

Sustainable Växjö 2030

Responsibility – Innovation – Results

Declaration for Sustainable Växjö 2030

With the declaration “Sustainable Växjö by 2030” we promise to take our local and global responsibility for people, the environment, and the economy. We who live, reside, and work in Växjö by 2030 will not cause any negative effects on the climate as a community. Europe's greenest city in 2030 is climate and eco-smart, safe and trusting, fair and responsible, growing and inclusive, green and healthy. With this declaration, we invite everyone who is willing and able to participate to contribute.

Växjö in 2030 is a municipality with a strong and decisive democratic leadership that we have built sustainably and durably. We have the tools to both prevent and handle changes and unforeseen events. We are a municipality characterised by openness and togetherness. We possess good knowledge of our history and our cultural heritage, with a strong sense of knowing that we who live here today can change things for the better. We know where we come from, but we are driven by where we are going. With a starting point in a community that embraces differences, we develop a good life together. Always in dialogue with and focusing on our future generations.

Växjö Municipality as an organisation has a key role and great responsibility to meet the current and future societal challenges. To succeed we must integrate all aspects of sustainability into what we already do; ecologically, socially, and financially. It has to happen through collaboration between the public sector, our citizens, and other important actors in our community like businesses, the non-profit sector, and government and regional representatives.

2030 is not far away, and to be sustainable by then, nine challenges have been identified. These are described in “Sustainable Växjö 2030” with suggestions for common goals. The goals and challenges are general and not immediately directed towards the municipality, nor any specified administration, organisation, or business – but to all of us. The essential principles for how this should be carried out is that we first and foremost use the resources that are already at our disposal, make sure that what we are already doing is done cost-effectively and sustainably, that we work with all dimensions of sustainability, and that we do it together with anyone willing and able.

Every one of us needs to take responsibility for our own carbon footprint in the lives we lead, as well as in the businesses or companies we work for or are responsible for. Responsibility means both showing restraint and contributing to development and innovation. We have high hopes for our citizens' own initiatives and decisiveness towards a sustainable development and future.

Our definitions

Sustainability

With the 2030 Agenda the UN defines what sustainable development means. The definition includes environmental, social, and financially sustainable growth, which builds on the Brundtland Commission's definition from 1987, to work for "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹ In the definition of "Sustainable Växjö 2030" we see the importance of including a resilience perspective. Resilience is about a system or society's long-term ability to handle change and continue developing. Our society today already faces the consequences of climate and societal change. Therefore, we need to ensure that our community is equipped to handle these changes for both people, society, nature, and the environment.

Växjö = Växjö Municipality

When we use the term Växjö we mean the whole geographic area, Växjö Municipality.

Växjö Municipal Group

When we use the term Växjö Municipal Group we mean all the administrations and companies included in Växjö Municipality.

¹ Our Common Future (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

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Introduction

“The sustainability programme Sustainable Växjö 2030 is meant to give the whole Municipal Group a common vision of the Växjö we want. The shared horizon will be the foundation of the strategic decisions taken within the scope of the programme by politicians and operations within the Municipal Group. The programme will provide the conditions for cooperation in the municipality, region, nationally and internationally. Clarity regarding where the municipality wants to go may inspire and provide the foundations for actors within the community and in the world to work in the same direction.” (From the project plan “Sustainable Växjö 2030”)

Work with the programme has strived for a high degree of participation and wider dialogue with co-workers in all municipal administrations and companies, both in management and operations. There has also been communication via different forums with citizens, businesses, voluntary organisations and researchers from the Linnaeus University amongst others.

Work with the programme has been carried through in three different phases: a situation assessment, a materiality analysis, and lastly working with the goals for 2030. The starting point has been the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Swedish Delegation for the 2030 Agenda’s report “The 2030 Agenda and Sweden”. The hope is that “Sustainable Växjö 2030” will give us a full image of both *what* we should focus on, *where* we are trying to go, and *how* we should work.

“Sustainable Växjö 2030” points out goals and initiatives that will enable us to *create an amazing place for everyone who lives, resides, and works in Växjö together, now and in the future.*

“Sustainable Växjö 2030” comprises the following;

- **1 declaration**
- **5 overall goals**
- **9 challenges**
- **3 principles for implementation**

The 2030 Agenda from a global to a local level

In September 2015, the members of the UN adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The agenda contains a political declaration, 17 global goals, 169 targets, and means to implement them. The agenda is an action plan for transitioning to a sustainable community that foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies for people, the planet, and prosperity. All countries have committed to, within their abilities, contribute towards fulfilling the agenda both within their own country and globally. The agenda emphasises partnership as a fundamental element for the implementation, which is why cooperation between the different actors and levels of society is a must. The agenda provides a new approach by emphasising how the greatest challenges of our time are connected and therefore needs to be resolved through a collective effort. The goals of the agenda are indivisible and efforts to reach one goal will affect the ability to reach other goals.

To achieve the goals set out in the agenda, each country is encouraged to present goals and implement initiatives based on their own circumstances and challenges at the national level. In 2016, the Swedish Government appointed the 2030 Agenda delegation to put forward a status report as well as an action plan containing suggestions and assessments of Sweden's continued implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within the delegation's status report, they present the challenges Sweden faces within a national context of the global goals. In the delegations final report, it is concluded that local governments have a central role when it comes to implementing and putting the 2030 Agenda into practice. Many of the basic missions like healthcare, schools, social care, and community planning that have a direct or indirect connection to the goals in the 2030 Agenda are implemented at a local and regional level. In the final report, the delegation assesses that the impact of the 2030 Agenda needs to be increased in municipalities and county councils, for example by integrating sustainable development into their management.

In Växjö we have spent decades working towards sustainable development, especially within the climate and environmental areas. Governing documents concerning sustainable development exist within practically all policy areas, including equality, public health, climate. "Sustainable Växjö 2030" is a governing, guiding, and inspiring document that makes it possible for the Växjö Municipal Group together with those who live, reside, and work in Växjö to reset towards a more sustainable direction.

Växjö's goals

To clarify what a sustainable Växjö 2030 means, five goals have been formulated. Each goal covers more than one challenge, is relevant to them all, and requires cooperation.

By having the goals cover more than one challenge we protect the indivisibility of the 2030 Agenda, and underline that nature and the environment, as well as society and people alike depend on each other.

To reach a “Sustainable Växjö 2030” a reset is required. The goals, through their simplicity, are meant to encourage the reset of our way of thinking and actions leading to a “Sustainable

Växjö 2030” They encourage us to act, live, and work sustainably. This requires decisions, choices, and priorities to take the same direction.

Overall goals for Växjö 2030:

Climate and eco-smart

Our society is built for all to reside, live, and work with as little impact as possible on the environment and climate. Significant knowledge leads to sustainable consumption and behaviour patterns.

We are a recycling society where the earth’s resources are used efficiently. Växjö is fossil fuel free and we continue to find new and innovative solutions together. We are proud of our results and inspire others through being Europe’s greenest city.

Safe and Trusting

We feel secure and we trust society and each other. Public services are available and accessible to all. In Växjö we take care of each other and work to make sure no one feels alone and without support. Our society is free of violence.

Our urban and rural environments are and feel safe, and they make it possible for different citizens to meet, thrive, and evolve. Växjö is resilient and prepared for climate and societal change.

Fair and Responsible

Växjö provides equal living conditions where no one feels discriminated against. Everyone has possibilities and ability to affect and take responsibility for societal and democratic development. We stand up for our own and others’ rights and obligations

Through our way of living, we contribute to opportunities for future generations as well as people here and in other parts of the world to lead good lives.

Growing and Inclusive

Växjö is an attractive place for innovative businesses and non-profit associations that contribute to high and sustainable growth. We have a strong economic development with little negative impact on the environment and a positive effect on people.

In Växjö we create conditions where everyone can manage school and enter the workforce in order to minimise exclusion.

We create environments that contribute to inclusion and fellowship between people. There is an abundance of variety in cultural and leisurely activities. Together we create an inclusive and growing Växjö.

Green and Healthy

We are equal and have equal opportunity for good health and a good life. We have a varied and accessible nature. We create the conditions for good health, exercise, and an active life.

In Växjö there are conditions enabling everyone to be healthy, feel good, physically and mentally.

We have a rich and varied biodiversity in our forests, agricultural landscapes, water, and built environment. We preserve and value nature's eco-systematic services.

Växjö's challenges

Nine challenges have been identified in Växjö. Each challenge is connected to multiple different goals.

The challenges are equally important and are described without anyone taking priority over another. They are formulated in a cohesive and overall manner. A more in-depth analysis and knowledge must therefore provide the basis for design and implementation of initiatives and activities needed to reset for a sustainable Växjö.

After each challenge, there is an example of a possible action that has been identified in the status report and that Växjö should do to meet the challenge.

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Biodiversity and ecosystem

Biodiversity is decreasing more and more rapidly as a result of our influence due to pollution, pesticides, and deforestation. We depend on healthy and well-maintained ecosystems and the services they provide us with, for our food supply as well as our health, and also because without these systems, we become increasingly vulnerable to climate change.

By preserving the nature in our immediate surroundings and reinforcing green living areas and landscapes we may avoid increased losses of biodiversity, weakened ecosystem services, and thereby our vulnerability in the face of climate change. Amongst other things, this depends on increasing the understanding of how climate, ecosystems, and the health and living conditions of a society are connected.

That is why we need to...

- Be a role model for land management
- Take ecosystem services into consideration when community planning
- Preserve and develop living environments and landscapes such as meadow, pasture, cultivation and wetlands
- Care for land with high values and leave space for the needs of future generations
- Ensure good water quality in lakes and waterways
- Limit the spread of microplastics and chemicals that are harmful to the environment and health
- Use natural resources in a sustainable manner
- Care for and develop areas for social activity, outdoor areas and green areas
- Ensure equal access and closeness to nature areas for health and recreational activities.

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Transport and travel

Transport and travel contribute, especially through the use of fossil fuel, to climate change, acidification, and eutrophication of land and water, as well as pollution which is damaging to both human and animal health.

By transporting people and goods sustainably in both cities and the countryside we can reduce our effects on the climate significantly. It is about good access to public transport, bicycle paths and footpaths, and other sustainable possibilities for travel, as well as closeness to meeting places and other services.

That is why we need to...

- Ensure a transport system that is free of fossil fuel
- Ensure and develop infrastructure for sustainable travel
- Work toward decreased distances to meeting places and services.
- Work toward safe and secure footpaths and bikeways
- Reinforce infrastructure and public transport with other regions and larger cities.
- Encourage innovation and development of new propellants and digital techniques meant to change transport and travel habits.

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Urban planning

Community planning and community development have a great effect on preventative climate and environmental initiatives, but also on social aspects like equality, trust, and accessibility.

By both reworking existing and creating new structures and places where we can reside, live, and work sustainably we can lessen our impact on the climate and increase social solidarity. This means that we need to prevent segregation, offer good social services, safety, accessibility, attractive meeting places, and sustainable transport. This way Växjö can become more sustainable and resilient towards climate as well as societal change.

That is why we need to...

- Work for good access to digital infrastructure and digital solutions.
- Ensure large-scale as well as small-scale energy production that is completely renewable with a high degree of self-sufficiency.
- Stimulate even more innovations connected to increased energy efficiency with the lowest possible primary energy consumption.
- Enforce Växjö Municipality's importance and attractiveness by focusing on cultural heritage, culture, and the value of the landscape
- Developing residential and living environments that prevent segregation and promote closeness to meeting places, nature, and culture
- Build a resilient society that prevents and balances the effects of climate and societal change
- Promote mixed housing and a variety of tenures
- Promote a living countryside
- Protect and strengthen water supply and water management
- Build sustainably and with low environmental impact, for example by continuing to be a role model for modern wood construction
- Promote the conditions for a sustainable business
- Make available and share more public facilities for effective use
- Encourage innovation and digital technologies
- Maintain and develop existing buildings and infrastructures

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Consumption and production

All products bought for organisations, businesses and private individuals have an environmental impact either during production, transport, use or as waste. Our consumption habits have consequences for both our environment and our health.

By developing the circular and sharing economy our resources and products can be used more effectively to minimise their environmental impact. It is partially about changing our consumption patterns so that they become sustainable, partially about developing circular responsibility and a sharing economy through upcycling, recycling materials and developing new ways, forums, and places to do so. It is also about facilitating sustainable purchasing and decreasing resource wasting.

That is why we need to...

- Promote increased upcycling and recycling, and use resources more effectively and circularly.
- Promote changes in consumption behaviour in order to encourage ecological, financial, and social sustainability
- Support and promote innovation on circular and bio-based solutions
- Strengthen the requirements and follow up on sustainability in all procurement and purchasing
- Push for energy efficiency in existing buildings
- Promote the production of food, energy, and produce in a sustainable manner
- Support and develop new forms and forums for a sharing economy

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Knowledge, lifelong learning, and education

Generally knowledge results are up, however, there is a growing gap between groups of pupils and schools. The pupils' socio-economic backgrounds have a great impact on their school results.

By strengthening teaching and providing an opportunity for everyone to develop to their full potential, we improve their conditions to shape their lives and their future opportunities in the labour market. It is about shifting our focus from handling to preventing and promoting, for example through more early efforts, not just in school, but where all community actors can contribute. It is also about creating inclusive learning processes in schools to promote equal opportunities.

Sustainable development requires conscious, active choices and action were we all take responsibility for ourselves based on our capacity.

That is why we need to...

- Ensure equal opportunities for lifelong learning from preschool to adult education.
- Work for accessibility and quality in all education
- Promote safe, inclusive, and inspiring learning environments that strengthen democratic communication.
- Spread and increase knowledge on sustainable development
- Promote learning during free time
- Promote meaningful and developing leisure time
- Focus on earlier and preventative efforts meant to promote the best school results possible to enable more young people to enter the workforce or further studies.
- Conduct education that is evidence-based and founded on tried experience as well as better skills development in school.
- Increase interdisciplinary collaboration between academia and other actors within society.

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Labour Market and Business Sector

Unemployment remains high among people, women especially, with little education who have recently arrived in Sweden. Simultaneously, there is a severe shortage of labour on the job market and a lack of competence in many sectors. That it is difficult for individuals in some groups to enter the job market is inhibiting for the citizens, companies, and the growth of the entire society. Exclusion risks becoming inheritable, compromising well-being.

By accounting for individual experiences and competences, making the job market accessible for more people, as well as strengthening motivation and education where it is needed, everyone may find a place on the job market and thus an independent life. The Växjö Promise (Växjöloftet) has gathered the job market's actors for full employment, while simultaneously increasing and clarifying expectations on individual responsibility, as well as developing societal support to jobseekers. A fair and sustainable society does not give up on anyone.

That is why we need to...

- Contribute to lifelong learning and improved matching in the job market.
- Recruit and maintain competence
- Curate and validate existing competence
- Create an attractive space and job market
- Promote a high, sustainable, and inclusive growth
- Create and maintain an equal and inclusive job market enabling everyone to partake in opportunities and to feel included.
- Develop the entire municipality through digitalisation
- Clarify the responsibility for each individual who is capable of working to contribute to our society
- Contribute to decreased financial and social vulnerability with an inclusive housing and job market
- Promote a sustainable working life

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Health and Well-being

Generally, health in the population is good, but there are differences between socio-economic groups in terms of health and length of life. Health is a fundamental condition for people's ability to reach their full potential and contribute to their own as well as society's development. If more individuals are in good health more can contribute.

By making sure everyone has equal opportunities to use health-promoting services, activities, and places, and by conducting effective prevention and health promotion, we can make sure everyone is in good health and has a dignified life

That is why we need to...

- Develop everyday environments such as green meeting places and sporting grounds that promote good health
- Decrease the consequences of socio-economic factors on individual health.
- Create interest for children and young people to get involved in civil society
- Promote movement every day for everyone
- Counteract involuntary loneliness and mental illness
- Promote nice, safe, and active senior years
- Actively prevent addiction issues with alcohol, narcotics, drugs, tobacco, gambling etc.
- Minimise the risk of being exposed to noise pollution, air pollution, and harmful chemicals
- Create good conditions for children and young people to grow up to become responsible and democratic citizens
- Create a wide selection of culture and leisure activities
- Promote good study and work environments for children and adults focusing on good norms, values, and attitudes
- Promote healthy eating habits for all

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Equality and Gender Equality

The difference in living conditions and health between groups affects our entire society, for example by growing social unrest, decreased solidarity, and decreasing security. Destructive structural limits lessen personal freedom. The threat of different forms of oppression such as honour-related violence and oppression, xenophobia, racism and homophobia means that the explicit and implicit opportunities in society are not equally accessible to all.

An equal society provides increased unity, safety, and makes its citizens feel secure.

By creating equal opportunities and possibilities regardless of gender, age, ethnic background, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression we can make our society more equal. It is also about an urban and rural perspective, accessibility, closeness and quality for all, adaptation to individual conditions and possibilities, as well as creating activities, places, services and efforts in a way that benefits or can be directed towards multiple age groups.

That is why we need to...

- Work for increased financial and social unity
- Create conditions and possibilities for people to meet
- Work for decreased financial and social exclusion
- Ensure that equal life conditions and safety go without saying for everyone
- Counteract behaviours that threaten human rights and limit people's freedom, independence, and well-being

VÄXJÖ'S CHALLENGE

Safety and Community

Insecurity and a lack of trust and influence may lead to a deteriorated life quality, criminality, and alienation, which poses a threat to democracy. The emergence of parallel social structures challenges the sense of community and solidarity.

By creating, shaping, and adapting society together with citizens and actors within the society we can create a sense of inclusion, belonging, and co-creation. A society that offers good welfare creates trust and makes people feel safe and secure. An important and central part is ensuring that public places and meeting places are safe in order to promote positive meetings between people. This is crucial for people's sense of security and trust towards each other, society, and democracy.

That is why we need to...

- Increase feelings of safety, trust, and influence for all
- Create conditions for safe living and working environments
- Safe footpaths and bikeways
- Conduct a systemic and close dialogue with citizens in all matters of development
- Work towards increased transparency
- Increase collaboration between different actors to become a sustainable society
- Strengthen pride and identity in Växjö as a place, then, now, and in the future
- Ensure good conditions for upbringing of all children

Principles for implementation

The 2030 Agenda has given us a clear direction for implementation that, together with “Sustainable Växjö 2030”, constitutes the three foundational principles for implementing our sustainability work:

1. the reset to a sustainable society is implemented, developed and followed up in the best way possible by being an integrated part of the existing management process and governance model
2. everyone works with and for all the goals and challenges in different ways
3. Sustainable Växjö 2030 is a common responsibility for everyone living, residing, and working in Växjö Municipality.

The implementation of “Sustainable Växjö 2030” demands that we take responsibility for what we ourselves have *control* over, through our operations and existing processes, but also through taking our responsibility for what we can affect and *work towards* together with other actors.

Implementation, development and follow up

For the Växjö Municipal Group “Sustainable Växjö 2030” means clarifying how *we create a sustainable future* in Europe’s greenest city that is a part of the Municipal Group’s values and code of conduct. The programme is applicable until 2030 with the aim set toward Vision 2050.

“Sustainable Växjö 2030” points out goals and efforts that will enable us to *create an amazing place where everyone who lives, resides, and works in Växjö together, now and in the future.*

“Sustainable Växjö 2030” is meant to be the starting point and direction for the Municipal Group’s budget and budget process until 2030. Based on “Sustainable Växjö 2030”, an inventory of needs in each operation will be conducted in preparation of each budget year, and where needs are included in the yearly budget work. Goals, targets, and indicators (existing and when necessary extended) should secure sustainability follow-up of the budget both in the short and long run, and indicate whether we are moving in the direction of the set goals. “Sustainable Växjö 2030” should be seen as a long run and governing document where the vision is concretised by the municipal council budget, but also in programmes, plans, strategies, and other governing documents within specific areas.

Follow-up happens in the best possible way by being an integrated part of the control and management processes (implemented, developed, and followed up in budget and business systems).

The reset will demand changes in behaviour, new approaches and operating modes, new methods and technical innovations to turn the trend around. This is a constant improvement effort for sustainable development and follow-up through in-depth trend analyses should happen at three points: 2022, 2026, and 2030. This is done with the help of key figures connected to the five goals that show if development is moving in the direction towards a sustainable society.

The Municipal Council's Sustainability Committee is responsible for trend analysis, interpretation and change in the direction, and goals in the programme.

Appendix 1. Key figures for Sustainable Växjö 2030

“Sustainable Växjö 2030” contains five goals. With help of the key figures connected to each goal, Växjö municipality can follow the trends in the development towards a sustainable society. The idea is that, to the furthest extent possible, each goal should be linked to ecological, social as well as financial key figures. As described in “Sustainable Växjö 2030” it will be possible to monitor these figures year by year, but they will primarily be used in the fourth year for the in-depth trend analyses.

A list of the key figures has been initiated, based on what is already in the budget, governing documents, Kolda etc. Exactly what key figures will be connected to what goal will be clear in February 2020. Until then work will be underway with operations and researchers to put together a list of key figures that collated will provide a full image of the follow-up on the development of the goals.

Document References

The following documents are foundational for Sustainable Växjö 2030:

- The UN's global goals as presented in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Swedish Delegation for the 2030 Agenda – “In the direction of a sustainable welfare society
The 2030 Agenda delegation's status report and proposed action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (SOU Fi 2016:1)

- The 2030 Agenda and Sweden: A time of challenges – a time of opportunities (SOU 2019:13)

- Status report on Sustainable Växjö 2030
 - Progress report 1– Self-assessment
 - Progress report 2– Communications with citizens, civil society, and businesses
 - Progress report 3– Communications with Researchers