

# COPENHAGEN

## ACTION PLAN **URBAN SPACE**



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**Special Edition**



## LEADER



## A new action plan for urban space -A project in progress

Copenhagen Municipality has initiated a process to develop the city's urban spaces. Our aim is for the city of Copenhagen to become a unique European metropolis created for people. The city will be an international meeting place which offers an attractive environment. It will also be a place for living in that it offers numerous possibilities for excitement, interest and delight.

The preliminary result is a draft action plan which is currently undergoing discussion. New squares, commercial streets, connections and pedestrian streets will create a more coherent city. Dull streets in residential areas will be transformed into recreational oases. It will be inspiring and challenging to live in the city. There will be a new type of urban space which will encourage more outdoor city life.

We have sought inspiration in European cities where there have recently been notable

achievements in city development. In Lyon and St.Etienne many projects have been realised which have given the city a new identity. This has been achieved in co-operation with the French city planner Jean-Pierre Charbonneau who has joined us as a consultant during this process in Copenhagen.

Initially, we held three workshops in spring 2004, attended by civil servants, citizens, politicians and other interested people such as film-makers, ethnographers and private consultants. The purpose was to discuss the development of the city's urban spaces which function as meeting places for the community. Many exciting ideas and thoughts are being considered and developed into a draft action plan. If approved, the plan will be a unique planning and development tool for the future.

Søren Pind  
Mayor of Building and  
Construction Department

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# Three generations of urban space

## Copenhagen Municipality has been working to improve the city's urban spaces for many years

### The First Generation

In 1963 the world's first pedestrian street, two kilometres long and now known simply as 'Strøget' was constructed. Since then many other streets and squares have been given over to pedestrians and today a large part of the city centre is car free. We call this the first generation of city spaces.



In the first generation a network of car free pedestrian streets was established - Strøget

### The Second Generation

In the second generation numerous beautiful and well designed squares and meeting places emerged which reflected the special, subtle Scandinavian style of design. New public spaces began to emerge in the local neighbourhoods as well as in the city centre. The city became a scene for exuberant city life with cafe guests, musicians, children playing and young skaters.



In the second generation new meeting places were created - Havneparken

### The Third Generation

We now intend to create a third generation of urban space which reflects recent changes in the population structure and work patterns. Copenhagen has previously been dominated by older people, but the community today has become increasingly diverse and multicultural. Many immigrants and younger citizens with children use the city in new ways. Also there is more activity in the local areas due to increased levels of home working. We need to make spaces that reflect contemporary demands and which can create diversity and a modern identity.



In the third generation we will create a new type of contemporary urban space



"Many European cities should develop a strategy for their urban spaces. My job is to help Copenhagen to manage its future by developing new working methods. Urban development is not only the work of professionals but also of citizens and politicians. In Copenhagen we should develop something new which reflects the contemporary needs and wishes of the city's inhabitants. The city should not be a copy of Lyon or Barcelona. Many people who have ideas make the city change."

Jean-Pierre Charbonneau  
Consultant and city planner, Paris



"I believe that we have constructed an urban action plan which is unique. I do not think that one can find a city that works so systematically with a strategy for urban space, as Copenhagen. I anticipate that there will be exciting discussions with local citizens and professionals in Denmark and abroad. When it is seen what we have done and if the proposals are approved, I think that we will receive a lot of attention and be successful at finding the necessary means."

Mette Lis Andersen  
Director, Building and Construction Administration, Copenhagen Municipality

# Thoughts from the workshops



**Jon Pape,**  
Leader of the Urban Space Office,  
Roads & Parks Dept.

*There has been co-operation between municipal departments and private consultants (in this process.) There's a great sense of engagement and mutual responsibility.*



**Rita Justesen,**  
Project leader,  
Planning & Architecture Dept.

*One of the ideas from the workshops is to discuss both public and private urban spaces in a project forum. A new understanding of the importance of beautiful and functional urban spaces is starting to appear among the private developers and I think the project forum will turn out to be a big succes for the urban space plan.*



**Stig L. Andersen,**  
Consultant landscape architect.

*The municipality must develop new methods for dealing with the improvement of urban space plus a better form of procedure in the civil service and a better division of competence.*



**Jan Christiansen,**  
City architect,  
Planning & Architecture Dept.

*The city, the streets, the paths and the squares change over time. Therefore it is very important, to constantly improve and innovate better architecture and new functions in the spaces of the city. The processes of the urban space action plan will facilitate these innovations both now and in the future urban planning of Copenhagen.*

## URBAN SPACE ACTION PLAN

**Rita Sørensen,**  
Copenhagen citizen.

*It would be good if officials and citizens influenced each other, then both groups would realise they could use each other, eliminating mistrust and encouraging liaison between the two parties.*



**Barbara Wandell,**  
Project leader,  
Rambøll Nyvig.

*We both started, and defined the task, at the same time. I don't think any of us who were involved in the beginning had any idea that the project would become as big as it has.*



**Jørgen Poulstrup,**  
Section leader  
Roads & Parks Dept.

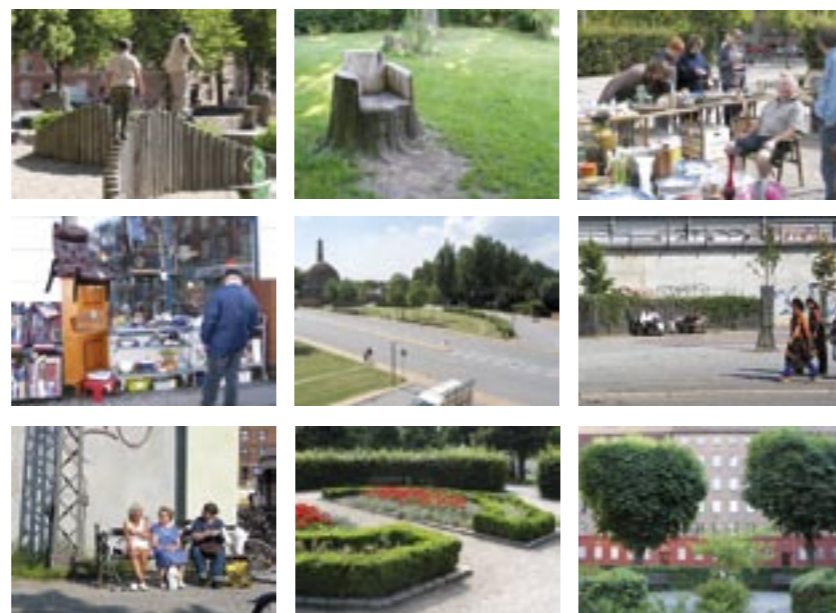
*I was surprised to find that the school system was also involved because they close off a lot of the spaces in town that could be accessible to the public after school.*



# METROPOLIS



# LOCAL CITY



# Vision and goals

## The Vision. A metropolis for people

The vision for developing urban space in Copenhagen is to create a metropolis for people giving a better place in which to live. This comprises;

- A flexible, international metropolis.  
The city will have a strong identity with a dynamic city life and attractive work places.
- An attractive city to live in.  
In the residential areas there shall be many possibilities for exciting and interesting experiences.

## Three goals for development

### 1. Strategy – more coherency

We will create a coherent plan based on clear principles for the development of urban space.



### 2. Quality – better value for money

We will create better and cheaper solutions which will give us more attractive and usable urban spaces for the citizens.



### 3. Process – improved decision making

We will establish a more effective foundation for political decisions, improved citizen dialogue and co-operation with private consultants and developers.





## A new approach and greater synergy

### The city-wide approach.

Planning and development of urban space will become more coherent in the future due to the adoption of a broader and more inclusive approach which involves an understanding of how the city functions as a whole.

## Synergy

The urban space action plan, which will take into account plans, strategies and policies previously agreed by the municipality, will lead to more effective and focused city development.

For example:

- City development plan
- Neighbourhood renewal plans
- Traffic and infra-structure plans
- City parking strategy
- The blue plan (harbour development)
- The park policy
- Green street spaces policy
- City plan



## Four principles of urban space development

Urban space will be developed following four principles. These will result in the strengthening of connections both within and between city neighbourhoods.



### 1. Commercial streets

- the heart of the local areas

The local commercial streets will provide focus points for city life in local neighbourhoods.

Examples of improvements:

- Removal of obtrusive street furniture
- Wider pavements, primarily on the sunny side of the street
- More resting places at strategic points
- Improved lighting
- Tree planting



Amager Boulevard



### 2. Connections

- making the city accessible for everyone

Improve neighbourhood infra-structure in relation to shopping and cultural centres, recreational areas, institutions and sports facilities.

Examples of improvements

- Wider pavements
- Improved crossing possibilities at road junctions
- Improved access for the handicapped
- Tree planting
- Improved lighting
- Improved signage



Teglårdsstræde



### 3. Squares

- creating places for meeting and activities

Provide the citizens with new possibilities for pausing, resting, observing, playing and active recreation.

Examples of improvements

- New surfacing on street corners and redundant bus traffic areas
- Creating new places at street junctions
- Marking and establishing borders using planters and flower pots
- Creating green areas using flowers and trees



Nybrogade



### 4. Pedestrian streets

- harbour promenades and streets

Create attractive and safe connections through the city and improve conditions for pedestrians

Examples of improvement

- Dual use pedestrian/traffic areas
- New surfacing solutions
- Define boundaries with signs and bollards



Dybbølsgade



# A plan for Copenhagen -the metropolis

The four principles will be applied to the planning and development of the whole city in order to create more coherency and an enhanced city identity. The action plan will be a good working

tool for the prioritisation of new projects and the development of street furniture and lighting. It will also be used for the planning of temporary public events and city art.



**Urban space development plan**

- Commercial streets, existing and planned
- Commercial streets, potential
- Squares, existing and planned
- Squares, potential
- Pedestrian areas, existing and planned
- Pedestrian areas, potential
- Connections, existing and planned
- Connections, potential
- M Metro stations existing
- M Metro stations future
- S S train stations, existing

# A plan for the local neighbourhoods

The four principles can similarly be applied to the local neighbourhoods in order to create a series of new recreative public spaces for the use and enjoyment of the local citizens. The citizens of these areas will also benefit from the new methods of decision making that will

be established. The action plan will enable citizens, politicians and designers to make informed choices about which areas to develop and how to develop them.



- Commercial streets, potential
- Squares, existing and planned
- Squares, potential
- Pedestrian areas, existing and planned
- Pedestrian areas, potential
- Connections, existing and planned
- Connections, potential
- M Metro stations existing
- M Metro stations future



**A local example –Leggravsparken, Amager quarter**

Recent developments in the Amager quarter, including the construction of the metro station, Amager Strandpark (new beach park opening summer 2005) and new residential areas means that there is considerable potential for the development of commercial streets, connections, squares and pedestrian areas. Future decisions will govern which local neighbourhoods will be developed into new recreative outdoor spaces.

# Goal Two: Quality - More value for money

## Simple and Cheap-a new concept for quality

- In addition to the normal one-off projects which are primarily in the historic city, numerous smaller projects will be constructed throughout the city's neighbourhoods.
- Projects will be constructed using new construction solutions, both technical and functional.
- Copenhagen's special identity will be preserved and developed.

## The way to better value

- Dull stretches of asphalt shall be given over to active recreation and pausing places
- Narrow and cramped pavements will be transformed into promenades, which will create improved access and more functional and beautiful street spaces
- Strategic tree planting will connect different areas in the city
- New connections will be created and identity enhanced with green infra-structure planting
- Flowers will brighten up local areas
- Urban space will be used for temporary events
- City art in urban space



Green connection



New space for recreation - Tietgensgade



Art in the city



Flowers in Kalkbrænderihavsgade



Small planting project



Events - the red carpet in Strøget

# Simple and cheap - some local examples

## A new square for family leisure - Sankt Kjelds Plads



Sankt Kjelds Plads today

A little-used roundabout in a residential area in Østerbro will be converted into a recreational oasis. New surfacing and planting boxes will be used to form protected green resting areas, where children can play.



A new space for play and leisure



Plan of the new square

## A new green connection - Gunner Nu Hansens Plads



Gunner Nu Hansens Plads today

The road between Østerbrogade and Fælledparken is today dominated by parked cars. The parking will be moved and a wider pavement constructed along the length of the street which can then be used as a promenade and for roller skating. Small squares will be built along the route and rows of trees used to mark the new green connection.



Wider pavements and trees create a new connection



Plan of the new connection

# Goal Three: The Process-better decision making

In the action plan new processes will be proposed which should result in more satisfactory and successful projects for the citizens.

- Politicians and citizens will become involved at an earlier stage in the process during the formulation of the project programme
- A project forum or advisory board consisting of civil servants will be set up. The group will oversee and evaluate larger projects
- Partnerships with private consultants and clients will be developed
- Documents, maps and illustrations will be made more legible for non-professional people
- The programme phase will be strengthened



Sønder Boulevard today

### Choosing alternatives - an example

During the development of the Sønder Boulevard project the dialogue was considerably more comprehensive than usual. Citizens and politicians became involved at an earlier stage. They discussed proposals for the programme, the overall plan



Alternative 1



Alternative 2



Alternative 3

Illustrations by Stig L. Anderson

### Increased dialogue with politicians

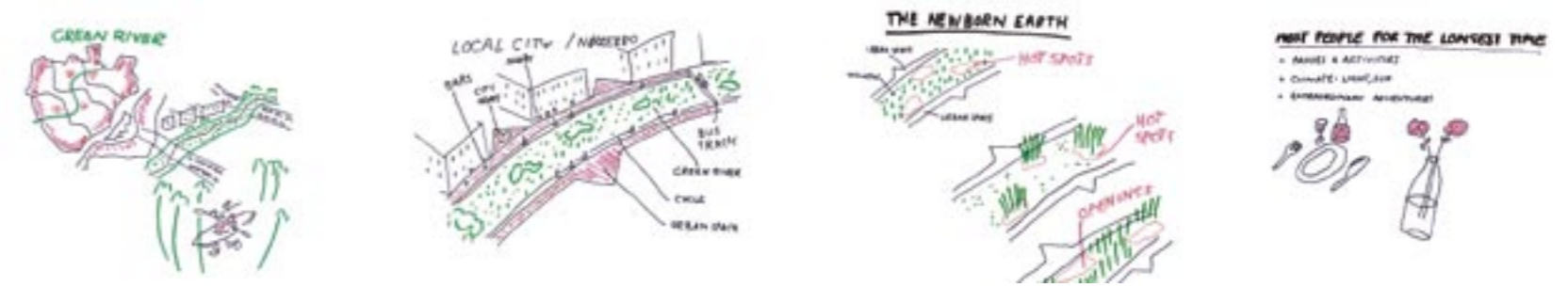
Politicians and citizens will be consulted on the development of the project programme. Citizens will be consulted through focus groups (namely active citizens, specialists, people from commerce, and shop owners) and public hearings.

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Programme Phase</b>        | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussions with POLITICIANS</li> <li>2. Project principals discussed with local FOCUS GROUP</li> <li>3. Programme developed based on the results from the FOCUS GROUP</li> <li>4. Programme discussed in the local area taking into account comments PUBLIC HEARING</li> <li>5. Programme and comments from the citizens presented to the POLITICIANS</li> </ol> |
| <b>Outline project Phase</b>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Outline proposal discussed with the local FOCUS GROUP</li> <li>7. Outline proposal revised based on the results of the local FOCUS GROUP</li> <li>8. Outline proposal discussed in a PUBLIC HEARING</li> <li>9. Outline proposal and comments from the citizens presented to the POLITICIANS</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Project proposal Phase</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Project proposal discussed in the local area with the local FOCUS GROUP. Alternatives presented for debate</li> <li>11. Project proposal revised based on comments from the FOCUS GROUP</li> <li>12. Project proposal discussed in the PUBLIC HEARING</li> <li>13. Project proposal and comments from the citizens presented to the POLITICIANS</li> </ol>       |

and the final project at length. Different proposals were presented for discussion so in reality there were real alternatives to choose between. The proposal was developed in collaboration with Danish landscape architect Stig L. Anderson.

# From sketch to reality

Several live projects were developed during the three workshops. One of them was Nørrebro bicycle route. The proposal was developed in a collaboration between the municipality and Danish landscape architect Torben Schönherr. Project construction commences spring 2006.



Early ideas take shape in the three workshops.



Landscape architect Torben Schönherr discusses the project at the workshop



The concept-A green river



Aerial view showing the project proposal



Perspective view showing the project proposal Illustrations by Torben Schönherr



'Cities remain the great demographic magnets of our time because they facilitate work and are the seedbeds of our cultural development. They are places of hugely diversified activities and functions: exhibitions and demonstrations, bars and cathedrals, shops and opera houses.

Copenhagen is generally considered as a beacon of hope in terms of urban regeneration-one of the few true examples of a humanised European City where squares and streets have been thoughtfully and steadily enhanced over the last 30 years, offering the city a sequence of impressive and inspirational public spaces.'

Richard Rogers  
London , October 2000

*Extract New City Spaces by Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzoe.*

