

**MEETING IN GÖTEBORG
FOR A REFLECTION ON POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN MONTRÉAL
AND THE SWEDISH CITY OF GÖTEBORG**



**BRIEFING OF THE APRIL 18 MEETING AT THE OFFICE OF HELEN FOTOPOULOS,
MAYOR OF PLATEAU MONT-ROYAL, BORROUGH OF MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC**

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Goals of the meeting with Mrs. Fotopoulos:

1. To describe my meetings with some members of Göteborg City Council, second largest city of Sweden;
2. To build up arguments for international leadership as a gender-equal city
3. To describe some advantages for Montreal to be a gender-equal city
4. To suggest some possible collaborations with the city of Göteborg

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MEETINGS IN GÖTEBORG, SWEDEN

CONTEXT

I was in Göteborg from mid-November 2005 to mid-January 2006 to do interviews for my master degree. I'm studying the opportunity of using public-private partnerships in sustainable development projects. My case study is Volvo's collaboration with the City of Göteborg in a project called Biogas Väst, which goal is to build up a market for biogas cars and vehicles.

MEETINGS

Meeting with Eva Olofsson, town council member, responsible for gender equality issues

I had a fruitful interview with Mrs. Eva Olofsson in order to discuss the interest that could have Göteborg to develop links with Montreal, not as twin cities but rather in specific collaborations (see other parts of this document). I've talked about the interest that could stem from combining reflection on gendered (Göteborg) and participative (Montreal) municipal budgets. We've also discussed the importance of showing the positive socio-economic impact of gender equality.

Mrs. Olofsson has said that the ideas were interesting but that it was important to wait for the Swedish fall election, in September before things can be done, since all posts are subject to election (national, regional, local).

Reinforcement of relationships with gender-equal specialists (municipal and regional)

I had many discussions also with Karin Wenander, who works with gender issues at the municipal level. Mrs. Wenander has been in Québec in June 2004 to give a conference at the Québec-Sweden 2003 mission, which was organized by the CCFDRM¹. I also discussed with Mrs. Simone Lindsten, responsible of gender issues at the regional level. Mrs. Lindsten has also given a conference in Québec, in May 2005 at the 6^e RÉMM conference; she also has written a booklet on Women and Politics that has been translated by the RÉMM and published on its website. The RÉMM (Montérégie's Women Mayor and City Councillors' Network) is the only structured women's network for municipal politicians in Canada).

Short presentation of Montréal to the City chairman

Before my interview with Göteborg City chairman, Mr. Göran Johansson, I've presented him briefly the situation of Montréal and mentioned that it would be interesting to link both cities, since they share many similarities, one being the very typical friendly mood. Although he doesn't like the US too much, he said he likes Montreal and has been to Canada more than one time.

City of Göteborg's mayor visit to Canada

Göteborg City Mayor has been on a visit to the Canadian Federation of Municipalities in February 2005. In Sweden, the role similar to a North-American mayor is played by the City Chairman while the mayor role is more representative and symbolic.

¹ Comité condition féminine en développement régional de la Montérégie

City branding and socio-economic prosperity

In the same vein as Richard Florida, who had classified Montréal as the top *festive and creative* cities last year², the urban research reveal that, in order to attract foreign investment, to keep their enterprises and retain qualified employees, cities must have for main assets (4 T):

- **Transport** : An efficient and multimodal transport system (subways, trains, airports close-by, cycle paths, natural pedestrian walkways, fluent car traffic), efficient both for people and good transportation, aiming at solving environmental issues and, when possible, innovative (ex : Strasbourg's light tram system)
- **Telecommunications**: Efficient IT used to reinforce the city branding as an up-to-date or even « avant-garde » milieu, where people can use new technology as soon as it's put on the market. An innovative workplace in IT is definitely a strong asset to attract highly-skilled workers.
- **Tourism**: A cultural offer for tourists, which promotes simultaneously the specific image of the city and its society (festivals, museums, local and international food, access to the rivers and the mountain, etc.) in safe and friendly surroundings supported by international signs (icons rather than language, English translations).
- **Tolerance**: Absence of ghettos and violence, « gays » neighbourhoods, promotion of civil society's initiatives and diversity.

In a context of globalization, where cities compete to keep their enterprises and their skilled and demanding workers, other assets are also essential:

- **Education**: upper education and knowledge-society institutes (universities, research centers/enterprises and international collaboration);
- **Environment**: a holistic vision of environmental improvement both ecologic and global with action plans related to sustainable development, aiming at reducing pollution (air, water, noise, etc.) while promoting aesthetic and historic assets (heritage and design) and the strength of its human mosaic.
- **Economy**: A healthy and diversified economy, based both on avant-garde clusters (IT, biotechnologies) and social economy, where creativity is important.

It goes without saying that both Göteborg and Montréal have these assets and are well-positioned in the global economy. Nonetheless, and this is the essential part of my suggestions, both cities would take advantage in promoting together the asset of gender-equality, which would turn out to be very positive for city branding, both at global, Nordic, North-American and Canadian level.

² Lapointe, A. *Lorsqu'il s'agit d'investissements pour la croissance de Montréal, il semble qu'on soit les champions de l'indécision*. Le Devoir, juin 5, 2006.

Gender-equality: a under-estimated asset for global cities

In taking into account that women and men have different realities but should be treated equally, gender-equal cities should take the leadership, and this for many reasons:

- **Innovation:** According to the American firm McKinsey & Co., the biggest challenge for enterprises is to find out and retain talented workers; this search has become more critical for businesses than capital, strategies or even R&D³. Women and men having different needs, interests and basic reality, innovation will arise from joining both expertises. And if talented people are both women and men, it is very fruitful to promote gender-equal measures and policies, especially knowing that the gap between women and men from Montreal is quite wide⁴.
- **Knowledge:** If men are more numerous at the PhD level and at the head of research centers, there are more women than men in universities, mostly in social fields, law and medicine. Women's contribution to projects such as a *Health and Knowledge techno pole* should be more than welcome, on many levels. Combining men and women's expertise to environmental and legal research is perfect to reinforce Montreal's expertise in order to attract World summits such as the International Conference on Climate Changes of December 2005.
- **Entrepreneurship :** In Canada, women own 30 to 40 % of all enterprises⁵ and, according to the Quebec's entrepreneurs' databank, they are profitable⁶. According to the *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*, «countries that don't encourage women strongly to create and develop new enterprises are not fully realizing their entrepreneurship's potential.⁷». If Montreal's economy is based both on women and men's enterprises, there is a strong tendency to support more men's interests such as IT, engineering or manufacturing. There is lot to do to develop women's potential; a gender-equal economy is still to be done, because upper education is not a guarantee for gender-equality, especially when it comes to salaries and opportunities for self-accomplishment.
- **Support to commercial development:** Following changes in their commercial practices to answer women needs more accurately (advertising, floor planning, services and products), many enterprises such as Rona have experienced a surge in commercial profits: in Rona's case, the compound annual growth since 1999 has been 39,3 %⁸.

³ <http://pf.fastcompany.com/magazine/16/mckinsey.html>

⁴ Femmes et développement régional, CRDÎM, *Des différences, des similitudes*, novembre 2004.

⁵ Machado, H.; Rouleau, L. *Identité sociale et entrepreneuriat féminin*. HEC Montréal. 2002

⁶ Saint-Cyr, L. *Banque de données sur les entrepreneures québécoises*. MIC. 2001.

⁷ Cité dans Saint-Cyr, voir note 3.

⁸ Yaccato, J. The 80 % Minority.

Two examples of gender-equal business innovation

Companies that create new, high-demand technologies and services enjoy, for a time, barriers to entry and superior margins and pricing power, for the simple reason that there are few or no other providers of that technology or service.

IBM CORPORATE BROCHURE 2004 P. 13

Concept car – The Volvo YCC project - done

In Göteborg, Volvo Car Corporation has asked a nine-woman group to build a concept car. If the YCC prototype has cost 3,5 M \$ US, the initiative has given Volvo an equivalent of 35 M \$ US in advertising, because of its astounding success. It has benefited Volvo's branding as a car manufacturer answering also women needs and interests (design, practical devices, environment, and safety). The Volvo YCC has won many prizes and has been exhibited everywhere in the World, including the renowned Rösshka Museum, in Göteborg.



The YCC experience of women building a car has also shown that, not only it their work would benefit men and women, but their way of working was also different because, a contrario to usual concept projects, which are highly secret, consulting and information was a the project core. (see press release, annex 2)

www.designmuseum.se

Girls and women's game software - an opportunity to explore

Wishing to brand itself as the game software city, Montreal already offers grants and subsidies for that type of enterprises moving to the City. While UBISOFT's business success is already famous, other game software companies wishing to create and develop a market for software games intended for girls and women could be invited to set offices in Montreal to develop that type of software, mostly absent for now; that would brand Montreal as an innovative social IT milieu.

Göteborg and Montréal's interest on collaborations

Common characteristics

- Gender-equal decisive and consultative structures and policies
- Friendly City branding, safe, with lots of outdoor activities and animation
- Nordic reality
- Large industrial and harbour infrastructures
- Winter activities in a climatic changes' context
- Language to protect in an international tourism context
- Multi-ethnic neighbourhoods that have not turned into ghettos
- Game software business cluster

Suggestions for collaboration between Göteborg and Montréal

GENDER-EQUAL INITIATIVES:

- **GÖTEBORG'S MUNICIPAL AND VÄSTRA GÖTALAND'S REGIONAL COUNCILS:**
*These two decision bodies being almost gender-equal, it would be interesting to build links with **Le Conseil des Montréalaises** and Montréal's City Council, in order to exchange practices and strategies on gender-equality issues, including policies, programs and projects to promote the unexplored gender-equality asset.*
 - Collaboration: – **POSITIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF GENDER-EQUALITY** - : *according to the World Economic Forum, Sweden is the most egalitarian country in the World and Canada is 7th rank, which places Québec probably in 6th rank, ex-aequo with New-Zealand. It would be interesting to see if it's possible to measure, in a concrete way, the positive socio-economic impact of gender-equal societies, in studying Montréal, Göteborg and a similar city in New-Zealand. The **Canadian Federation of Municipalities and Women Condition Canada** could be interested in working on this project. Results could be sent to the World Economic Forum, to stimulate other governments to adopt gender-equal measures in their own country.*
- **GENDERED (GÖTEBORG) AND PARTICIPATIVE (MONTRÉAL) BUDGETS:** *While there is still no gendered-budget in Göteborg, there are some reflection regarding the issue and Montreal should be experiencing participative budget soon. It would be interesting to combine reflection s on both municipal practices, since Québec's society tends to be «bottom-up» while the Swedish society tends to be «top-down».*
- **INITIATIVES IN CITY BURROUGHS:** *Both in Göteborg and Montréal, some initiatives come from the boroughs and not the central city offices. Exchanges on these practices, in gender-equality or other topics in sustainable development could be inspiring.*

Other sectors to explore for collaborations

MULTISECTORIAL INNOVATION:

- **LINDHOLMEN : MULTI- RESEARCH CENTRE ENTREPRISES/UNIVERSITIES :**
 - Business application - **SUNFLEET** - : short term «green» car rental with mobile phone control for reservation, management and car use. www.lindholmen.se

It would be interesting to create some links between Lindholmen and Saint-Michel Eco-Centre and Communauto.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN ENERGY MARKETS

- **BUSINESS REGION GÖTEBORG (BRG):**
 - Business application – **BIOGAS VÄST** - : public-private partnership to develop the biogas market as biofuel for cars and buses, while reducing drastically smog problems in the city of Göteborg. www.businessregion.com

It would be interesting to create some links between BRG, the STM, the Saint-Michel Eco-Centre but also the City of Montréal and its Chamber of Commerce (PPP)

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY LIFE

- « **LISEBERG** » : Municipality-owned attraction Park similar to La Ronde
 - Business application – **CHRISTMAS MARKET**- : even if the mechanics are closed for safety reasons in winter, Liseberg is open in November and December for outdoors shows, candy or craft shops are open. The business season is thus kept longer in a very festive way. www.liseberg.com

A reflection on winter outdoor activities in a climate change context could be fruitful, since both cities share the same climate reality.

Conclusion

The objective of this document – and our meeting - was to show that it would be interesting to create links between two cities, which are my favourite ones. Montréal and Göteborg share this ambiance that is so valuable of a «real lived-in» city, with its creators, industries, its World mosaic and its streets where one can walk forever with pleasure. Both share this «joie de vivre» that anybody can feel. So, as I would present a future good friend to another, I wanted to do the same with this initiative.

I'll be happy to present you with more details some of Göteborg's projects such as Biogas Väst, should you want to. And if you need more info, I'll be pleased to answer them if I can.

Thanks you for this opportunity to tell you more about this initiative,

Regards,



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Annex 1 – Portrait of Göteborg

Society:

- 400 000 people
- 2nd largest Swedish city
- Metropolitan centre for the West of Sweden, i.e. Västra Götaland
- Reflection on gender municipal budgets
- 40 %/60 % women/men town councillors
- Ethnic neighbourhoods, no ghettos
- Multi-parties election mode without the possibility of independent candidates
- Numerous para public enterprises (energy, transport, business, etc.)
- Multi-partners PPP: «network-oriented»

Environment

- Downtown turned towards the sea (port, access to the sea, canal)
- Many pedestrian streets and environmental zone for trucks
- Sailboats used as hotels
- Many parks and cycle paths
- Archipelago with many natural reserves
- Nordic Climate
- Many municipal buildings and apartment blocks with district heating
- Cruises and sailing activities

Industries

- Largest Scandinavian port
- Many large industries
- Transport infrastructures and expertise very developed
- IT, (game software and computer solutions for the car industry)
- World enterprises: Volvo Groups and Volvo Cars, SAAB, Preem refineries, Hasselblad, Ericsson
- Expertise in environmental solutions linked to the industry (BRG)

Tourism and culture:

- Friendly ambiance, safe, festive
- Many outdoor activities : fireworks, festivals, many others
- Renown Opera House
- House of the National Symphonic Orchestra
- Many museums, including the Rhösska (renowned Scandinavian design museum)
- Historic Replica of the East Gothenburg (sail ship)

Education :

- Many universities such as Chalmers (technical school), which includes the Fenix Institute (links between research and industry), Göteborg's Händelskolan (economics) and Göteborg's University
- Research Centre multi-sector industries/universities (Lindholmen) with sections open to the public

Annex 2 – Expertise of Bebop et cie

Owner: Kim Cornelissen

Title: Regional and International Consultant

Issues: Links Québec-Sweden, transport, sustainable development, municipal politics, gender equality

Special collaboration: coordinator of the Women Mayor and Town Councillors' Network in Montérégie-Est

Education:

- Bachelor degree in jazz guitar and composition –Concordia University, 1986
- Bachelor degree in Urban Planning – UQÀM, 1998
- Master Degree in Urban Studies, School of Management, UQÀM – almost done
 - Subject of the thesis: PPP as valuable managing practices in sustainable development projects : the case of Biogas Väst, a PPP between Volvo and the Swedish city of Göteborg

Some works:

- Writer of many booklets on municipal politics (2003-2006)
- Regular speaker on municipal politics, both national and international
- Professional resource for Local Authorities' Associations and Networks (FQM, UMQ, FCM. RQVVS) and some ministers from Québec (Transport, Municipal Affairs) (2002-2006)
- Co-writer for the Montérégie's Sustainable Development Framework (2003)
- Co-responsible for the Québec-Sweden mission and the post-mission conference (2003-2004)
- Writer of many « memoirs » in sustainable development, gender equality, and municipal politics for governmental commissions
- Many writings on biogas as biofuel
- Speaker on biogas as biofuel for the National Environment Fair in Montreal, June 2006
- Translation of Swedish documents⁹ about sustainable development and gender equality:
 - Sweden's Strategy on Sustainable Development 2003
 - The SNS Project : Women on Top
 - The SNS Project as done at the Volvo Group
 - Numerous articles

⁹ Translated from English into French.