

Aalborg+10 and the City of Västerås

Baseline Review 2007



VÄSTERÅS STAD

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Summary

Compilation of this baseline review began in autumn 2006. The task force examined current programmes and policies in order to compare targets with the efforts that have been made within the framework of the commitments of the Aalborg Charter. The baseline review will be followed by monitoring reviews every five years. In co-operation with 15 contact people at various city administrations and companies, a steering committee at the Municipal Executive Office focused on the items in the Charter. The evaluation followed up on and monitored the fulfilment of previously established targets. The City of Västerås strives to improve in all areas and work for long-term fulfilment of the sustainability criteria. We are relatively advanced in certain areas, such as waste management, biogas and protection of our cultural heritage. Other areas require a considerably greater effort on our part. Above all, we must involve citizens more effectively in issues such as democratic participation and the local environment, as well as reduce social exclusion and improve community safety and security.



1 Introduction

The Charter of European Cities & Towns Towards Sustainability (Aalborg Charter) emerged from key previous milestones. The 1992 Rio Earth Summit was followed by a number of strategic policy decisions. The 1996 Lisbon Action Plan 'From Charter to Action' was a European initiative for sustainable development that was given concrete form by the Aalborg Charter, approved by the European Conference on Sustainable Cities & Towns in Aalborg, Denmark on 27 May 1994. The City of Aalborg was assigned to coordinate the effort, as well as disseminate information on the official website (www.aalborgplus10.dk) and elsewhere.

The purpose of the baseline review is for local governments to describe how far they have come in implementing the 50 commitments of the Charter. After the reviews have been presented, a local target setting process is to begin in 2007 aimed at improving initiatives in each area. A number of cities and towns have formed a joint Nordic/Baltic network. The network is developing indicators to facilitate comparative studies among the various local governments. The effort started in 2006.

1.1 Background

The Västerås City Council voted on 2 February 2006 to endorse the Aalborg Commitments. The 50 commitments are broken down into 10 themes for sustainable urban development:

1. Governance
2. Urban management towards sustainability
3. Natural common goods
4. Responsible consumption and lifestyle choices
5. Planning and design
6. Better mobility, less traffic
7. Local action for health
8. Vibrant and sustainable local economy
9. Social equity and justice
10. Local to global

The City Council's endorsement of the commitments means that the City of Västerås:

- endorses the Aalborg Charter
- endorses the Aalborg Commitments
- agrees to produce an integrated Aalborg Commitments baseline review as a starting point for our target setting process within 12 months following the date of the City Council's signature
- agrees to enter into a local participatory target setting process that incorporates existing Local Agenda 21 or other local sustainability action planning and takes into consideration the results of the local baseline review

- agrees to prioritise our tasks, aiming to address the ten Commitments
- agrees to set individual local targets within 24 months following the date of our signature, taking into account the Aalborg Commitments Annex as an inspirational resource, and to set time frames related to the targets that are suitable to demonstrate progress on our Commitments
- agrees to make a regular Aalborg Commitments monitoring review of our achievements available to our citizens
- agrees to regularly provide information on our targets and our progress to the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign and, through this cooperation, to review progress and learn from each other

2 Baseline review

The baseline review is the product of a broad participatory effort by employees of City of Västerås administrations and companies. The review examined the city's overall accomplishments, current projects and plans with respect to the 50 Aalborg commitments. Each commitment was rated on a scale (baseline assessment) of 1 to 4:

- 1 = Begun
- 2 = Off to a good start
- 3 = Well on the way
- 4 = Target reached or almost reached

1 Governance

We are committed to energising our decision-making processes through increased participatory democracy.

We will therefore work to:

1.1 further develop a commonly shared long-term vision for a sustainable city

Many of the targets presented in the joint vision until 2013 of a document entitled Västerås Mälarstaden (Västerås, City on Lake Mälaren) have been fulfilled. Thus, the effort to set new targets and shape a new vision until 2025 will begin in 2007. The idea is for the initiative to include many elected representatives, city employees, citizens, businesspeople and association members. Sustainability issues will be integral to setting the new targets. To support the more concrete effort, elected representatives will develop a statutory plan for the current term of office. Citizens will not participate in putting together that policy document.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

1.2 build participation and sustainable development capacity in the local community and municipal administration

The city is involved in an intensive effort to promote democratic development and citizen involvement. Contact has been made with associations of people who have non-Swedish ethnic backgrounds for the purpose of involving citizens who are relatively inactive at this point. In order to create opportunities and spur interest when it comes to involvement in the local community, the City of Västerås provides information in a free daily weekly that is distributed to all households. In addition, the city places a full-page monthly announcement in the local newspaper. Information is also disseminated by means of a newsletter in Arabic and easy-to-understand Swedish. Published by a private firm, the newsletter is co-financed by project funds. The Municipal Executive Committee has decided to conduct a sustainability survey to find out how citizens view such issues and which ones they regard as most important.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

1.3. invite all sectors of local society to participate effectively in decision-making

The meetings of the City Council are open to the public and broadcast on the local television network. Decisions have also been reached to open parts of all committee and board meetings to the public, except when private individuals and confidentiality issues are involved. The committees for the individual and the family, people with disabilities, the elderly, preschools, compulsory schools and education have introduced a public question and answer session during their meetings. A decision to expand citizen dialogue will be implemented in co-operation with a democracy team, a policy reference group that reports to the Municipal Executive Committee and consists of two members of each party in the City Council. The Municipal Executive Committee supports city employees through the Municipal Executive Office in the process of promoting democracy issues.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

1.4 make our decisions open, accountable and transparent

All decisions of general interest are now public – they are announced and publicised in various ways, including the city's website. Meeting notices and agendas, as well as issues of particular interest to the public, appear on the

website. Publicity and transparency is a fundamental principle and statutory requirement of everything we do.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

1.5 cooperate effectively and in partnership with adjoining municipalities, other cities and towns, and other spheres of government

The City of Västerås has a longstanding tradition of participating in networks, including the Council for the Stockholm-Mälars Region, the Partnership for Sustainable Welfare Development, Baltic Sea Cycling, Cities Against Drugs, networks for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Aalborg Network. We also partner with Köping on a harbour company and with two adjoining municipalities on an emergency service association. At a more comprehensive level, we work actively with various public agencies such as the Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Employment Agency, the County Labour Board and the County Council. We are constantly striving to improve and strengthen our collaboration in those areas. We are also part of a national network of local governments and county councils aimed at promoting citizen dialogue and democratic development.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

2. Urban management towards sustainability

We are committed to implementing effective management cycles, from formulation through implementation to evaluation.

We will therefore work to:

2.1 strengthen Local Agenda 21 or other local sustainability processes and mainstream them into the heart of local government

We are strengthening Local Agenda 21 in a number of areas, including waste management, the energy sector, public health and participatory democracy. To varying degrees, citizens are also being given a voice in formulating our master and local plans.

The amount of information that City of Västerås disseminates to the public has decreased in recent years, particularly when it comes to activities such as the annual EU In Town without My Car Day and World Environment Day. We are a member of the Agenda 21 Association, which continually highlights sustainability issues, primarily by distributing the Gröna Draken (Green Dragon) quarterly to all households in the county. The association runs a number of projects that focus on hazardous chemicals and other areas. The effort will be strengthened over the next year. In close co-



operation with local governments, citizens, public agencies and other stakeholders, the association has launched a long-term initiative to ensure that Västmanland County is free of fossil fuels by 2015.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

2.2 deliver integrated management towards sustainability, based on the precautionary principle and with regard to the EU Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment

In addition to policy, the City of Västerås Environmental Programme articulates principles and precepts for our approach to the environmental effort. The principles serve as the framework for decision-making and processes that are integral to sustainable ecosystems.



In terms of the precautionary principle, we will actively consider environmental concerns by weighing benefit against harm and refraining from activities whose environmental consequences are unforeseeable or beyond the scope of our knowledge.

The EU points to many urban environmental problems, including air and noise pollution and traffic congestion. But it also stresses that cities and towns serve as an engine of the national economy. The magnetism of cities and towns is a key factor in implementing the EU's Lisbon Strategy for promoting growth and employment. Improving urban environments is a priority for the European Commission.



A number of documents that span various periods of time describe the way forward for Västerås, particularly the city centre, to achieve long-term sustainability. Besides our 50-100 year initiative pursuant to the Aalborg Commitments and Agenda 21, our Målbild Västerås (Setting Targets for Västerås) vision extends to 2013. An effort is under way to forge a new vision for Västerås. The master plan and a number of local plans, in which action for dealing with air and noise pollution is central, govern our strategies for ensuring a sustainable urban environment.

Reducing the harmful impact of traffic on the environment and public health is a priority area for the City of Västerås. But conflicting interests must be balanced against each other in order to achieve a sustainable urban environment. Monitoring and actively applying new research findings is important. In order to ensure a sustainable city centre, citizens must have information, knowledge and opportunities to participate in the planning process.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

2.3 set targets and time schemes in the framework of the Aalborg Commitments and create and follow the Aalborg Commitments monitoring review

In endorsing the Aalborg Charter, the City of Västerås has agreed to strive to meet all of the commitments. As soon as possible in 2007, the city intends to begin systematising and integrating its existing targets in accordance with the commitments.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

2.4. ensure that sustainability issues are central to urban decision-making processes and that resource allocation is based on strong and broad sustainability criteria

The City of Västerås Environmental Programme stresses three success factors in the long-term sustainability effort. One of the factors is the way that we handle our decision-making processes. The biggest indirect impact comes from the decisions that we make now. It is utterly important that as many consequences as possible be brought to the fore so that decisions rest on a firm foundation. We use some of the various available planning tools, such as environmental impact assessments, in our effort.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

2.5. cooperate with the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign and its networks to monitor and evaluate our progress towards meeting our sustainability targets

In the past, the City of Västerås has participated in the annual EU In Town without My Car Day. Unfortunately, we lacked the resources to do so in 2006. Such activities must be seen as an element of our long-term traffic strategy. That way European Mobility Week becomes part of our day-to-day work, though more prominent during a certain period of the year. The City of Västerås participates in various networks and exchanges, particularly with other EU Member States.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

3 Natural common goods

We are committed to fully assuming our responsibility to protect, to preserve and to ensure equitable access to natural common goods.

We will therefore work, throughout our community, to:

3.1 reduce primary energy consumption, and increase the share of renewable and clean energies

The proposed energy plan formulates the following strategies based on the policy objectives of the Environmental Programme. City of Västerås planning shall strive to design and locate housing, workplaces and services so as to ensure efficient energy supply and use.

- Cogeneration shall be used as much as is technically and economically feasible.
- The choice of fuel when rebuilding or extending the cogeneration plant shall be based on conditions at the time.
- The City of Västerås shall promote the adoption of environmentally friendly technology while encouraging experimental and innovative construction projects.
- When providing its services, the City of Västerås shall implement energy saving measures that generate environmental benefits accompanied by acceptable economic consequences.
- The City of Västerås shall actively provide energy information and counselling to businesses, organisations and the public.
- The City of Västerås shall discourage the use of direct electricity, electric boilers and fossil fuels for heating.

The use of performance targets for results, time schemes, action and responsibility is also proposed.

The Växtkraft Project, a unique biogas plant based on a cyclical concept between the city and countryside, has been constructed. The sorting out of biowaste by inhabitants of the city provides the basis for producing biogas to use as motor fuel and as biofertiliser in ecological agriculture to improve soil quality. The project enables an outstanding solution for managing organic waste in order to avoid landfill. Biogas replaces diesel and petrol, while emissions of greenhouse gases, overfertilisation and acidifying substances are reduced.

Statutory plan

The statutory plan for 2002-06 contains energy sector targets to be monitored annually by the City Council. The plan specifies three success factors:

- Prioritisation by the city of climate issues in its internal environmental effort, as well as external cooperation with – and influence on – businesses and the public in Västerås
- Adoption by the city of an energy plan
- Planning by the city for a new biofuel boiler at the cogeneration plant

A new statutory plan will be adopted for the upcoming term of office until 2010. The plan will also cover 2011.

Urban master plan

The urban master plan for Västerås provides guidelines for future urban planning. Sustainability and quality of life are identified as the overall objectives of urban planning. Promoting long-term urban sustainability includes the ecological, economic, social and cultural parameters of development.

Environmental programme

The Environmental Programme lends concretion to the targets for the energy sector. The City of Västerås takes its role as an environmental model seriously, actively striving to encourage the reduction of energy consumption and the improvement of efficiency by disseminating information and knowledge about climate issues through action such as energy and consumer counselling for businesses and the public. The City of Västerås shall design strategies that include proposed action and priorities within the framework of energy planning.

Environmental policy

The City of Västerås environmental policy includes a number of commitments that affect the energy sector.

Waste management plan

According to one of the policy objectives of our waste management plan, options for waste incineration shall be explored.

Energy counselling

The City of Västerås provides energy counselling that is largely financed by the Swedish Energy Agency. The city does not have a particular orientation, but proceeds from the agency's general guidelines.

Local investment programme

In 2000, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

provided a government grant of SEK 142 million to accelerate conversion to a sustainable society. The grant was a local investment programme (LIP). Final reports on all of the programme's projects are to be submitted in the first quarter of 2007. The programme includes a number of energy-related programmes, including biofuel management, treatment of bioashes, alternative energy sources when renovating schools and energy-saving measures for the street system (lighting and signalling equipment). The Våxtkraft biogas project is the single biggest initiative of the investment programme.

Environmental management

The internal environmental effort of the City of Västerås continually monitors its energy use. Ongoing action is being taken to reduce total consumption.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

3.2. improve water quality, save water, and use water more efficiently

In accordance with the Environmental Programme, a water plan shall be developed as the basis for gaining an overview of the water situation, reducing the environmental burden on Lake Mälaren and improving water quality in lakes and streams. A policy objective of the programme states that "lakes and ground water shall be protected and conserved in order to secure the future water supply." Attainment of the target will require reduced environmental burden on Lake Mälaren, higher quality lakes, streams and ground water, environmental adaptations by agriculture, forestry and park management, and less extraction of natural gravel.

The raw water of Lake Mälaren is filtered through Badelunda Ridge and eventually becomes drinking water. The lake is also the recipient of wastewater, which is purified, inspected and recycled. Given that the lake serves as both source and recipient, many activities in Västerås affect water quality. Leakage of substances such as phosphorous from industrial sewer lines, not to mention agricultural and forestry, has a harmful impact on the lake.

The City of Västerås is an active participant in Mälaren's Water Protection Association. One goal of the association, which was established in 1998, is to promote more broad-based co-operation on environmental monitoring of Lake Mälaren. The members are county administrative boards, county councils, businesses, water protection societies, government agencies and stakeholder organisations. The association has set a number of targets that impact on the central environmental objectives and problem areas that

are specific to Lake Mälaren. Targets, action and monitoring procedures have been developed for the following areas: agriculture, municipal plants, private sewer lines, industrial plants, fisheries, outdoor life, maritime traffic, small boats and hazardous substances, as well as protection of surface and drinking water.

In its various roles as an authority, planner, service provider, informant and inspirational force, the City of Västerås has major responsibilities and opportunities when it comes to protecting and conserving water resources. The effort to protect surface and ground water has become more urgent with the incorporation of the EU Water Framework Directive into Swedish legislation. Local governments will have a vital role to play. The principal is in charge of inspecting its own drinking water. The Environmental and Health Protection Committee is responsible for official supervision. Water samples are taken from Lake Mälaren, particularly at bathing spots. The bathing water is high quality. But green algae is present in large quantities at certain times of year, indicating that the lake is affected by nutrients. Within the limits of its mission, Mälarenergi AB (the city-owned electric power and district heating provider) also takes samples and conducts investigations.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

3.3 promote and increase biodiversity, and extend and care for designated nature areas and green spaces

The City of Västerås Environmental Programme states that, “We shall work actively to strengthen and conserve the long-term natural and cultural assets of Västerås.” The urban master plan includes a green infrastructure plan illustrating the city’s goals.

Many areas of Västerås are valuable in terms of nature, culture or outdoor life. A nature and culture action plan currently being drafted is scheduled for consideration by the end of 2007. The plan will establish guidelines for developing, protecting, conserving and renewing valuable natural and cultural settings. Meanwhile prospects for setting up an information centre that focuses on Västmanland nature and culture, as well as the ecology of Lake Mälaren, are being explored.

Government grants have enabled the launch of various projects. Proposals for the design and use of Trådarängarna, a bird paradise adjacent to the Gäddeholm area, have been drawn up. The bird fauna, flora and insect population have been inventoried.

The Anundshög Burial Mound, which is one of Sweden’s most extensive sites of ancient remains, has been restored and made more accessible and attractive to both inhabitants of Västerås and tourists. The area offers many scenic trails and walking paths in settings that are of interest from both an historic and biological point of view. Cultural and outdoor life interact in a fruitful manner.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

3.4 improve soil quality, and preserve ecologically productive land and promote sustainable agriculture and forestry

The City of Västerås Green Forestry Plan accords special importance to environmental protection in forest management planning. The goal of the plan is to strike a better balance between production and environmental protection. The city has set aside approximately 16% of its forest holdings, excluding preserves, for various environmental protection purposes. The forests are environmentally certified, a guarantee that forestry meets high environmental standards.

The forests in the urbanised areas exhibit great biodiversity. Inventories of the forests closest to the city offer a good overview of their bird life, flowers, mushroom flora and frog and toad population.

With grants from the EU Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE) programme and support from the city, the County Administrative Board has made a concerted effort to improve the quality of bird life in the Asköviken nature reserve. The city’s Asköviken Nature School has taught thousands of preschool, compulsory and upper secondary students about nature in Mälardalen, particularly the surrounding area.

The percentage of city-owned land that is ecologically cultivated has decreased in recent years.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

3.5 improve air quality

Indoor air quality at the city’s schools has grown steadily better thanks to an extensive programme aimed at improving ventilation. One of the objectives is to reduce childhood allergies.

A policy objective of the Environmental Programme under the heading of “Urbanised Areas” states that “Inhabitants



of Västerås must be able to live in safe, healthy urbanised areas characterised by fresh air, noise and radon levels below the national target values, and non-hazardous radiation levels.”

The City of Västerås Environmental and Environmental Health Office has conducted environmental monitoring for many years. A fixed and a mobile station have both taken measurements. The mobile station was shut down in 2004. Located on the roof of City Hall, the fixed station continually measures sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and ozone levels. A monitor at Punkthuset continually measures PM10 particulate matter levels.

On behalf of the City of Västerås, SLB-analys in Stockholm measured nitrogen dioxide and PM10 levels. The results were to be compared with environmental quality standards. The report is dated December 2006. The measurements indicate that average daily nitrogen oxide levels did not exceed the standards anywhere in the city, and that average daily PM10 levels did not exceed the standards except on the most heavily trafficked stretch of E18. The measurements for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and ground-level ozone were low in 2005.

A task force of representatives of city administrations and companies has been appointed to propose targets and organisational structures for air quality monitoring. A proposal is scheduled for submission in 2007. A review of the existing emissions database is planned.

City of Västerås employees have attended day-long trainings to become more knowledgeable and aware of environmental issues.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

4. Responsible consumption and lifestyle choices

We are committed to strongly promoting and facilitating the prudent use of resources and to encouraging sustainable consumption and production.

We will therefore work, throughout our community, to:

4.1 avoid and reduce waste, and increase re-use and recycling

Västerås is far along when it comes to re-use and recycling. A total of 64% of all household waste was recycled in 2003, and the target for 2009 is 75%. The objective of the 2005-09 waste management plan is to reduce both quantity and hazardousness. The original waste management plan of 1993 was the opening shot for a new approach that

involved the sorting out of biowaste, the construction of Återbruk recycling centres and a series of informational campaigns.

VafabMiljö AB is in charge of ensuring that the region's waste is properly managed and recycled. Businesses can obtain advice, as well as assistance with transport and interim storage of hazardous waste. Citizens go to the recycling centres to sort a substantial percentage of large household waste and leave electronic scrap, hazardous waste, etc. The centres, which are highly accessible and convenient, were visited 725,000 times in 2006. More hazardous waste was collected than anywhere else in the country.

Two examples of action that is promoting re-use and recycling are the expansion of household waste separation by the Mimer municipal housing company and the Technology and Sports Administration's asphalt recycling. One of the Västerås recycling centres runs a project that allows households to leave objects for volunteer organisations, such as the Salvation Army or Brödet och Fiskarna, instead of waste management. In other words, the objects are re-used and contribute directly to the avoidance of waste generation.

VafabMiljö AB and Mälarenergi, the city-owned electric power and district heating provider, conducted a successful joint informational campaign in the schools. A total of 4,000 students were involved in 2006.

An area in which we can improve is learning how to avoid waste generation. That means thinking twice and making wise purchases that reduce the quantity of waste.

Baseline assessment: 4 (Target reached or almost reached)

4.2 manage and treat waste in accordance with best practice standards

VafabMiljö AB is in charge of ensuring that the region's waste is properly managed and recycled. Businesses can obtain advice, as well as assistance with transport and interim storage of hazardous waste.

The Växtkraft Project co-digests household and restaurant biowaste with ley crops from farmers and sludge from grease separators in institutional kitchens. The process generates biogas that can be used as an environmentally friendly motor fuel, as well as a residual biofertiliser that can be used in ecological agriculture to improve soil quality. The project creates a cycle of energy and plant nutrition.

Baseline assessment: 4 (Target reached or almost reached)

4.3 avoid unnecessary energy consumption, and improve end-use energy efficiency

The City Council will adopt a new energy plan in spring 2007. The Environmental Programme's policy objectives form the basis of the plan's performance targets. Among the central strategies of the plan are the choice of energy sources, the reduction of energy consumption and more efficient use of both electricity and heat. The plan also stresses the need of greater energy counselling for businesses, organisations and the public. The City of Västerås and its administrations shall serve as a catalyst in that effort.

The task of the city's energy counselling is to offer advice about action that reduces the use of electricity for heating, makes more efficient use of the electricity grid and increases the percentage of electricity and heat from renewable sources. The target groups are households, small businesses and local organisations. Mälarenergi, the city-owned electric power and district heating provider, also makes recommendations about ways that households and businesses can be more energy efficient.

Many of the city's administrations and companies strive continually to reduce energy consumption in their buildings and ensure greater energy efficiency. For instance, they might install fittings that save water, energy efficient white goods and light fittings, or thermostat valves. They may also install more effective equipment in heating plants, manage and monitor the heating and ventilation needs of their buildings, or individually measure heat and hot water. Other action includes loft insulation, new windows and new street lighting.

Since 2002, the City Council has implemented a statutory plan that monitors both electricity and heat consumption in the city's premises on an annual basis. The target of reducing energy use by 2% was met in 2003, but consumption has since risen again. The new statutory plan to be developed for the 2008-11 term of office will revise the target.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

4.4 undertake sustainable procurement

The City of Västerås is a key actor in the community when it comes to promoting sustainable production and consumption. The scale of purchases is one means of stimulating demand for eco-labelled, organic¹⁾ and ethical products. Thus, it is important for us to undertake sustainable procurement. Incorporating sustainability considerations into our procurement processes is currently

one of our weak points. Our procurement policy is being redrafted, and a procurement strategist has been hired as of February 2007. The policy and associated action plan are scheduled for consideration in May. New guidelines will also be drawn up.

The proposed procurement policy states that the City of Västerås and its companies shall work toward a healthy living environment and sustainable long-term development. Whenever possible, the city shall choose goods, services and contracts that are compatible with both the external and working environments. The social implications of procurement processes shall be considered as much as possible.

As a step in promoting sustainable procurement that takes the environment into consideration, the City of Västerås and the Swedish Environmental Management Council conducted a training in environmentally friendly procurement in November 2006. No targets have been set for sustainable, ecological procurement.

Baseline assessment: 1 (Begun)

4.5 actively promote sustainable production and consumption, in particular of eco-labelled, organic, ethical and fair trade products

The City of Västerås is a key actor in the community when it comes to promoting sustainable production and consumption. The scale of purchases is one means of stimulating demand for eco-labelled, organic and ethical products. Thus, it is important for us to undertake sustainable procurement. Incorporating sustainability considerations into our procurement processes is currently one of our weak points. Our procurement policy is being redrafted, and a procurement strategist has been hired as of February 2007. The policy and associated action plan are scheduled for consideration in May. New guidelines will also be drawn up. As a step in promoting sustainable procurement that takes the environment into consideration, the City of Västerås and the Swedish Environmental Management Council conducted a training in environmentally friendly procurement in November 2006.

City of Västerås guidelines for business travel establish certain criteria for the vehicles that are purchased. When

the City of Västerås purchases, rents or leases cars, priority shall be given to those that run on renewable fuel, such as biogas or ethanol.

The Consumer Committee and Environmental and Health Protection Committees merged in November 2006 to form the Environmental and Consumer Committee. The committee advances, supports and coordinates the interests of Västerås consumers, and strives to strengthen their position in the market. In addition, Konsument Västerås (Consumer Västerås) provides counselling, as well as information about consumer rights, household finances, and consumer-related energy and environmental matters.

Baseline assessment: 1 (Begun)

5 Planning and design

We are committed to a strategic role for urban planning and design in addressing environmental, social, economic, health and cultural issues for the benefit of all.

5.1 re-use and regenerate derelict or disadvantaged areas

Västerås was historically an industrial town with many large factories. ASEA, now ABB, had many large industrial premises in parts of the city centre. Svenska Metallverken was another large company with factories in the city centre. ABB has moved its remaining production facilities to the outskirts of the city. Meanwhile, the old industrial and office premises have been renovated to build Västerås Technology Park, which contains a number of small and medium-sized businesses, primarily in the knowledge sector. Other former industrial properties in the city centre now house dwellings, offices and service outlets. Among other re-uses of industrial land are the construction of dwellings at Lillåudden and the central shoreline area, requiring considerable soil remediation because the old factories used creosote and other products and chemicals. The urban master plan clearly prioritises brownfield site development.

Various residential areas are being regenerated in different ways. Råby Centre has been strengthened and renewed with a community centre, accessible public services, new blocks of flats and restoration of the external environment. Similar initiatives are under way in Pettersberg. Additional projects are planned for some of the other districts.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way) – previously 2: (Off to a good start)

¹⁾ Organic food must be manufactured in accordance with certain principles that pay particular attention to the environment. Chemical fertilisers may not be used when producing organic ingredients. Manufactured organic products such as jam do not contain artificial sweeteners or flavourings, and they have a lower percentage of additives than factory-made products.

5.2 avoid urban sprawl, achieving appropriate urban densities and prioritising brownfield site over greenfield site development

In accordance with an urban master plan adopted by the City Council in November 2004, brownfield site development is one of the five strategies that shall be mainstreamed into urban planning in Västerås. Approximately 8,000 new dwellings are needed over the next 10 years in order to accommodate expected population growth. Two thirds of the dwellings are planned as new developments at brownfield sites. Old industrial areas in the city centre have become available as factories and offices are vacated or renovated. They are now being converted to new districts, primarily for housing but workplaces as well. Centrala Mälarstranden is the most important urban renewal area. An expanded master plan authorising approximately 2,800 dwellings was approved in 2004. The first stage comprising 2,000 dwellings at Lillåudden has been completed, and local planning is under way for 2,000 more. Furthermore, almost 1,000 dwellings have been completed in the Öster Mälarstrand and Östra Hamnen urban renewal areas. Local plans for approximately 800 new dwellings in the old industrial districts of Östermalm have been drawn up, and construction has started up.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

5.3 ensure the mixed use of buildings and developments, with a good balance of jobs, housing and services giving priority to residential use in city centres

The urban master plan for Västerås focuses on diversity. A mixture of housing, workplaces, services and entertainment – as well as various types of housing, buildings and leases – shall form the basis of multi-sided districts. The plan identifies the need for additional blocks of flats in the city centre.

The following general principles apply to the planning of new developments:

- a functional mix at the overall district level – for instance, the plan for Centrala Mälarstranden with the first stage of Öster Mälarstrand as a model
- at the local plan level, permit mixed use in each neighbourhood and building
- when renovating districts, strive for various types of housing and leases with Råby Centre and Skiljebo as models
- housing projects in the city centre, such as Östermalm, near Herrgårdsskolan, in the Loke neighbourhood (terraced houses at the Gallerian shopping centre) and in the Kleopatras neighbourhood

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

5.4 ensure appropriate conservation, renovation and use/re-use of our urban cultural heritage

The urbanised areas of Västerås are largely a product of 20th century architectural and planning paradigms. Urban cultural heritage in Västerås is an exceptional exponent of modernism and its town planning ideal. A special report in connection with the master plan for Västerås highlights the urbanised areas of that era and establishes guidelines for construction and planning in the valuable areas. The guidelines also contain directions for re-use of the valuable areas in view of their specifically defined assets.

New local plans are being drawn up to permit re-use of the industrial districts of the city centre that bear a valuable cultural heritage while preserving and enhancing their symbolic value.

The Vallby Open-Air Museum is a park that preserves buildings from earlier eras and incorporates them into its offering, including handicrafts and outdoor activities. The museum also participates in a national gene bank programme intended to preserve old species – fruits, rabbits, poultry and sheep in the case of Västerås.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

5.5 apply requirements for sustainable design and construction and promote high quality architecture and building technologies

Västerås has changed and adapted to new requirements through the centuries, particularly the 20th century. The city has proven to be robust and sustainable when faced with new challenges.

The urban master plan for Västerås builds on and carries forward the city's tradition of ecological, economic, social and cultural sustainability. The four strategies are broken down and given concrete form in programmes and local plans at the district, community and neighbourhood level.

Ever since 1993, the City of Västerås has awarded an annual construction prize to promote and encourage high-quality architecture and building technologies.

Low-energy buildings will be a priority in the proposed new energy plan.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

6 Better mobility, less traffic

We recognise the interdependence of transport, health and environment and are committed to strongly promoting sustainable mobility choices.

City of Västerås traffic planning strives to reduce the detrimental health and environmental impact of traffic, adapt physical planning to surrounding aesthetic assets, and ensure a safe, accessible transport system.

Västerås offers quality options for both private journeys and business transport. It has an extensive, direct footpath and bicycle network with many grade separations, as well as a city-wide bus network. Nevertheless, comprehensive action is needed to create a sustainable, long-term transport system.

The overall objectives of the master plan are quality of life, along with an economically sound city that also works well ecologically, socially and culturally. The master plan takes a holistic approach to development and traffic planning, stressing the importance of satisfying the need of all road users for a healthy environment, accessibility and safety. The Västerås Traffic Plan for 2004-13 sets the following targets:

- Accessibility, security and proximity for everyone
- Attractive footpath, bicycle and public transport networks
- Adequate transport quality for the business sector
- Reduced proportion of journeys by private motorised transport
- Attractive, functional public street space

We will therefore work to:

6.1 reduce the necessity for private motorised transport and promote attractive alternatives accessible to all

The plan proposes various measures to implement this new approach to traffic. For instance, the bicycle network shall be expanded to permit accessibility to various destinations in the city. The destinations are not only areas where many inhabitants work, but recreational facilities, strolling areas and shopping areas. The network of bus lines shall be expanded as well. To reverse the trend toward fewer journeys by public transport, as well as to make the system more effective and appealing, a two-pronged scheme of trunk and other city lines is to be developed. The master plan also mentions the possibility of providing special service between residential and business areas.

Various campaigns and projects have been conducted to promote bicycling. The City of Västerås local investment programme includes the Cycling Västerås Project, as well as

the Counselling and General Education, Vehicle and Road User Services and Infrastructure sub-projects. Among the concrete actions taken in 2000-04 were Bicycle Ambassadors, the Cycle to Work Campaign, 15 kilometres of new bicycle paths, 11 new bicycle crosses, additional bicycle parking, and better care and maintenance of bicycle paths in both the summer and winter.

Västerås is among a number of cities and towns participating in the Baltic Sea Cycling Project aimed at making urban environments more attractive and improving mobility by encouraging bicycling. Västerås is conducting a sub-project to create new opportunities for bicyclists to carry goods and passengers.

The public transport system has been adapted to appeal to additional target groups. For instance, Flexlinjen started in 2006 as an alternative to Färdtjänst (special transport services). Flexlinjen has three target groups: people covered by Färdtjänst, those who are 65 or older, and those who have been approved for healthcare related transport services by Samtrafik, Västmanland's transport for health care and people with disabilities. All age groups are eligible for Flexlinjen.

To reduce the need for private motorised transport, the Mimer municipal housing company launched a car sharing service for tenants in the city centre. Mimer's employees also take advantage of the service.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

6.2 increase the share of journeys made by public transport, on foot and by bicycle

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Maintenance of bicycle paths is vital to safe and attractive bicycle traffic, particular in the winter. The Technology and Sports Administration has an agreement with winter road maintenance companies, which take care of snow clearing and ice control in accordance with specified priorities. The agreement accords the highest priority to foot-paths, bicycle paths, streets on which buses operate and major through streets.

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Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

6.3 encourage transition to low-emission vehicles

For the percentage of green vehicles to rise, there must be a number of public service stations with some kind of biofuel. The Växtkraft Project in Västerås produces biogas from renewable raw materials, eliminating carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to global warming. Due to the properties of biogas, particulate matter, nitrogen oxide and hydrocarbon emissions are also lower than with petrol or diesel. A service station in Västerås makes biogas available to the public. A number of other service stations in the city have some kind of biofuel, mostly ethanol E85.

One way that the City of Västerås encourages the transition to low-emission vehicles is to offer free use of public



pay parking places. The City of Västerås does not subsidise purchases of green vehicles.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

6.4 develop an integrated and sustainable urban mobility plan

The Västerås traffic plan is part of the city's urban master plan. The traffic plan has not been adopted as official policy, but serves as a guideline for decision-making. The plan describes development of the transport system in order to promote a sustainable, long-term city. The key tenets of the plan are a holistic approach to development and traffic planning, as well as satisfying the need of all road users for a healthy environment, accessibility and safety. No sustainability plan has been adopted.

The City Council has approved a Disability Programme. Based on standard UN regulations, the programme aims to mainstream disability issues into local government processes. Each committee and board shall formulate targets, objectives and action plans for implementation of the programme. The Technology and Sports Committee has adopted an action plan for disability access describing approaches to consultation aimed at integrating the needs and views of people with disabilities into the city's traffic planning process. The Västerås transport system must be made more accessible to people with various types of disabilities. For instance, public transport vehicles, stops and information systems need to be adapted, pedestrian zones must be more level, and the public street space must be more disability friendly.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

6.5 reduce the impact of transport on the environment and public health

Reducing the impact of transport on the environment and public health poses a major challenge. Use of all types of transport is increasing today. We have launched an effort to compile and summarise knowledge and activities associated with transport in order to identify the areas that need greater attention. The results of the effort will form the basis of ongoing climate and transport planning.

Although we have noted greater awareness of climate impact and traffic problems, decisions such as ongoing shopping centre development on greenfield sites are still working in the opposite direction. Economic growth is boosting the use of all types of transport. One of the

city's most important tasks is to help shift expected traffic increases from private motorised transport to bicycles, public transport and the like so as to reduce the impact on the environment and public health.

Bicycling has a long tradition in Västerås. Construction of the bicycle network began back in the 1950s. The city has adopted an explicit strategy of maintaining and expanding the network. Västerås has some 350 kilometres of bicycle paths, as well as approximately 220 bicycle underpasses and overpasses. Cyclists are separated from vehicular traffic in approximately two thirds of the trunk road network. The various bicycle projects and campaigns that have been and are being conducted are linked to public health issues.

Population growth, promotion of business start-ups, brownfield site development, greenfield site development, job creation and speed limits are considerations that demonstrate the conflicting interests that come into play in decision-making processes. Elected officials must weigh those interests on a case to case basis. The decisions they make can have a detrimental impact on both the environment and public health.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

7 Local action for health

We are committed to protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of our citizens.

We will therefore work to:

7.1 raise awareness and take action on the wider determinants of health, most of which lie outside the health sector

In March 2003, the City Council adopted the Public Health Programme for the City of Västerås, which proceeds from a holistic perspective. As a basic set of principles, the programme stresses health promotion, targeting venues such as city districts, workplaces and schools. Sections of the programme also deal with lifestyle and habits. The programme was put together in consultation with citizens and other stakeholders in the city over three years. Priority areas of the programme are currently in focus.

The City of Västerås Integration and Disability Programmes, as well as its policies for housing and business sector issues, are also strategic documents that directly or indirectly impact social development and health. Based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,

we have also drawn up a specific Children and Young People's Programme.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

7.2 promote city health development planning, which provides our cities with a means to build and maintain strategic partnerships for health

The partnerships below are related to health and wellbeing.

Partnership for Sustainable Welfare Development

The partnership, which involves co-operation with three other cities on district development, includes local governments, municipal housing companies, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, the Swedish National Institute of Public Health, the Swedish Association of Municipal Housing Companies and Örebro University. The purpose is to improve methods and skills for increasing employment, reducing segregation and promoting participation in residential areas.

WHO European Healthy Cities Network

Västerås and nine other Swedish cities are members of the Swedish network of WHO European Healthy Cities. The purpose is to promote good quality, equitable health for everyone by contributing to local intersectoral public health efforts.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Västerås partners with others in order to advance the cause of human rights. The purpose is to incorporate the perspective of children into the city's planning process.

Keep Västerås Safe – the City of Västerås Crime Prevention Commission

By working closely with the police, housing associations, the business sector and many others, the network strives to create a safe city and reduce street crime in the various districts. The purpose is to co-operate with many other stakeholders in the districts to make sure that the city is a safe and pleasant place in which to live.

Integration

The City of Västerås is part of a network that compiles and disseminates information about social exclusion issues. The purpose is to promote a society in which everyone has the same chance to lead a satisfying life regardless of their background.

Public Health Commission

The Public Health Commission is a Västerås network of pharmacies, the County Council, associations and other stakeholders. The purpose is to provide a venue for experience sharing, stimulation, skills development and ideas for new initiatives and projects.

Public Health Forum

Västerås is part of a local government network set up by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health.

Health Sector Commission.

The commission, which includes the Västmanland County Council as well as local governments in Västmanland and Södermanland, was organised by Mälardalen University. Other stakeholders such as industrial health services and pharmacies also participate. The purpose is for co-operation on education and research to be applied to municipal services and for the university to learn about the public health initiatives of the local governments.

A new unit has been established as part of the city's overall administration to deal with welfare and labour market issues. The strategic focus of the unit is to provide city management with reliable, relevant information for making decisions about diversity and integration, safe and secure residential areas, democratic development, the labour market, public health and other priorities.

Baseline assessment: 4 (Target reached or almost reached)

7.3 reduce inequalities in health and address poverty, which will require regular reporting on progress towards reducing the gaps

The City of Västerås works closely with the County Council and our local university. We use the Life and Health and Life and Health of Young People questionnaire surveys to monitor the effort. The surveys are also conducted by many other local governments in Central Sweden. The university publishes papers and studies as well. We take advantage of national statistics from the Swedish Labour Market Board, the Swedish Integration Board and Statistics Sweden. We present local statistics concerning maintenance support, ill-health and unemployment. We report on the number of people living below the poverty line, as well as estimating the number of homeless people on an annual basis.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)



7.4 promote health impact assessment as a means for all sectors to focus their work on health and the quality of life

At present, the City of Västerås has not reached any decision about using health impact assessment (HIA). But the issue is under consideration, and representatives of Västerås attended an HIA training arranged by the WHO European Healthy Cities Network during the autumn of 2006.

Baseline assessment: 1 (Begun)

7.5 mobilise urban planners to integrate health considerations in their planning strategies and initiatives

The city's public health strategist – along with representatives of its committees on social, educational, youth, elderly and cultural issues – helped draw up the urban master plan. That approach permitted integration of public health considerations into the planning strategy. The strategist is also involved in the district development project and planning of new residential areas. Such issues were considered very early by an overall business and administrative group of the Strategic Town Planning Group.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)



8. Vibrant and sustainable local economy

We are committed to creating and ensuring a vibrant local economy that gives access to employment without damaging the environment.

We will therefore work to:

8.1 adopt measures that stimulate and support local employment and business start-ups

In co-operation with trade associations and the Swedish Employment Agency's local office, the City of Västerås is conducting a business assistance programme under the working name of FöretagsNära. The objective is to quickly and efficiently help small and middle-sized businesses find qualified employees and otherwise become more competitive. The City of Västerås has overall responsibility for providing adequate services to all citizens. The city will perform a new analysis of its mission and social commitments in 2007.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)



8.2 cooperate with local businesses to promote and implement good corporate practice

The atmosphere of co-operation between the city and various sectors is highly productive. The city is working actively with the restaurant industry to promote moderate drinking and a zero-tolerance drug policy at bars and restaurants.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

8.3 develop and implement sustainability principles for the location of businesses

An environmental impact assessment is always performed before a business-start up is approved. Any environmental impact with respect to traffic, noise, emissions, safety and other areas is also analysed and discussed. The city has not developed special sustainability principles for the location of businesses.

Baseline assessment: 1 (Begun)

8.4 encourage markets for local and regional produce

The City of Västerås has set an explicit objective of using locally produced goods in its own activities. The percentage of eco-labelled ingredients of school lunches shall increase, while food produced for the elderly at assisted living facilities and the like shall carry a clear declaration of ingredients. A farmer's market has been set up at which local producers of meat, fish and vegetables can sell directly to consumers without any intermediaries.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

8.5 promote sustainable local tourism

We are focusing on local tourism, which can also attract external visitors, in several ways. The city has assets that are attractive to tourists with both maritime and cultural interests. For instance, the Anundshög Burial Mound provides a unique historical setting. Lake Mälaren offers a wide range of bathing, fishing and boating opportunities. Meanwhile, Svartå Valley and the Asköviken nature reserve have many options for bird watching, canoeing, sport fishing, etc.

The City of Västerås and the Swedish Cycling Association have completed a 600 kilometre regional bicycle track con-

sisting of 130 different segments. The idea is to link a large urbanised area with the surrounding rural area so that everyone is close to the track wherever they live. The track is intended for training, exercise, recreation and tourism.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

9 Social equity and justice

We are committed to securing inclusive and supportive communities.

We will therefore work to:

9.1 develop and implement programmes to alleviate poverty

The Public Health Programme for the City of Västerås stresses the central role of economic welfare. The City of Västerås analyses and compiles statistics in the area. Homeless people, those receiving maintenance support, and children in families with substandard finances are counted. The homeless project includes an overall strategy, as well as an action plan that describes ways of supporting associations, organisations and other volunteer efforts. Education is important for finding a job and earning a decent income. We are conducting a questionnaire survey about lifestyle and living conditions. Some of the questions address the issue of whether or not respondents have a financial buffer to protect against unexpected expenses.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

9.2 ensure equitable access to public services, education, employment opportunities, training, information and cultural activities

Access to information is very extensive. We are involved in a number of efforts aimed at making information more comprehensive and available to various target groups. Notifying people of different projects and inviting them to dialogue with us is very important. The media are integral to such initiatives. The City of Västerås must ensure transparency and be straightforward about how the projects are going. Our current approach includes meetings, exhibitions, mailings to households, information on our website, articles in the free Västerås Tidning newspaper, press releases and Stadsperspektiv, the city's internal newsletter.

The City of Västerås and the County Administrative Board publish a community newsletter in Arabic and Sorani. A Västerås firm puts together the newsletter with trust fund financing. An online version of the newsletter is available

in Swedish. Eventually we hope to publish it in easy-to-read Swedish as well.

The City of Västerås is trying different ways of getting information to citizens. All households receive regular updates on energy and sanitation issues.

The City of Västerås website is being revamped. Unfortunately, very little of the website is currently in foreign languages or easy-to-read Swedish. The material also needs to be adapted to various target groups. Information must be easy to find. Inhabitants of Västerås have been invited to participate in the process of establishing a 24/7 authority.

Citizens can meet and get to know both elected officials and city employees at City Hall. A new entrance and adjoining meeting place are being planned for spring 2007. The area will provide citizens with community information such as exhibitions, computer access, brochures and direct contact with various stakeholders.

We want to make sure that much of our cultural offering targets children and adolescents and that some of it is out in the districts. Schools and community centres are key channels for reaching different social groups.

The Inclusion, Dialogue and Activity (IDA) Project strives to make schools in segregated areas more attractive, improve student performance, support parents and find new routes for children of migrants to enter the labour market. The major initiative for disadvantaged districts spotlights schools and preschools.

The Jobbpunkt Väst job centre offers counselling, skills development and health promotion services. The City of Västerås and the Mimer municipal housing company run the project with EU financing. The project focuses on regular jobs rather than trainee positions.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

9.3 foster social inclusion and gender equality

The districts and schools are key venues for fostering social inclusion. A number of district projects are under way aimed at promoting commitment and participation at the neighbourhood level. Schools not only provide instruction and guidance, but serve as a rallying point for residents, associations and the business sector. We are actively working to satisfy the need for various meeting places. The district family centres provide an opportunity for families with children and people of varying ages to get

together. All Swedish workplaces are required to draw up an equal opportunity plan. An active ongoing effort and monitoring are needed for such plans to be properly implemented. Schools and preschools are subject to a similar requirement.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

9.4 improve community safety and security

Keep Västerås Safe, the City of Västerås Crime Prevention Commission, involves close networking of the city and the police. The commission has 38 members. The Chairman of the City Council is also chairman of the commission. The Municipal Executive Office and its coordinator run the project. A total of 120 businesses, associations and organisations participate. The purpose is to jointly promote safety, security and community spirit in order to prevent vandalism and street crime. Neighbourhood watch schemes in the districts are a cornerstone of the effort. Västerås co-operates and shares experience with a number of other cities and towns in order to make the project even more effective. Following training in Safety and Security Inspection Tours, the concept is about to be adopted in Västerås. During a conference, the outdoor environment of several districts was documented. Many places were photographed and described from the viewpoint of safety, security and vulnerability to street crime. Lighting on the streets of the city has been studied as a means of identifying opportunities for improving safety and security. Eight local crime prevention councils are now active.

An initiative is under way to use a geographic information system (GIS) to pinpoint where street crimes are committed and their correlation with other variables in the community. The project involves close co-operation with the local police and a number of national participants.

The Västmanland County Council and the City of Västerås operate and co-finance the Risklinjen (Risk Line). Anyone who discovers an immediate danger or risk in their neighbourhood can dial the phone number 24 hours a day. The purpose is to involve citizens in the effort to ensure safe and secure neighbourhoods. For instance, a caller might report that a sewer lid is loose, there is a hole in the street, a playground swing is broken or an emergency exit is blocked.

We have an overall strategy for working with other stakeholders to prevent accidents. In addition, we have put together a crisis management plan describing procedures after an accident has occurred and key social services have been disrupted. Drills are conducted every year with strategic indi-

viduals to create routines and preparedness for dealing with accidents that may occur. Such accidents may directly affect people or endanger the environment in various ways.

Baseline assessment: 3 (Well on the way)

9.5 secure good quality and socially integrated housing and living conditions

Housing and schools in Västerås are highly segregated. A priority of city policy is to actively combat segregation and social exclusion. Municipal housing companies have a special policy for allocating flats.

Among the policy documents drawn up by the City of Västerås that relate to living conditions and housing are the urban master plan, as well as the Public Health, Environmental, Disability and Integration Programmes.

After being mapped by means of a GIS, the city's housing supply programme can be correlated with social variables such as maintenance support and educational level. Satisfying housing needs is a vital task of the city. Among the factors to consider are the number, size, location and rental levels of flats. Both the Public Health Programme and the urban master plan stress the importance of ensuring a proper mix of housing, workplaces and services. Such an approach contributes to safety and security by guaranteeing that someone is always out on the street.

One objective of the fight against segregation is to mix various kinds of leases. Good quality public transport is another means of helping to ensure that residential areas are accessible to everyone.

Housing companies are key partners in designing safe living environments.

Schools play a central role in the districts and can serve as a rallying point. The Skolan Mitt i Byn community school movement promotes the use of schools as gathering places, offering premises and services even after the school day is over.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

10 Local to global

We are committed to assuming our global responsibility for peace, justice, equity, sustainable development and climate protection.

We will therefore work to:

10.1 develop and follow a strategic and integrated approach to mitigate climate change, and work towards a sustainable level of greenhouse gas emissions

The urban master plan describes strategies for Västerås to maintain a strategic and integrated approach to sustainability. The plan presents strategies for economic, ecological, social and cultural sustainability. Västerås is in the Mälardalen Region. Co-operation and the development of strategies can and should proceed from both local and regional perspectives. An effort is under way to forge a long-term vision for Västerås in the next few years.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

10.2 mainstream climate protection policy into our policies in the areas of energy, transport, procurement, waste, agriculture, and forestry

The City of Västerås Environmental Programme identifies climate issues as a priority for the future. A decision about adopting the energy plan currently being drawn up will be made in spring 2007. We put together a traffic plan in 2004 as a foundation for our future efforts. Our recent analysis of the traffic situation may set the stage for a revised, action-oriented plan.

The Växtkraft Project produces biogas by co-digesting bio-waste with ley crops and sludge from grease separators, creating an ongoing cycle between the city and countryside.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

10.3 raise awareness of the causes and probable impacts of climate change, and integrate preventive actions into our climate change policy

Activities related to climate issues are under way, and new ones are being planned. Climate change is high on the policy agenda, with a particular emphasis on carbon dioxide emissions. No other greenhouse gases have been prioritised yet. The City of Västerås does not presently have an overall climate strategy.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)

10.4 reduce our impact on the global environment and promote the principle of environmental justice

The first point in the City of Västerås Environmental Policy is that the city shall make efficient use of the earth's resources and co-operate with others to ensure a sustainable, long-term society compatible with the capacity and cycles of nature. The city shall incorporate environmental considerations into its decision-making processes and adapt all of its services to environmental needs.

When procuring goods and services, the City of Västerås shall serve as a driving force toward the goal of a sustainable society. We have the opportunity to take the environment into consideration and promote the principle of environmental justice when procuring goods and services. Our procurement policy is being redrafted, and a procurement strategist has been hired as of February 2007. The policy and associated action plan are scheduled for consideration in May. New guidelines will also be drawn up.

Fairtrade City provides a vehicle for local governments to focus on human rights in their procurement processes, as well as to co-operate with representatives of other social sectors to encourage ethical consumption.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)



10.5 strengthen the international cooperation of towns and cities and develop local responses to global problems in partnership with local governments, communities and relevant stakeholders

City of Västerås administrations and companies maintain various exchanges with other countries, particular European. One of the major projects is Baltic Sea Cycling.

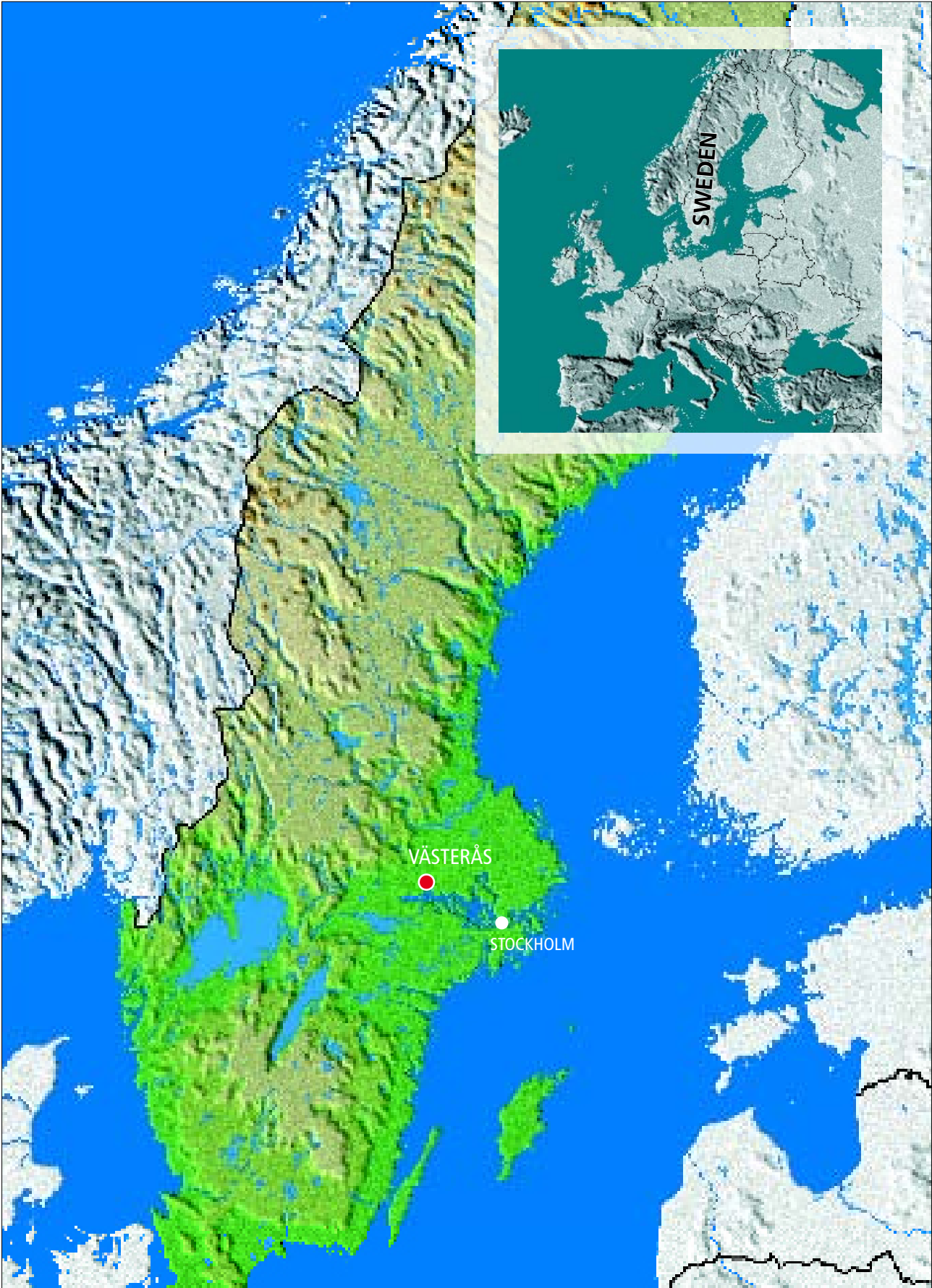
The International Policy for the City of Västerås, most recently revised on 1 September 2005, was first approved by the Municipal Executive Committee many years ago. The overall vision for international co-operation reads as follows: "The City of Västerås engages in international co-operation to promote peace, democracy and respect for human rights. Our guiding principles are the evolution of a sustainable society, as well as greater knowledge and understanding through encounters with other cultures. International co-operation also enables us to stimulate the city's business sector."

In order to implement the policy, annual action plans are adopted that describe the ongoing and anticipated activities of local government. The current plan accords particular importance to regional development, employment, welfare, sustainable development, IT and education. Special policy-related activities will be conducted in 2007. The City of Västerås is involved in international co-operation issues at the regional, county and local level.

Västerås continually nourishes and cultivates its relationships with twin towns in the Nordic area, Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The city also participates in a number of European networks.

The City of Västerås strives to take part in projects financed by the EU. For instance, several projects are under way or have recently been completed that are financed by the Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, Interreg III B, EQUAL, Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE), Culture 2000 and other EU initiatives. Special resources have made Västerås one of the leading cities and towns in Sweden when it comes to obtaining EU financing of educational projects.

Baseline assessment: 2 (Off to a good start)





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