

# NETWORK OF PUBLIC SPACES

– AN IDEA HANDBOOK



The Ministry of Local Government  
and Modernisation

# The idea handbook

The handbook illustrates the tools used to fulfil some of the Sustainable Development Goals, and in particular SDG 11.7. by 2030: "Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, particularly for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities".

The handbook was first published as a guidebook for work on public spaces in Norwegian municipalities in 2016. Therefore it is set in a Norwegian context.

"Attractive Nordic towns" has been a program under the Nordic Council of Ministers involving 18 small and medium sized Nordic towns in the overall goal of using the UN Sustainable Development Goals to create more attractive towns. As a part of this process the handbook was translated from Norwegian to English and supplemented with examples of urban spaces from the participating Nordic towns.

The idea handbook also includes a summary of interesting projects that have contributed to development and new thinking.

The Nordic countries have many similarities. As such, we hope that the idea handbook will prove inspiring and that it will be a useful tool in your future work.



Monica Mæland  
Minister of Local Government and Modernisation

Oslo, October 2019





### Everyday public spaces

“Everyday life is summer, winter, autumn and spring. It’s sunshine and rain. It’s boots and sandals. It’s Monday and Saturday. It’s biking to work. It’s a safe way to and from school for first graders, it’s a walk to the corner shop. It’s the schoolyard, the shop, the shopping street, the shopping centre and the workplace.

It’s the bench on the street corner, the sidewalk café and the bus stop. It’s the park, small idyllic areas for children, birdsong and bathing pools. It’s morning coffee on the corner, the playground at seven o’clock on Sunday morning and the football pitch. It’s a sledding slope and the small ice-skating rink and the ski track in the park. It’s an evening walk with the dog and Constitution Day celebrations. Where we walk, bike, live and meet. These are everyday public spaces”

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The background of the entire page is a photograph of tall, thin, golden-brown grasses in the foreground. In the background, a large, dark-colored building with a grid-like facade is visible under a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent white circle is centered on the page, containing text and a location pin icon.

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**PUBLIC SPACE  
AND A PUBLIC  
SPACE NETWORK**

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This chapter deals with important reasons for developing a network of public spaces in towns and villages. The chapter describes what a public space network is, elaborates on current challenges, and shows what a public space strategy can do.



# WHY PUBLIC SPACE AND A PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK?

Ever since the market places and squares of old saw the light of day, and up to today, public spaces have played an important role in our towns and villages. Public spaces are the in-between spaces, the public recreation areas and community meeting places in everyday life and in communal celebrations. Good public spaces are the city's glue and make public areas more alive and inclusive. They promote town life and activities and make them appealing to local residents, visitors and the business community.

As citizens we have become more demanding and selective in choosing where we want to live and stay.

Attractiveness has therefore become an important criterion in the competition to attract new residents, manpower and jobs.

We want safe and pleasant everyday surroundings that are also stimulating and offer venues for activities and experiences. For people to be able to use public spaces on a daily basis, they should be within walking distance and easily accessible with safe connections and without barriers. The status and role of public spaces have changed. While, for a long time, attention has been focused on the wide-open squares and markets in the centre, it is now increasingly directed towards smaller public spaces and the importance they have in people's everyday lives.

Having an everyday perspective on town and village development means that we can find out what it takes to give people good, inspirational and practical, well-organized surroundings. It's all about a good mix of facilities located within walking distance of each other. This principle is



The illustration shows the public space network and connections for pedestrians and cyclists.



called the ten-minute city, or compact city. A quotidian perspective should form the basis of major structural plans for housing areas, transportation and for the design of detailed plans and small public spaces.

Inspiring public spaces can create greater physical and social activity. It is important for public health – and to counteract loneliness and create a greater sense of security. It also contributes to better conditions for children and youths, better social inclusion and a more enjoyable everyday life for everyone. The habits and opportunities for people to live a sustainable life are related to how “liveable” towns and villages are.

Liveability is about facilities, pedestrian facilities and how compact the town is, as well as readability, connectivity and place identity, which are also hallmarks of liveable environments and places. Liveable towns and villages are not only energy-efficient, rich in biodiversity, environmentally friendly and accessible, they should contribute to beautiful surroundings and better health – and to make the residents feel proud. Places must be planned from the bottom up, and residents must be allowed to be involved in the planning and design of their surroundings.

A good and well-functioning public space network with attractive public spaces and organised connections promotes local identity. The unique nature of a place becomes visible and better connects different points in the city for more people. It also improves mobility for pedestrians and cyclists. At the same time, it becomes easier and more pleasant for people to travel around the place and daily tasks can be carried out without being dependent on a car. More pedestrians and cyclists create life in streets and the places, which makes it safer to travel, allows for new face-to-face encounters between people and provides better conditions for a flourishing shopping and service environment.

The public space network is also key to environmental efforts. Increased mobility for pedestrians and cyclists helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Public spaces can also enable us to manage to adapt to climate change and to deal with the challenges of surface water as a result of increased rainfall and flooding. By replacing some of the hard surfaces with surfaces that drain and store water we can enhance both the blue and green qualities of the environment. At the same time, we can renew streets and public spaces so that they become richer in natural diversity and improve the perception of quality.

### The European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention\* defines landscapes as “an area, as people perceive it, whose character is a result of the influence and interaction between natural and/or human factors”. This definition puts in focus the human experience of the landscape and the inhabitants’ everyday surroundings and embraces both nature and culture. It covers all kinds of landscapes, public and country landscapes, coastal and mountain landscapes. It covers valuable landscapes, ordinary landscapes and landscapes that may need restoration.

The Convention recognizes that the landscape is constantly changing, and places great emphasis on local autonomy and involvement to influence that changes are made in a direction that people want. It puts particular emphasis on landscapes where people live and work and where children grow up. Local involvement is necessary to strengthen the participation of the local community and individuals in the planning, protection and management of their surroundings. We must also improve, restore and create landscapes in towns and villages.

\* The Convention was adopted by the Council of Europe, and came into force in 2004. As the very first country in Europe, Norway decided to implement the Convention in 2001. It is administered by The Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation.

# ABOUT THE IDEA HANDBOOK

The intention of the idea handbook is to inspire municipalities and others to develop good public spaces and a good public space network.

We can achieve better everyday surroundings by connecting the physical public structure more closely to users of the town and village in which public spaces are to be developed. The main message, briefly stated, is that a public space network should be of good quality and be adapted to the people at each place. This means that public spaces should lie within walking distance and be easily accessible with good pedestrian and cycling connections. Everyone should also have access to a variety of public spaces of a different nature. They should be designed for different purposes and activities that are needed by residents and society in general.

## The idea handbook aims to show

- the importance of public spaces and public space networks in towns and villages
- principles for the development of a municipal public space strategy
- good ideas and examples of projects and planning tools that are intended to provide inspiration for this work

By developing a public space strategy, the municipality acquires a plan that shows how the public space network can evolve over time. Here it is important to have visions and long-term goals for the work so that all measures, large or small, are implemented over time. This work should be anchored in the municipality's plans according to the Planning and Building Act.

There are a number of town and village development methods and the discipline covers many topics. The idea handbook is intended to be applied in practice. It is cross-sectoral and focuses on interdisciplinary cooperation to achieve better overall solutions. It has therefore been necessary to collocate complex themes and to simplify them.

The idea handbook is particularly suitable for municipalities that plan to start developing a good public space network.

The main focus is on the improvement of existing public space structures, although the principles also apply to transformation areas and new projects starting from scratch.

## Target group

The target group for the idea handbook is, in the first instance, municipal planners, and is also useful for other public and private actors working with public spaces from different standpoints. The book is pertinent for town and village development, as well as area and transportation planning. It is also important to consider needs for children and adolescents, social inclusion, public health and property development.

Local politicians are responsible for the social development in their municipalities, and for the sustainability of land use, for the benefit of their citizens. Therefore, politicians are also a target group.



# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Many municipalities have worked actively for years to develop and improve their public spaces and a growing number of municipalities are seeing the value of laying the groundwork for good meeting places and a thriving social life. Despite this, there is still a great deal of potential for a more targeted and offensive focus on this area. We outline below the common challenges that public spaces represent in municipalities and what a public space strategy could help resolve.

## Lack of good public spaces

Many public spaces have become less attractive or inaccessible over the years due to traffic, parking, empty retail space, “unfriendly” architecture, grey and hard surfaces, privatisation, crime or other circumstances. Many places are also characterized by poor transitions between roads and building developments in the form of vacant lots.

- A public space strategy can help activate areas not in use and raise the quality of the surroundings.

## Unclear responsibility for public spaces

Public spaces have varying purposes and many different public and private owners and managers.

Different actors can be responsible for the development and operation of its own squares, parks, roads and streets. The municipality often lacks an overall strategy for where they wish to have public spaces, and what those spaces should offer.

- A public space strategy will enable the municipality to be at the forefront and to propose desired development options for public spaces in the municipality. This may help to clarify who is responsible for the development, management, operation and maintenance of individual public spaces.

## Fragmentation and barriers in the public space structures

Lack of cross-sectoral work often contributes to poor connections in the town or village. In many municipalities different agencies are involved in planning roads, sidewalks, cycle paths, green structure and public spaces. Fragmentation and barriers often hinder flow in the town or village.





- In the long run, a public space strategy will develop a public space network that connects green structures, cycling, walking, outdoor life, cultural monuments, homes, businesses and shops. It will contribute to a better overall planning of the public space structure. These are important elements of municipal and zoning plans.

### Lack of street life or activity

It can be a challenge to create life and activity in public spaces. Unfortunately, there are many examples of municipalities that invest a lot of time and money on creating new public spaces of high architectural quality, but which still remain empty. Often, this is because users were not consulted when the solutions for public spaces were designed, or that facilities were wrongly sited in relation to each other.

- A public space strategy can create an increased awareness of connecting physical planning with social structures through dialogue and participation. The strategy can also include measures that increase street life and activity.

### Floods and water damage

In many municipalities the surface water network is overloaded and is vulnerable to repeated incidents of flooding following torrential rainfall. The public space network can be designed to deal with rainwater and flooding by replacing hard surfaces with surfaces that drain water. At the same time, the water can be utilised as an architecturally attractive quality in streets and squares. Thus, towns and villages are made greener and can offer better quality experience.

- A public space strategy may require that water is drained at the area level, and locally on the individual site.

### Public space strategy

A public space strategy is intended to show the aims and development potential of public spaces and the public space network in the

municipality. Common to most towns, districts, suburbs and villages is that they want defined central areas with urban qualities and good residential areas with access to public spaces and adjoining recreation areas. However, there is a big difference between a small village and a larger city centre. Each location has its own distinct geography, history and landscape. The development structure, population, and the mix of housing, industry and culture vary.

A public space strategy must be based on local conditions, and the development of urban qualities should be adapted to each individual location.

A public space strategy must be founded on the planning strategy which states what municipal and zoning plans the municipality should develop. This must form an integral part of municipal planning.

### The Charter of European Planning\*

The main purpose of the charter is to encourage holistic planning based on current and future needs. This is so that regions, towns and municipalities should be able to achieve better environmental conditions, sustainable economic growth and better social well-being. The charter focuses on the inhabitants and users of the city and their needs in a rapidly changing world. It promotes a vision of the connected city which can be achieved through planning and cooperation between professions.

\* The European Council of Spatial Planners, (ECTP-CEU) adopted this charter in 2013. The Charter is updated according to current needs and ambitions and applies to all of Europe.

## Public space and the Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. The Agenda is the world's shared plan to transform the world to build lives of dignity for all, - where no one will be left behind.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and their 169 targets, aim to realize human rights for everyone, gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible, and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.



The SDGs provide a fundament for all urban and community development. It is important to use them as a baseline when communicating visions and developing methods and indicators.

# 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

“Make cities and human settlements  
inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”



## SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities,

“Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”- has a specific target concerning public space;

SDG 11 has 10 targets, and public space can contribute to several of them, for example target 11. 2 on transport and road safety, reduce water related disasters and improve air quality, and target 11.6 on reducing the adverse environmental impact of cities.

Good public spaces could also contribute to achieving some of the other goals, such as SDG 3 Good health and well-being SDG 13. Climate Action

### Target 11.7

By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities



# SOME TERMS



## Public space

The traditional way of perceiving public space is as an open space in a dense city. In this Idea Handbook public spaces are all publicly accessible – such as streets, squares and marketplaces, parks, small parks and blue-green areas.

Public spaces are defined as outdoor spaces delineated by buildings or other natural physical barriers. The term public space is used regardless of how it is commonly used or has been used in the past. Here the term is extended from being merely a physical space in a city to include areas that are publicly accessible and adapted to human activity within the town and village area.

Thus, the term public space also covers parts of the green structure and the blue-green areas of a town or village that have been prepared and made accessible to the general public: parks, nature areas and more.

The public outdoor areas are referred to in this Idea Handbook as “public spaces” because they are important arenas for city life and public activities. These qualities are looked for in both larger and smaller towns and villages.

## Public space network

A public space network is the infrastructure of streets, squares, parks, water features and recreation areas, sidewalks and cycle paths. A public space network should link to people’s target points in everyday life.

A network is defined as a system of elements that interact, and which may have widely differing purposes and character.

A public space network contributes to a better interaction and interconnectivity between buildings, roads, green structures, public spaces and landscape – and people on the spot.

## Target points

Target points are the main places where people stay at or seek out in everyday life such as home, school, work, kindergarten, shops, public and private businesses, and attractions.

# THE PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK IN THE MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE

A public space network contains public spaces and connections of different sizes and with different content. This does not necessarily imply that certain elements are more important than others. Together they form an entirety that is necessary in order for public spaces and the public space network to function, not least in terms of mobility and social interaction.

The public space network in each individual place has its own premises and qualities based on the municipal structure and the landscape of which it is part. A village in a mountainous area, a small town by a river and a city by the sea all have different qualities to play on that give each their own identity.

There is a hierarchy of public spaces in the building development structure, from large central squares, parks and streets to medium-sized public spaces, and right down to each street corner. A public space hierarchy can be found in all places, even the smaller ones, but then often of a different scale and scope.

It is important to remember that many of the public spaces have had changing use throughout the ages but that they are still always public spaces. For example, a public space can alternate between being a square, a road and a park depending on the needs of the time.

Some public spaces are also the result of fires or transformations whereby open areas have been given a new function as public spaces. It is a clear characteristic of public spaces that they are numerous and integrated, and they have a variety of overlapping activities and qualities. In fact, the most successful public spaces often consist of hard surfaces, vegetation and water.

The Idea Handbook categorises the different types of public spaces so that we can be more conscious of the way we plan and use them. By separating public spaces in this way insight is gained into their main characteristics, and also indicates what they are used for.

In addition to presenting public spaces, the book also describes the target points and connections in a public space network.



PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK – shows a simplified public space hierarchy: 1 Central public spaces (large or important public spaces), 2 Medium-sized public spaces (important at the area level), 3 Smaller local public spaces and target points, 4 Connection networks (for pedestrians and cyclists), 5 Connections out in the landscape (outside the building zone).



## PUBLIC SPACES

### STREETS, SQUARES AND MARKETPLACES

These are the “hard places” or the “grey public spaces” that mainly have surfaces of stone, asphalt and concrete. Such places may also include green and blue elements in the form of vegetation and water.

They can be large or small, and are attractive for shopping, movement, play, representation and social encounters.

#### Examples

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marketplaces  
squares  
street with sidewalks  
street corners  
pedestrian zones  
bridges  
subways  
playgrounds  
areas in front of the shop

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## PARKS, VACANT LOTS AND GREEN AREAS

These are the soft public spaces that promote recreation and rest but are also social meeting places and areas for play and activity.

Parks, vacant lots and green areas are mainly surfaced with grass, gravel, wood or forest floor. Vegetation is the dominant element.

Green public spaces range from cultivated parks of great beauty, with flowers and water features, to wild nature areas with paths or trails. Such places can have great experiential qualities and recreational values.

### Examples

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- parks
  - pocket parks
  - green areas
  - small idyllic areas for children
  - green open spaces
  - commons
  - riverside paths
  - allotments
  - urban cultivation
  - recreational areas
  - play areas
  - activity areas
  - vacant lots
  - cemeteries and burial sites
  - grassy fields
  - green corridors
- 



## PUBLIC SPACES WITH WATER

Blue public spaces have water as their dominant element so that a river that flows through the centre can be a public space in itself. Such public spaces often create identity due to their rich history.

Water can give a public space a distinctive character and combine several different public spaces with one clear identity, such as the Akerseiva River in Oslo.

Blue public spaces may form part of an infrastructure that absorbs rain and flood water, while also acting as a feature in itself.

The attractiveness of a place may be improved by good living areas at the water's edge, with squares, stairs, promenades, paths and swimming areas.

### Examples

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beachfronts  
quaysides  
public spaces with artificial water and fountains  
public spaces next to the sea, river, lake and stream  
public spaces that absorb and slow down rainwater and floods  
beaches and swimming facilities

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# CONNECTIONS – FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS

Pedestrian and cycling connections are the arteries of a place – this is where we move to and from work, school, shopping and leisure activities. The connections hold the place together. This includes, for example, both major public sidewalks and the paths that people have trodden themselves as part of the total pedestrian and bike path network.

## Examples

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- streets
- streets with sidewalks
- paths
- shortcuts
- stairs
- gaps and alleys
- bike paths
- roads
- bridges
- subways
- quay areas
- sea fronts
- riverside paths
- boat routes and ferries
- cable cars

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# TARGET POINTS

## IN EVERYDAY LIFE

We call the places where most of us go every day “target points”. With small changes more of these can be developed to become small and large everyday meeting places. They are part of the public structure that is based on the use of the place. Wherever possible, natural meeting places should be established that cater to the public.

### Examples

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home  
school  
kindergarten  
workplace  
grocery shop  
public institutions and offices  
centre  
services  
cafés  
shopping centre  
library  
sports centre  
training centre  
bus stop

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## ATTRACTIONS

Attractions are places people seek out to visit – they are “magnets”. These might be the beach, the vantage point, the café with the good cookies or the culture centre. These places may have unique characteristics – historical, cultural and physical. Attractions may also be distinctive and creative places, like alleys with different cultural expressions, areas of urban farming and outdoor music arenas, that make a place stand out.

Since each category is different consideration should be given as to what it takes to transform each place, such as benches in front of the cinema and bike parking at the beach. It is important that the public space network is organised such that there are good walking and biking connections to local attractions.

### Examples

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centre  
cafés  
restaurants  
cultural facilities  
library  
sports centre  
gym  
art gallery  
library  
cinema  
activity areas, skate park  
cultural monuments, cultural heritage sites  
natural qualities, vantage points  
water, river and sea, bathing area, quays  
people’s everyday qualities

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## FIVE CRITERIA

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– for the development of a good  
public space network







There are five criteria that are particularly important when adapting the public space network to suit local residents and achieve good quality.



# FIVE CRITERIA FOR ACHIEVING A GOOD PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

## People

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### USABILITY

describes the functions that public spaces and connections need to fulfil for the public space network to be attractive to use

## Infrastructure

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### PROXIMITY

refers to distances to public spaces, and access to different types of public spaces within the network



### CONNECTION

refers to connections within the public space network, and public spaces with regard to mobility

## Design

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### QUALITY

means the qualities and layout of the surroundings and physical characteristics of the public space



### URBAN NATURE

describes the blue and green natural areas, public outdoor life and climate adaptation

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# USABILITY

Usability describes the functions that public spaces need to fulfil for the public space network to be attractive to use.

## 1 Everyday public spaces and public space network

Public spaces are closely linked to our everyday lives, therefore public spaces must be designed to meet our desires and needs. We all have different preferences in respect of public spaces. Sometimes we might be looking for some form of activity, while at other times we might just need a peaceful place. Some people take the dog for a walk, others may be looking for a place to play, or may be merely passing through on their way to somewhere else.

In other words, public spaces are intended to create the framework for an enhancement of life quality. Municipal planning should allow for the development of a public space network that functions as a coherent entity, and that includes a variety of qualities that work for everyone. Thus, it is important that the municipality plans

the public space network in such a way that:

- connections are linked and make it easy to “connect into” from home, work and the important target points
- public spaces, both individually and in a broader context, offer a variety of qualities and activities that enrich people’s everyday lives

### LIVEABLE CITIES

In 2008 British authorities conducted a national survey to find out what is really important for people’s well-being. The responses were summarized as follows:

- Connect
  - meeting places where you can feel connected with others, friends, work, the neighbourhood, but also feel that you belong.
- Being active
  - walking and biking, outdoor swimming, having access to various activities. Need not be extremely but perhaps slightly physically demanding.
- Experience the surroundings (take notice)
  - awareness, mindfulness, but also have access to pleasant surroundings
  - seasonal variations and the like.
- Keep learning
  - opportunity to learn something new.
- Giving to others
  - use our ability to stretch ourselves and participate in the lives of others.

“Five ways to wellbeing.” The 2008 Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project.







## 2 Public spaces with a specific function and flexible public spaces

Public spaces have a variety of roles and functions within a public space network. Some public spaces have specific use, such as the market square, the square in front of the town hall, the church and so on. These are primarily designed for the task they are to perform, such as a venue for market trading, representative buildings, ceremonial events and so on. However, in order not to appear empty when they are not in use these places should attract people and accommodate varied use on a daily basis.

Public spaces should be flexible and not exclusive to specific functions that limits other types of activity. Vacant lots are good examples of flexible public spaces, whereby open grass or gravel areas can be used for a variety of activities such as ball games, picnics, ice-skating, and parties.





### 3 Public spaces for children and young people

Public spaces that are designed for play are popular places. If playgrounds are also designed so that adults enjoy staying there, they will be beneficial to the local environment. It is important to be aware of arranging activities for both boys and girls since they may prefer different forms of activity. For example, skate parks are often more attractive to boys than to girls, but girls' interests must also be taken into account when planning play and activity areas.

Informal meeting places and green areas that are planned for both social and physical activities can be especially important for children and young people who do not participate in organised sports. We also know that parks and public spaces play an important role for children and young people who live in small apartments in tower blocks. The "World Park" at Furuset in the borough of Groruddalen in Oslo is one example of how a public space can be tailored to meet the residents' needs and wishes. In another example, the "Young and Out" project has registered how young people between the ages of 13 and 26 use public spaces and outdoor areas at Tøyen in Oslo.

+ See Chapter 4. The Idea Bank, page 90 and Chapter 5. Resource Pages, page 113

### 4 Public spaces for everyone

Versatile and good design of public spaces encourages flexible use. Public spaces that are intended for different user groups, and that are also free, lead to increased use. The physical design and furnishing will help define which groups feel at home there. Different public spaces can attract people from different social classes, different ages and so on.

Planning for different groups to stay in the same area at the same time encourages people to meet and contributes to tolerance and social inclusion. Thus, public spaces become democratic meeting places.

### 5 Public spaces for all seasons

Public spaces must be planned for year-round use. We often have summer in mind when planning outdoor activities in public spaces, however, since winter lasts for several months a year, it is important that we also have a strategy for how public spaces can be attractive even in freezing temperatures. In wintertime vacant lots and squares can be watered and frozen and used as skating rinks. Many municipalities prepare ski tracks in parks and green open spaces during the winter months, and snowploughing can be more than just snow clearance if the snow is deposited to create sledding hills in neighbourhoods.





All four seasons have their own resources. Here are some examples of resources we can use, and there are many more:

**Spring:** spring bulbs, snow melting and budding leaves is the season for walks and other outdoor activities

**Summer:** sun, warmth, water and vegetation is the season for swimming, sunbathing and outdoor life

**Autumn:** autumn colours and water is the season for walks, biking and nature experiences

**Winter:** snow and ice is the season for using kick sleds, sledding boards, skating and skiing

## 6 Public spaces for harsh climates

When planning and designing public spaces we must take into account the local climate and changing weather conditions.

In some cases, this will be ensured by good operation and maintenance routines such as snow clearance and sanding of pavements and bike paths in the winter. However, it is still important to thoroughly plan the location and dimensioning of lighting and furnishing on streets and squares so that we can deal with both large volumes of snow and surface water in a good way. For public spaces that are located

close to the sea we must use materials and vegetation that tolerate salt water. A public space that is exposed to wind and weather can be arranged to provide protection from wind and with heated benches. Equally, public spaces that are designed to tolerate harsh weather conditions can be attractions in themselves.

### HAMAR MUNICIPALITY IN WINTER

Hamar Municipality is very conscious of making multiple uses of public space and green open areas throughout the seasons. For example, only half of the pavement and sidewalks in winter are sanded so that people can use the other half for using a kick sled, sledge or sledding board.

The slides in Ankerskogen were developed by local enthusiasts so that small children can take part in skiing activities under good and safe snow conditions from November to April. The fountain area in the new Stortorget square is frozen in the winter and skates can be rented under the auspices of the organization "Youth of Hamar". More than 20 local areas downtown are frozen in the winter.



### 7 Public spaces that can be used around the clock

The best guarantee that public spaces will be used is that there are enough people of different ages living nearby. In many Norwegian towns and villages the streets in the centre are occupied by businesses and shops rather than being residential areas, although most towns and villages have one or more centres where younger people in particular meet to see and be seen.

A public space network must provide good, safe connections to and from the centre at all times of the day. In several towns, so-called “safe routes” are being discussed which young people and adults can take on their way home in the early hours of the morning. In Oslo good lighting is combined with pruning of shrubs and hedges to improve visibility. Maximum safety is provided by the presence of other people, and Oslo’s strategy is therefore supplemented with civilian security patrols or patrolling police.

For public spaces to be used throughout the day it is important that the municipality has adequate systems for cleaning and maintenance, not least on weekends. Streets and squares should be attractive for both everyday life and parties, and the day after the night before!

### 8 Public spaces and street life and activity

It can be a challenge to create places with an active street life, people out-and-about, lively shopping precincts and attractive marketplaces. By means of a public space strategy the municipality can ensure that it has an overview of where particular qualities are to be found, or are lacking.

Public life surveys are one method of registering activity. Here it is possible to register user groups and the number of streets and frequency of use of squares, parks and the public arena, and thus obtain an overview of attractive and less attractive places.

**+** See Chapter 5. Public Life Surveys

A variety of events, markets and festivals can also contribute to public life for shorter or longer periods of time. The municipality, the business community, cultural organisations and volunteers often collaborate on various events in the centre.

### 9 Public space for quality of life

All neighbourhood areas need community meeting places that help create good living environments. This is true of neighbourhoods in residential areas, in towns, satellite towns



and public areas along the networks and into the town centre.

We are in the process of creating towns and villages that are more compact, and the public environment becomes more important for neighbourhoods. By exploiting the use of existing town and village structures, public parks and squares are used more. Compact public development, where the ambition is to create good compact towns and villages, can have positive consequences for public life. However, it can also create pressure on the natural environment. Therefore, private outdoor areas and common areas must be well maintained, as well as connections to other parts of the city and the public green structure.

**+** See Chapter 5. 10. Points that ensure good life quality

### 10 The bench that creates a simple meeting place

Both younger and older people often feel a lack of meeting places in the immediate neighbourhood and clubs and associations need places for stands and the like. A place with benches in front of the corner shop can be a simple way of ensuring social encounters. One or more benches will also provide older people with a place to rest, making it easier for them to walk to their local shop.

### PUBLIC LIFE AND LIVING OSLO

“Living Oslo” is a public-private network between politicians and businesses in the centre in which property owners, the business community and the tourism industry participate. The aim is to co-operate in taking concrete measures to make the centre of Oslo both attractive and accessible. The network discusses strategies and initiatives at an early stage, and then passes these on to a local executive committee which is responsible for implementation. “Living Oslo” has prepared a public life survey (GEHL Architects 2014) which, among other things, has provided guidance in the planning of an action programme for increased public life and the project for car-free public life in the centre of Oslo. The benefit of the “Living Oslo” collaboration is that a forum has been established for discussions on centre development, as well as a broad forum for the establishment and implementation of concrete actions.



# PROXIMITY

Proximity refers to distances to public spaces and access to different types of public spaces within the network.

## 1 Distance affects use

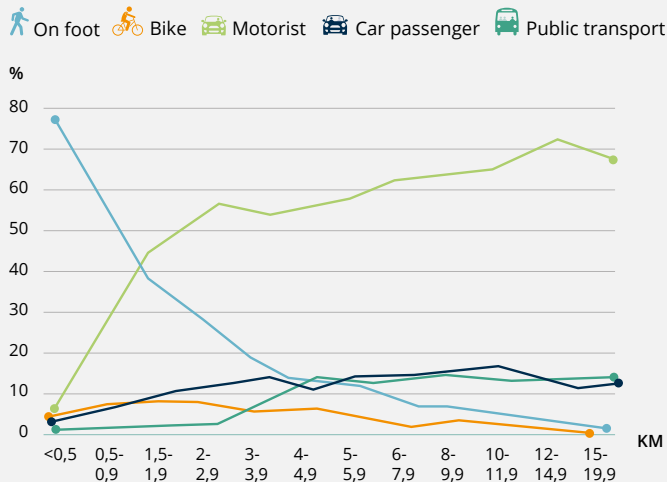
When the municipality or others plan their public space network, knowledge of local journey types is important i.e. how far people are willing to walk or bike before they decide to use their car, or drop the trip altogether. Research shows that when the distance is less than 1-kilometre people usually choose to walk. One kilometre is approximately a ten-minute walk. If the journey is longer, people choose to bike or even more often to take the car. For children and older people, the distance they can cover in ten minutes is shorter.

From a socio-economic perspective the Norwegian Directorate of Health and the Norwegian Roads Administration envision the following recommendations:

- 0 – 2 km. journey to work: walk
- 2 – 7 km. journey to work: bicycle
- 7 – 15 km. journey to work: bicycle or e-bike or use public transport and walk or bike parts of the way

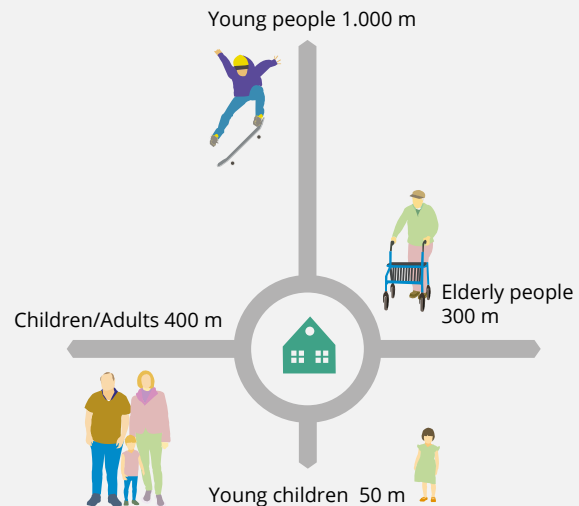
It is crucial to take these distances seriously, it creates environmentally-friendly public development with a public health perspective that is taken into account in planning. Therefore, the intention behind planning a public space network is that everyday activities should be located within walking or biking distance. This means that area planning must be based on knowledge of local journey patterns when different facilities are being localised.

### HOW DO WE MOVE FROM PLACE TO PLACE?



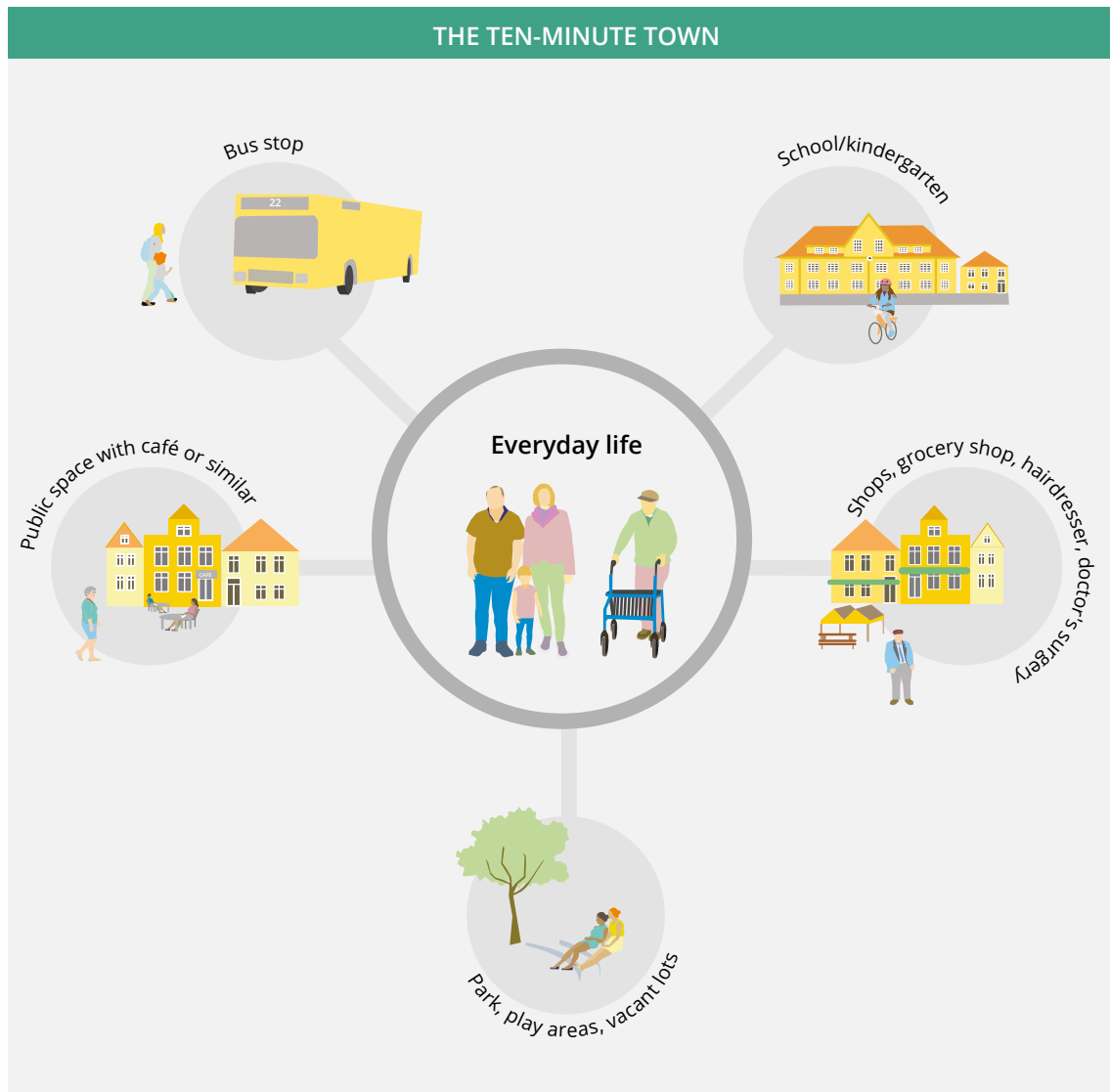
This data is collected from RVU 2009 and TØI Report 1130/2011

### HOW FAR DO WE WALK?



This data is taken from "Planning of green structure in towns and villages", Directorate for Nature Management 6-1994





## 2 The Nearby town The Ten-Minute Town

In the nearby town, all of everyday life target points can be reached within a walking distance of ten minutes. The ten-minute city is a planning principle that emphasizes a good mix of housing, school, kindergarten, businesses, jobs, leisure activities, public spaces, green spaces, and which are linked together with attractive connections.

The ten-minute town assumes a relatively dense building development with a good mix of functions and purposes. This constellation does not exist everywhere, but it is nevertheless a planning principle that is useful to pursue. It provides an indication of how to locate various new facilities if we want to support accessibility by foot and bike.

+ See Chapter 4. The Idea Bank, Case Fredrikstad p. 111



### USE OF PARKS

An example from a Danish survey of how parks in Odense are used shows that:

- The shorter the distance is to the park; the longer people stay there and the more often it is used.
- 66 percent of park activities are in the range of high to moderate activity (running, jogging, biking, ball games etc.)
- When the distance is 300m. or less, there is a 75–80 percent probability of people using it on a weekly basis.
- When the distance is more than five km. from their home, there is a 15–25 percent probability that people will use it on a weekly basis, i.e. rarely, or never.
- 43 percent of residents who have less than 300 metres to parks, use them daily.
- 2 percent of residents who have more than 5km. to parks, use them daily.

(Ref. 10 principles. Health-promoting public space development in Tønsberg, Norway by Cititec)

### 3 Barriers and boring surroundings

Real distance and perceived distance are not always the same. Attractive traffic arteries mean that people are encouraged to walk farther, while barriers and boring surroundings reduce the desire to walk or ride a bike.

Loud noises, hazardous crossings, a feeling of insecurity, desolate roads or poorly signposted connections are typical barriers. Conversely, attractive connections on which many people travel appeal to more people. One example is from Gran, where the way to and from school was boring so the municipality took steps to ameliorate this.

**+** See Chapter 4. The Idea Bank, Gran School Road Project page 87.

### 4 Access to different public spaces

A neighbourhood should have access to different types of public spaces with a variety of features and qualities which can be used by different people, preferably at the same time. A range of facilities with varying content and nature must be provided within an area that includes different types of public spaces. Thus, they can fulfil a variety of functions that are needed by the residents.

### Recommendations on access to different types of public spaces

There are a number of national laws, regulations and guidelines that apply to green open spaces and play areas. The table shows an excerpt from the national guidelines and regulations that have been adopted at the municipal level. We have also added some recommendations that can act as a guide for the design of local public space networks.

EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO A VARIETY OF PUBLIC SPACES WITHIN THEIR IMMEDIATE VICINITY	
A square or marketplace	within 200m. (built up area) – 300 m. (dispersed settlement)
Larger marketplaces	within 800 m.
A park or green open space	within 200m. (built up area) – 300 m. (dispersed settlement)
Larger green open spaces	Access to a larger green open space where you can go for a walk of approximately 2 km. at a maximum distance of 500 metres from your home
Green corridors	Securing green corridors that are 30 – 50 metres wide at a maximum distance of 500 metres from home is recommended
Green connections	green connections are recommended that are either tree-lined or have another kind of green structure such as a green tissue in the urban structure and/or signposts directing to parks and green open spaces
Starting point for walks	within 500 m.
Playground	within 50 m from home neighbourhood playground 150 m from home larger attractive playground within 500 m
EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO SIDEWALKS, BIKE PATHS AND BICYCLE PARKING	
Sidewalks	continuous sidewalks with a network of shortcuts, walking paths, footpaths and pavements
Streets	pavements should have a minimum width of 2 metres
Bike paths	a network of bike paths adapted to each local area, with a hierarchy from express bike paths, where appropriate, to biking shortcuts
Bike parking	bike parking racks in public spaces and at target points
Bus stop	within 300 m.
EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO BENCHES IN PUBLIC SPACES, IN FRONT OF SHOPS ETC. AND ALONG SIDEWALKS	
Benches	in all public spaces and in green open spaces
Benches at everyday target points	at bus stops, in front of shops and entrances to public buildings and institutions, cultural institutions and other relevant private buildings
Benches along sidewalks	at every 50 m. along the main sidewalks at every 100 m. on other relevant sidewalks



On the left the Nollis city plan from 1748 shows public spaces in white. Public buildings such as the Pantheon are also shown in white, they are defined as public spaces.



### Recommended guidelines for the public space network are adapted to local conditions.

The above table on page 35 refers, among other things, to:

- National political guidelines for children and adolescents, and guidance given in circular T-2/08 on children and planning
- Planning of green structures in towns and villages. DN-Handbook 6, 1994 and Guide from the Norwegian Environment Agency, M100 2014
- The towns of Stavanger, Bodø and Rana, share the objective of everyone having no more than 500 metres to the starting point of their journey
- Oslo Municipality, Norway's, "Municipal Sector Plan for Squares and Meeting Places".

#### RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES

It is possible to set requirements or provide guidelines for public spaces and meeting places in

- Municipal planning: one example is the municipality of Oslo, Norway's, "Municipal Sector Plan for Squares and Meeting Places".

- "Area in need of a square/meeting place" is defined in the municipal sector plan as areas in the inner city that have more than 200 m, and outer city with more than 300 m (direct path between points) to a square/meeting place, or other main meeting place or local square/meeting place.
- For development encompassing more than 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> gross area, the regulation plan emphasises the inclusion of at least one square/one meeting place that satisfies the aforementioned requirements with a useable area of at least five percent of the gross area of such an initiative. Moreover, the square/meeting place should be established in an area offering a good view and in a sunny location, and should be designed with easy access to the public street network or pedestrian sidewalks and cycle paths. Terrain steeper than 1:3 is not included in the area. The Regulation Plan should also ensure that the square/meeting place is sited parallel to building development.

+ See Chapter 4. Idea Bank Municipal Sector Plan for Squares and Meeting Places in Oslo, Norway, page 113.







## CONNECTION

Refers to a coherent public space network and public spaces regarding mobility.

### 1 Public spaces for mobility and better connections

Travel is an important aspect of the functionality of a public space. Many of the everyday experiences in public spaces occur in connection with travel. Travel is often complex and therefore the concept of mobility is a good umbrella term that refers to interaction and combined use of different types of transport. Providing for safe and inclusive public spaces with good mobility where people can meet and see each other is a good starting point for creating public life. This is the case at the local level, and also between districts, villages, hamlets, green open spaces and so on. These public spaces form the connecting lines in the public space network, and they must be made available to all groups of society.

#### Examples of public spaces for mobility:

way to and from school  
the bus stop  
the connection between different public transport stops  
the shopping street in the centre  
residential streets with a mixture of housing and shops/commercial buildings  
entrance to the shopping centre  
residential street  
the path through the park  
shortcuts  
cycle paths in green open spaces  
public areas

Caption: The illustration shows a principle of sustainable mobility whereby pedestrians and cyclists have 1st priority, public transport has 2nd priority and vehicles have 3rd priority.

### 2 Distances and accessibility are essential for use

Accessibility for vehicles has largely been prioritised ahead of vulnerable road users and has reduced people's use of streets and public spaces. Street life is dependent on travel on foot and by bike, but vehicle-based downtown areas can be difficult to navigate or both pedestrians and cyclists. In many towns measures are now underway to transform the roads to streets with better accessibility for vulnerable road users.

Mobility for this group starts based on everyday life from home. The public spaces we move in must have the kind of qualities that make us feel like walking and cycling. It must be easy and comfortable to choose an active form of transport. These measures must be built on a knowledge of attractive solutions for each of the modes of transport and to protect the diversity of road users, methods of use and equipment.





It is important to create a hierarchy of connections when we develop a network of transport arteries – from the smallest shortcuts to the bigger sidewalks – and we must pay attention to, and separate, traffic flows with different speeds. For example, the latter relates to separating cyclists as they hurry to work, from people strolling along the river bank: two groups of road users with different tempos and attention levels.

Good solutions with the smallest possible number of conflicts requires interaction between land use and the street network hierarchy.

### 3 To want to walk or bike

The main reason why we want to go outdoors and spend time there is to experience variety in our surroundings. Just walking along a stretch of road might be perceived as in a film where something happens within the space of a few

seconds. It is important to strive for variety and a human dimension in built-up areas, such as short squares, a fine-meshed network and a variety of buildings with architectural details, front-facing facades and a number of different functions.

Variation in colour and detail, openings between buildings and a diversity of facilities and activities make for an attractive walk – and encourage us to walk even further. Vegetation and water are elements in a varied experience of nature and enable walkers to find their way. It is, for example, possible to introduce different types of vegetation in parallel streets that plays on a particular theme for each of the streets. Resting places, a variety of seats and space for planned and unplanned activities allow for stays and social control.





#### 4 Mobility plan and travel habits

To be able to view the whole picture, including different types of travel, a trip must be registered in its entirety, not as separate journeys. A mobility plan or analysis will reveal the potential and possibility of combining different modes of transport into one network. This will provide a good foundation for developing strategic public spaces and connections, and may mean that roads, streets and public spaces designed for car traffic must be redesigned to suit public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. Transport projects may also be used in environmental rehabilitation and area development. The public railway in Bergen is a good example of this. It has generated new central areas and led to an upgrading of streets and squares; stops on the route have become new places in their own right.

To achieve this, certain fundamental exercises must be carried out:

1. Conduct counts, analyses and forecasts of the desired traffic group's needs. Growth forecasts must reflect desired transport modes (public transport, biking, walking).
2. Reduce private vehicle accessibility and increase accessibility for the desired traffic groups.

#### 5 Good advice for mobility in public spaces:

- Pavements must be wide and pleasant to walk along.
- Facades must be varied and open with variety or activity at least every 20 metres.
- Sidewalks and street corners must be spacious enough to accommodate street life, benches, café chairs and crates of wares.
- Pedestrian zones must be connected and be free of barriers and traffic hazards.
- The infrastructure must be made suitable for children. For example, use control questions like "Is this a route on which a young child can run to kindergarten, or a stretch of road on which a 6-year-old can bike to soccer training alone"?
- The use of the street areas must be clearly marked.
- Zones for pedestrians and cyclists must be designated.
- Avoid high road edges – they represent a problem for cyclists and are unfortunate in terms of universal design.
- Public transport stops should be placed logically in relation to important destination points. The distance between stops should be around 300 m to make them easily accessible.
- There should be bicycle parking at or close to all stops.



- Bicycle parking should be positioned close to all relevant target points for everyday life.
- Allow for necessary space for delivery vans etc., and ensure that there are flexible solutions for use of the public space all day long.

## 6 Lighting

Good lighting is important so that people can be outdoors when it's dark. Public spaces, sidewalks and cycle paths must be clearly illuminated so that surroundings feel safe. Studies show that many groups want good lighting. Older people want good lighting so they can see where they are going. Many older people stop going out and participating in activities after dark – partly just because it is dark, and partly because they are fearful, they will not be able to get help if they should need it. Children and young people want good street lighting so that they can see each other's faces. All of this establishes requirements for street lighting – evenness, luminous intensity and quality – to show what is being illuminated without being glaring.

A lighting plan can indicate where lighting is needed, and the type of illumination needed. This applies to lighting plans for public spaces and connections, but also for landmarks such as signal buildings, natural elements and so on. Outdoor lighting can be designed so as to provide a functional, architecturally good and not least energy-efficient and cost-saving system.

+ See Chapter 5. Lighting guide p.118.

### NATIONAL CYCLING STRATEGY

The National cycling strategy is part of the National Transport Plan (NTP 2014 – 2023) and describes the aims and means of increasing cycling activity in Norway. "Focus on cycling" means that national, regional and local authorities are working together to encourage more people to bike. The main aim is for bike traffic to account for eight percent of all travel by 2023.

### NATIONAL WALKING STRATEGY

The national walking strategy has the following aims

**1. It should be attractive for everyone to walk.**

The aim is for all sectors of the population to experience walking as attractive, and that everything is arranged so that it is possible to walk more as part of daily life.

**2. More people should walk further.**

The aim is for a greater part of the population's total travel to be on foot, and that all sectors of the population should walk more in their daily life.



# QUALITY

This means the quality and design of the surroundings and physical qualities of the public space.

## 1 Qualities of spaces in the public space network

The quality of a public space network is an important factor in the development of attractive towns and villages. Archimedes defined quality as “aesthetic and enduring.” In a Norwegian dictionary quality is defined as: “The way things are – their nature and specific character (sensory perception). Simply put, quality is the ability to satisfy the user’s needs and expectations.”

Quality will generally be subject to interpretation, but must be made adaptable and relevant. High quality is achieved at different levels and is



dependent on a number of conditions working together. Planning strategy, spatiality, lighting, form, scale, coherence, climate, architectural quality, cultural history, aesthetics, and durable and beautiful materials are just a few examples of what contributes to a quality experience.

Specifically, it is about making the best use of the qualities of a place, such as views, variations in terrain, river banks and so on. Public spaces should be designed so that they are not only useful, but also enrich people’s everyday experiences.

We experience our surroundings at eye-level when walking or cycling. What makes the surroundings attractive from this perspective is the variety in facades, high architectural quality of buildings and public spaces, access to a pleasant landscape and rich city nature.

## 2 Quality in public spaces

Quality is also about using durable and beautiful materials that can withstand aging and that are robust and suited to each place. This applies to open spaces, borders, furnishing, lighting and use of vegetation.

Public spaces are intended to contribute to a rich sensory experience – also called joyful values: colours from buildings, art and vegetation, smells from trees, bakeries and the sea, sounds from rustling leaves, running water or voices.

Clients, developers and designers such as architects and landscape architects have a shared responsibility for ensuring quality in area plans and in each particular project. Here the municipality has an advisory role. See also the principles for designing public spaces Chapter 3. Public Space Strategy p.58.





## ARCHITECTURE

Architecture, in its broadest sense, encompasses all our man-made environments, including buildings and factories, outdoor spaces and landscapes. It's all about individual buildings and groups of buildings interacting with each other, about towns, villages and landscapes as a whole.

Quality is improved when planning of houses, common areas and facilities is steered by the ambition to achieve good architectural quality. Processes that place emphasis on knowledge, teamwork, presentation and good implementation are essential to what we want to achieve.

Architecture should contribute to high life quality and provide attractive, functional and universally-designed buildings and environments.

Architecture is intended to express a shared culture and identity, contribute to well-being, sustainability and value creation, and aim at preserving and enriching the environment.


From *Architecture Now*.

### 3 Public spaces and heritage as a resource

Cultural heritage represents a treasure chest full of genuine local history that contributes to a sense of identity and belonging. Older buildings, squares, installations, streets, paths and tracks in the landscape help to enrich the architecture when places are to be transformed. By preserving its history, we contribute to carrying on the identity of a place.

All public spaces have a physical shape, but they also contain a collection of memories, histories and stories. Our relationship with towns and places is driven by reason and emotions, and affinity is built over time. Historical traces represent a resource when areas are to be developed, renewed, or repaired.

One example is the “Blue Thread” project in Trondheim, where local heritage is being used as a resource in public development and the creation of public life.

 See Chapter 4. The Blue Thread p. 93.

If we view the development of public structure over time, it is often the case that, although houses change, the street structure and public spaces remain unchanged. It is therefore important to design public spaces so that they can accommodate changes over time.



One example of this is the Torgallmenningen in Bergen. Torgallmenningen is a wide avenue and a square – and one of the city's most important meeting places. As with all similar areas in Bergen, it was originally planned as a firebreak following the city fire in 1582 and was given its name after the city fire in 1702. The area was given its current design following the city fire in 1916, and was last upgraded in 1999.

#### CULTURAL HERITAGE IN PLANNING

- The Directorate for Cultural Heritage's City Strategy (2016)\* is the Directorate's strategy for work with cities.
- The Directorate has also developed methods for mapping and developing historical qualities to be used as resources in the development of towns and villages.
  - "DIVE" is a public heritage analysis tool for landscapes, towns and villages.

\* The register presents an overview of areas where national cultural heritage and cultural environment interests are linked to Norwegian towns and villages with a public structure. The database shows the most significant existing traces of Norwegian public development from the Viking age and up to about the 1950's.

#### 4 New projects that are intended to give added value to public spaces

All construction projects should have good architecture and landscape architecture that increases the value of the environment and creates better unity. When developing a public space network, it is important to take advantage of the existing qualities of a place. New building and construction projects that support this idea will have a positive effect on development. Buildings must be designed so as to make stays in public spaces interesting and equally, designed to be attractive to residents, users, and people passing through.

The municipality, as the planning authority, has a particular responsibility for the totality and for ensuring that the "seam" between many different projects makes the place attractive. New projects or area plans can help improve the public structure by reinforcing the connections at each location.



### 5 Public spaces and improvements

Many places have large vacant lots, particularly connected to commercial buildings, road landscapes and harbour areas. When transforming such areas, it is important to ensure an attractive framework for the community by the creation of a well-organized public space network. Squares, parks, football pitches, green areas or sea fronts can be established in such areas. It is also important to create good connections and transitions so that these areas are better connected to each other, and so that the public structure gives the impression of unity.

For example, improvements to streets and public spaces may involve

- redefining roads as streets
- creating a square from what was previously merely a large asphalt surface with parking lots
- building parks on vacant lots or demolition sites
- building broad sidewalks with rows of trees where there was once just a hard shoulder
- marking up cycle paths in red on wide streets previously only intended for cars
- creating attractive pools and water features in landfill areas close to rivers, the sea and lakes

### 6. Art in public spaces

Art can enrich our surroundings. Throughout the ages art has been used to decorate parks and squares. In connection with the upgrading of Bergen in the 1980's artists designed the open spaces in Vetrldsallmenningen. This inspired other cities to introduce art into their open spaces.

At Rjukan, the artist Martin Andersen has installed a sun mirror on the mountain. During the weeks of the year when the sun does not reach down into the narrow valley the mirror directs rays of sun down into the town square. As local art the sun mirror tells us something about Rjukan's real situation and provides a new and longed-for quality to the town.

Vardø has used art in its own public development strategy with respect for the town's character, rich cultural history and local business initiatives. The project started in 2012 when street artists were invited to create works intended to represent the town's history in a new and unconventional way. This has resulted in "Vardø Restored", which creates new stories and future-oriented business activities in the city's historic buildings.





## 7 Operation and maintenance

All public spaces need regular maintenance to keep them attractive. This means tending to and watering vegetation, garbage disposal, cleaning and inspection of furnishings and lighting and so on. It also applies to snow ploughing and clearing. All public spaces should have their own operation and maintenance plan.

### ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY

The Planning and Building Act establishes constraints to architecture and uses the concepts of aesthetic design of the environment, visual qualities and architectural design and building traditions.

A. Aesthetic design of the environment applies to the good design of the built-up environment, good living environments and the safeguarding of landscape qualities.

B. Good visual qualities mean that the building/installation expresses its function through its form, and that other visual qualities are to be safeguarded through design and execution, as an interaction between volume and height, expression and so on.

C. The concept of good architectural design is applied as a collective term for the integration of visual qualities, usability, functionality and universal design in any concept.

D. Good building traditions in architectural terms are understood to describe a well-built environment. Execution, material use, design and interaction with location and environment can help to enhance, renew and develop building traditions. The projects should have good architectural design and meet key requirements for environment, adaptation and universal design.

Municipalities, as planning and building authorities, have a great opportunity to influence local design and architecture. Community and land-use planning are important tools for managing development, and municipalities have great freedom in identifying local building traditions and the physical design of our environment.

**+** To read more about quality, see Chapter 5. The building tradition key.



# URBAN NATURE

Urban nature is about the blue and green qualities of a public space network, public outdoor life and climatic adaptation.

## 1 Blue-green public spaces

Green towns and villages contribute to well-being, biodiversity and recreational opportunities. They are important for public health, local identity and the desire to live in a particular place. Nature in the city is part of the city's ecosystem comprising water, vegetation, earth and animals. Blue-green public spaces, which range from parks to woodlands, must be planned and taken care of so that they add something to the city's qualities. It is important that all blue-green public spaces and connections are planned as elements of an overall green structure.

## 2 Trees in streets and squares

Roadside trees, rows and avenues of trees should be planned as a unity. They can also help to connect green spaces. Municipalities can prepare special tree plans or street use plans to this end. Such plans will determine the appearance of streets, define which road users should be given priority, lighting and furnishing, which streets should be tree-lined, which public spaces

should be mostly green or without vegetation and so on. People prefer to take walks in green surroundings so tree-lined streets or avenues can encourage walking and public outdoor life.

## 3 Renewal of green public spaces

Many green areas have great potential for improvement. Large grassy areas in parks may be regarded as a positive quality since they have many uses, but they can also be experienced as green deserts where nothing happens. A green area does not necessarily improve a neighbourhood if it lacks content and is poorly maintained. Green open spaces need to be developed to give a positive experience by establishing play areas, pitches for ball games, small parks, paths and benches and so on. Well-planned care and cultivation of new plants and vegetation improve the quality of such areas. Vegetation at many levels and variety create greater biodiversity which allows for many species of birds, insects and fauna to thrive. A richer natural diversity also opens for more experiences for people.





New parks can help to revitalize areas. Examples of this are two new parks in the public district of Groroddalen, Oslo; Bjerkedalen Park and Verdensparken.

+ See Chapter 4. Idea Bank pp. 88 and 90.

#### 4 Public spaces and urban cultivation

Urban farming is popular in cities. Many people want to grow their own vegetables whilst others enjoy the social aspects of urban farming. Public gardens vary from traditional allotment gardens to cultivable spots in temporary public spaces, public parks and established public spaces, roadsides and so on.

Urban cultivation often leads to positive changes. An example of that is the herbal garden in Grønland, Oslo, which has played an important role in encouraging integration while enabling neighbours to get to know each other. In Vaterlandsparken, urban farming has helped to make the area feel safer to be in, see Chapter 4. Idea Bank p. 90. The eastern district of Stavanger is a transformation area in which the “Edible District” project has used urban farming as a key element of the identity and integration strategy for the development of the district.

When planning parks in towns and villages it is important to choose the type of vegetation that bees and other pollinators like to ensure the pollination of plants. “The Pollinator Corridor” in Oslo is an example of a project to secure “flight paths” for bees and other pollinator species in the city’s green structure. See Chapter 4. Idea Bank p. 91.

#### 5 Burial grounds as public spaces

Cemeteries and burial grounds are green public spaces. Burial grounds are fenced in and the gates act as a psychological barrier against the wider world so that stress and hassle can be left on the outside to make room for peace and contemplation. Norwegian burial sites are public and many of them were established as early as the Middle Ages. As such they also have cultural and historic value. People use burial grounds for different recreational purposes, but presence and activities must be subordinate to the obvious sensitivities of these sites. A discussion is underway in international fora on the use of burial grounds as public spaces.



## 6 Public spaces for public outdoor life

Outdoor life has developed from the traditional hiking trip in woodland and the countryside to greater recreational use of public spaces and green open spaces in neighbourhoods. Public outdoor life is outdoor life that alternates between trips in nature areas and in urban environments. Public outdoor life involves the use of the public space network of streets, parks, public spaces, harbour promenades and so on, where there are links to the hiking paths in less cultivated nature on the urban fringe. Public outdoor life offers nearby recreational areas with a breadth and diversity that make them attractive to many. Experience shows that these are attractive to all sectors of the population, including those who do not participate in traditional Norwegian outdoor life in woodlands, fields and mountains.

This means that arrangements should be made for new forms of outdoor activities and sporting events that have a lower threshold for participation. One example is Kristiansand municipality which has as an objective to offer everyone access to a universally adapted evening walk in its district.

Many towns and villages have developed good projects for public outdoor life, such as:

- Stavanger: 52 everyday walks – walks in the town and in nature.
- Drammen: Urban outdoor life – along the river, through the city and out into the countryside.
- Trondheim: The Blue Thread – cultural heritage and urban life along the Nidelva river and the harbour.
- Public outdoor life in Kristiansand -The SMS project, see Chapter 4. Idea Bank p. 111.

### RECREATION AREAS. MAPPING AND VALUATION

The Directorate of the Environment has developed a method for mapping and valuing recreation areas in order to identify, develop and service public recreational areas. The towns of Mo i Rana, Bodø, Bergen and Trondheim have used this method in developing public spaces.





Future streets: multifunctional use of space in Deichmansgate and Wilses Street. Illustration by Oslo Municipality's City Environment Directorate and Tag Architecture.

## 7 Climate change adaptation and renewal of public spaces

Public spaces also play an important role in climate change adaptation by serving to absorb and spread surface water. Requirements for improved climate change adaptation in towns and villages can contribute to the renewal of public space networks with a variety of robust and attractive public spaces. Streets, squares, parks and green open spaces are designed with rubble drain beds, gullies, rain gardens, ponds and trees that help to spread the water and at the same time enrich the quality of the area. Interdisciplinary collaboration in cooperation with good landscape architecture is necessary to achieve good solutions such as flood roads for dealing with run-off storm water resulting from climate change. Here are some examples:

### Rainwater and flooding in public spaces

Good solutions for dealing with storm water can also give public spaces new qualities. Parks, squares and streets can be designed to lead, to slow down and to drain rain and flood water, instead of piping it into the sewer system. Examples of this are the "Streets of the Future" project in Oslo and the "Cloudburst Plan" in Copenhagen.

### Open streams and rivers

By reopening streams and rivers that are enclosed in underground pipes the blue lines in the landscape of towns and villages will be resurrected. New flood roads and delay roads must be planned in the context of the natural drainage system in each area.

### Rain garden

A rain garden is a depression in the terrain that absorbs and slows down rain and flood water rather than letting it flow into stormwater drains and waterways. They are planted with sturdy plants that tolerate both large volumes of water and drought, and also make a positive contribution to the environment. Rain gardens can be established in squares, parks and other green open spaces, and they also act as important biotopes for vegetation and wildlife.

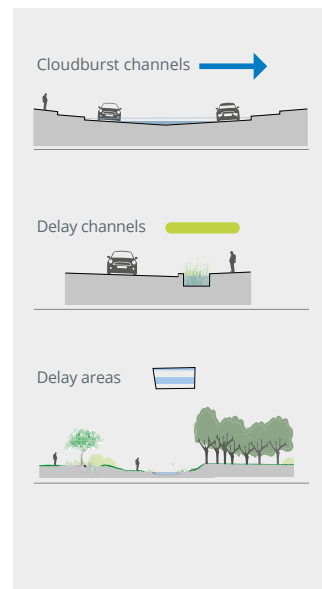
### Flood control of waterways

Flood control along rivers and streams can create added value if it is also made available for public access. A good example of it is the flood embankment at Lillestrøm, where footpaths and park features were established following the great flood in 1995.

 See Chapter 5 Resource pages. Blue-green factor.



■ Main stream     ▤ Main stream, underground



+ See Chapter 5. Resource pages Climate change adapted public spaces in Nørrebro/extreme rainfall plan. Nordic built Cities Challenge, 2016.

### Extreme rainfall plan for Copenhagen

In July 2011, Copenhagen was hit by a huge flood and experienced 150 mm of rainfall in the space of two hours. The flood destroyed critical infrastructure and material value totalling one billion euros.

Copenhagen has taken on the consequences of the city becoming hotter, wetter and wilder and has created a plan to address climate change. The plan includes a “Cloudburst Plan”, which finances surface solutions that are adapted to changed climatic circumstances. This is intended to help create multifunctional spaces in the public environment that drain off water from one to ten percent of the time. Otherwise they function normally as roads, streets, parks and squares. The concept involves a larger proportion of green and blue areas in public spaces. The objective is to develop more public nature and greater biodiversity and to create synergies that save time and money.

The plan follows natural waterways and divides the city by catchment areas. Some of the solutions are cloudburst roads, delay roads and delay areas. The new infrastructure is to be implemented within 20 years.



3

**PUBLIC SPACE  
STRATEGY**





A strategy is a method for achieving a goal. This chapter presents a proposal for how a municipality can start the work of developing a public space strategy. A toolkit has been put together with checklists that will help to develop plans for a local public space network.



# PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGY

A public space strategy enables a municipality to work actively and purposefully towards developing public spaces and a public space network. It should be based on local conditions and adapted to suit each place.

A public space strategy can be made as comprehensive or as simple as needed. It is vital to have a vision, long-term objectives and to initiate the process. The strategy should be developed in collaboration with local inhabitants and businesses so that public spaces and the connections between them are easy to use, attractive and accessible to all.

There is no fixed answer as to how a municipality should plan, organize, and implement this work. There are a number of factors that come into play, such as the extent of the municipality's available economic and professional resources, the ambitions that it hopes to achieve, its knowledge-base as well as the local physical structure and surroundings.

## What is a public space strategy?

A public space strategy will:

- include a clear vision and objectives for the public space network
- a plan for the public space network that shows relevant measures
- an action plan that shows stage-by-stage implementation

The public space strategy must be flexible enough to allow for any new measures that may be introduced to be integrated into the totality, and thus improve the quality of each place.

## How to develop a public space strategy

There are many ways of developing a public space strategy. The Idea Handbook proposes a method based on certain general principles that need to be made compatible with local conditions.

This toolkit and checklists may assist in this work. They suggest topics that may be relevant in overall planning, registration and analysis and in the preparation of the public space network plan itself. In Chapter 4 the Idea Bank also includes examples of a number of tools and methods that may be used.

The chapter also describes how the public space strategy can be incorporated into the planning system, how to use temporary public spaces as a strategy, and finally some good advice.

# TOOLBOX

## – FOR A PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

Here we describe how a municipality can develop a public space strategy. We have, of necessity, simplified the material so as to provide an overview, while including the most important elements. The toolkit includes useful advice.

The Toolbox contains:

### A. Overall plan and design (checklist)

1. Overall plan for a public space strategy
2. Design of a public space network
3. Design of public spaces

### B. Registration and analysis (checklist)

1. The physical environment
2. The social environment

### C. Plan of a public space network (example)

## METHOD

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The physical design of the public space network and each public space must be seen in relation to the municipality's visions and ambitions, and the prevailing conditions of each place.

In registering and analysing the physical and social environment we also register its potential, and need, for public spaces and connections.

A public space network plan should show its long-term development and be the terms of reference for all issues affecting public spaces for pedestrians and cyclists.

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# A CHECKLIST FOR OVERALL PLAN AND DESIGN

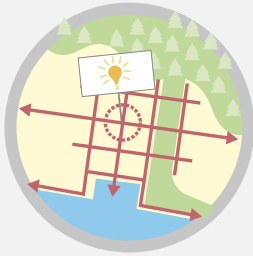
## 1 OVERALL PLAN FOR AN PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGY

The points below illustrate some general principles for a public space strategy.



### 1 The landscape, building development and potential

Exploit the distinctive character and qualities of a place in the design of all projects. Location analyses are an important factor to identifying these elements.



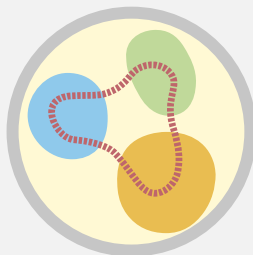
### 2 Vision

Have a vision of what you want to do with the place in the context of the municipality's identity, ambitions and specific needs.



### 3 Connect overall structures

Take into account the overall regional and municipal structures, such as public transport, bike paths, lakes/river courses, green structure and recreational areas.



### 4 Connect local areas

Connect the different types of land in the city such as districts, neighbourhood areas, lakes and rivers towns and centres together with sidewalks, bike paths, green open spaces with hiking trails, public transport routes and so on.



### 5 The Compact City/The Ten-Minute Town

Adhere as closely as possible to the principle that most everyday target points should lie within walking distance and readily accessible for most people.

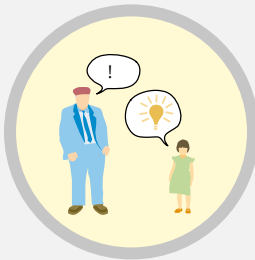
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### 6 Quality and attractiveness in the physical environment

Preserve existing qualities and attractions – and create new ones. The aim is for all actions to make the surroundings more valuable and attractive to the inhabitants.

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### 7 Participation

Arrange everything according to what people need and want. Dialogue with local inhabitants and collaborative activities form the basis for creating local tailor-made public spaces and connections.

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### 8 Temporary public spaces

Develop temporary public spaces in areas that need city life, activities, and meeting places.



## 2 DESIGN OF A PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

The points below provide some important recommendations for the design of a public space network. These are taken from Chapter 2 Five Criteria.



### 1 Usability

- Public spaces have different roles, some have specific functions, others are for flexible use.
- Public spaces should be for all age groups and be places where everyone feels at home.
- The intention behind public spaces is to enable local inhabitants to experience seasonal variations by allowing for year-round use.
- Public spaces should be able to be used throughout the day and night, and be conducive to street life and activities and good living environments.



### 2. Proximity

- Everyone should have access to a variety of public spaces that lie within walking distance. This means there should be at least one meeting place, a square or a green public space, that offers a number of positive experiences.
- Connections to the public spaces should be attractive and be free from barriers and traffic hazards, with surroundings that encourage people to choose to walk.





### 3 Connection

- A public space network should promote mobility for pedestrians and cyclists and create better connections in towns and villages.
- Such connections should branch out from the main network into a number of shortcuts.
- Streets should have wide sidewalks that are pleasant to walk along. The public space network should be well-lit to promote a feeling of safety and security.
- Bike racks and bus stops should be integrated into the public space network.



### 4. Quality

- Local characteristics – including cultural heritage and history – have potential that can be exploited in the design of public spaces.
- Quality of design is about finding solutions that take into account the needs of the people who live there.
- Quality is about good architectural design of buildings and surroundings.
- The quality of places can be enhanced by good implementation and maintenance routines.



### 5. Urban nature

- Blue-green public spaces contribute to a sense of well-being, awareness of seasonal variations and biodiversity.
- Blue-green public spaces are adapted for recreation, play and a variety of activities.
- Trees are the green fabric that weave together public spaces and green open spaces.
- Urban cultivation and bee-keeping in public spaces strengthen biodiversity and offer new meeting places.
- Public spaces are intended to encourage public outdoor life in the local environment.
- Public spaces should be adapted to climate change and utilise water as a positive quality.

## 3 DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

The points below show some important principles to be followed in the design of each public space. These are taken from Chapter 2 Five Criteria.



## 1 Smart relationships between buildings and outdoor areas

A building and a public space should offer something to each other. The facades of the main floor should display some form of activity and interest. The main floor should “open up” towards the public space. Entrances should face the public space and not the parking lot at the back.

## 2 Good material use, good architecture and landscape architecture

A building development should be of high architectural quality and similarly high-quality landscape architecture in a public space. Good use of materials that are both aesthetically pleasing and durable in buildings and open spaces should be used. Elements that give pleasure and stimulate the senses, such as water, colours, art, flowers and trees are important features.

## 3 Vegetation and rainwater - a design resource

All public spaces must be climate-adapted and use rainwater as a resource and positive quality. Some solutions may be ground that drains off water or rain gardens, dams, channels and the like.

City nature with water and vegetation should contribute to greater biodiversity in public spaces.

## 4 Elements that strengthen a sense of belonging and identity

Local qualities can be used as a resource in planning solutions: a view, axes of collimation, terrain, proximity to water, existing vegetation and cultural heritage. Are there any elements that can be developed as an attraction in the public space?

## 5 Local climate – south-facing walls and protection from harsh weather

Take advantage of the local climate to establish different zones. Create places that encourage use, take advantage of sun and shade and provide protection from the elements.

## 6 A place to stay and use

Understand people’s needs and always establish processes that reveal and take care of people’s needs. Design places that are interesting for everyone – children, young people, adults and the elderly – and for those who have different preferences. Outdoor furnishing should reflect the needs of users.

## 7 Movement – an element of the public space

Create an infrastructure that is both inclusive and cohesive. All open spaces should be connected locally and between streets and other buildings. They should also be adapted for pedestrians and have universal design.



## B REGISTRATION AND ANALYSES

### 1 THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Mapping of public spaces and connections in the public space network involves a great deal of registration and analysis work. This may seem overwhelming so it is important to have a practical approach and find out what is relevant to each particular place.

#### Mapping of public spaces and the public space network

Defining the geographical boundaries of the area is an important task to enable mapping and analysis. In larger municipalities the work can be divided into several sub-areas that can then be linked together to form greater cohesion.

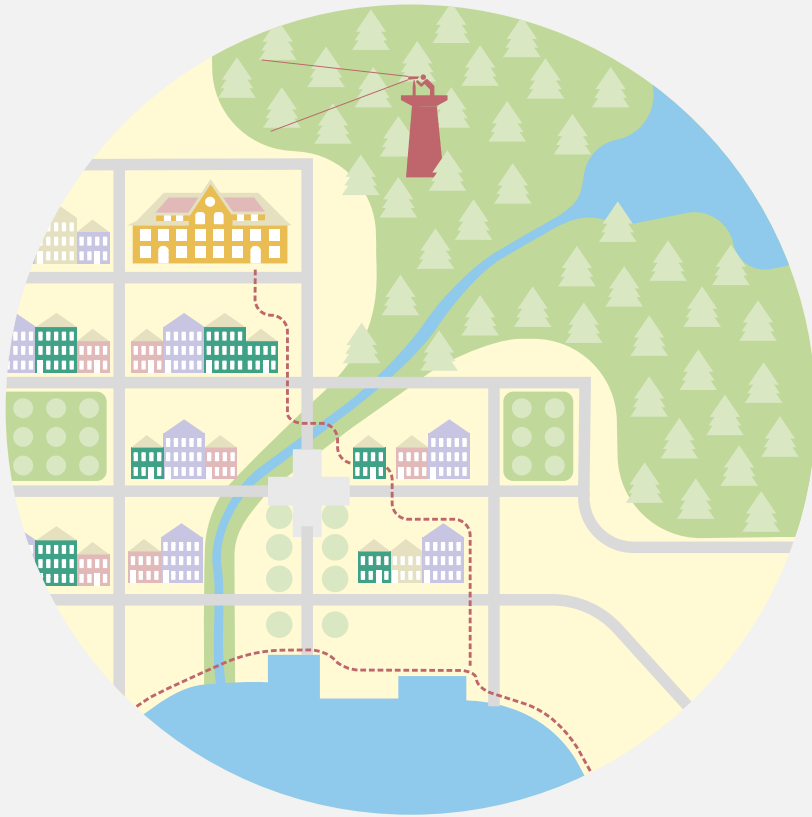
During mapping the current status of each area must be registered. Where are the public spaces? What qualities do they have? Can any areas be developed into new public spaces?

The same applies to connections for pedestrians and cyclists. Where are the sidewalks and bike paths located today? Where is there a shortage of pedestrian and cycling connections? Where should new ones be established? The connections need to link public spaces and everyday target points in order to create a network.

The checklist in the table is a list of issues to be considered when mapping and analysing the physical structure. The list is not complete, but can act as starting point. Municipalities may have different characteristics that can be added to the checklist.

The illustration on the next page shows a method for mapping and analysing an area — a town centre, a village centre, district centre, local centre, neighbourhood area and the like. Professionals and residents in an area can carry out this type of analysis.

CHECKLIST FOR MAPPING AND ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC SPACE POTENTIAL



**MAPPING**

1. Where
2. What kind
3. Quality
4. Potentially new



**PUBLIC SPACES**

Streets, squares and marketplaces  
Parks and green open spaces  
Blue public spaces

**CONNECTIONS**

For pedestrians  
For cyclists

**TARGET POINTS**

Everyday target points  
Attractions

**AREA**

**ANALYSIS**

1. What do we have?
2. What are we missing?
3. What can be improved?



**To achieve better:**

- Usability
- Proximity
- Connection
- Quality
- Urban nature

## SURVEY AND ANALYSE EACH THEME: EXTENDED CHECKLIST

## A Survey of public spaces, connections and target points

- where they are
- what type of public space, connection or target point
- the quality of each location (material use, design, furnishing, lighting, sensory perception)
- potential new areas for public spaces or connections (waste areas, demolition sites, landfill area)
- include probable new target points to come, e.g. new school, bus station etc.

## B Analyse public spaces

- the public spaces' spatial sequence – how they are located in relation to each other
- the public space hierarchy – role in the city – Town Hall Square/district market place/street corner
- public spaces that are designed for a special function (market stalls, play areas, Town Hall Square, Sculpture Park)
- public spaces that are suitable for everyone (parks, squares, green open spaces)
- different sizes (pocket park or city park)
- different functions (representation, local meeting place, recreation etc.)
- which public spaces and connections should public authorities plan, develop etc. Which can be entrusted to private developers etc

## C Analyse connections

- pedestrian connections
- biking connections
- public transport
- hierarchy of walking and cycling connections from express traffic to shortcuts
- adapted for a particular situation, cargo bikes or bike paths to school
- adapted for everyone and of mixed function
- bus stop in the right place

## D Analyse the target points

- everyday target points
- local attractions
- connections to the target points
- connections to attractions
- where should a meeting place be arranged with benches etc.
- where should bike parking, bus stops etc. be arranged

## E Legal issues

- which areas are zoned
- who owns the land
- are there areas that are zoned which private individuals have occupied (e.g. shortcuts in residential areas)

### Registration in different databases

When evaluating topics that are relevant to the public space network it is important to draw on existing knowledge before registration in the field. Many municipalities have already registered many of these elements in the municipality's database, which can be labour-saving.

National geographic data is registered in the Geonorge.no map website and includes data on vegetation, hydrology, landslide/avalanche risk, Kids' Tracks (digital registration of children's movements in local surroundings) and participation in the planning process. The following are commonly found in municipal databases:

- the municipality's base map data contains property data, roads with pedestrian sidewalks and bike paths, water, elevation
- local thematic data such as cultural heritage, yellow lists (recognised and prioritised sites worthy of preservation), or cultural heritage plans
- overview of annual daily traffic (AÅDT), accident data, property ownership

### Other relevant topics:

- The principle of universal design should form the basis for developing public spaces so it is also important to register places that do not meet universal design requirements.
- Environmental data such as contaminated ground, places subject to flood, landslides and the like should be registered.
- A wide range of the supporting data and registration mentioned in the Norwegian Directorate of the Environment's guide M100-2014 "Planning of green structure in towns and villages", is also relevant in respect of public spaces. This applies to local climate, impact of the solar cycle, air quality etc.

### Examples of mapping public spaces and connections

GIS tools are suitable for mapping a public space network, the areas that lack different types of public spaces and connections, and qualities and defects associated with places. This has been done in Fredrikstad, Hamar and Bergen among others, see Idea Bank Chapter 4.

### Analyse as an entirety

Once all registration and analysis has been entered on the map the current situation or status is visible. Mapping is part of the basis for the work on the strategic plan, and shows:

- what public spaces we have, connections and target points
- what is lacking within the area
- what can be improved to achieve better usability, proximity, quality, city nature and connection



## 2 THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The public space network must be designed based on what people expect and need. Different groups often have different needs and preferences. Demographic knowledge is therefore an important basis for evaluating the needs of local inhabitants. It is important to design a good system that is practical in implementation.

### Active participation and dialogue

The right that individuals and groups have to participate in, and exert their influence on, official reporting and decision-making processes is an important element in the preamble to the Norwegian Planning and Building Act. In Section 4-1. "The planning authorities are to ensure that citizens have been allowed to participate in the planning phase."

A well-developed public space network has a positive impact on the environment and society. It is therefore important that representative groups are consulted and are allowed to contribute. For town and village development processes to be both open and inclusive, it is important to allow for interesting and engaging participation processes. The planner thus serves as a catalyst for dialogue and debate to elicit as many viewpoints as possible from as much of the population as possible.

Public meetings on their own rarely cover all groups of the population. New and more creative arenas must be created for participation where people are able to present their opinions. Outreach activities, digital solutions, stands and exhibitions, visualization tools, media use and workshops are examples of open and inclusive arenas that may be suitable.

### Mapping and knowledge-based planning

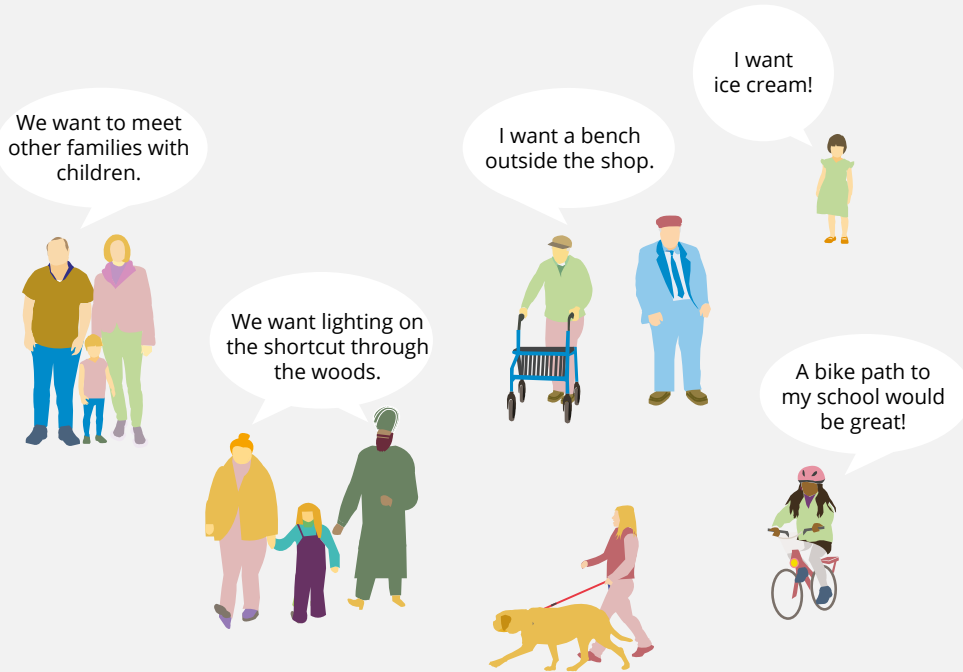
It may be useful to prepare an interactive work programme in order to achieve a goal-oriented process. In connection with the start-up of planning work or a project a participation strategy might be prepared that allows people to make suggestions and helps to make amendments to plans in later phases.

Knowledge-based planning involves the collection and use of both quantitative and qualitative data.

- Quantitative knowledge can be data retrieved from statistics offices. Criminal statistics are also available for many places.
- Qualitative methods can include surveys, scenarios, and various digital recording tools. Qualitative data can be summed up and recorded through public life accounts and Kids' Tracks.

The illustration on the next page shows a selection of methods for mapping and analysing public space networks in terms of people's use and needs.

CHECKLIST FOR DATA COLLECTION AND PARTICIPATION



PEOPLE

different uses and different dreams

DATA COLLECTION

**Data from Statistics**

- population composition
- who lives where
- public health
- social economy

**City Life Accounts**

- How many:
- walk
  - cycle
  - stay

**People's Tracks**

- Who goes where:
- children
  - young people
  - adults
  - elderly people

**Something special for children and young people**

- playgrounds
- meeting places

DIALOGUE/PARTICIPATION

- dialogue, outreach activities
- workshops
- surveys
- digital tools and apps

**Institutional councils and representation**

- children and young people
- elderly people
- people with disabilities

Volunteering

Others

## Children and young people and other groups

Arrangements should be made for groups that are unable to participate to be able them to take an active part in a collaborative process. This includes the younger generation, cf. national policy guidelines for strengthening children's and young people's interests in the planning process.

Those who cannot participate directly should be able to contribute in other ways. Municipalities should establish special arrangements to ensure that the interests of children and young people are known, and their voices heard. Registering Kids' Tracks is an example of how to map children's areas and their interests, see Chapter 4. Idea Bank p. 113.

There are a number of channels that can be used to determine what the population needs, such as municipal and county councils for disabled people, and regional and local organizations.

## Local knowledge

What the residents themselves believe are important qualities of their everyday landscape is often tacit knowledge that it has not been commonly mapped. This knowledge is a democratic resource that needs to be incorporated into plans, and that can contribute to establishing the premises for how places and areas are designed. The Kids' Track and People's Track methods are appropriate tools for mapping these qualities.

There are other initiatives as well. In Kongsberg, an Instagram competition was launched in which the residents photographed places they appreciated. The SMS project in Kristiansand is an example of a socio-cultural location analysis intended to contribute to socially sustainable development. Here, an important objective is to increase public outdoor life, improve integration and strengthen the sense of community among the town's residents.

 See Chapter 4. Idea Bank pp. 88 and 111.

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal design means that products, applications, services and environments are designed so that they can be used by everyone – as much as possible. The principle of universal design emphasizes that everyone is equal, and that everyone should have equal opportunities to participate in and use public spaces and the immediate vicinity.

It is important to design public spaces so that they can be used by everyone. The understanding of this principle must be evident at all levels – owners, planners, contractors and operators.

Many technical requirements – such as gradients, orientability, resting places, allergy issues, lighting etc. – are common and have general requirements for functionality, accessibility, overview and so on, and thus will not be an “accessibility requirement” on its own.

Legislation in this field states that “the main solution” should be universally designed. Therefore, in the case of challenging terrain or equal zones in an area the requirements of the law can be interpreted with a degree of flexibility; not everything needs to be the same everywhere. In general, information provided on signs, information boards, maps, etc. are important in finding your way. The information could inform about accessibility, gradients, about the distance to the target points, the primary and alternative routes, recreation, accommodation, which routes are illuminated and so on. The information should be such that most people understand it, and be placed at key points.





## C PLAN FOR THE PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK

### How to pull together a physical plan and participation

The physical design of the public space network must pick up the signals from the participation process. This work requires professional acumen.

A dialogue group can be created with interdisciplinary expertise that evaluates measures such as technical requirements, Public Health, schools and local society and designers.

The measures are designed in cooperation with a variety of professionals such as landscape architects, architects, sociologists and municipal planners. Measures need to function well so that people with different interests can thrive together.

### Plan for the public space network

The plan for the public space network will be a strategic plan showing how the municipality can work on public spaces and connections in the short and long term. This plan will also be the basis for other development plans and planning applications which are to be dealt with in the municipality's daily work.

On the basis of the plan for a public space network the municipality can prepare action plans that state what measures are to be initiated.

### Action plan for a public space network

An action plan for a public space network should describe interim plans and financing in order to carry out the measures, and set aside the necessary resources for it. Inspiration for various actions that can be initiated is shown in Chapter 4. The Idea Bank.

For example, an action plan might look like this:

#### ACTION PLAN EXAMPLE

**Year 1:** The municipality builds a small square in the local centre.

**Year 2:** The municipality creates a public space strategy and a plan for the public space network to be incorporated in the municipality's planning strategy.

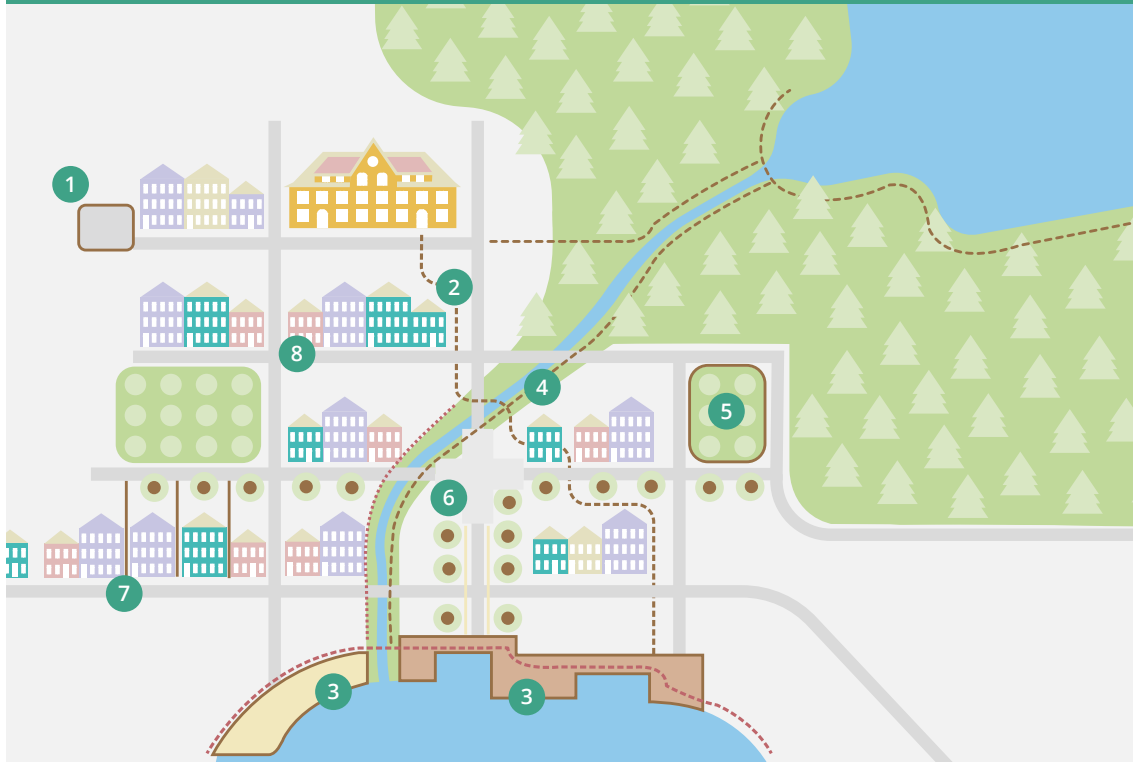
**Year 3:** The municipality creates a strategy for increasing public life, with a focus on activities and events throughout the year, simple facilitation of activity in parks, etc.

**Year 4:** A neighbourhood in a district in the municipality needs a better system of shortcuts to secure connections for children and the rest of the population. Funds are set aside for planning, participation and implementation.

**Year 5:** The municipality allocates funds for preparing a beach in an in-fill area along the coastline.

**Year 6:** In connection with excavation for new pipes and cables the municipality wants to convert the roads through the town centre to streets with wide tree-lined sidewalks, lights and benches.

EXAMPLE OF A BASIC PLAN FOR A TOWN NETWORK



- |                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1 The area lacks a meeting place. Convert demolition sites into temporary public spaces in cooperation with the neighbourhood.</p> | <p>4 Poor hiking trails along the river and in the wilderness. Prepare better trails with benches along the river and in the wilderness.</p>                                          | <p>7 Poor sidewalk conditions for children in the neighbourhood. Add new shortcuts between building developments.</p> |
| <p>2 There is no safe pedestrian and cycling route between the school and the sea. Establish a new sidewalk and bike path.</p>        | <p>5 The park is rarely used. Develop existing park into activity park.</p>                                                                                                           | <p>8 The local shop lacks benches. Arrange a small area with benches in front of the shop.</p>                        |
| <p>3 The beach zone is an in-fill area and partially inaccessible. Develop a new city beach and beachfront.</p>                       | <p>6 The streets in the centre have narrow treeless sidewalks. Build new sidewalks with avenues that connect the city parks, the forest, the square and the river to one another.</p> |                                                                                                                       |

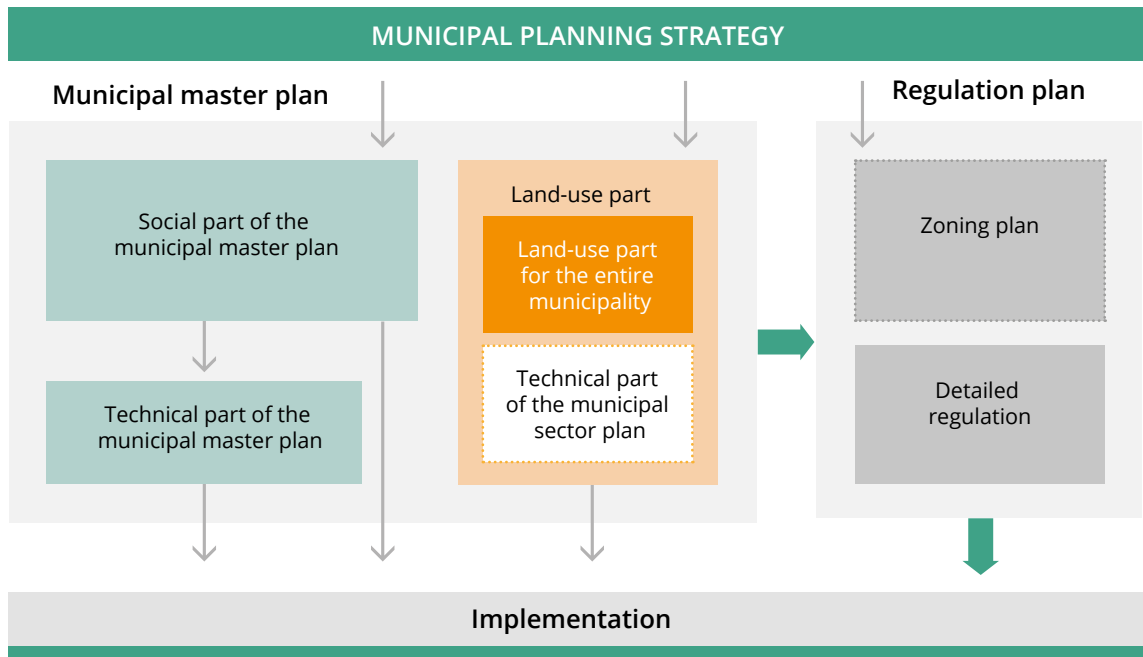
# PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGY IN THE PLANNING SYSTEM – NORWAY

To be successful the public space strategy should be firmly anchored, both politically and administratively, in binding municipal plans and decisions made according to the Planning and Building Act. Sufficient resources must be allocated for planning and implementation of the strategy. The municipality should have an attentive attitude towards public spaces, from the overall level down to detailed design of the individual measure.

A public space strategy may be an informal plan that can serve as the basis for other plans. It may also be a thematic municipal sector plan. What is chosen depends on prevailing local conditions, ambitions, available resources and the planning situation in the municipality.

A municipal planning strategy is a tool for political prioritisation of tasks. The municipal planning strategy is intended to clarify the municipality's reporting and planning needs. In this context it may be appropriate to describe the status and challenges of the public space network. This can provide the basis for promoting the need for a public space strategy.

The social part of the municipal master plan provides guidance for both the land-use part and the economy part, as well as for zoning plans and any development agreements. According to the law the municipality is obliged to follow up the need for attractive, safe and good surroundings in planning work, and to follow this further in the planning system – through the economy part, action part, the municipal plan's land-use part and zoning plans.



The public space strategy is anchored in the municipal planning strategy and is followed up in the social part, the land-use part, the zoning plans and development agreements.

Municipalities prepare different objectives and strategies for social housing development. Here, using text and illustrations, they can describe in more detail the principles they wish to adopt in a public space strategy. The strategy should be seen in the context of other relevant topics such as public health, energy, climate, aesthetics, cultural heritage, living conditions and quality of life, childhood environment, outdoor life, transportation and centre plans.

 See Chapter 5, Bergen Municipality Social Plan

The land-use part shows land use and priorities in the physical environment. Here the municipal council stipulates what land use is allowed and which restrictions apply in the planning area through land-use purposes, zones requiring special consideration and general and specific planning provisions and guidelines. The land-use part of the municipal master plan and the provisions are legally binding.

Public spaces and connections may fall under many land-use purposes:

- 1 Buildings and facilities
- 2 Transport and technical infrastructure
- 3 Green structure
- 4 Use and protection of sea and waterways, with corresponding beach zone (ref. The Planning and Building Act Section 11–7 Land-use purpose in the municipal plan's land use part).

Legally binding provisions may be associated with the various land-use purposes in order to maintain, upgrade and develop the public spaces and the public space network. Zones requiring special consideration or regulation may be used if relevant to clarify details in the zoning plan. Wherever the planning situation


is unclear it may be sufficient to provide provisions for public spaces and the public space network in the land-use part of the municipal master plan. In areas with a more complex planning structure it may also be necessary to establish overall constraints in the social part, as well as clarifying details both through the municipal sector plan, land-use regulation and detailed regulation.

Examples of relevant planning provisions and requirements in the municipal master plan may require that:

- Everyone should be within walking distance of public spaces, such as squares and parks or green open spaces, from where they live
- requirements for continuous, safe and attractive connections for pedestrians and cyclists
- requirements for high quality in public spaces and connections
- requirements for arranging for use on the basis of participation

### Zoning plans

Zoning plans should detail the land use in the municipal master plan's land-use part. Zoning-plans are legally binding plans that consist of area regulation and detailed regulation. On both levels it is important to include areas for public spaces and connections.

 See more information in the Zoning Plan Guide, Chapter 5.



### Planning tools for implementation of a public space strategy

In most cases, implementation of the measures in the public space strategy will take place gradually. Nevertheless, the plan will give the municipality an overview of relevant tools and a fundamental strategy as to how they should be used. This will contribute to predictability for all parties and allow for different contribution requirements to be accepted as sensible and within a legal framework. This also applies to the framework for what can be required of contributors through determination of priorities, development agreements etc.

It is important that both private and public developers set aside enough space for public spaces, parks and connections, and that they have a high standard of design. Illustration plans and detail plans that accompany the projects are rarely legally binding. To ensure that such qualities follow the project to its conclusion, they must be anchored in regulatory provisions or in development contracts.

Prioritisation regulations are a suitable method for ensuring that public spaces and connections are developed, i.e. that conditions are set for completion within a certain time limit.

Development agreements are a statutory method for ensuring plan implementation. For example, this may apply to the establishment of technical infrastructure such as roads, supply network and public spaces that are included in the land-use plan for the area. Laws and regulations set limits for when and how development agreements can be entered into, and for when such agreements are a pre-requisite for a feasible development. Good guidance is available on its practical application.

With remodelling of larger public areas, new development areas, and larger densification projects, the developer should share responsibility for the development of the public space network that also serves the developer's project. The developer may then be obliged to pay for the development of part of that structure.

It is important that a dialogue with the developer is initiated at an early stage. Thus, misunderstandings can be avoided and it will be easier to create an understanding that the public space is necessary, and that it also adds positive qualities to the developer's project, which can also often be financially beneficial.

Before starting negotiations with the developer, the municipal council must have made a prior decision on the use of a development agreement (The Planning and Building Act Section 17-2). The decision must be made by the municipal council and cannot be delegated. The decision of the municipal council must, as far as possible, clearly indicate where in the municipality it can be expected to use the development agreement, and what such an agreement is intended to cover.

#### COLLECTION OF EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

Akershus County Council has arranged a course series intended to provide a basic introduction to development agreements as a strategic tool in Akershus' development policy. The course series provides a basic introduction for people with little experience of development agreements, and also a professional specialization for those already working with the subject. As a follow-up to the course series Asplan Viak, on assignment from Akershus County Council, has prepared a collection of examples showing the scope that development agreements can be used for, and good working methods.

# TEMPORARY PUBLIC SPACES AS A STRATEGY

## What are temporary public spaces?

Temporary public spaces can be a strategic tool for the municipality to increase city life and activity, test out solutions prior to final development, or to make inhabitants aware of new locations in the town or village. Temporary public spaces often only exist for a shorter period of time, but there are also examples of public spaces that have remained for many years.

Such public spaces can contribute to new life and activities in areas that are little used.

Examples of areas for temporary public spaces can be existing streets, squares and parks where there is a need to encourage more city life and activity. These may also be areas that lie fallow, such as demolition sites, deserted grassy areas, in-fill areas in the beach zone or vacant sites used as parking lots.

Actions may be large or small. One example of a larger action is Larvik harbour which the municipality developed as a beach and beach park in just a few days. It lies there in anticipation of

other public development. Examples of simple actions may include:

- that open spaces are painted in different zones with different colours that signify different uses, such as places to stay, bike paths etc.
- furnishing with simple movable chairs and benches
- setting up areas for play and other activities
- planting trees and flowers in boxes and sacks
- urban cultivation in pallet collars and the like

The initiative for a temporary public space may be taken by the municipality itself, from residents or from local businesses. Often the initiative comes from people who want to create new public spaces in the town or in their immediate surroundings. Active use of temporary public spaces contributes to a public development that does not lock the public space into a particular type of use, but which can be open and inclusive to change and local initiative. Temporary public spaces created through participation can also give politicians an idea





Temporary public installations can create new life in otherwise unattractive areas. If they are successful, as in Larvik, the public can request that the temporary status be made permanent.

of what is going on in the town, and what people are concerned about. By using the public spaces, ideas for the next generation's city life become apparent.

The English term “place-making” refers to processes where the inhabitants are involved in designing the public spaces and thus create new collective values. This provides fertile ground for cultural, economic, social and ecological creativity that defines and strengthens local life. By capturing the local population's enthusiasm and inviting them to participate in developing public spaces, different kinds of city life can be created that are socially valuable even if the measure is only short-term.

### Why is it appropriate

Starting with a temporary measure is often easier than going directly to a permanent development. It requires building permission, but not a zoning permit. Thus, it is possible to test whether the initiative is successful and to be able to adjust it before final development.

Temporary installations allow you to be up and running quickly and to improve and activate the public space at little cost.

### SUMMARY

It is appropriate to use temporary public spaces to test out various activities in the public space through installations and elements before it is finally developed:

- to create activities and meeting spaces in areas that are little used
- to create meeting places in areas that lie fallow, such as demolition sites, deserted grassy areas, and vacant lots.
- to create new attractions by “changing” the public space
- to make room for urban farming
- to contribute to new identities for areas through positive stories of what the public space has contributed
- to activate a development area by converting sites that have not been used for a while into temporary public spaces

## Some tips

Temporary public spaces that are used to create new activity in an area usually last for a maximum of two years, in line with the Planning and Building Act's provision for time limits on temporary interventions. Here are some good suggestions for idea development, the application process and implementation:

### HOW TO GET STARTED

#### Development of an idea

- Let the idea be so flexible that it can be further developed. Many individuals can contribute to improving the best ideas underway
- The idea should adhere to the municipality's other visions and plans.
- Check the status of the public space, whether it is allocated for other purposes, such as a rigging place, temporary road diversion or similar.
- Ensure that the idea is anchored with all involved parties.
- Check with the municipality if anything to be established requires application for a building license or dispensation from the Planning and Building Act.

#### What has to be applied for

- Get an overview of what the Planning and Building Act says: Do you need to apply for construction, building an annex, extension, placement of a building, construction or other facilities?
- The builder may propose interim measures of less than two years' duration, subject to the property owner's agreement.
- Check with the municipality if a separate application form has to be submitted for outdoor events and the like.
- Be clear as to who should have the different roles and tasks in the creation and implementation of the project.

#### Implementation

- Ensure that you have the formal and practical competence in place before the project starts up.
- Check which rules apply for implementation (of events, for example).
- Have the necessary agreements with the property owners in place.
- Make allowance for anything that can go wrong.
- Create a strategy for the maintenance of the public space: remember, it may be more popular than you had hoped it would be – which will increase wear and tear.
- Always consider re-using elements. This is effective, sustainable and creates familiarity.
- Be prepared for success and failure – both provide valuable knowledge and experience.
- Start with a small and simple project – and do it!

Source: Architect Gunnar Ridderström/Citiplan AS.



# GOOD ADVICE FOR A PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGY

Regardless of what level of ambition the municipality has for its public space strategy, experience from planning shows that the following points are essential to success:

## Visions and objectives

The municipality should have a vision or an overall objective for public space development that ensures that the sum of many small and large initiatives, both public and private, contribute to the development goals. The municipality should also take clear leadership in this work.

## Anchoring

The public space strategy must be well-rooted locally, both politically and administratively, through binding municipal plans and resolutions. It is advantageous to have bipartisan consensus on the initiative in order to ensure continuity in implementation over a longer period of time. Sufficient resources must be allocated for planning and implementation of the strategy. The municipality should also endeavour to ensure ownership and anchoring of the vision and the public space strategy in the local community with property developers and builders, organizations, associations and residents.

## The municipality's organization and cross-sectoral work

To achieve an entirety and synergies, the public space strategy must be linked to related priorities and activities in the municipality. The strategy can be seen as a tool for reaching other important societal objectives, such as improving public health, a living centre, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving surface water management and improving quality of life. An interdisciplinary public space group can be

a good solution. The public space group should comprise of employees of relevant agencies in the municipality as well as representatives of the business community, property owners, organizations and residents and other key players in the local community who have ownership of the public spaces.

## High quality

Local identity, cultural heritage and high architectural quality must "lift" the place and should be a guiding principle for all work with public spaces. This applies to municipal public spaces and public spaces owned and developed by private actors. Quality is the ability to satisfy users' needs and expectations, and includes both utilisation potential and aesthetic expression. Beauty is a quality in people's lives and demands emphasis on the aesthetic dimension of the environment and the development of elements that give pleasure.

## Knowledge

Knowledge-based planning and implementation are important. The design of a public space strategy must build on updated and fact-based knowledge of what the place has to offer and what it needs. It assumes that local conditions must be mapped and analysed. Such knowledge can be obtained from statistics, map registration and participation.

## Participation

Participation by the local community ahead of and during development of plans and building projects is vital. This applies both to the design of the overall strategy and to the specific design and implementation of the individual projects. In order to ensure real influence, there must be participation at an early stage of the work. This is especially true for plans that directly affect

local residents. Mapping people's needs and desires for everyday qualities in the local environment contributes both to a sense of belonging, the development of democracy, to community values and ownership of the area.

### Flexibility

An holistic public space strategy with long-term goals is important in ensuring that the sum of all the individual measures pulls in the right direction. At the same time, the strategy needs a built-in flexibility so that it also takes account of local public space initiatives in a positive way. These may be temporary or permanent measures initiated by the local community itself: residents, volunteers, organizations or private developers and property owners. The combination of an overall strategy for the development of public spaces with good facilitation for local initiatives and user participation makes for a good public space network. In all cases it is important that measures be developed as part of the larger totality and according to the same quality criteria.

### Development step by step

Build step by step. The municipality must have a realistic understanding of how to implement the public space strategy. Economics, measures, timeframe, anchoring, cooperation and involvement all play an important role that needs to be considered for each project, and for larger and smaller measures. In most cases it is necessary to progress step by step and carry out several separate measures over a longer period of time. What starts as something small can more easily evolve into something larger when the local community sees the positive effects of public space projects.

### Action right away

To get up and running quickly, and to achieve tangible results, is important to maintain interest and motivation during the long-term work of establishing a public space network. These can be either permanent measures that are simple and cost little to carry out, or temporary measures that can be done immediately.

Temporary measures can initiate change processes and help to transform or upgrade. It is important to invite local residents to start up or help to carry out projects in their local environment.



4

## IDEA BANK

Part 1. Examples from projects

Part 2. Examples of methods  
and tools.







This chapter shows some examples of projects with a high transfer value. The first section is classified according to the theme and function of the project. The second section provides examples of appropriate planning tools and methods. Projects with everyday qualities are prioritised. The examples are selected according to theme rather than geographical distribution.



# PART 1A

## Norwegian projects

- 1 Bicycle City, Alta: Cycling shortcuts
- 2 Johanneskirke­trappen, Bergen: Upgrading of a main city axis
- 3 The Håsteinar Park in Laksevåg, Bergen: A new district park
- 4 Toke Pier, Drangedal: Meeting place and focal point in the village centre
- 5 Beachfront and marketplace, Fauske: Measures to improve attractiveness
- 6 Krusedullparken, Fredrikstad: Temporary public space on demolition site in Fredrikstad
- 7 The river as a public space and transport artery, Fredrikstad: Free city ferry
- 8 School road project, Gran: Neighbourhood project for better route to and from school
- 9 Kongsberg in my Heart, Kongsberg: Instagram competition about streets and squares
- 10 Bjerkedalen park, Oslo: New district park and opening-up of streams in Groruddalen
- 11 Carl Berners plass, Oslo: From road junction to public space
- 12 "Outside the Shop", Oslo: Everyday aspects of street design
- 13 Parkour in The World Park, Oslo: New district park with activities and neighbourhood action
- 14 Sjakkplassen, Oslo: Disadvantaged area in Grønland that was made greener and safer with urban cultivation
- 15 Surface Water Canal in Bjølsen Student Village, Oslo: Climate-adapted public space with quality of life for students
- 16 The Pollinator Passage, Oslo: Continuous flight routes for bees
- 17 Urtehagen, Oslo: Neighbourhood integration area in Grønland
- 18 Mosaic, Skien: Backyards converted into new public spaces
- 19 Dalen Activity Park, Trondheim: A brilliant idea at Saupstad
- 20 The Blue Thread, Trondheim: Improved connections between the city, cultural history and the river
- 21 The Shortcut project, Trondheim: Shortcuts that encourage walking
- 22 Åsveien School, Trondheim: Rain water and games in the schoolyard





## Norway

Photo: Alta kommune



## 1 BICYCLE CITY

### ALTA

#### Cycling shortcuts

The city of Alta has developed its own shortcut project as part of its cycling initiative. Shortcuts are important small elements in the fine-meshed total transport network. These may be roads, footpaths, trails or alleys and serve as fast, functional and secure options for pedestrians and cyclists, and for children and adults alike.

In Alta more than 40 such routes have been upgraded and this means that they will remain in good condition for a long time. The most frequently used routes have been covered with recycled asphalt, and each shortcut is signposted. This indicates that they are legal traffic routes and prevents neighbours from using them as an extension of their backyards for storage.

The shortcuts mainly run through areas that are set aside for public purposes. This provides accessibility on far faster routes than motorized travel can offer.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



## Norway



Photo: Camilla Jensen/Dronninga landskap

## 2 JOHANNESKIRKETRAPPEN

### BERGEN

#### Upgrading of a main city axis

In recent years, Bergen has conducted a comprehensive urban renewal of central axes and public spaces, such as the Fish Market, the Torgallmenningen square, avenue and pedestrian zone, and the square in front of the Johannes Church.

A new set of stairs has been built with references to famous Italian gardens, where the use of water is essential. A large circular water bowl has been placed in the square next to Rosenberggaten street, and otherwise water channels and waterfalls have been integrated into the lower section of the stairs. The sound of running water helps to create calm and a distance from the city's constant background noise. The central area is designed as an amphitheatre where one can settle down and enjoy a splendid view of Torgallmenningen. The project has been carried out by the Department of the Environment in close cooperation with local residents' associations. The Council for Disabled Persons in the municipality of Bergen has also been consulted in the design of the area.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



Norway



Photo: Bergen kommune

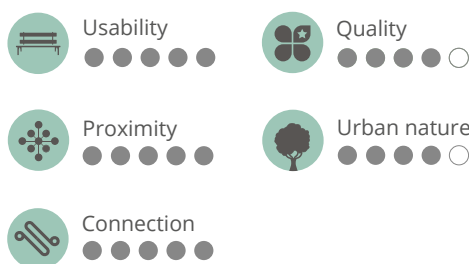
### 3 THE HÅSTEINAR PARK IN LAKSEVÅG BERGEN

#### A new district park

The Håsteinar Park is a new district park lying in historical surroundings, where both urban growth and concentrated building development meet with the shipbuilding industry, museums and an old, established garden.

The project started when part of the old Damsgårds River was to be reopened. A considerable amount of polluted material was removed to recreate the historical brook dating from the period prior to the Second World War. The area experiences extremely varying volumes of water. Sediment dams, rapids and artificial weirs have now become visible, whilst floodwater is diverted into the original piping system.

The water acts as a link between historical elements, whilst creating synergies that have inspired the creation of a genuine district by incorporating an adjoining overgrown garden. Most of the garden has been transformed into an open park with a grassy amphitheatre and stage. Next to the Swiss-style villa is an intimate pleasure garden, with historic paths and modern gardens.



Norway



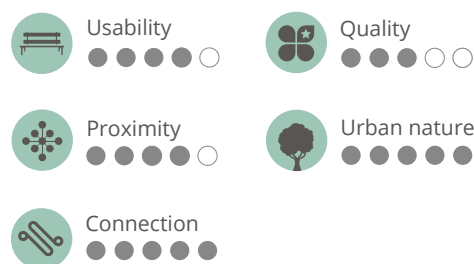
Photo: Dag Jensen

### 4 TOKE PIER DRANGEDAL

#### Meeting place and focal point in the village centre

An idyllic neighbourhood recreation area has been established near the waterfront in the centre of Drangedal as part of the Toke Brygge local development project. It is universally designed with hiking trails, activity park, obstacle course in the forest, outdoor shack, culture pier, beach, good sitting areas, art in outdoor spaces and a more compact centre. The designs and interventions have been based on the old building environment and cultural landscape by the river.

Local people and pupils from the local school have participated in this work by establishing an entrepreneur camp, future-oriented workshop and annual art projects. The project is a good model for smaller municipalities seeking to develop meeting places in the village centre, and to make use of the opportunities that nature has to offer, as well as historical buildings. The work has been carried out with a high degree of successful interdisciplinary effort, quality and enthusiasm. The waterfront has become accessible and has gained a much clearer identity. It opened in autumn 2015.





Norway



Photo: Erik Veigård

Norway



Photo: Fredrikstad kommune

## 5 BEACHFRONT AND MARKETPLACE FAUSKE

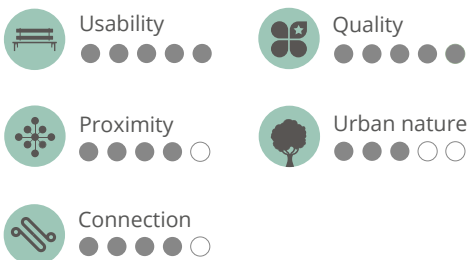
### Measures to improve attractiveness

The beachfront and the marketplace are part of the centre development in Fauske. It was absolutely necessary to introduce elements that could enhance the attractiveness and pleasantness of the centre because Fauske had turned its back on the sea. It was important to introduce the sea as an element in the centre.

As part of the strategic business plan a project team was appointed to complete the process. The marketplace is built in the central axis of Fauske and is designed as an amphitheatre so that it can be used for cultural events such as concerts, festivals and Constitution Day celebrations, in addition to normal market activities.

The beachfront has become a positive feature by introducing the sea as an element in the city centre. It has contributed to increased life and activity, walking and boating. The beachfront has enhanced the attractiveness of the city centre.

Additional elements have been introduced to the beachfront such as a quay, floating pier for small boats, sea fountains and a stairway down to the sea.

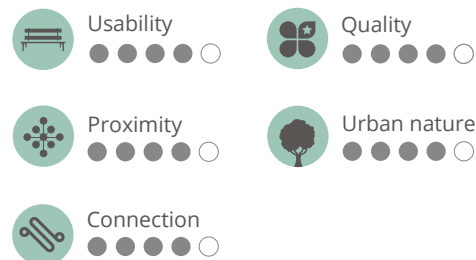


## 6 KRUSEDULLPARKEN FREDRIKSTAD

### Temporary public space on a demolition site in Fredrikstad

Krusedullparken is a park in Fredrikstad where visitors can wander around amid luxuriant vegetation and sit on green benches right in the middle of the city. The park was established as a temporary measure in the spring of 2013 on a demolition site in the centre, and is intended to be used for a future expansion of the Town Hall. The purpose of the initiative is to create a positive experience until development starts. It has also been a pilot project for testing out new ideas and collaborative relationships.

The park consists of peat blocks that create a pattern in an organic maze, while perennials, ornamental grass and bulbs create positive experiences all year round. At the end of the maze we find the Krusedullhuset which is a 5-metre-high bamboo installation created by students of Cicignon School, in partnership with a local draftsman and architect and which has been built by the Municipal Parks Department. Krusedullparken still exists as a positive feature in the public landscape.



Norway

Photo: Fredrikstad kommune



## 7 THE RIVER AS A PUBLIC SPACE AND TRANSPORT ARTERY FREDRIKSTAD

### Free city ferry

The river means a great deal for Fredrikstad, as a public space, communication artery and carrier of social identity. The old town, Isegran Fort and FMV Industrial Museum are some examples of our rich cultural and industrial history and today comprise a significant part of the town's recreational and common areas.

It is important to exploit the river as a resource in the development of a sustainable blue-green town. Upgrading of existing public spaces along the river, the creation of new spaces, an increased range of facilities and better connections to and along the river must be secured through efforts by the municipality and private developers.

The free city ferry (from 01/01/13), more ferries, extended schedules and the establishment of more ferry seats have resulted in a tripling of the number of travellers. The city ferries have become an important extension of the public transport facilities. They have improved accessibility to the centre and contributed to a change in travel patterns. The city ferry has become a natural part of the footpath and bicycle path network in the town.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection

Norway

Photo: Pasi Aalton



## 8 SCHOOL ROAD PROJECT GRAN

### Neighbourhood project for better route to and from school

The “walking and biking to school” project was a collaboration between Gran Municipality, the Norwegian Public Roads Administration and the Norwegian Design and Architecture Centre. The project was initiated by the Public Health Coordinator in Gran Municipality who wanted to inspire more children and young people to walk and bike to school, instead of being driven. The project follows up on national strategies to encourage pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the Government's architecture strategy. The Norwegian Design and Architecture Centre works to highlight good examples of positive space development in small and medium-sized Norwegian towns, with a particular focus on participation.

Kids' Tracks was used as a method for mapping the routes to and from school. In collaboration with architects and students at Oslo School of Architecture and Design, installations were built to serve as meeting and waiting places for children on the way to school. A brochure and map have also been prepared to provide inspiration for neighbourhood projects.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection

## Norway



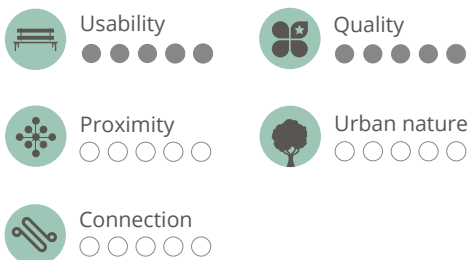
Photo: Henriette Bendiksbø

## 9 #KONGSBERGINMYHEART KONGSBERG

### Instagram competition about streets and squares

The #kongsbergimithjerte Instagram competition was arranged in autumn 2015 in Kongsberg by the local newspaper "Laagendalsposten", and the "Our Streets and Squares" collaborative project between the Directorate for Cultural Heritage and the Norwegian Public Roads Administration, Directorate of Public Roads. The occasion was a conference and exhibition of public development, held in Vestsida, Kongsberg's historical district. In connection with these events the newspaper wrote several articles on public development in Vestsida and in Kongsberg.

The competition is intended to showcase and promote the historical significance of streets and squares, and to contribute to an increased awareness of the importance of streets and squares as social and public arenas. #kongsbergimithjerte invites local residents to show what they observe and experience in their town, and to open up a dialogue on public development between local residents and public developers.



## Norway



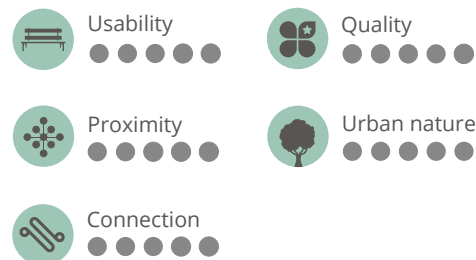
Photo: Dronninga landskap as

## 10 BJERKEDALEN PARK OSLO

### New district park and opening-up of streams in Groruddalen

Bjerkedalen park is a result of a municipal investment project to improve the Groruddalen area. Participation by local residents has been an important element in the design of the park. 350 metres of the Hovinbekken stream have been opened up after 60 years in pipes, a bathing pool has become the park's greatest attraction and the dam to the south has been removed to get the cold air out and the sun in. Blocks are integrated into the park, forming a park area of 75 acres.

A ball pitch and a terraced pavilion with a café and an amphitheatre have become the neighbourhood's new meeting place. The public walk made of Norwegian stone and gravel forms the spine of the park. The secondary pathways around the park act as an upper gallery with a view towards the sun, the open sky and the reflecting surfaces of the water. Groves of deciduous trees are located against the blocks' windowless façades and give the appearance of Norwegian hillsides. 50,000 perennials form a bed of rich colours. Bjerkedalen park has become the neighbourhood's meeting point for users of all ages, and is an international and award-winning example of a Norwegian park of our time.



Norway

Photo: Adam Stirling/Dronninga landskap



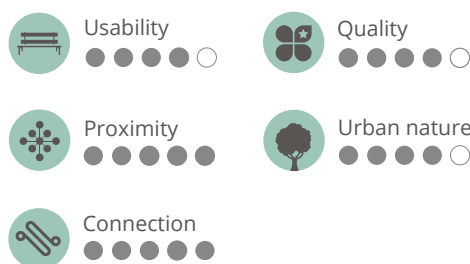
## 11 CARL BERNERS PLASS OSLO

### From road junction to public space

Carl Berners plass is a five-armed square between five streets in the inner city of Oslo. Until the opening in autumn 2010, the square was designed as a grey road junction completely dominated by traffic.

The main action that has been taken is to prioritize pedestrians by converting the junction into a square, or a street into a public space, where traffic has to adapt to non-motorists and life between the houses. The square mirrors the development plan, so that the roundabout is square and the tramline passes through a green central island. This is a green and thoroughly planned traffic project with 200 newly planted trees lining the wide sidewalks. This has acted as a catalyst in redefining the area as a popular place to live.

Use of private vehicles has been reduced by 35 percent by people finding other ways to get around. Today the square is swarming with people and vehicles, but traffic moves more slowly and safely based on the premises of pedestrians and public life.



Norway

Photo: Dronninga Landskap as

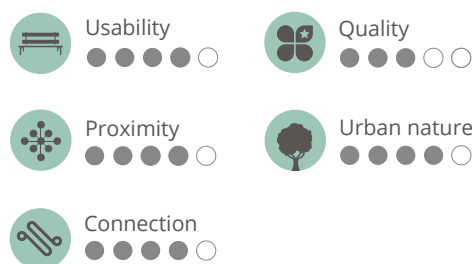


## 12 "OUTSIDE THE SHOP" OSLO

### Everyday aspects of street design

A new block of flats with a local shop on the ground floor has been built on Christian Krohgs gate, which is an upgraded city and residential street in the centre of Oslo. Fortunately, the sun shines into the street all year round so the sidewalk has been extended so that there is just enough space for one bench, one garbage bin and some bicycle racks.

This small square has four trees that are planted in plenty of soil that is covered with stabilized gravel allowing pedestrians to walk over it and still giving the trees good growth conditions. The trees, Japanese cherry trees with reddish-brown bark and a wide crown, grow to a maximum of two storeys and are trained. Even after just a few seasons the four trees on the expanded sidewalk have created a new and friendly place to stay outside the shop. This is an example of a street design that incorporates a simple meeting place with a shop, one of the everyday target points.





Norway

Photo: Marianne Gjerv

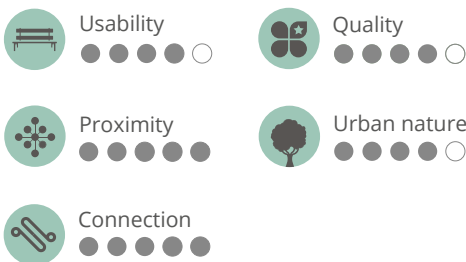


### 13 PARKOUR IN THE WORLD PARK OSLO

**New district park with activities and neighbourhood action**

The World Park is centrally located at Furuset in Grorudalen, close to the Furuset metro. The name refers to the cultural diversity of the population of Furuset, representing more than 140 nations. The park covers 52 acres and is divided into three areas: the landscape park, the world square, and the playground landscape. The park has been realized through a collaboration between the Alna District and the Public Environment Department together with extensive participation from local residents. Here you will find benches, barbecues, fruit and vegetable gardens, streams, art, play sculptures and Norway's first parkour facility.

Furuset has an active parkour environment and representatives from Furuset Parkour have participated in designing the facility. The main elements of parkour facilities are concrete walls and steps, poured-in-site rubber tyres, plastic bollards and rails. The World Park is one of four district parks built as a result of the Groruddal Priority Programme (2007–2016).



Norway

Photo: Monica Løvdal

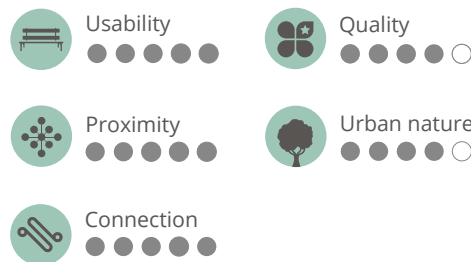


### 14 SJAKKPLASSEN OSLO

**Disadvantaged area in Grønland that was made greener and safer with urban cultivation**

Can the inclusion of multiple user groups do more for a public space with a marginalised community? The Vaterlandsparken area between the Akerselva river, Oslo Plaza Hotel and the Oslo Spektrum Arena has been called Oslo's most dangerous place. In the summer of 2015, Oslo Municipality and Neighbourhood Gardens established a temporary public space project, "Sjakkplassen", to test out urban cultivation as a means of creating green meeting places. The square was furnished with self-watering plant boxes, benches and large chess pieces. The chess pieces are available free of charge every day and are frequently used.

From day one, the project has been well-received by neighbours, passers-by and tourists alike. The Police, security guards and outreach workers have experienced a considerable increase in the use of the area, and an absence of negative episodes during the project period. The plants have been cared for by the users of the square, and the vegetables have been harvested as they matured. Being green and inclusive did the trick.



Norway

Photo: Rainer Stange

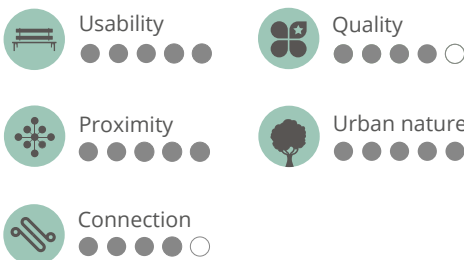


## 15 SURFACE WATER CANAL IN BJØLSEN STUDENT VILLAGE OSLO

### Climate-adapted public space with quality of life for students

A student village has been created in Oslo Sporveier's former tram workshops for 1,200 students integrating both new and old buildings in a single district. An avenue of pear trees links the new and restored development together. The student village's meeting places are the café and shop in the curved Bjølsen Hall in the campus square. A terrace has been built for diners between the café and the square. Courtyard trees have been planted in green micro-gardens in the paved square. Benches, bike racks and fences have been specially designed and produced for Bjølsen student village.

The open canal running through the middle is an iconic feature of the student village. Water from roofs and drainpipes is transported in open gutters into the banked-up retention basin. Every day a pair of ducks come here to feed and swim. The canal is set in a lush garden of perennials which transforms the space in-between into a paradise garden. The project is an example of rainwater being used as a positive resource in heightening the quality of a public space.



Norway

Photo: Oslo



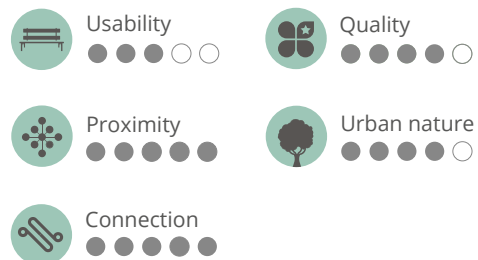
## 16 THE POLLINATOR PASSAGE OSLO

### Continuous flight routes for bees

The concept of the pollinator passage revolves around creating increased awareness of, and involvement in, the situation for bees and other pollinating insects. The city's inhabitants have been invited to participate in creating continuous flight paths for pollinating insects across the capital. Everyone can contribute by planting pollen and nectar rich plants and setting up beehives. The polli.no website is designed as a kind of tourist guide for pollinators, in which places to eat and stay are marked on a map and everyone can observe the pollinating insects in their progress through the city.

As with other global environmental problems the dramatic decline in pollinating insects can appear to be overwhelming. Highlighting the significance that small, individual actions have for the bigger picture can help to strengthen the conviction that it helps to become involved.

The project shows that plants for bees, bumblebees and other pollinator species should be included in all private and public green open spaces.



## Norway

Photo: Monica Løvtdal

17 URTEHAGEN  
OSLO

## Neighbourhood integration area in Grønland

With the approach of Ramadan, neighbours in the Grønland district of Oslo gather in a small common area, the herb garden, to harvest fresh coriander from the shared cultivation boxes ready for their lavish nocturnal meals. Local rumour has it that it's the best Coriander in the world. Later in the summer cherry tomatoes are popular, and peppermint and chamomile are brewed for tea. If you are lucky, the children in the neighbourhood will tell you the names of the different plants, and what they can be used for.

In multicultural neighbourhoods there is often limited contact between ethnic Norwegians and minority groups. A public neighbourhood garden creates an important meeting place where Norwegians have a pretext to chat with new neighbours and where many immigrants can create a link between their old and new homelands, and a means of making a contribution to the community. A public kitchen garden and green meeting place prove to have social, culinary and knowledge dissemination functions.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



## Norway



Photo: Skien kommune

18 MOSAIC  
SKIEN

## Backyards converted into new public spaces

The aim of Mosaic Skien is to rejuvenate public spaces inside the walled area of the old city in close cooperation with the estate owners. A diverse network of public and private outdoor spaces can revitalise an historic city and encourage walks and public adventures in the city.

Skien municipality wants to create innovation from the bottom up, as well as an overall management system. Mosaic tests out ideas about new content in the old city grid structure. There are about 40 backyards in the centre and so far, work is being carried out on ten pilot projects, of which two are temporary, four permanent and four ongoing. It is literally a physical mosaic in which each project constitutes an important part of the bigger picture. Using Mosaic, the municipality takes the lead in transforming the backyards into oases of art and green spaces. Empty and forgotten spaces are transformed into beautiful gardens, special outdoor cafés, art exhibitions or places where city dwellers can stay and play. Mosaic as a project was planned to last from 2010 – 2015 and the method is being continued in the Skien 2020 action programme.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



Norway

Photo: Trondheim kommune



## 19 DALEN ACTIVITY PARK TRONDHEIM

### A brilliant idea at Saupstad

The lighting system used in Dalen Activity Park at Saupstad stems from an original idea by young people in the neighbourhood. They were genuinely involved in what was happening around them and believed that the local community needed a park. The background for this was a desire for solidarity, activity, positive experience, well-being and not least security for all residents, as part of the improvements in the Saupstad-Kolstad area.

The vision of the young people was to create an adventure park that was so exciting and creative that it could attract people of all ages and encourage activity. Good lighting quickly became the main focus.

Both the housing cooperative and Trondheim Municipality were enthusiastic about the idea. Professional lighting designers were engaged and the young people were allowed to be involved in the process, which resulted in test lighting being rigged in Dalen Activity Park. Following the test lighting, the City Council has allocated several million kroner to the development of the Park.



Norway

Photo: Carl-Erik Eriksson

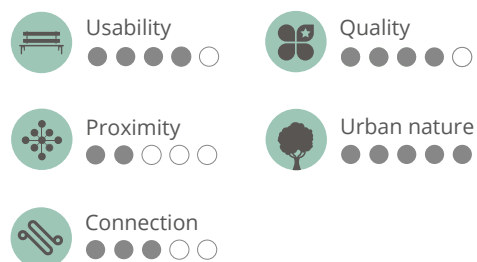


## 20 THE BLUE THREAD TRONDHEIM

### Improves connections between the city, cultural history and the river

The Blue Thread project is based on the unique resource that is the Nidelva river, the canal and the port area of the city of Trondheim. The aim is to strengthen the relationship between public development, city life and cultural history, and to better link the city and water.

The Blue Thread means working on protecting existing resources while further improving the city's qualities. The method is intended to act as a catalyst by utilizing temporary installations and events along the way. One example is the cooperation with NTNU Live Studio on the so-called "archipuncture projects", the stairs and the jetty on the King's Street commons, which have helped to revitalize the wharfs on Kjøpmannsgata. The project has a clear communication strategy, and has established a broad collaboration platform with a wide network of different actors from the public and private sectors, local residents and educational institutions.





Norway

Photo: Trondheim kommune

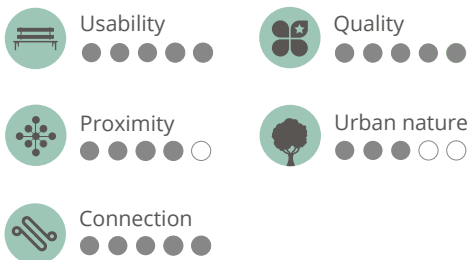


## 21 THE SHORTCUT PROJECT TRONDHEIM

### Shortcuts that encourage walking

Upgrading shortcuts helps make it faster, safer, and more attractive to walk to schools, workplaces, bus stops and the centre/local centre. The shortcut project is part of the “Greener Trondheim” walking strategy with the vision of “Walk more – drive less” that aims to make it easier to walk all year round. Each shortcut has its own character, and requires a different degree of upgrading. 340 shortcuts have been registered.

Examples of shortcuts are Blomsterstien – the flower trail – a shortcut of 600 metres between Moholt Student Village and NTNU, is upgraded with street lighting and is able to withstand snow clearing. Counts show a 70 percent increase in use one year later. Fuglesangen – the bird song – is a shortcut of 250 metres to primary school and lower secondary school, upgraded for year-round use so that schoolchildren do not need a ride to school. The shortcut through the Fort to the centre (160 metres), has been upgraded for year-round use, lighting has been installed, as have a handrail and bench in the steepest section. Positive feedback and increased use mean that upgrading of between five and ten shortcuts will be carried out each year.



Norway

Photo: Visualis v/Matthias Herzog



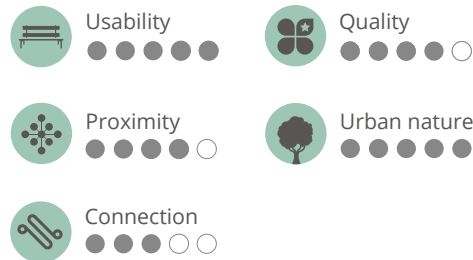
## 22 ÅSVEIEN SCHOOL TRONDHEIM

### Rainwater and games in the schoolyard

At Åsveien School in Trondheim rainwater is used as a resource. The schoolyard, which looks quite plain in dry weather, has some hidden qualities that become apparent when it rains. The water is collected in a system of gullies, channels and weirs, is led below ground and then comes up again through tubes that spew out the water, which ends up in a pond. The system has technical, aesthetic and activity-enhancing functions.

The schoolyard has many outdoor spaces, provided by buildings, the terrain and the elements. A grove of beech trees in the middle of the schoolyard has been preserved and has become the focal point for play and rest between the trees.

A connection running diagonally through the school property has provided a new connection between the residential areas before and beyond the school, and has become a shortcut in the area. The schoolyard is a focal point both during and after school hours. Involvement by teachers and pupils in this process has made an extensive use of water to play in possible.





# PART 1B

## Projects from Attractive Nordic Towns

### Denmark

- 23 A garden for a community, Middelfart: Climategarten at a Nursing home in Skovgade
- 24 The Climate City, Middelfart: Urban Development through Climate Adaption
- 25 House of street-sports, Viborg
- 26 Sønæs climate park, Viborg

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### Iceland

- 31 Akratorg, Akranes: Reconstruction of the town square
- 32 Breiðin – The Two Light Towers, Akranes
- 33 Guðlaug baths, Akranes
- 34 Selskógur, Fljótsdalshérað: A beautiful backyard forest
- 35 Family adventure park, Mosfellsbær

### Norway

- 36 Stortorget, Hamar: Focus on participation and year-round use
- 37 The seaside park, Levanger: The neighborhood of wooden houses
- 38 The Stadium park, Levanger
- 39 City beach, Steinkjer: City beach and maze as new attractions

### Sweden

- 40 Aktivia, Lund
- 41 Bantorget, Lund
- 42 Pop up-beach at Stortorget, Lund







Denmark



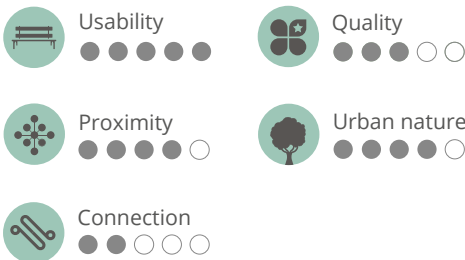
Photo: Claus Fisker

## 23 A GARDEN FOR A COMMUNITY MIDDELFART

### Climate garden at a Nursing home in Skovgade

The climate garden is the result of a lot of people working together. It is a green oasis for residents and employees at the nursing home and for the entire neighborhood. It also handles rainwater from approximately 4,000 square meters of roofing and 2,000 square meters of parking space.

In 2015 residents, employees, volunteers and professionals began to investigate how the rainwater that falls in the 11,000 square meter area of Skovgade should be handled in the future – and be an inspiring project for others. From the beginning the goal was to find solutions that would please all the local residents and provide a greener, healthier and more fun outdoor space whilst contributing to solving the challenges of climate change and more frequent cloudbursts with extreme precipitation. Now 20 boring parking spaces have turned into a green oasis with space for the young and the old for exercise, play and serving the interests of the entire community. Even on grey, rainy days the garden creates value. Here you can sit inside and see how the rain collects in the raingarden and slowly filters down into the earth and disappears.



Denmark



Photo: Middelfart

## 24 THE CLIMATE CITY MIDDELFART

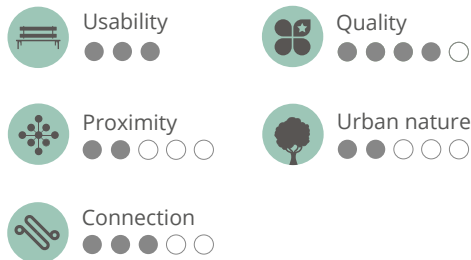
### Urban Development through Climate Adaptation

One of the greatest social and financial challenges of the future is to ensure climate-resilient towns and cities; this calls for a pronounced paradigm shift within the fields of urban development and wastewater management.

Using a dialogue-based approach 'The Climate City' project focuses on developing innovative solutions that integrate both climate adaptation and urban design through focus on multifunctional design of urban spaces and structures. The project aims to manage rainwater on the ground as a supplement to underground piping, making rainwater a visible urban element.

One of the objectives of 'The Climate City' project is that new solutions, and the principles behind them, should become a source of inspiration both nationally and internationally by integrating urban development and climate adaptation into future design.

The climate city project is carried out as a partnership between "Middelfart Wastewater Utility", "The Municipality of Middelfart" and "Realdania".



Denmark



Photo: Viborg

## 25 HOUSE OF STREET-SPORTS VIBORG

### House of street-sports

A former windmill factory has been converted into an urban sport and entertainment center. The rough look of the building has been preserved and new elements in wood, plastic panels and asphalt have been added.

The idea of the center is to create an open house where everybody can drop by during afternoons, evenings and weekends. You can play basketball, street football, ride a scooter, try parkour, climb a wall or meet up for a dance-session. There are also meeting facilities, exhibition areas and an outdoor skatepark.

The facility is open for non-organized members as well as associations and is situated next to a housing area with mixed cultures and close to the city center. The area is part of a big renewal plan, called Viborg Railcity.

The private organization GAME runs the house. This is a young, non-profit organization with several similar facilities in other towns in Denmark. A lifelong membership costs 7 euros.



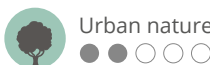
Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection

Denmark



Photo: Viborg

## 26 SØNÆS CLIMATE PARK VIBORG

### Sønæs climate park

In central Viborg, next to a lake, a new climate park has been created combining recreational use with rainwater management. Sports fields that were previously frequently flooded have now been converted into a public park where people can walk, play, picnic and experiment with water.

The landscaping concept was to dig a channel to create a “nature island” that tolerates temporary flooding with rainwater, the channel functions as a reservoir for handling rainwater from the larger nearby housing area. The “nature island” has a number of fun activities such as crossing the water on floating stepping stones, pulling a small pontoon, swings on poles in the water and climbing or balancing activities. The park has turned out to be a great, new, meeting place for the young, for families, for the elderly and for disabled persons. A lot of organized as well as pop-up activities take place.

The park is a cooperation project between the municipality and the sewage company.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection

## Finland



Photo: Pori

## 27 NATIONAL URBAN PARK PORI

### Green corridor through the city

The Pori National Urban Park was established in 2002. It is one of the main concepts underlying the development of the urban structure and the cityscape; it is a way of managing and preserving particular values in nature and the built environment, and it makes Pori unique. The park area forms a continuous green structure within the city. Without leaving the park you can travel from the Kokemäenjoki river delta, known for its birdlife, through the heart of the city to the Pori Forest recreation area and on to the countryside surrounding the city. Besides interesting sights and attractive open public spaces, the urban park also offers countless opportunities to enjoy peace and quiet and to relax. Parks, forests, wetlands and other elements of the natural environment are accessible within walking distance of the city centre.

The Finnish National Urban Park (NUP) concept is a part of the Land Use and Building Act. There are nine unique national urban parks in Finland (2018).



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



## Finland



Photo: Salo

## 28 RIVER OF LIGHT SALO

### River of light

In Finland lighting plays an important role in improving outdoor life, especially in winter time when there is a minimum of sunlight. The city of Salo has invested in LED lighting and is among one of the most LED illuminated cities in Finland.

The Salonjoki river flows through the city. The pedestrian walkways, bridges and old buildings by the river banks are lit by LED lamps that can change colour depending on the situation or event and season. Lighting creates a safe and pleasant walking environment and in that way contributes to outdoor life in the city. Lighting creates liveability in the city center, and liveability is one of the priorities of the strategy.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



Finland



Photo: Salo

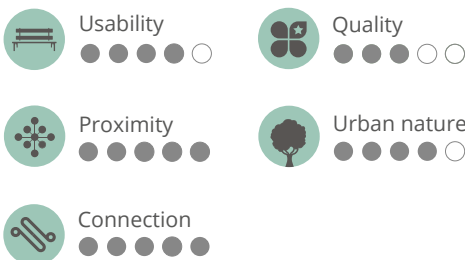
## 29 TRANSFORMATION OF A CAR PARK SALO

### Transformation of a car park

The car park next to Salo market is a good example of how a public space can be transformed, and how different activities can change a place according to the time of the year and different kinds of events.

Salo marketplace is the best marketplace in Finland – a public living room and the heart of the city in summer time – with a circular parking area next to it. The popular evening markets on summer Thursdays bring a children’s flea market to the parking area, and events such as the vintage car gathering and beach ball competition, as well as a variety of activities, can take place in the parking lot.

In the winter time there is no open-air market but children and families gather and enjoy outdoor life with skates on in the city centre because, in wintertime, the parking area is transformed into an ice rink. The ground will be watered and frozen and lights will hung up, on some evenings music is played and hot drinks served to skaters. The skating park is result of a cooperation between local associations and the municipality.



Finland



Photo: Vaasa

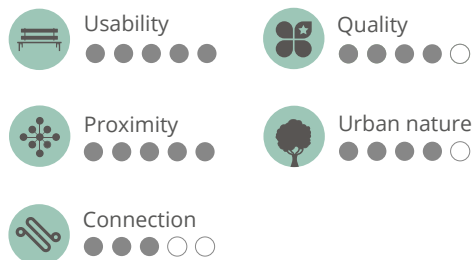
## 30 VAASA SEASHORE VAASA

### Vaasa seashore

The seashore path is safe route providing everyone with free and easy access to the most beautiful parts of the town. It is the backbone connecting many different places of interest such as beaches, playgrounds, museums, university campus, fishing spots, camping areas or protected nature areas.

While the urban section looks like a pedestrian promenade with entertainment every few meters, other sections further from the center provide an opportunity for biking, hiking or bird-watching along paths crossing the swamps.

Despite the temptation to turn attractive seashores into private plots Vaasa city has kept them as places for public use. Links are constantly upgraded and new spots added. The most used part of the city have been upgraded and some of the nature areas still in need of change will be made accessible not only to sportsmen, but also to the broader public.





## Iceland



Photo: Akranes

## 31 AKRATORG AKRANES

### Reconstruction of the town square

The new and improved town square of Akranes was formally opened on the National Day of Iceland, June 17, 2014. The main purpose of the upgrade was to create a focal point for cultural events and services in the town. The pleasurable result has been a decrease in car traffic and an expansion of green areas. The square hosts a wide range of activities such as various festivals and food, antique and Christmas markets.

The square's lighting solution is unique and creates an ever-changing environment; it strengthens the spirit of the place and increases diversity in the area. In the middle of the square the 1967 statue of "The Sailor" by Marteinn Guðmundsson honours the memory of drowned sailors. Playful water fountains create a fine mist and the raised stage hosts music events and other entertainment.

Furniture such as benches and water fountains were made by local craftsmen.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



## Iceland



Photo: Akranes

## 32 BREIÐIN – THE TWO LIGHT TOWERS AKRANES

### Breiðin – The Two Light Towers

Akranes lies in the outskirts of Reykjavík in West Iceland, and Breiðin is the southernmost part of Akranes. The two lighthouses are the area's greatest attractions, the smaller one was built in 1918 and is the oldest concrete lighthouse in Iceland. The bigger one dates from 1944 and is open to visitors, with its striking view from the top and wonderful acoustics which makes it a popular venue for art exhibitions, recording sessions and concerts.

The cultural value of the area is an important reminder of lost working methods in the fishing industry. The goal is to create an attraction for locals and tourists by strengthening the area's outdoor recreation potential and highlighting its historical and cultural values. The ongoing development of the area combines many elements including design, outdoor activities, nature, culture and history. The area is covered by protection orders for of its landscapes, natural beauty and rich bird life, as well as being a great outdoor area.



Usability



Quality



Proximity



Urban nature



Connection



Iceland



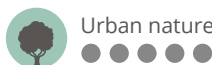
Photo: Akranes

### 33 GUÐLAUG BATHS AKRANES

Hot baths nestled in the middle of rocky breakwater barrier against the open Atlantic Ocean

Guðlaug baths are located on Langisandur, Akranes, on Iceland's west coast. The pool is nestled in a rocky breakwater barrier that runs along the beach, and it also shelters the coastal sports grounds from the North Atlantic Ocean. The beach is a popular public place for the people of Akranes who pass by to enjoy the vista as well as using the beach for a variety of activities. The baths are open to the public and play a supporting role as a gathering point for ocean swimmers in dire need of warming up.

The formal expression of the baths is inspired by the naturally occurring pools of seawater surrounding beach rocks as the tide flows in and out. It is composed of three platforms, the top is a viewing deck/roof, the middle is the Guðlaug bath itself that flows into the bottom which is a shallow pool at beach level. North of the baths is a soccer stadium now protected by a concrete structure facing the ocean. The "underbelly" of the stadium is re-purposed as changing rooms, café, and storage, serving the beach, the pool and the soccer field and further enhancing the quality of life on Langisandur.



Iceland



Photo: Fljótshérað

### 34 SELSKÓGUR FLJÓTSDALSHÉRAÐ

A beautiful backyard forest

Selskógur is unusual among Icelandic forests in that only native trees grow there and it has regenerated naturally rather than seeing imported conifers planted.

Located right on the outskirts of the town of Egilsstaðir, the current site plan designates it for the public to enjoy peace, tranquillity and beautiful nature, as well as preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

Several walking paths, either paved or covered with wood chips, run through the forest and connect directly to the town, making the area very accessible for walkers, runners and cross country skiers. In the forest, close to a picturesque river gorge, there is a playground and a small outdoor theatre for cultural events.

Recent proposals for a new site plan will see the area enlarged, more paths, playgrounds and exercise facilities, whilst also incorporating further preservation of rare plants and trees.



Iceland



Photo: Mosfellsbær

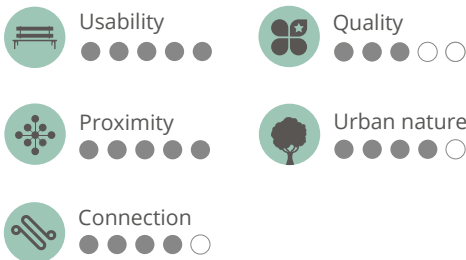
## 35 FAMILY ADVENTURE PARK MOSFELLSBÆR

### Outdoor recreational area for the public

The Family Adventure Park in Mosfellsbær is located in an natural, open area close to the town center, nearby residential area and school and sport area. It is surrounded by natural vegetation, trees and flowers, connected by an extensive net of walking paths, to enjoy the unspoiled nature of the area.

An extensive development of walking paths and vegetation has taken place, with a paved and illuminated main path running through the entire park, from the local sports area to a nearby residential area. Recently a playground was established within the park, with a climbing net, disc golf field and a large climbing tower, and close by is another themed playground build by the local scout union.

It is a great outdoor recreational area for the whole family, both during summer and winter, as cross-country skiing is available in the area during snowy periods. The park is still under construction and many more features will be added, such as a picnic area, pond, a bird watching area and more playgrounds and activities. The Family Adventure Park is a natural haven in the midst of an urban environment, allowing easy and free access to unspoiled nature very close to home.



Norway



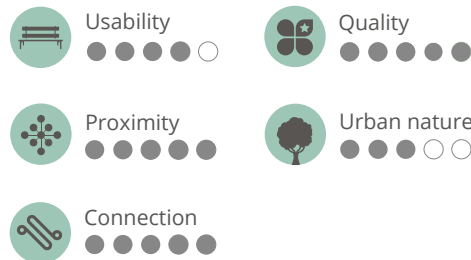
Photo: Hamar kommune

## 36 STORTORGET HAMAR

### Focus on participation and year-round use

Hamar municipality has completed a network design process to find the “DNA code” for the town’s principal public spaces. Temporary artistic installations and events were elements in a comprehensive participation process. More than 1,200 schoolchildren took part in the process using resources from the Cultural Schoolbag project, as well as residents of all ages. The process was conducted full-time over three intense months in 2012 by Ecosistema Publico from Spain, who won the assignment in a competition for art-based planning of the marketplace.

The municipality wanted to develop the main square together with the new culture centre so as to create an attractive central point west of the centre after a large shopping mall was established at the eastern end. Participation is one of Hamar’s core values which determined the choice of methodology for the development of the square. Seasonal strategies were among the themes in the process, particularly for incorporating wintertime activities into the project.



Norway



Photo: Tove Nordgaard

### 37 THE SEASIDE PARK LEVANGER

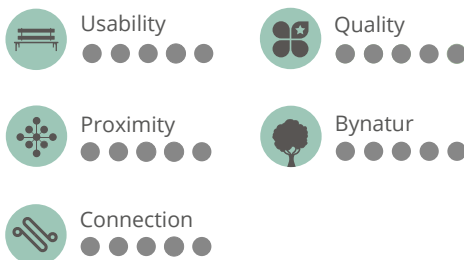
#### The neighbourhood of wooden houses

The seaside park is located on the historic axis connecting the sea and the old town center, an area of listed buildings and part of Levanger's cultural heritage. The site of the park, on the Levanger Sound, adds to the spatial experience and enhances an awareness of cultural-historic qualities.

The park was completed in 2010, and the goal of the project was to revitalize the park axis and anchor the straits as part of the identity of the city. The park should ensure general access and underline the city's contact with the sea; it was important to preserve the existing trees as part of the park's quality.

With a granite stone amphitheater and flat seafront area, the park invites flexible use, including concerts and historical events, and can accommodate 5-600 people. The design, with the amphitheater seating providing steps down to the seafront, together with a new wooden pier, create an intimate meeting place that invites use in everyday life.

On each side of the park there are historic jetties with a museum and a restaurant that strengthen the city space as a cultural-historical meeting place. The lighting in the park axis was also an instrument for creating security.



Norway



Photo: Tove Nordgaard

### 38 THE STADIUM PARK LEVANGER

#### The Stadium park

The Stadium park is a 15 decares (about 2 football fields) activity park in the center of Levanger designed to offer children and young people space for unorganized activity. The target group was primarily for youths, but also intended for a multi-generation public.

The design of the park was inspired by the meandering course of the Levanger river, represented by a gray-blue brick footpath with blue lighting and imitating the earlier river channel. The concept of winding river bends is repeated in semicircular areas for different activities including a water theme, exercise apparatus and a skate park. A graveled area serves as a ball park in summer time and ice rink in winter. The former bicycle velodrome was the inspiration for a play area called the "mini-velodrome" with space for outdoor games. The stadium park is an attractive urban space for small and large events with facilities such as the old clubhouse and its own toilet facilities. The park has become a major attraction, an important urban area and a meeting place where people of different ages and cultures meet.





## Norway

Photo: Steinkjer kommune

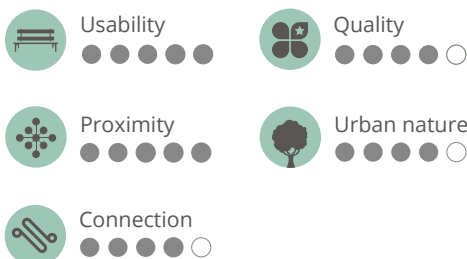


## 39 CITY BEACH STEINKJER

### City beach and maze as new attractions

The new city beach in Steinkjer is located in the town centre and is easily accessible without a car. The city beach represents a pleasant oasis in an area characterized by shopping centres and the E6 motorway. The beach has white sand and palm trees, parasols and a floating trampoline.

The beach is one of many initiatives taken to link this part of the town to the rest of the town centre, and to make the area more attractive to tourists and the town's residents. Not far away, the Parks Department has planted an exciting and popular 1.3 km. long labyrinth called the "Trifolium". The city beach and the Trifolium have helped create identity and a sense of belonging, and are concepts that have also been applied to other towns and villages.



## Sweden



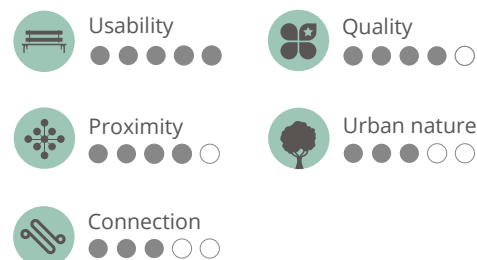
Photo: Lund

## 40 AKTIVIA LUND

### Aktivia

The Aktivia project, carried out in 2016 and partially financed by Bolighus, had the goal of creating a universal and equal-opportunity arena for the younger generation. Aktivia is in Klostergården park which was built

in the 1960's in one of Lund's most densely populated housing areas. Aktivia itself was planned and designed in dialogue with 12-15 year-old girls and includes, among other things, a trampoline, a theatre stage with built-in sound system, table-tennis and park benches with integrated LED lighting that creates a feeling of safety and cosiness after dark. A variety of events take place here and anyone with a good idea is encouraged to realise it – it's a space that develops with use.



Sweden

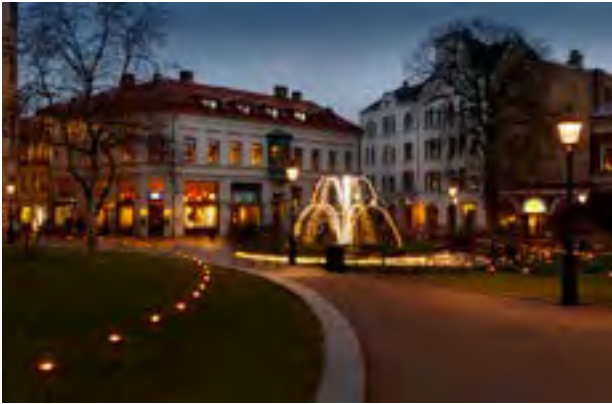
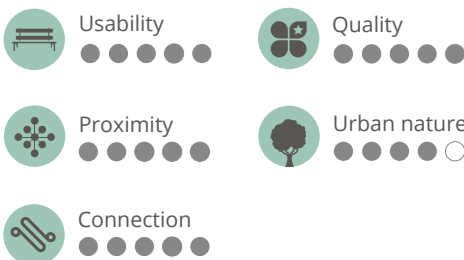


Photo: Lund

## 41 BANTORGET LUND

### Bantorget

Bantorget, an ornamental square, was built in the 1860s next to the railway station and renovated in 2018. The new design was based on existing qualities and refines the character, function and needs of the square in its meeting with the city of today. The historical character has been maintained and the focus has been on high quality materials and detailing. Whilst previously many had simply passed by Bantorget, today it invites you to stop and settle down and it is also one of the first places visitors see when they come to Lund. Bantorget is a mix of park and square – a green square – and functions both as an elegant entrance and inviting meeting place for residents and visitors.



Sweden

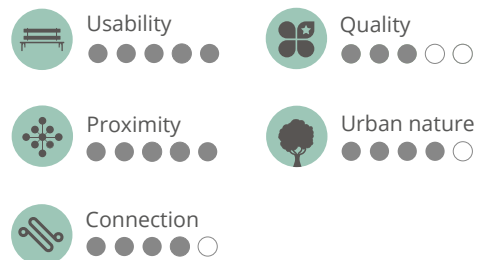


Photo: Lund

## 42 POP UP-BEACH AT STORTORGET LUND

### Pop up-beach at Stortorget

Stortorget is Lund's oldest square and an obvious destination and meeting place in the city. A pop-up beach was built in the square in the summer of 2018 – with a twinkle in the eye and a playful attitude it implies that if we don't have a real beach in Lund then we can build one. The purpose was, not least, to create some fun for those people still in town over the summer. The beach, which was placed in front of the Town Hall, attracted both groves of residents as well as visitors and invited them to use Stortorget in new ways. The temporary installation changed the character of the square and people of all ages settled down to play or take a break in the shade of a parasol – a small piece of the French Riviera in the middle of the medieval city center.



# PART 2

## Tools and methods

- 1 Public space strategy for Trondheim centre: Transfer value to districts and towns
- 2 Public space plan for Hamar: Long-term land-use strategy in the municipal plan and Jan Gehl Architects' methodology
- 3 Public outdoor life in Kristiansand: The SMS project
- 4 Public space network – Fredrikstad: Visualization of mapping and analysis
- 5 Case Fredrikstad: Urban laboratory for a ten-minute town
- 6 Guide to alternative planning of public spaces in Oslo – VPOR: Coherent technical and blue-green infrastructure in transformation areas
- 7 Squares and meeting places in Oslo: Municipal sector plan for squares and meeting places
- 8 Kids' Tracks: Digital registration tools of children's participation in planning of town and village development









## 1 PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGY FOR TRONDHEIM CENTRE

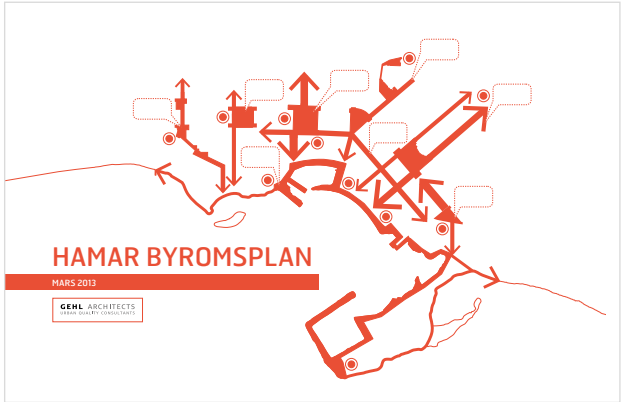
### With transfer value to districts and towns

A temporary artificial ice-skating rink in Cicignon Square in the city centre is among the initiatives taken in cooperation with the business sector, and as a direct follow-up of the urban space strategy for the centre of Trondheim.

Public space is highlighted as an important element of the Municipal Plan's land-use sector for 2012 – 2024, with a vision shared with the city's business sector of "An environmentally-friendly and economically dynamic City Centre".

The public space strategy "Urban spaces in the Centre" (2016) has the vision "Public spaces that are good to use". The document describes four strategic initiatives: more dialogue, more knowledge, targeted efforts and more exploration. A separate section presents 13 selected urban spaces.

The public space strategy includes an action and financial plan for 2016 – 2019. This sets out prioritisation of selected public spaces with plans for temporary measures and permanent upgrading. Cooperation with the business sector is an important premise for implementation of these plans. Testing of temporary measures was started in autumn 2015. At the same time, cooperation with the business sector was established to prepare an annual City Centre Accounting to provide more knowledge on how the centre and public spaces are used.



## 2 PLAN FOR PUBLIC SPACES IN HAMAR

### Long-term land-use strategy in the municipal plan and Gehl's methodology

Hamar has learned that initiatives related to public development projects were stronger in the area bordering the centre than in the centre itself. It became important to encourage wider involvement. To this end a series of popular public meetings were organised to discuss topics relating to the town and centre development. As a consequence, a public space plan for the centre was developed as a private-public collaboration.

#### Strategies:

- A more attractive and accessible riverside area for the centre
- Develop the many squares and parks, vary design and focus on more user groups, especially children and young people
- Improve experience for pedestrians and cyclists
- The streets as attractive axes through the centre
- Building development within the historic public plan structure

The process has created better understanding of the centre's value as a meeting place and the need for concerted efforts. Temporary public spaces and creative initiatives are welcomed. The public space plan is part of a long-term land-use plan strategy. The municipality will incorporate the public space strategy in the next revision of the plan for the centre.

Photo: Kristiansand kommune



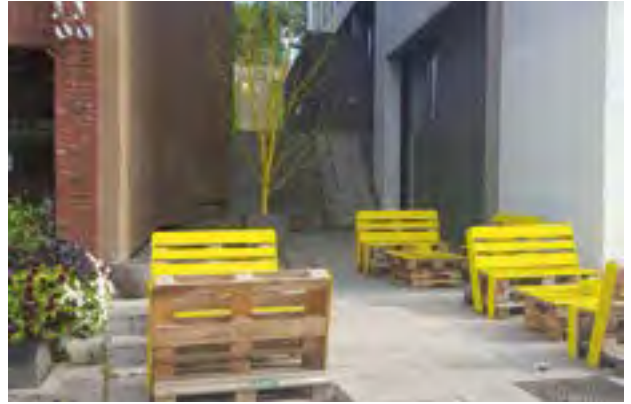
### 3 PUBLIC OUTDOOR LIFE IN KRISTIANSAND

#### The SMS project: Place development, participation and social meeting places

The SMS project is a planning tool used for better place development. Here you will find checklists and methodologies that contribute to public health considerations being given higher ranking in civic planning processes. The aim is to secure links between recreation, activity and meeting places. Kristiansand wants to double its population in the central districts of the town, so it is also important to arrange for outdoor life and activities in the downtown areas.

The aim is for more people to make more use of the town's pedestrian zones more often and throughout the greater part of the day and year. Improved lighting has been installed, as has a wider variety of meeting and activity places, better access to the sea, more vegetation with fruit, berries and flowers. Moreover, urban cultivation has become possible in the park area and it has been used for parties for neighbourhood associations, with a café, various artistic and cultural events, races, free training for yoga, exercise, Pilates and orienteering.

Photo: Fredrikstad kommune



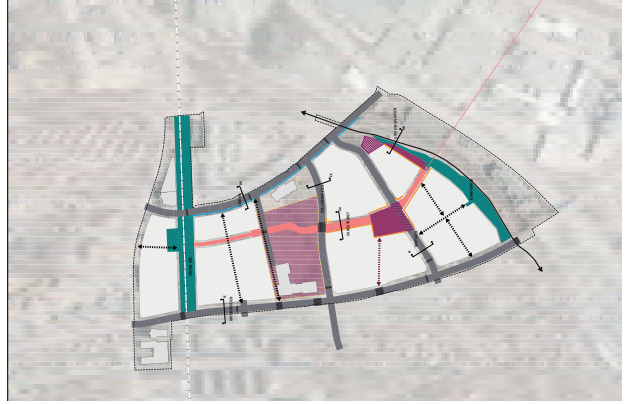
### 4 PUBLIC SPACE NETWORK – FREDRIKSTAD

#### Visualization of registrations and analyses

A premise for the nearby town is that public streets and public spaces, paths and shortcuts, constitute a continuous network of pedestrian connections and cycle paths.

Fredrikstad municipality has developed a map solution which can be accessed via PC or mobile phone connected to GPS localization mapping wherever you may be located in each public space.

The mapping application can be of great benefit to the municipality's administration and politicians as an analysis tool for city planners, and as an aid in administrative procedures relating to regulation plans and building cases. The tool is well suited for dissemination purposes of events and is particularly important in the anchoring of planning processes. It can also be used for planning cultural events, for registration in the Parks Department, the Refuse Collection Department etc. Since it is easy to use, it will also be a useful knowledge bank for politicians and people in general.



## 5 CASE FREDRIKSTAD

### Urban laboratory for a ten-minute town

Case Fredrikstad is a project that aims to develop a compact town, meaning that everyone should have access to their everyday activities within a walking distance of about 1 km.

The working method has been to survey and analyse the central area using urban life accounting, participation and strategies for the repair of the urban tissue.

An urban life survey formed the basis for defining objectives, activities and criteria for urban life accounting. Subsidiary objectives have been to:

- strengthen and prioritise the general and specific qualities in urban life accounting
- improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- establishing good methods for user participation in the urban space development process
- use urban life accounting as a strategic tool in the continuing work of public space development

It has been important to create ownership and anchoring among politicians and internally in the municipality in order to bring to life the vision and sub-projects.

The urban laboratory in the centre is a meeting point for dialogue and exchange of ideas between the municipality and the residents.

## 6 GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE PLANNING OF PUBLIC SPACES IN OSLO (VPOR)

### Coherent technical and blue-green infrastructure in transformation areas

Oslo uses prescriptive plans for public spaces to plan cohesive technical and blue-green infrastructure plans in transformation areas with many property owners. The plans are informal and normative. Following a review of plans by the City Council there is predictability with regard to what the municipality expects should be included in subsequent regulatory plans.

VPOR was first used for Ensjø in 2007 and has since been developed for several other areas. It includes a concretization of the structure of public spaces, the size and layout of squares, parks and streets, façade requirements, and differentiation of quality standards.

The plans are essential tools for the funding of new infrastructure. The costs of measures in the plan are calculated and incorporated as priority requirements in subsequent zoning plans. Later development agreements ensure private funding of the measures.

Photo: Oslo kommune



## 7 SQUARES AND MEETING PLACES IN OSLO

### Municipal sector plan for squares and meeting places

The municipal sector plan was adopted by Oslo City Council and applies to the entire building zone with the exception of the downtown area. The plan secures existing marketplaces and meeting places and facilitates the establishment of new ones. A key objective is to ensure areas for all social groups and the plan applies to publicly accessible outdoor spaces, but not common areas or other outdoor areas intended for private use.

The plan is overriding, but includes provisions and guidelines for the handling of planning and building cases. Some areas have been identified that lack market places and meeting places, and requirements have been set for the establishment of new meeting places in new development projects. In addition, a toolkit has been created with a collection of examples to provide help and inspiration for implementation.



Photo: Sverre Gunnar Haga

## 8 KIDS' TRACKS

### Digital registration tools of children's participation in planning of town and village development

With increased growth and demographic changes in towns and villages, it has become necessary to plan smarter and more sustainably than before. New methods and tools are needed that can map the real use and needs for different types of outdoor areas. Kids' Tracks provides municipalities with new knowledge of children's and young people's experiences and use of their local environment, and the data can be implemented in the municipality's planning. The involvement of local residents in planning processes is a legal requirement, but is difficult to realise in practice. Participation increases the knowledge base in plans by highlighting more aspects and improving the quality of the local environment. Kids' Tracks is democracy in practice.

Design and Architecture Norway, in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, the Science Education Centre and the University of Bergen, re-launched a more user-friendly version of Kids' Tracks. In 2015, Design and Architecture Norway, in cooperation with the Norwegian Institute for Public and Regional Research, the Norwegian Institute of Life Sciences and three pilot projects (Ski, Giske and Bodø) tested, documented and evaluated the Kids' Tracks method.





5

**RESOURCE  
PAGES**







## 5.1 Glossary

### The glossary defines the words and concepts used in the Idea Handbook

**Blue-green structure** is the green structure that follows water, such as water systems, streams, surface water, flood roads and the like. It is also the part of the green structure that creates access to areas adjacent to sea and water.

**Public life** is used (in this context) as a term for outdoor activity in the public space, regardless of purpose, duration and nature.

**Urban nature** is a part of the town's and village's eco-system with water, vegetation, land and wildlife. Urban nature is linked to green and blue elements.

**Public space** (in this context) refers to all publicly accessible outdoor spaces such as streets, squares, parks and green open spaces. A public space is defined according to the role of the place or space in a development plan (such as square, park, street, green open space) and the activities that the public spaces are furnished with and adapted for.

**"Publicly accessible"** means public spaces that are available to everyone, as well as private areas that are zoned or made accessible for public use.

**A public space network** is the infrastructure of streets, squares, parks, blue-green areas and pedestrian and bike connections. These are the connections that people use to and from their target points in everyday life. The network is also designed to integrate neighbourhoods, districts, towns, villages and hamlets into a coherent unit.

#### **Social sustainability**

The term "sustainability" can be divided into three subcategories: Environmental, social and economic sustainability. Social sustainability concerns inclusion, reduction of social inequalities and creating physical places and social conditions that are good for people to live in.

**Connections** is used here to mean all categories of sidewalks and bike paths. It also includes other connections for pedestrians and cyclists such as boat connections, cable cars and the like that contribute to better accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Streets** are traffic arteries in towns or settlements. Streets are distinguished by the fact that the houses lie along a fixed building line and form walls in the streetscape. Rows of trees, dense hedges, walls and fences can also similarly be perceived as barriers. Squares and parks also belong in a street network, so that there can be open spaces along a street.

**Green structure** is the mesh of large and small landscaped areas of the city (DN-Handbook 6.1994), also called the green infrastructure. This may be more or less cohesive and consist of many different types of spaces, with different levels of development and public access. For example, these may be parks, nature areas, cemeteries, private gardens, common residential outdoor areas and agricultural areas. Green structure is also used as a collective term for blue-and-green structure.

**"Joyful values"** are about beautiful elements that stimulate the senses, such as a view, water, flowers and trees etc.

**Quality** is about the ability something has to satisfy users' demands and expectations, and comprises both utilisation potential and aesthetic expression.

**Liveable towns or villages** is a translation from the English term "Liveable Cities". This means towns or villages that are good to live in, and where the surroundings contribute to a high quality of life. Places have different degrees of liveability, depending on whether they contribute to a better or a poorer quality of life for residents. Quality of life is about the people in the public spaces, while "liveability" can be used for the design of surroundings. (Norwegian Language Council)

**Mobility** is a collective term for mobility, and refers to interaction and the combined use of different forms of transport.

**Target points** are the main places that people stay in and seek out in everyday life such as home, school and kindergarten – and shops, public and private services such as cafés and restaurants, hairdresser and fitness studio, as well as attractions.

**Parks** are green open spaces that are adapted for recreation, sporting activities and outdoor living. They are often cultivated with lawns, planted areas and water features, and are operated and maintained. A park can also be a natural area that is easily adapted for use with paths, seating etc.

**Urban qualities** are qualities that are derived from notions about the city and public life in the city. It requires that there is a certain density in the building development and in the number of people living there. Urban qualities are about the positive characteristics – it is about developing physical environments that attract street life and activity and provide a positive framework for city life.

**Public outdoor life** promotes activity, is intended for recreational purposes and is exercised in both public and green surroundings.

**Outdoor spaces** are the spaces between buildings, the outdoor environment in residential areas, gardens and parks at schools and other institutions, larger parks and recreation grounds. Outdoor spaces can be both private and public, such as gardens, backyards, squares and parks.

**Roads** are traffic arteries, particularly used with regard to surface routes. Roads are often found in more open landscapes than streets are. Buildings along a road are normally not dense enough or close enough to form visually limited spaces.



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**The documents under Literature and Resources are both sources for the Idea Handbook.**

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### 5.3 Contributors

The handbook has been developed by the Planning Department of the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation by Project Manager Ellen Husaas, with assistance from Guro Voss Gabrielsen and Kristin Omholt-Jensen.

With the cooperation of:

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### 5.4 Photos and Illustrations

Photos should be read either from top to bottom, or from left to right. The order of the photos is given in parentheses.

#### Ilja Hendel

Cover photo, pages 2, 4-5, 8, 9, 13, 16 (1 and 4), 17, 18 (1 and 4), 19 (1,3 and 4), 20 (1 and 3), 21, 22-23, 26, 27 (2 and 3), 29 (1), 30 (2), 31 (2), 34, 36 (2), 37, 39, 41 (1), 43 (2), 44 (1), 47 (2), 48 (2), 49 (2), 52-53, 69, 75 (1), 80-81, 83, 95, 114-115

#### Erik Veigård (Nordland County Council)

Pages 16 (2,3), 18 (2), 20 (4), 19 (2), 27 (1), 28 (2), 29 (2), 30 (1), 31 (1), 40 (1), 40, 46, 49 (1)

Ellen Husaas: pages 18 (3), 20 (2), **Dronninga landskap**: page 48 (1), **Marianne Gjørnv**: page 28 (1), **Birgitte Simensen Berg**: page 44 (2), **Gunnar Berven**: page 76, **Ian Cox**: page 45 (1), **Karin Rø**: page 45 (2), **Helene Gallis**: page 75 (2), **Are Røysamb**: page 40 (2), **Dag Jenssen**: page 41 (2), **Sophie Labonnote**: page 43 (1), **Bergen Kommune**: page 47 (1), **Viborg**: page 97

#### Chapter 1B – photos from the Nordic towns

**Claus Fisker** (Page 98), **Middelfart** (Page 98), **Viborg** (Page 99), **Pori** (Page 100), **Salo** (Page 100), **Salo** (Page 100–101), **Vaasa** (Page 101), **Akranes** (Page 102–103), **Fljótsdalshérað** (Page 103), **Mosfellsbær** (Page 104), **Hamar kommune** (Page 104), **Tove Nordgaard** (Page 105), **Steinkjer kommune**: page 106, **Lund** (Page 106–107)

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