

The Green Parking Index

A New Approach to Calculating Parking Spaces for New Developments

Swedish law requires an adequate level of parking is provided for all new housing developments. The standard is one parking place per apartment. This provision is expensive. As a result of a dialogue between the City of Stockholm and private building companies, a Green Parking Index has been created. The index is designed to reduce the need for parking spaces by rewarding developers who offer alternative forms of transport to residents.

Aim

The goal of the Green Parking Index is to reduce the amount of space that cars occupy in Stockholm. By reducing the demand for private parking places, this helps to encourage alternative forms of transport. The aim is to:

- Reduce parking spaces.
- Provide access to alternative modes of transport.
- Reduce the cost of construction / purchase by reduced internal parking.
- Provide urban space and increase local quality of life by reducing external parking.

Process

The index was developed by an inter-departmental team. An important prerequisite for mobility services is to regulate street parking, either by pricing or by timing regulations. This is needed to provide an incentive that will stimulate behavioural change.

The key is a building regulation that starts with a baseline for parking spaces. This is based on current car ownership per apartment in the city.

This is between 0.3 – 0.6 cars per apartment. Any new development takes account of location and related factors to determine a starting point.

The final index for an individual development is based on available mobility services. Parking provision can be reduced according to the following guidelines (there are also project specific variations). The index is adjusted by a percentage depending on outcome and the amount of parking that the municipality demands for the new development.

10% - on the provision of:

- Information package.
- Quality bicycle parking with easy accessible facilities such as automatic doors.
- Access to car sharing.

15% - on the provision (in addition to the above):

- Bicycle sharing.
- Free trial access to public transport.

25% - on the provision of (in addition to all the above):

- Service boxes (some with cooling facilities) for the storage of home deliveries.

Success factors

The results of the new policy are still to be determined. It will take several years before the full effect can be assessed. To date the policy has received wide support from stakeholders and is currently used in all new planning projects on land owned by the city authority (and in several projects on land owned by private owners). There are four stand out reasons for success:

1. The Green Parking Index is based on the Stockholm transport strategy.
2. A multi-disciplinary team from municipal departments and boards was commissioned to develop and introduce the index as a complement to the existing flexible parking regulations.
3. The concept became the basis for a dialogue with building companies. They were positive about the proposal because it increased space for flexibility.
4. Baseline numbers used actual car ownership for the location.

Stakeholders

The municipal development board, the city's traffic and city planning departments, local building companies, public housing companies and the public parking agency.

Challenges & solutions

- Determining which mobility services or other factors should be eligible for a discount on parking places.
- How to determine the size of the discount.
- How to ensure mobility services over the long term.
- How will other urban construction, traffic planning and public policy impact on parking demand.

The exact locations, discounts and outcome of each project are decided by the project team. This is through collaboration and dialogue with the city's legal services and the developer. If the project team agrees or if there is political input, it is possible to make adjustments to promote development and test new solutions. Final parking spaces are recommended by city officials and are decided by the City Planning Board (detailed plans and building permits) or the exploitation board (land use guidelines and agreement).

Achievements

Through the Green Parking Index, Stockholm has achieved a modern way of looking at car parking as a flexible instrument within building regulations that can contribute to a sustainable mobility system for the city. The index increases transparency in the process and helps find the best solution for all. Previous parking standards required builders to reduce the number of apartments in a project to comply with the parking regulations.

An approach based on the actual car ownership in different parts of the city is definitely useful. It helps to ensure political support if a policy like the Green Parking Index can be integrated into a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP).

Several municipalities across Sweden are also investigating the introduction of different types of mobility services.

More information

Stockholm Building Administration

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<http://www.stockholm.se/PageFiles/1279183/1%20Riktlinjer.pdf> (Swedish)

Further information on SmartImpact network visit:
<http://urbact.eu/smartimpact>
www.smartimpact-project.eu