

URBAN FREIGHT FOR LIVABLE CITIES - *HOW TO DEAL WITH COLLABORATION AND TRADE-OFFS.*

Welcome Address /Arne Wittlöv

Good Afternoon.

On behalf of the organizers, I wish you all very welcome to this Symposium on Future Urban Transport 2012.

This is the fifth Volvo Research and Educational Foundations Conference, and the second to be co-organized and co-hosted by AB Volvo, City of Gothenburg and VREF (Volvo Research and Educational Foundations).

Over the years, our conferences have been explorative – meaning each conference has been built on lessons learned and experiences from earlier conferences.

The first conference in year 2000 on “Future Urban Transport, Problems and Solutions” was a truly scientific conference, each session focusing on a specific disciplinary topic. Sessions were History and Geography of urban transport, Function and Efficiency of transport, Energy consumption and Environmental aspects and Safety aspects – ending up with a synthesis, a session on critical issues for the future – needs and actions.

The difficulties to deal with the overarching issue of Urban Transport this way led us to the articulation of the central theme of the whole FUT Program – “How to deal with the complexity of urban transport development?”

The second and third conferences in 2003 and 2006 were organized in interdisciplinary, interactive meetings. Important issues were identified and discussed, such as:

- Complexity – can it be managed – and how?
- How to assess transferability and non-transferability?
- What is generic and what is context specific in urban transport?

Over the years, VREF has been eager to understand how knowledge is disseminated. How do practitioners learn from academics – and vice versa? Hence, it was an important step forward when the fourth conference in 2009 was the first to be co-organized together with practitioners, with AB Volvo and The City of Gothenburg. The theme of the 2009 conference was “Access and Mobility for Cities of tomorrow”. Important themes included “Design criteria for social integration and economic development”

Now, this fifth conference, the second to be co-organized, has a different format.

- It is by invitation only.
- We have allocated more time for interaction, for exchange of thoughts and ideas and for networking.
- And we have chosen a more specific, but highly complex and “hot” topic: **Urban Freight for Livable Cities -How to deal with collaboration and trade-offs.**

Today we are some 90 participants from almost 20 countries and from all continents. We have also a wide variety in background and experience among our participants: Research (from more than 20 universities or institutes), cities, industry and NGO’s are all represented

To all of you: Most welcome!

Let me now introduce the first speaker representing the organizers, Mr. Olof Persson: