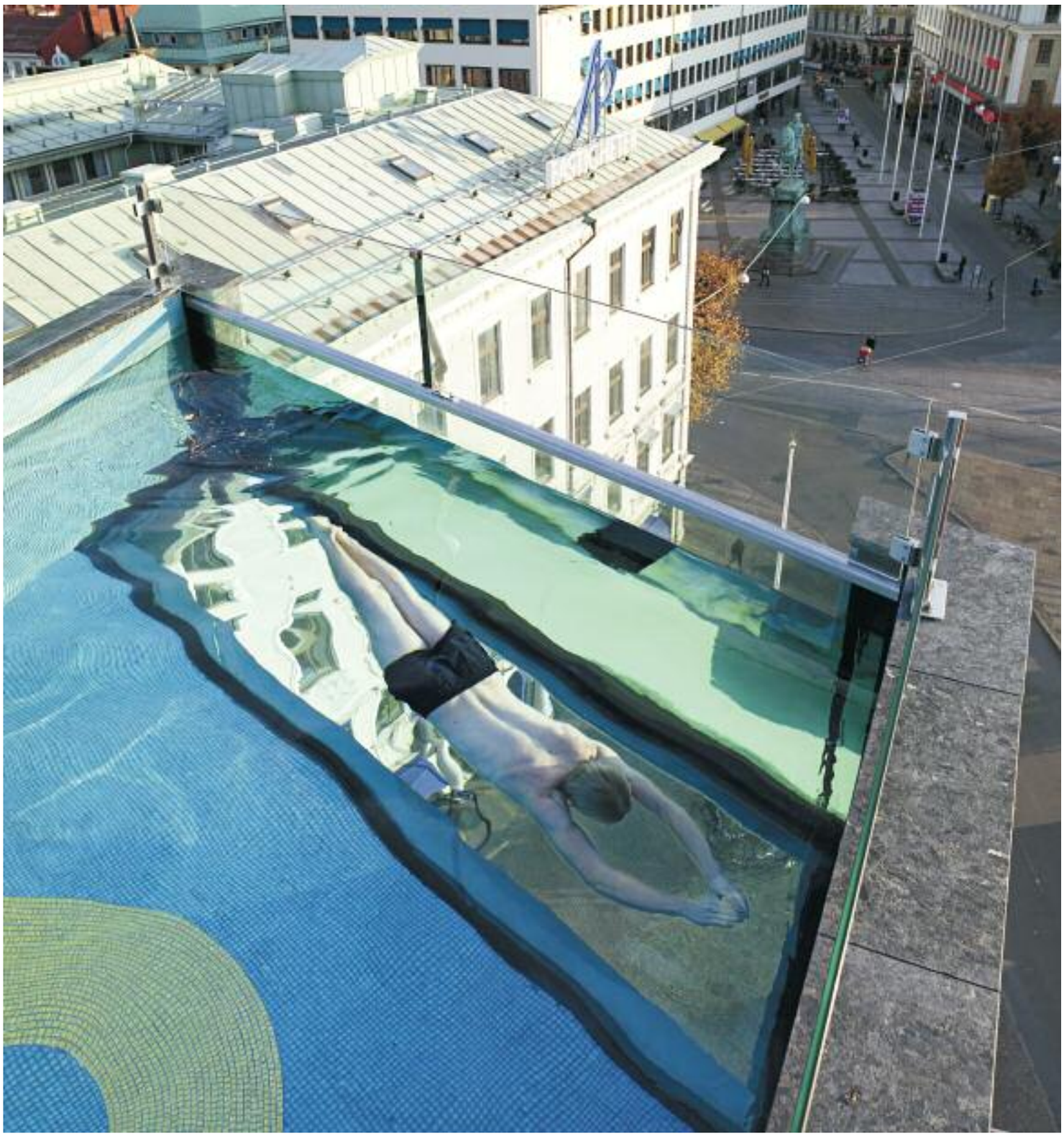

**THE FUTURE DEMANDS** a change in our way of life and our urban development in order to create a sustainable society. We realise that carbon dioxide emissions will have to be radically reduced. How the city is designed has an important bearing on our achieving the aim of sustainable urban development. The city is the key to sustainability.

More and more people are moving into urban communities. The cities offer services, job opportunities and the community of other people. Functional cities are not only a precondition of peoples' livelihoods; everyday living must also be viable and make possible the freedom of choice we aim for. The city needs to be planned and developed in such a way that people can live close together in contexts affording a high quality of life.

Since 2008, more than half the world's inhabitants are city-dwellers. In Europe it is estimated that over 80 per cent of the population are living in cities. In Sweden too, people are rapidly relocating to cities and growth regions. By 2030 the population of the Stockholm region is expected to have grown by half a million, which means that room will have to be found in the Greater Stockholm region for a city the size of Gothenburg. The City of Stockholm alone is expected to grow by 150,000 residents between now and 2030.

These are all forecasts, but the fact remains that a rapid redistribution of population is in progress, posing new and major challenges to the planning of cities and regions. How are we to achieve sustainable urban development against this kind of background?

Our cities have been built over a long period of time and informed by a variety of ideals. The urban development of the future will build on the settlement already existing. Given the present rate of investment in building and infrastructure (roughly 25 billion euro annually), adapting settlement and transport to future requirements will take at least 50 years. In our planning today we must take into account the fact that in 50 years' time we will have a different technology and new ways of life.

The sustainable city will be more densely built up than at present. By consolidating its functions the city can make a wide range of amenities available to all. But our modern cities are not dense. They have quadrupled their per capita land use since the 1950s. Sustainable urban

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development is based on interaction between enterprise, the various municipal authorities, other municipalities in the region and the various national government agencies. The city develops sustainably when the municipality formulates clear rules for players in the market and defines the long-term focus of quality and sustainability.

Formulating strategies to underpin partnership and coordination is a task for the municipality. Given open, democratic processes, the focus of policy will be accepted and understood by those affected and on a basis of partnership with enterprise, thereby empowering and broadening development. The municipality has the important task of co-ordinating the city's resource utilisation in the best interests of the community. Air, light, greenery and silence are also important resources for urban sustainability and, moreover, fundamental to the success of infill development. Through viable coordination of urban development we can guide resource utilisation in the direction of greater efficiency from an ecological, social and economic viewpoint.

Our municipalities need to develop their architectural policies – not as freestanding, independent documents but as something worked out in concert with municipal planning on all levels. An architectural policy can highlight great visions in the municipality's strategic planning work at both general and detailed levels.

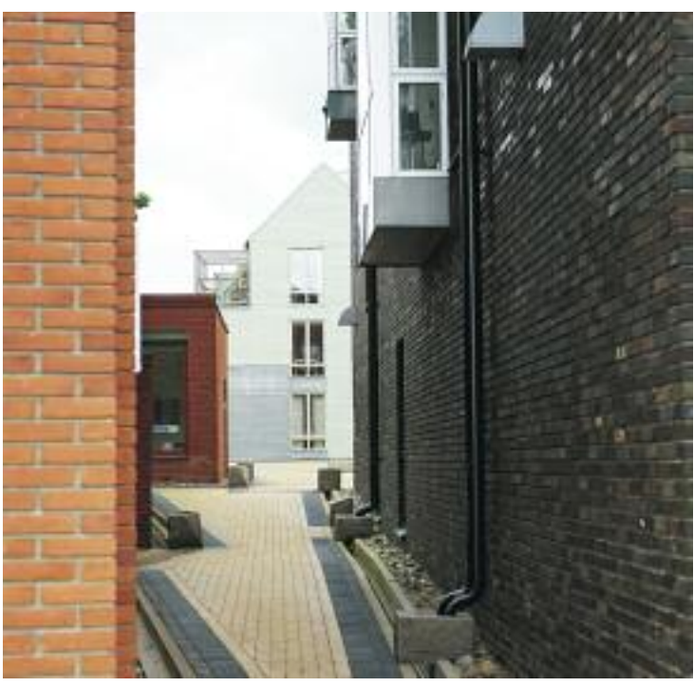
This is a matter of identifying the city's unique values, developing strategies, coping with conflicts and formulating realistic interim targets of greater sustainability. To this end the municipality needs a broad-based urban development competence and access to architectural competence tasked with steering urban development in the direction of a holistic mindset. The city is not an isolated phenomenon. It interacts with its surroundings – the region and the countryside. Planning and architecture are therefore needed which can manage the interplay between the individual construction project and the city's public spaces and functions, between the municipality and the region and between the region and the country as a whole. Our expectations regarding quality of life can then be reconciled with the need for sustainable resource utilisation. An approach of this kind makes for investments which will be secure in the long term and strengthens the city's ability to attract new investments.

The Planning and Building Act does not provide adequate support for dealing with the city as a whole. New methods of urban development need to be evolved which will make it possible to plan interconnections, physical structure and design of the city of a larger scale.

*"A modern, harmonious and lively architecture is the visible sign of an authentic democracy"*

WALTER GROPIUS

33.



## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Work out an architectural and urban policy which puts sustainable development of our cities high on the political agenda.

**II.** Develop planning instruments which are suitable for the existing built environment and manage the urban environment coherently.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to local politicians in municipalities and on county councils

**I.** Allow the city to be complex and multi-functional. Focus policy on greater diversity and avoid norms, sectoral thinking, large-scale operations and commercialisation, which cast new building development in one and the same mould and which simplify the structures of the city. Plan for variation in settlement and forms of tenure.

**II.** Plan across municipal boundaries. People's mobility transcends those boundaries and joint planning is needed in order to provide necessary communications and services.

**III.** Establish close co-operation between politicians and the city's architects and planners. This is essential if the political vision is to be translatable into long-term, sustainable planning.

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**IV.** Strengthen the city architect and planning offices and make better use than at present of the competencies of city architects, architects, landscape architects and planning architects.

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# The urban landscape

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**THE LANDSCAPE, IN** the city and outside it, is more communal than anything else. We have a common right of access to the countryside, but also a common right of access in the city – the public space. The landscape is in fact a very important quality in many of Sweden's cities.

Ongoing migration to cities calls for an upgrading of the urban landscape. Open public spaces – squares, parks, play areas and green belts – existing in and within a short distance of our cities are growing more important and are going to be used by increasing numbers of people as cities become denser. We need to concentrate on planning, developing and maintaining all spaces in and around our cities because, quite simply, we will not be able to afford to leave them unused. Investments in public spaces, both existing and new ones, are profitable in the long term and make an active contribution towards sustainable urban development.

Where our common countryside is concerned, there are strong and distinct tools for its valuation and care. Such tools must also be available for the city's green public spaces. The public spaces in the city are important meeting points for recreation and social activity, at the same time as the experience of greenery and nature is important for people's health and wellbeing. The parks and vegetation of the city will become more and more important in dense cities. Climatologically, greenery acts as a major ventilation system and is important for the quality of the urban air. There are various ways in which all these qualities can be developed through the creation of new parks, green spaces and arable land.

In densified cities, the everyday landscape will also become the children's everyday and play environment. The view of what children should do and be is already heavily institutionalised and must be counterbalanced by a well-cared-for everyday environment affording opportunities for play and outdoor experience.

Everywhere in the world, ecological high-tech solutions are being developed for the integration of building and green structures. Cities both large and small are faced with the challenge of inflecting the trend from energy guzzling and pollution to greening, with a new view of green space in urban planning, as well as encouraging people's own initiatives and developing local growing and the city's food supply.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to municipal politicians

**I.** Draw up distinct park plans for cities, taking into account both social life and the ecological value of parks, as well as their maintenance and sustainability. The economic importance of parks in making the city an attractive place to live in must be highlighted and valued in relation to their maintenance costs.

**II.** Use comprehensive and detailed development plans as tools for safeguarding the city's park spaces. Let the city gardener act with real authority when it comes to creating park quality.

**III.** Insist on developers, in connection with the city's building and development, helping to finance public spaces, in much the same way as property owners do in the centre of town. Closeness to good public spaces raises the value of properties and homes.

*"It is difficult to design a place that will not attract people. What is remarkable is how often this has been accomplished"*

WILLIAM H. WHYTE

41.

**IV.** Unify responsibility for all the city's and municipality's public spaces instead of decentralising to district level. The design of the city's landscape is a strategic urban development issue.

42.

# *Universeum*
# Gert Wingårdh

*I often get asked: "What's the thing you had most fun doing?"*
*I always reply: "Universeum."*

*Over half a million people do the 3 km walk through that building every year, which adds up to 4 million in the 8 years that have passed since the building first opened.*

*Four million people approaching the building from the north, seeing how the storeys of the wooden nave symbolically climb up the Liseberg hill, walking in beneath the first exhibition storey projecting over the entrance (good shelter from the rain), passing through the turnstile and meeting the big window on the South American rain forest, banging into the box office (and on average paying just over SEK 100) before entering the incline lift cage and riding more than 25 metres from the entrance level to the start of the exhibition and from there walking, by way of Swedish countryside and watercourses, down below the surface of the westward sea, through the fauna of the Atlantic, emerging at the peak of the rain forest and making their way down to the shade and the great water boas (anacondas), walking along duckboards over a dizzying atrium to experimental stations uniting black and white, old and young.*

*It's a mind-blowing thought, 4 million people having moved along the path I devised, met materials which I chose and leaving with memories that hinge on my thoughts and intentions. There is POWER in architecture, there is no getting away from it, try as we may, and that is what makes it so important, allowing time, making democratic, understanding.*

*P.S. The political decision to build "Universeum" was taken in 1998. The building was intended to generate as much energy as it consumed (on an annual basis) and to be ecologically sustainable. It was built largely of wood (the biggest wooden public building in Europe) and is to all intents and purposes naturally ventilated. The enterprise is a foundation with the Gothenburg Region, the Chamber of Commerce, Gothenburg University and the Chalmers University of Technology as its trustees.*

Gert Wingårdh, architect SAR/MSA, Wingårdh Arkitektkontor AB
Artistic Professor of Architecture at Chalmers

# Communications

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**NEARNESS, CONVENIENCE AND** security are important in everyday living. The home and its neighbourhood are our base, and outside it the whole city is there for work, social intercourse, experience, culture, services and special interests. Modern man is becoming more and more dependent on the timetabling of everyday life. We depend on properly developed neighbourhood services and on being able to travel to and from work by means of efficient transport systems with a high level of local availability. Good everyday living depends on good communication facilities, not least considering that many people are working further and further away from home and that the need for travel is increasing.

A good balance between the availability of transport systems and traffic flow is achieved through cogent, co-ordinated planning of transport infrastructure and settlement. Public transport solutions must have a high level of availability for all in order to be attractive. Adequate, convenient, safe and dependable public transport can reduce the need for environmentally destructive, space-demanding motorised transport in the city.

The car has become the city's biggest environmental problem. Despite the necessity of radically reducing carbon dioxide emissions and reducing motor traffic, the latter is increasing. The car has given us freedom of movement but also created dependence. We have built our cities for the car and geared our lives to the convenience which the car affords. The car is suitable for, and helps to bring about, a sparsely populated, sprawling city. Conditions for public transport, cycle traffic and pedestrian traffic are undermined in urban environments which have been planned for car travel. In the sustainable city, car dependence can be reduced, even if the car fleet is gradually adapted to make it less environmentally destructive.

Sustainable development demands that long-distance journeys employ transport systems which minimise consumption of resources. From an environmental viewpoint it will not in future be justifiable to travel by air on journeys of less than 600 km. For these short-haul journeys, air travel can be replaced with efficient new rail systems. Expansion of the rail network, including both normal standard and high-speed tracks, can develop mass transit and reduce heavy transport on the road network. But rail investments are not in themselves a cost-effective instrument of climate policy. Other initiatives are also needed in order to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the transport market.

When we travel more, we also spend more time in the transport environment. It is essential for that environment to be designed in a way which enables users of public transport to socialise, work or rest in transit. Travel environments also need to be informative, secure and calculated to facilitate changeovers between different types of transport.

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Rapid transit roads and railways impact heavily on the local environment through their straightness and barrier effects in the landscape. These facilities must therefore be planned with care and consideration for the landscape, vegetation and local road systems. When roads and railways are routed in harmony with the content and form of the landscape, damage to ecosystems and to geological and hydrological systems can be avoided. By planning with understanding of the preconditions and qualities of the landscape, great values can also be created both for passengers and in the local environment.

When large-scale transport systems come up against the city, a conflict ensues between the city's smaller scale and local patterns of movement. A change of tempo occurs from fast to slower. These transitions are important. Efficient new transport systems need to be able to connect in the heart of city centres, thus facilitating development of the old parts of cities and at the same time building a city which is sustainable.

Roads with fast-flowing traffic near the city also need to be given a design reflecting their relation to the city. Today these traffic environments are often treated like ditches and backyards. Roads connecting with the city must be treated as part of the city's public space and designed with respect for the people living and travelling there.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Invest in efficient new rail systems with central connections in regional growth areas. The railway network needs to be expanded in order to meet the demand for different kinds of traffic, simultaneously with measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the transport market.

**II.** Co-ordinate the planning of national transport systems with municipally controlled urban development. Invest in research into environmentally friendly mass transit systems.

46.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to local politicians in municipalities and on county councils

**I.** Invest in local mass transit systems with high availability and dependability, which link up with the national rail systems via regional nodes.

**II.** Plan jointly across municipal boundaries, in accordance with citizens' job markets and the need for viable transport services and everyday living arrangements.

**III.** Give priority to careful design of streetscapes, so that they will develop into public spaces in the city, places where people can meet together.

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*"Architecture is a social activity that has to do with communication or places of interaction. To change the environment is to change behaviour"*

THOM MAYNE

# Integration

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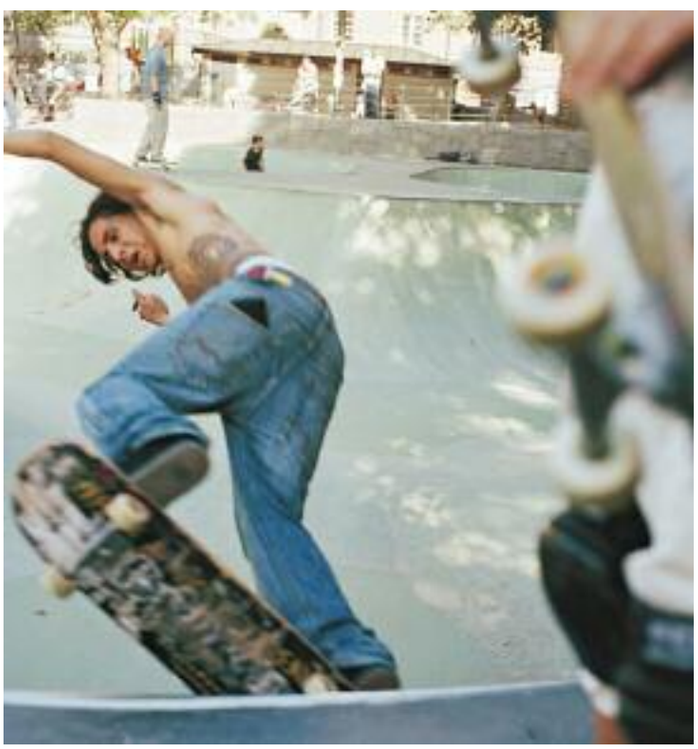

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**INTEGRATING MEANS MAKING** whole. Integration is about processes and initiatives which make our cities whole and give everyone a place in the community. Integration is gradually improving, but many of our cities remain heavily segregated, with different neighbourhoods and housing estates offering completely different living conditions. This tends to alienate those living in the most deprived areas, leading to a marginalisation process which entails exclusion from society's common resources. This in turn leads to a growth of social tensions and conflicts.

We want a society which enables people with different experiences of life and different backgrounds to come together. We want to build social relations between different groups of the population. Integration is a key issue in Sweden for the coming decade.

Integration calls for work on many different levels. One of its fundamental prerequisites is employment and job availability. But integration in society is also promoted with the aid of physical planning and measures of urban renewal counteracting the exclusion or marginalisation of groups or parts of the city.

Physical planning, urban development and housing segregation issues will in future need to be far more clearly interlinked. Social aspects of housing must be treated in the same context as planning and urban development. The municipalities need to assume responsibility for bringing these issues together in a holistic perspective on the development of our cities. The parts of the city need not be similar, but they do need to be equally good. It is crucially important that the townscape can provide opportunities for meetings. Mixed activities and mixed forms of tenure in the housing market are two prerequisites of living, secure cities.

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The attractiveness of the neighbourhood consists in a combination of people, activities and the physical environment. Meeting points are a matter of public premises but also have to do with an environment capable of generating interplay between indoors and out. The quality of the urban environment can also be improved through measures to do with lighting, signage and vegetation.

Good everyday living must be possible in all parts of the city. Deprived parts of our cities need to acquire the same array of services, institutions, functional outdoor environment and meeting points as other neighbourhoods. Strict functional segregation needs to be broken down and opportunities created for new activities and greater complexity. Deprived areas can be provided with unique objects which the whole city can see and has reason to visit. Barriers can be broken down, so as to improve the linkages between different parts of the city.

Equivalent opportunities of travel within the city for all residents are a fundamental pre-requisite for a sense of community with people living in other parts of the city and, accordingly, participation in the aggregate city.

There are immediate, sometimes pressing, needs for physical upgrading and rebuilding of deprived neighbourhoods, but for lasting results we need a combination of physical interventions and social initiatives.

52.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to municipal politicians

**I.** Create civic participation in planning and make the local situation and context the starting point. Participation by those living and working in a township is a prerequisite of being able to upgrade and develop the township and establish security there. Successful integration calls for co-ordination of various physical and social inputs and builds on participation and acceptance by the residents themselves.

**II.** Mix your building-stock, so that homes of different kinds and with various forms of tenure will exist in all parts of the city. Assume joint responsibility for housing supply in the municipality and work actively to promote housing production conducive to integration. Plan the city so that the residents will have the fairest possible allocation of homes, schools, services, cultural amenities and a good outdoor environment.

**III.** Create meeting points, bridge barriers and improve communications between the different parts of the city.

*"The job of buildings is to improve human relations: architecture must ease them, not make them worse"*

RALPH ERSKINE

53.

**IV.** Build unique objects in deprived areas, thereby strengthening the feeling of being citizens of the whole city among the people living there.

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55.

# Housing

56.

**HOUSING IS OF** the utmost importance to us. We put a lot of energy into creating the housing we want, and housing pre-empts a big share of our financial resources, almost a third of a household's available income.

Housing needs are liable to change. The change is concerned both with ideological shifts and with new habits. Furniture measurements today are not what they were half a century ago. The living room is not longer a room for special occasions. We work more from home. Changes are also underway in our forms of cohabitation. The urban household with children, the large immigrant family, the well-paid single woman, young people without permanent jobs, older persons dependent on caring services – all of these people, and others besides, demand a place in the housing market.

Swedish housing construction has played a pivotal role in the shaping of Swedish identity in modern times. Transformed, and in many cases downgraded, housing policies in recent decades have moved the goalposts. Housing construction today, to all intents and purposes, takes place on terms dictated by the market and according to people's purchasing power and payment capacity. People with low purchasing power and with housing needs other than those which have been the historical norm have few options open to them. We now have, not one, but many different housing markets. We have large young families crammed into undersized flats of substandard quality. We have empty apartment buildings in depopulated areas. We have homeless young adults and we have elderly couples living on in large detached houses and unwilling to move because of the exceptional financial disadvantage this would entail.

Policy needs to relate more clearly to the fact of Sweden's housing market having grown more complex. Society cannot simply leave all issues of housing supply for the market to resolve. The municipalities are bound by law to plan housing supply so that everyone in the municipality concerned can be well housed. We need a new form of convergence between the State, the municipalities and the players in the private market in order to untie the knots into which Sweden's housing market has got itself.

Increasingly differentiated needs and an increasing diversity of housing markets call for more options, as regards both the parties developing and building and the solutions offered. More players are needed who can develop every conceivable combination of large and small, ordinary and exclusive. Even if there is a great need for new homes, the majority have been built already. The way in which we manage, develop and rebuild is critical for the greater part of the housing stock. But new construction, which constitutes a mere fraction of the total housing stock,

57.

*"The home should be the treasure chest of living"*

LE CORBUSIER

represents the best opportunity for change, and so commitment to development and innovative thinking is vital when new homes come to be planned and built.

The municipalities must stand their ground when developers and housing constructors offer only their safe bets and standardised housing solutions. The municipalities should also develop programmes of their own for environmentally appropriate housing construction, starting with the principle that a building must have as little environmental impact as possible, both while under construction and during its lifetime.

Young adults today are facing a very difficult housing situation. Only half of those aged between 20 and 27 have homes of their own. The situation is particularly worrying in the growth regions and in the biggest cities. 150,000 homes are already needed today if all young adults are to be independently housed. There are housing shortages in half of Sweden's municipalities and the number of people in our society who do not have the housing they want is steadily rising. Young people are not the only ones looking for cheap rental housing. Varying, and progressively smaller household structures are augmenting the need for smaller flats, primarily cheap ones. The growing proportion of older persons calls for special initiatives enabling older persons to manage their housing without having to be referred to more institutionalised forms of accommodation.

Long-term commitment to development is the only way of meeting all these needs. It is also important not to get bogged down in a narrow view of standards. Quality and standards are not synonymous. Architectural quality can be high in a low-cost project. There are international examples of this kind, such as Denmark's *Bedre Billigere Boliger* ("better cheaper housing"), which are worth taking after.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Launch a clear societal initiative for openly discussing housing supply, needs, responsibilities and quality issues. Take a thorough, close look at the Swedish housing market. Follow it up at regular intervals. Maintain a living and continuous forum in which municipalities, housing constructors, planners and architects are invited to take part. Choose a dialogue procedure, not a traditional governmental commission or inquiry. Set aside financial resources for the purpose.

**II.** Provide special support for production of affordable housing. New building development offers the biggest opportunity for remedying deficiencies in the housing stock. Special efforts should be devoted to low-cost quality construction.

**III.** Finance a new form of housing research. Housing research in Sweden has been badly neglected. As a result of the deregulations of the 90s, knowledge concerning good housing quality and housing habits has evaporated or been thrust into the background. Research is needed to turn this development around.

60.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to municipal politicians

**I.** Rally forces to improve the housing situation for young adults. It is unacceptable that only one out of every two young adults have an independent home and that the proportion with homes of their own is steadily declining.

**II.** Arrange housing competitions and housing fairs. Housing fairs and competitions have been proven to benefit the development of the housing stock. They also create a much-needed basis of discussion and debate concerning our homes.

**III.** Draw up programmes and undertake environmentally appropriate housing production in the municipality. Lay down guidelines for environmental impact, both during the construction phase and during the buildings' lifetime. Make clear how the planning and construction process is to deal with issues of durability, health and comfort, energy conservation and resource management.

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**IV.** Spread housing construction between a larger number of developers. Large-scale repetition is no longer needed in order to optimise the profitability of housing construction. Shorter production runs and a larger number of players will ensure a varied housing stock.

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# Sustainable building

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**MUCH IS NOW** known about how to achieve buildings that are dependable and energy-efficient. In practice we can construct buildings which deliver energy instead of consuming it. The reasonable thing is to make our buildings as lean as ever we can.

Applying technical solutions is only one side of the matter. The technology needs to be based on demands for ecological, economic and social sustainability. The Swedish environmental quality target of "a good built environment" means that the built environment must provide experiences of beauty and well-being, be varied, affording the possibility of a full life, be free from noise and have access to sunlight, clean water and clean air. A holistic view is the name of the game. The big challenge is not only to devise technically farsighted solutions but to devise attractive technical solutions. Only then will they benefit our environments.

The sustainability concept needs to be viewed in its full breadth. Technical sustainability belongs together with social sustainability. An environment with qualities is an environment which invites participation and seldom leads to destruction. If anything it is associated with care and concern. Sustainability demands contexts in which the user is the starting point. The thing is to create environments which create well-being, embrace many sides of the community and spontaneously prompt users to interact and experience things. Sustainability also has to do with time. Constructing a good building right from the start is better than making it over ten times. Cheap today but expensive to run is not a viable path. The opposite, however – expensive today but cheap to run – may be the right choice.

For a long time here in Sweden we have considered ourselves a leading example in matters of energy conservation and environmental awareness in construction. But by comparison with many other countries (such as Germany, Austria and Switzerland), that image does not necessarily hold good. Experience from those countries tells us that economic incentives can be just as important as rigorous building codes for stimulating environmental thinking. Several countries have good credit opportunities for low-energy buildings, rewarding construction technology which reduces energy demand in the long term.

Another important aspect concerns local conditions, using local physical opportunities, such as local materials and the local climate. Transporting materials to and from building and construction sites implies a huge waste of resources at global level. The sun is an asset, and perhaps the wind or a nearby watercourse can be used for cooling the building.

66.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Introduce effective economic instruments for achieving lean buildings.

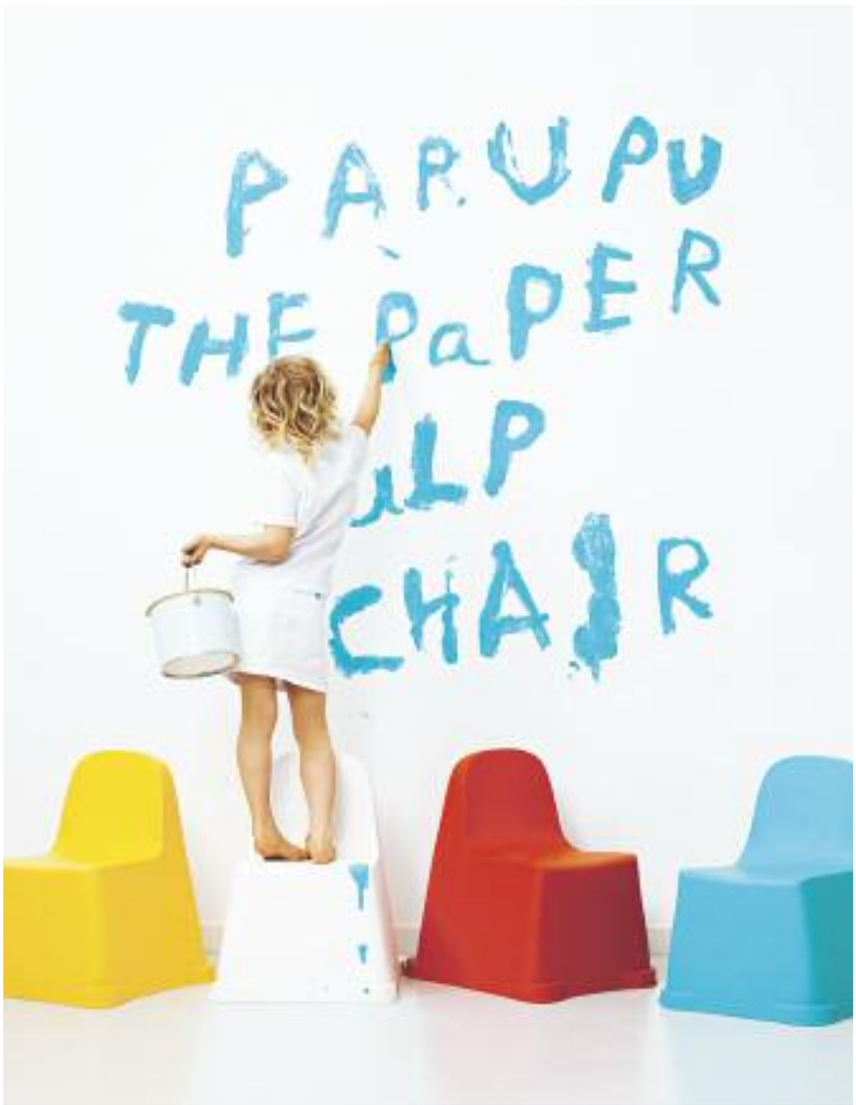
**II.** Introduce uniform environmental certification. At present there are several different environmental certification systems, national and international, for buildings. A clear and uniform national certification is needed which will form a code for building and place building in a social and administrative perspective.

**III.** Create a distinct system of innovation support. Close co-operation between architects, engineers and developers needs to be supported so as to bring about lean environments which will also be attractive. Special competition procedures based on predefined environmental targets are one form of support. Another is support schemes targeting certain buildings where the environmental stipulations exceed the common level.

*"The world will not evolve past its current state of crisis by using the same thinking that created the situation"*

ALBERT EINSTEIN

67.



## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to municipal politicians

**I.** Take the lead where environmentally friendly and energy-efficient building is concerned. Avail of the existing possibilities of making stipulations in connection with land allocation.

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# *Willing architecture*
# Sara Grahn

*Architecture is an act of will. We add, change and subtract in the belief that what we are creating will make the physical space and living conditions better than they were before we sat down at the drawing board.*

*Architecture requires big financial investments, involves lots of people and takes a long time. It is a massive communal effort to transform reality for the better.*

*Society is faced with big challenges – economic, social and ecological. Striking a balance is the key to sustainable development. The prevailing attitude in building today is anorexic – concerned with saving, minimising and abstaining. This may slow down a negative development but can never reverse it.*

*Suppose we were able to see the built environment as part of the ecosystem and not as a threat. Ourselves and building development as fully integrated with our surroundings. See the architecture beyond the finished project, for the whole of its lifecycle. That could give us a dynamic idea of what architecture is all about.*

*How capable is the room of adjusting to new conditions and functions? How does it respond to cold, warmth, blistering sunshine and a fresh wind? How well does it care for the people, animals and plants?*
*How does it generate energy? How, ultimately, is the material recycled or disposed of?*

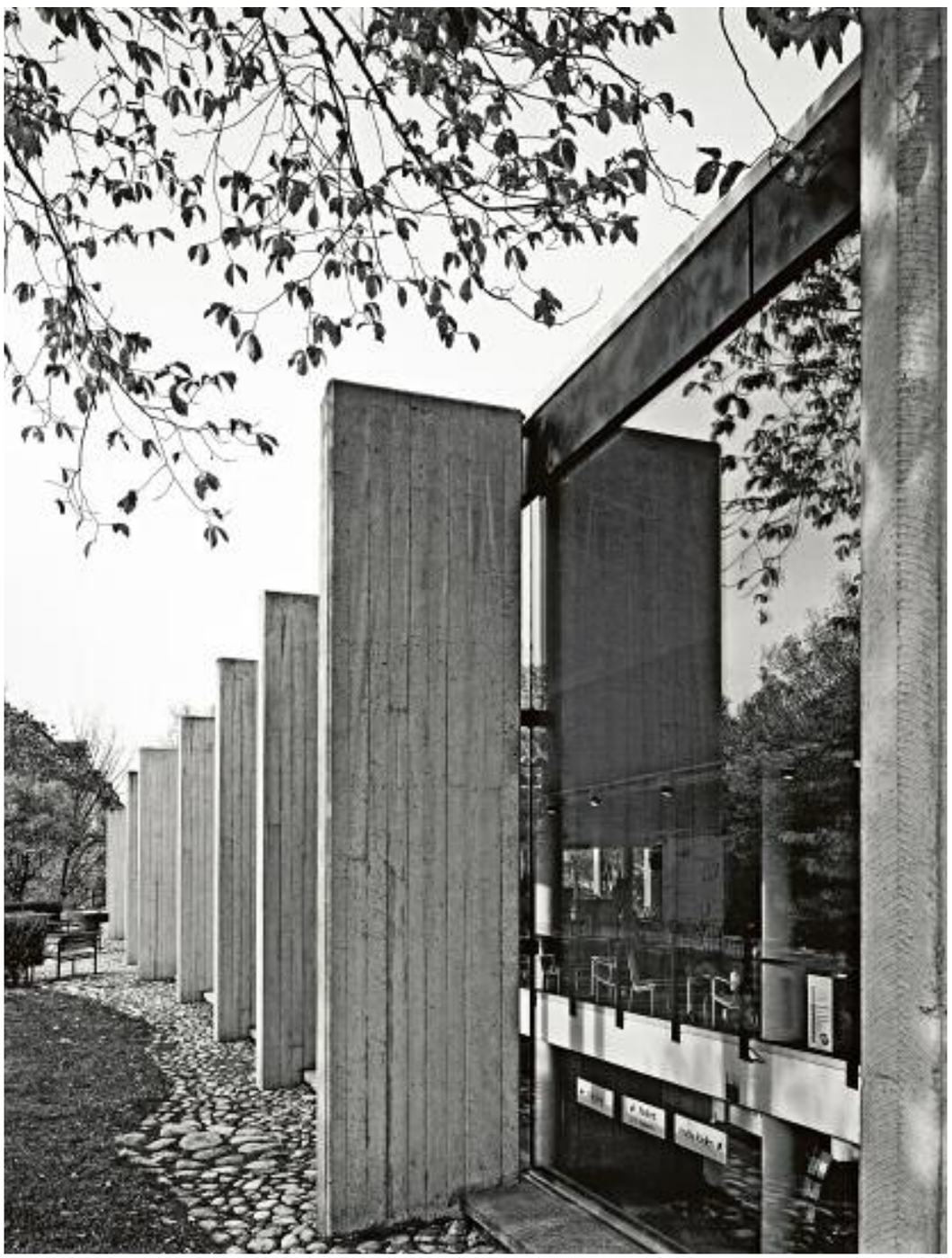
*Can architecture be part of an ecocycle with neither beginning nor end? A player in all the systems – economic, social and ecological? There is no single answer, but all these questions endow architecture with interesting approaches to the future.*

*The challenges are great but the possibilities are numerous. Developing a sustainable built environment is a difficult undertaking, far too complex for one single profession to be able to come up with all the solutions. Here a number and variety of skills and a shared intent are needed.*

*Architecture means willing something.*

Sara Grahn, architect SAR/MSA, White Arkitekter AB
Professor in Sustainable Design, School of Architecture, KTH

# The heritage



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**OUR HERITAGE COMPRISES** more than what previous generations have built over the centuries. What we build today is the heritage of tomorrow. When planning and building today, therefore, we have cause to ask ourselves what we want to bequeath to future generations.

We have the responsibility of creating a society which will not deplete natural resources and in which there will be clean air and food for all. We realise that we will have to change our living habits and social structures in order to meet the future and shoulder our responsibility towards future generations. But behind us we leave a heritage which is an important component of a sustainable future society.

We rejoice in our heritage, we cherish and conserve it. Every generation in our history has left valuable legacies in the form of buildings and structures. The heritage comprises everything from 16th century Vasa castles, other signature buildings, urban environments, piazzas and open spaces of outstanding historic interest to the family farm and our own country cottage. These buildings, spaces and landscapes are becoming more and more precious to us. It is easy to see the value of something that is three or four generations old. Buildings from one generation ago are less highly valued. But the Million Homes Programme buildings of the 1960s are today many people's place of origin. Rejecting that generation's building out of hand would be as indefensible as when, in the 1960s, we demolished many town centres, replacing them with department stores and multi-storey car parks.

Today it goes without saying that attractive homes can be created in congested city centres by upgrading and modernising them. Similarly, we must upgrade and bring out qualities in the neighbourhoods and housing environments which we blankly write off as monotonous and which very often suffer from lack of maintenance. The aim must be for everything we build and leave behind us to have a value and to be serviceable to future generations.

In order for the things we build today to be of value tomorrow, they must be amenable to changing needs and functions, i.e. designed in general terms. They must also be resistant to visual wear and tear, i.e. beautiful. Finally, they must be built of sustainable materials and structures, maintainable instead of maintenance-free.

72.

## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to politicians at all levels

**I.** Utilise knowledge and developed technologies for upgrading and renovating buildings and environments constructed by all generations.

**II.** Define and safeguard the heritage quality of existing buildings and develop the heritage value of what is planned for building and construction.

**III.** Preserve and cherish the heritage qualities of the landscape.

73.

*"Architecture is the will of an epoch translated into space"*

MIES VAN DER ROHE

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# Knowledge

76.

*"There will never be great architects or great architecture without great patrons"*

EDWIN LUTYENS

**IF PEOPLE ARE** to be capable of relating to and making demands on our built environment, an open and living debate is needed concerning architecture and its importance to the individual and for the life of society. This in turn requires knowledge on several planes. Expert knowledge is required on the part of architects, founded through architecture and planning education and research of an internationally high standard.

The architect's capacity for shaping new characteristics and values out of a holistic view is needed in order to realise and test politicians' and developers' visions and strategies. Proposals are then made intelligible to us and amenable to our assessment. This work requires a solid foundation of knowledge concerning people's needs and expectations, as well as calculable facts about technology, the environment and economics. But what is needed above all is a capacity for thinking multidimensionally and constructively about different ways of solving the problems.

The study programmes in architecture and urban development provide that foundation, but need to strengthen their sustainability perspective. It is important that study programmes be given good long-term prospects of supplying urban development with the knowledge and competence that are needed in order to develop our built environment in the best possible way. To this end, Swedish architecture and planning education need to be on a level which makes possible advanced academic exchanges and recruitment of international spearhead competence.

Research in architecture and urban development is crucial both when it comes to supplying the industry with a scientific platform, and to reinforcing the scientific foundations of architecture studies. Sweden therefore needs a number of research environments of sufficient magnitude to provide a solid development of theory and methods in the subject field.

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Players in the construction and property sectors need to know about the role and importance of architecture in the context of the building of society. The construction sector has long been criticised for lack of follow-up, indistinct allocation of responsibilities, poor interaction, fragmentation and reluctance to change. In order for the construction sector to be competitive in relation to other industries and sectors of society, a high level of aspiration is needed, and also an innovative mindset underpinning the development of sustainable cities and architecture.

Development projects in sustainable architecture and urban planning, with a holistic view, involving all players in the construction process, should be encouraged. Architects' and planners' analytical tools and methods for simulating and staging new solutions need to be utilised better, from primary research to marketing of finished products and services. Knowledge of architecture and urban development is not only concerned with the quantifiable. Human experiences are the point of departure, because ultimately they are governing our choices. When numbers reign supreme, only the quantifiable is highlighted, and not what really matters to people.

Understanding of architecture is needed in many roles and on a variety of levels. Developers and clients, property managers, contractors and technical consultants need a basic knowledge of architecture in order to make the right choices and adopt the right standpoints in their own spheres of activity. All post-secondary study programmes focusing on planning, construction or property management should include an introductory course in architecture – a general course concerning the role and significance of architecture in urban development.

Society needs to have a general knowledge of the importance of architecture, founded already in school. Communicating knowledge concerning the planned and built environment to children in school is a matter of necessity if we are to succeed in creating a sustainable society. Knowledge of the importance of architecture for our physical environment and our living

78.

conditions must therefore already be inculcated in school. This can be done by using architecture, the built environment, the heritage and public space as educational resources, as teaching material and as a source of knowledge in education.

The school environments of children and young persons must be secure, attractive and stimulating. A school characterised by care of the physical environment and at the same time communicating knowledge of our designed environment will give children and young persons a solid foundation for learning, responsibility and capacity for making demands on their environment. The school offering a good, experiential environment, both inside the school buildings and out in the school playground, can give our children an understanding of the implications of a cogently worked-out, pleasant environment for wellbeing and development.

We want schools to provide knowledge and insights. We also want our children to develop into responsible individuals who appreciate and respect the value of cogently designed public environments. And we want our children to be able, and to be entitled, to make demands on their habitat – in school but also later on, in adult life. Schools have the responsibility of laying the foundations of children's quality awareness in adult life as housing consumers, aware of the necessity of high quality in building, construction and furnishing.

Architecture in school and school architecture go together. Given a school characterised by concern for the children's environment and at the same time communicating knowledge of the importance of our design environment, our children will acquire a solid platform for learning responsibility and for demanding quality.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government, Riksdag and higher education establishments

**I.** Ensure a long-term sustainable basic financing of study programmes in architecture and urban development on an internationally competitive level.

**II.** Create a limited number of major internationally competitive research environments for research into architecture and urban development.

**III.** Strengthen and co-ordinate the communication of research findings and experience in architecture and urban development.

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**IV.** Initiate a broad-based development of competence among players in the construction and civil engineering industries for better interaction based on a holistic view of urban development in terms of innovation systems.

**V.** Improve knowledge of the role and importance of architecture in the life of the community, e.g. by introducing an introductory course of architecture in all higher education study programmes which have to do with urban planning, construction and property management.

**VI.** Create a school which uses architecture, the built environment, the heritage and the public space as an educational resource, teaching material and source of knowledge. Include teaching on architecture in all teacher education programmes, so as to equip teachers for using architecture and the built environment as teaching material.

*"An important work of architecture will create polemics. It shows that people are interested, people are involved"*

RICHARD MEIER

82.

# Exports

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**THROUGHOUT HISTORY AND** to the present, the world at large has had great confidence in Sweden's ability to create a society which takes good care of its citizens. Sweden has a strongly positive image as regards its focus on development with respect for human conditions, nature and the environment. In many parts of the world Sweden is viewed as a shining example of sustainable building and of planning of sustainable urban development. This is a trademark to cherish, and we have a big potential for exporting know-how and expertise.

Bo-01 in Malmö, Älvstranden in Gothenburg and Hammarby Sjöstad in Stockholm are some of the interesting urban development projects to which politicians, officials, property developers, investors, builders and architects from all over the world have come for knowledge and inspiration. Växjö, with its proactive planning and aspiration to manage without fossil fuels, has been developed into a green city attracting professional visitors from all over the world. Several big new urban construction projects such as H+ in Helsingborg and Årstafältet and Norra Djurgårdsstaden in Stockholm bid fair to become future models of sustainable building and urban development.

Swedish architects take a holistic view of urban planning; they know how to plan a city through a democratic dialogue, how complex systems are integrated and how to address transport and energy issues. Knowledge and experience like this are greatly needed in a world where the proportion of city dwellers is steadily rising.

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Swedish architect practices know about planning for sustainable development and many of them are working internationally on everything from very large to minor urban development projects. Many Swedish firms also have a wide span of competence and within their own enterprise or network can deliver a wide range of interconnected services.

Architects are often door-openers for other exports – not only exports of other consulting services but also of technical solutions for the environment. Competence in architecture and planning for sustainable urban development open the way to a broad range of environmental technology exports. Swedish export promotion authorities will need to pay more attention to these connections in future.

A deliberate, long-term export drive for Swedish urban development competence can help to further strengthen Sweden's trademark as a leading nation in the environmental sector. As a nation we must seize the opportunities presented by Swedish architects and planners leading the world in planning for sustainable urban development.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects to the Government and Riksdag

**I.** Co-ordinate the efforts made to export Swedish know-how in urban development and architecture. Long-term, strategic co-operation in these fields is needed between authorities tasked with export promotion and authorities tasked with working on the image of Sweden abroad.

**II.** Allocate resources for special trade missions aimed at exporting sustainable construction and planning for sustainable urban development.

**III.** See to it that Swedish expertise in sustainable urban development and sustainable building is presented at international trade fairs and exhibitions and in conjunction with export trade missions.

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# Procurement and quality

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**PROCUREMENT OF PLANNING** and architectural services must always be based on quality criteria. Architectural services must never be chosen on a lowest cost basis. The architect's assessed capacity for accomplishing the task, competence, experience, capacity and creativity, carry more weight than the price quoted, e.g. in a public procurement. Price cannot be ignored in any procurement, but the outcome of a project hinges ultimately on the architect's ability to tackle a complex task and to deliver a result which is at least on a level with the client's expectations. It is widely attested that public procurement of architectural services has tended more and more to be swayed by the lowest price, even though everyone agrees that creative skill services should not be purchased on a lowest-cost basis. This trend has a devastating impact on the quality of public sector building, civil engineering and interior design and must be addressed at national level. Developments in Sweden today are moving in a different direction from developments in the neighbouring Nordic countries.

The public procurer has the same possibilities as the private one of allowing the procurement process to be guided by quality targets. Even if there are rules of public procurement which lay down specific conditions for the actual procurement process, legislation per se does not oblige the public buyer to put more emphasis on price than the private purchaser of architectural services is obliged to do. The architectural service purchased is an assessed capacity for proposing the best possible solutions for the task in hand. How successfully this is accomplished and what quality is ultimately achieved will not be fully known until the service has been completed. In this perspective, preoccupation with the price of the architect's contribution is the wrong starting-point. If price of the architect's service carries too much weight, it means that quality aspects have been thrust into the background.

Swedish procurement culture needs to be fundamentally transformed where creative skill services are concerned. For construction or civil engineering of high quality, the success of the

*"Quality is long remembered after price is forgotten"*

ANONYMOUS

outcome is predicated on the provision of as much scope as possible for the first, idea-based phase of a project, the phase where there is every possibility of defining the course of development.

A proven method to guide a creative process is to arrange an architectural competition. It is in the earliest phase of a project that the foundations are laid for its qualities – architectural, artistic, technical, functional and economic. A well-managed architectural competition, in which the participants devote their creativity and competence to come up with the best proposal, is supremely value-generating. In a competition a number of architects make proposals for the design and realisation of a project. Comparisons can be made between the advantages and disadvantages of different solutions. Design, economics and function in the alternatives are balanced against each other until the solution is found which, all things considered, measures up best to the predefined requirements and preferences. In programming and jury work, an amount of knowledge, dedication and a common vision of the project are generated at an early stage.

Architectural competitions arouse interest on the part of the general public, users, politicians and the parties involved, and can be used for communicating and strengthening decisions about a project. The competition process also provides opportunities for opinion formation and marketing. With the same brief and presentation requirements for all competitors, the proposals are concrete, comparable and ready for exhibition and publication. The competition is an available procurement procedure under the Public Procurement Act (LOU). It is the only procurement procedure enabling the public procurer to choose both architect and solution in one and the same process. After a competition is over, the procuring authority is entitled to negotiate directly with the winning architect concerning a further commission. In this way the project can be developed and realised together with the competitor who came up with the most interesting proposal.

The architectural competition is a smooth, economical and value-generating way of procuring architectural services. At a time when public procurement has grown increasingly complex and impenetrable, the competition stands out as a procurement procedure which can be aimed more easily than other forms of procurement at predefined targets. Competitions are not suitable for the procurement of all architectural services, but should be used more in order for developers to achieve their qualitative targets.

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## Proposals by the Swedish Association of Architects

**I.** Ensure that all public procurement of architectural and design-related services is based principally on quality aspects, and that these are always weighted more highly than the price of the service procured.

**II.** Instruct the Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency and the Swedish Competition Authority to devise models for quality-dominated procurement of creative skill services and to organise training for public procurement officials in these matters. The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions ought similarly to encourage procurement of architectural services by municipalities and county councils to be based on quality and never on the lowest price quoted.

**III.** Ensure that national and municipal authorities engaging in construction and civil engineering take the opportunity of using architectural competitions as a means of procurement.

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# Swedish Association of Architects

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**THE SWEDISH ASSOCIATION** of Architects represents Sweden's architects, interior architects, landscape architects and planning architects. It is the representative body of the architectural profession representing all their professional and practice interests. In addition it is tasked with demonstrating the importance of architecture and planning for the society. The Association has 10,700 members, including 95 per cent of the country's architects. Upwards of 7,000 members are professionally active. More than 2,000 are students. Four out of five practising architects are active in the private sector, mainly as employees or entrepreneurs in architectural and consulting firms. One in five is a public sector employee. Most architects in the public service hold appointments with city development, city architect or planning offices.

The Association offers advice and support to clients in matters of procurement by means of a competitions and procurement service. We also work with competence development through a comprehensive Continuing Professional Development programme for our members.

The Association publicises good architecture and planning by presenting a number of architectural awards. Sweden's foremost architectural award is the Kasper Salin Prize. In addition the Association awards a Housing Prize, the Siena Prize, a Planning Prize, the Gold Chair and a Reviewers Prize.

The title of Architect is unprotected in Sweden. A trained architect is recognisable from the membership and professional titles used by Association members. Practising architects belonging to the Association can add the membership title MSA (Member of Sveriges Arkitekter) to their professional designation. A member with a full degree (five years) and at least one year's professional experience may use the appropriate professional title from among the following, which are registered trademarks.

The professional titles are Architect SAR/MSA, Landscape Architect LAR/MASA, Architect SIR/MSA. Planning Architect FPR/MSA

Architects are trained at KTH (the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm), the Chalmers University of Technology, LTH (the Lund University Faculty of Engineering) and Umeå University. Interior architects are trained at Konstfack (the University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm) and HDK (the School of Design and Crafts, Gothenburg). Landscape architects are trained at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Alnarp and Ultuna. Planning architects study physical planning at BTH (the Blekinge Institute of Technology).

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*Arkitekten*, the journal of the Swedish Association of Architects, appears eleven times annually.
The Association also owns the magazine *Arkitektur*.

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