

KEY POINTS OF LEARNING IN THIS BRIEFING

- A first step in development of productive, resilient and sustainable regeneration strategy for Oslo must be clear understanding of the driving forces which will influence cities in the 21st century. These include: urban culture, mobility, future technology, the knowledge-based economy, urban identity, cultural activities and interaction between market and policy.

- As in many cities, there is a strong tension between the aspirations of property owners for maximisation of profit from regeneration and from social and sustainability aspirations of the public and community sectors. For Oslo, it may need to explore alternative options for financing infrastructure and redevelopment if it wishes to balance economic and social goals.

- A key tool in regeneration has been the Oslo Charrette, a participative visioning and strategy process which explored three divergent development scenarios. The briefing explores the advantages and limitations of this approach.

- A second tool is sustainable transport analysis. A key conclusion is that well-planned inner-city regeneration can reduce transport disbenefits in the overall region, and that provision for sustainable modes – walking, cycling, public transport – must be built into designs from the beginning.



Revierkaia, Oslo Large, KAP architects 2004



Temporary Pocket Park, Snohetta 2005

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WATERFRONT COMMUNITIES PROJECT

The Waterfront Communities Project is a learning network of nine cities from around the North Sea who are rediscovering their waterfronts and striving to reconnect their cities with the sea.

Each city is experimenting with new ways of tackling a particular challenge of waterfront development such as integrating new and existing communities or transport links. These activities are organised around nine project themes allowing cities to consider a wider range of issues than would have been possible working alone. Examining themes as a whole rather than individually is generating considerable learning about the interrelated nature of the thematic issues with impact on waterfront development.

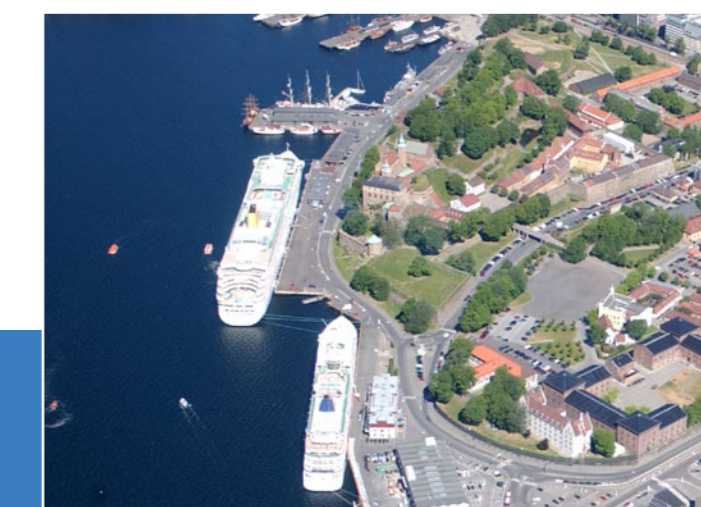


www.waterfrontcommunitiesproject.org



Sustainable Transport and the Integration of Waterfront in the Urban Fabric

LEARNING FROM THE CITY OF OSLO



Vippetangen



OWPO's office in front of the new opera

INTRODUCTION

This policy briefing reviews harbourside regeneration activities in Oslo. It demonstrates in a generic manner the key challenges and issues. It draws together learning to date, both in our own projects, by our partner colleagues and in transnational meetings as well. This briefing contains a status about Tools, Points of Learning and Guidelines, summing up what we have accomplished, any difficulties overcome or not, and finally sketches of our ways ahead, input needs and final products.

WATERFRONT REGENERATION IN OSLO

The overall regeneration initiative is called Oslo Fjord City. The Oslo Waterfront Planning Office (OWPO) is cooperating with The Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO) as academic partner, and partly with Oslo Port Authorities. OWPO is a section of the Agency for Planning and Building Services and hence a body in the municipal planning authority of Oslo. OWPO's main task is to work with the general planning of Oslo Waterfront. The office is a time limited project, staffed with 7-8 persons with different professions and located in the harbour, close to a new Opera under construction.

The two key challenges of the project is to foster better understanding of how programming and planning of the Oslo waterfront can contribute to both a:

- more sustainable transport in Oslo and the region, and
- the creation of public spaces that will help integrate the waterfront with the city.

DRIVING FORCES IN 21st CENTURY URBAN SOCIETY

To accomplish Oslo's aims, it is important that regeneration visions and strategies recognise the driving forces which influence cities in the 21st century. This is the first step in development of a productive, resilient and sustainable strategy.

To achieve this it is necessary to develop an information process and research based on an investigation into the main driving forces, such as:

- Urban culture - the young, urban population is growing; requirements for improved quality of life, e.g. with regard to education and professional careers, social networks and cultural consumption strengthen the city.
- Mobility – a feature of the modern city. The population changes jobs, partners and dwellings more frequently, at the same time the physical mobility and the ICT development contribute to a more flexible organisation.
- Future technologies – an impetus for a sustainable development. Future technologies play an important role in determining how we organise our work. New sources of energy are aimed at increased environmental friendliness.
- The knowledge-based economy - research and development is strongly established in the Oslo region. Knowledge will be the post-petroleum era's most important input factor, and the Oslo region will continue to grow.
- Urban identity as a driving force in the regional competition. The city's identity can be improved by means of the waterfront, and it can help make the city an internationally renowned region for research, business and industry, recreation and culture.
- Culture as an important growth factor. The city's content is crucial for success in international competition. The aesthetic and functional quality of the city and its water-

front must be proportionate to its social and cultural quality.

- Interaction between market and policies. Deregulation of the market makes the private sector more dynamic. In order to succeed, the development of the waterfront is dependent on an interaction between local and central government authorities and semi-private and private investors.

Based on dialogue and coordination AHO has mainly worked with the integration of the waterfront in the urban fabric and OWPO with sustainable transport.

TOOLS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VISION AND STRATEGY

The Oslo-Charrette

The main activity at the OWPO in this period has been the organizing and running of the Oslo-Charrette, called 3 X FJORD CITY. The Oslo-Charrette was held at the Fjord City Office on 1-5th November 2004.

Three divergent scenarios – called Oslo Park, Oslo Network and Oslo Large – were programmed beforehand and developed and illustrated by three teams during the Charrette. The teams were led by architects and had participants with varied background, i.e. transport planners and landscape architects as well as students from the academic partner, AHO.

The European aspect of our work has been realised in this project by inviting a Danish architectural office as leader of one of the teams and inviting an external critic from Hamburg. As part of the exhibition our academic partner, AHO, made a presentation of the Interreg IIIb and the Waterfront Communities project, together with an evaluation of the three scenarios.

The result of the workshops, including the

Oslo-Charrette, will provide the basis for dialogue and a broad public debate and will be partly incorporated into the city of Oslo's ongoing work for comprehensive planning of the Oslo waterfront.

Sustainable Transport Analysis

OWPO has, in cooperation with Oslo Port Authority, accomplished two aspects of transport analysis in 2004 and 2005. The main focus in the first analysis was to prepare a model for transport calculations. During the Oslo-Charrette the consultants working on the traffic analysis took part in the discussions on sustainable transport and accessibility. They have used the three scenarios from the Oslo-Charrette as input to the second phase of the transport analysis. The second phase/analysis has resulted in evaluations and recommendations in a very generic matter based on these transport calculations. These developed principles/criteria - which have to be in place to secure a sustainable transport system - was the main achievement in the second analysis. These headlines are translated into English and are available on the internet. The website www.fjordcity.com is continuously updated.

These criteria are now used in our next and ongoing phase, which are more evolving around concrete physical solutions. We are now - in what we call the accessibility project - looking into more precise overall demands for the further planning of the Fjord City areas. We work in dialogue with significant local and state transport offices and we aim to reach common understanding upon general principles regarding transport solutions and transport challenges in both short and long terms.

During the process of this work it turned out that the material was not sufficiently varied. The process moved on from the initial plan and has been transformed into a general framework for the ongoing and future collaboration between AHO as academic partner and the City of Oslo and the OWPO.

Exhibition and Media

The OWPO have documented the results of the Oslo-Charrette in a public exhibition in December 2004 and January 2005, and a

catalogue which is published in an English edition. During the Oslo-Charrette three public meetings were held, attended by the general public, planners and journalists. The event received good coverage in the newspapers, but it turned out to be difficult to draw attention and visitors to the exhibition.

TEMPO! Fjord City: A Network for Temporary Activities

A Network for Temporary activities – TEMPO! Fjordbyen – has been organized by the OWPO. TEMPO! includes the realisation of several art exhibitions in former warehouses (before they are demolished for a decisive road tunnel project), painting of “the red carpet” and the ongoing production of a leaflet/map of bike/walk routes through the harbour, attractions etc, published in English.

Public Space as a Strategy for the Waterfront

The program for and the results from an architectural competition “Urban Spaces in Bjorvika” (Byrom i Bjørvika) was planned as the basis for a report, where prototypical extract on various themes should be translated to operational “guidelines” and points of departure in further discussions on the work.

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Student Exploration of Landscape Urbanism

As a result of the cooperation between AHO and OWPO, the Institute of Urbanism and Landscape at AHO arranged a studio fall semester 2005 on master level called “Fjordtrikken (the Fjord Tram)”. The studio had 18 students; 9 landscape architect students and 9 architect students. The theme of the studio was the relationship between public transport and urban spaces. Integration between traditional landscape architecture and urbanism was a vital part of the studios working methods. The results of the studio will be published during the spring of 2006. Extracts and projects from this studio will be part of and connected to the framework of our work in the WP 3.2.

POINTS OF LEARNING

On the Use of the Charrette Tool

The useful and important results from this resource intensive workshop did not come into full use in the subsequent regeneration strategy process for two possible reasons. First, because of strong demands set by politicians and landowners which may have constrained the programming and planning progress. Second, the architectural team leading the charrette was very well prepared and therefore had a head start on their in-depth understanding of issues compared with the other team participants, which may have hindered a wide-ranging discussion during the first two days of the charrette. However, advanced preparation meant very detailed and sophisticated final presentations at the end of the charette. Another concern is that the Oslo-Charrette may have been too similar to a traditional architectural competition, raising the issue of whether or not the team leader should have been an architect.

Another issue is that the exhibition following the Charrette did not draw large crowds – most likely because the harbour areas have been closed for the public for many years (and therefore are out of people's consciousness), and simply because no one actually lives in the harbour yet. It is undoubtedly a communication challenge to integrate the public in broad discussions about future use of these “forgotten” areas.

Overall, it is important in early stages to secure understanding among the politicians for the enduring process needed to successfully accomplish flexible and robust plans that will gain the city on in a long perspective.

On the Achievements of Transport Analysis

Continuity in dialogue and participation are also needed for transport systems analysis to secure consensus and commitment to implementation of recommendations. The results from the transport analysis clearly shows the need for special focus on people walking and cycling and for public transport in order to reach sustainable transport goals. It is necessary in early phases of planning to introduce such issues so they influence important physical consideration in the design of public spaces.

The work with the transport analysis has also revealed difficulties in implementing expanded passenger transport on water, primarily (it is assumed) because there is no active public transport office or private investors that see any immediate potential for water-based public transport in Oslo, at least in the short term.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

Overcoming Barriers to the Waterfront

- For a long time the Fjord City regeneration areas have been inaccessible for the public, partly because of harbour activities and expansive infrastructure construction for trains and cars. When the harbour activities is to be relocated, it will be necessary to remove both physical and psychological barriers in order to have any possibility to create good neighbourhoods and connect the existing city to the waterfront.

Working towards Sustainable Transport

- The environment will benefit from concentration of policy and resources on urban transportation development in the Fjord City rather than in the region outside. Even if there is heavy traffic regardless of which projection is chosen, the analysis indicates that high utilization in central parts of the Fjord City would result in less vehicular traffic in relation to development volumes, thus improving the environment as a whole.

- A high proportion of businesses, opposed to a high proportion of dwellings, would result in higher proportions of public transport usage.

- Strict enforcement of parking norms and increased concentration on public transport solutions will be crucial to achieve the good environmental results shown in this analysis.

- Since many people will wish to cycle or walk rather than drive or use public transport, particular effort should be made to provide facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in the Fjord City area.

Students and Landscape Urbanism

- Extracts and part of student projects will be connected to the framework as academic discussions related to the leading themes.

The work will be presented in a final report summing up the most important issues of the students projects.

References

- A survey of both contemporary literature and relevant urban design projects will serve as theoretical and practical input to support and elaborate leading themes. The literature and projects will be presented on A4 sheets with an abstract relating the literature/projects to the four themes.

Better Coordination Among Agencies in Oslo

- Until now AHO and OWPO has been working slightly separately on two main components of Oslo's waterfront initiative: public spaces and sustainable transport. In future they need to coordinate objectives and resources in a more systematic and firm way.

Transnational Learning

- It is also important for Oslo to strengthen communication with our transnational partner cities on input needed to present a useful covering of all relevant projects, results and references.