

In Malmö, severe budget cuts across Swedish municipalities over the last two decades have impacted strongly on all non-statutory municipal services such as parks management. Similarly, new tax laws affecting German local governments have made the financial situation for urban open space management in Hannover increasingly tough.

The second and much less frequent approach to core funding involves monies gathered specifically for the management of public open space, and hypothecated for that purpose. Although this approach does not provide a guarantee that adequate funding will be forthcoming, it nevertheless secures a more transparent collection and expenditure process, and decisions about funding are not played off to the same extent against other calls on the public purse.

The Minneapolis city charter gives the Park Board the authority to levy a tax on residential property and this hypothecated tax revenue is supplemented by state allocations under the Local Government Aid programme. In Melbourne, the primary source of funding for Parks Victoria is a Parks Charge levied on all residential, commercial and industrial property in the metropolitan area. The charge is collected and administered by the state government, which distributes the revenue among all relevant organisations (Box 8.7).

SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING

Supplementary funding, the second form of open space management funding, comes from a wide variety of sources. Although generally much smaller in quantity than core funding, these resources were particularly welcomed for the ability they provided to enhance the level of the general service, to fund capital investments, and to help establish better connections to the community of open space beneficiaries – including the business community. Århus has been particularly successful in supplementing its budget through utilising the local and national interest in the protection of water resources and the environment in general to lever EU funds for forestation schemes. In Curitiba, pollution-related fines administered by SMMA have been used to fund capital projects, while subsidies from federal and state governments and tax incentives have also been used to attract private money.

In its various guises planning gain has also been a supplementary source of funding in Groningen, Wellington and Zürich. In Groningen, all infrastructure associated with new residential developments, including open spaces, must be paid for from revenues generated from the sale of the houses. In Wellington, land development levies are used in a similar fashion, whilst in Zürich developers donate the land and pay for the implementation of new open spaces in exchange for zoning bonuses. In this case, the system supplements core funding which has been increasingly

squeezed to make it go as far as possible (Box 8.8). In all these cases, the city administration subsequently takes over the management of the new open spaces.

In Minneapolis, in the search for reliable, long-term, non-tax streams to supplement its income MPRB has been looking at private fundraising and fees and charges for services as means to raise income. For private fundraising the Board has worked with the Minneapolis Park Foundation, a charity whose aim is to solicit private funds for the development and maintenance of Minneapolis's parks. Revenue-generating public-private partnerships are also being explored. In Tokyo, following a general reduction in resources available from central government for the management of open spaces, a private finance initiative-type scheme has been introduced as a means to fill the gap. The monies generally only relate to new capital projects and their subsequent management.

Basic versions of partnerships, through private sponsorship of space are found in Hannover, Malmö and Curitiba, usually for special projects. Although total contributions are not financially significant, they are often politically important and help to strengthen connections with communities. In Melbourne, Wellington and Curitiba, income is also derived from rents and licenses to private operators, but the total is small, and further limited in the case of Melbourne by government policy restricting the introduction of market rates. In Paris, some income is generated through granting licenses to private businesses to run sports facilities, restaurants, cafés and events in the city's public open space. However, French law forbids the ring-fencing of revenue streams and, as a consequence, this revenue goes into the municipal budget as a whole, and not back into open spaces.

Finally, a number of the cities have been able to fund capital works through urban regeneration schemes involving regional, national and even supra-national funding. These include capital investment in the open spaces of older urban areas in Groningen, or the significant government resources used for improving living conditions in Malmö, including the renovation of parks in deprived areas around high-rise estates.

REINVESTMENT PROCESSES

Both core and supplementary funding fed into capital reinvestment projects, as well as ongoing maintenance. Indeed, processes of reinvestment were not always seen as distinct from day-to-day maintenance processes, but rather as degrees along a continuum of caring for public open space. Thus some tasks need daily attention, others are on much longer time frames up to many years, as and when reinvestments need to be made. The latter are nevertheless generally funded through different mechanisms, which many of the cities were finding it increasingly difficult to secure.