

**The metro and the metropolization:
the post-war transportation ideology, traffic planning, and
modern urban renewal in Scandinavian capital cities**

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For post-war Europeans, the need for physical reconstruction and political renewal was obvious. New ideas within architecture and town planning were important in producing the new forms of urban life - in many times they were needed in cities and towns destroyed by the war. Bombs did not destroy the Scandinavian capital cities but a heavy modernization started. The idea of post-war planning legislation was to improve the efficiency of local development planning, to extend its range beyond existing densely built areas and to create instruments for structure and general planning at the municipal and regional level.

In all Scandinavian capital cities "dynamic community development" and traffic planning were combined. The organization of metro and other transport, the provision of infrastructure, planning the suburbs and redesigning the city centres headed the list of priorities. Nordic policies were to combine democratic ideals, traffic efficiency and metropolitan image. With the creation of the city's public transport department, the arrangement of suburban traffic and transport became a hot political topic. In all cities metro planning became highly politicized by the strong social-democratic parties with great interest to the social control of land use. The traffic planning showed also an important social message: the need to be a modern metropolis.

Traffic problems were already discussed in the first post-war conference of the Nordic capital cities in 1946 in Stockholm. The only solution to be seen was rational and long time underground planning. In all Scandinavian capital cities the new traffic planning bodies made monumental metro plans in the 1940s and 1950s based on comprehensive analysis of both public and private needs. In the paper a presentation is made how the international metro planning ideal were transported to Scandinavia and how public transport deeply became rooted in urban planning. An underground with rapid rail transport opened new dimensions in all cities. Systematic transportation ideology and the great urban renewal of the city centre met each other.

A comparative analysis shows how easily the modern "dream metropolis" became a reality in North Europe and how the capital cities closely followed each other's development in realizing this dream. Stockholm became the prime example in the Europe as whole of the vast transformation of the old city centre as a result of metro planning. Helsinki and Oslo were merged with the neighbouring municipalities in 1946 and 1948. After this annexations both capital, regional, metropolitan, suburban and metro planning could be seen as a whole. Metro was the most expensive municipal project all cities and in many cases for a long time carried out without state finance. The paper will focus also on the complex power relationship between municipal planning and public opinion.

