

Round table, World meteorological day, 23 march 2016.

Ruth Bänziger, co-mayor of Onex

Onex is a medium swiss city of about 18'500 inhabitants with only about 3'500 employments. It's 8'500 households are mainly situated in the new city of Onex, built between the early 60's and the late 70's. It accomodates two thirds (66%) of the population.

We are not directly involved in finding solutions concerning the consequences of climate change, but we are strongly involved with prevention. I mean sustainable development. We try also to imply different actors and we conduct as well bottom up as top down projects. Resilience is based on original, diversified and sometimes unique actions.

I'll give you examples concerning 3 topics : **reduce** energy consumption, **limit** the need of **non sustainable mobility** & improve the **reuse** of goods.

1) Reduce energy consumption

The City of Onex has elaborated a territorial energy concept of the commune which aims at the 2000-watt society.

It sets on diversification of renewable energy sources : geothermy and solar thermal energy in the individual housing area and photovoltaic solar energy in the residential building area. The difference in treatment originates from the district heating network called CADIOM which provides enough warm water and heat. This enables the roofs to be used to provide photovoltaic energy. The water circulating in the CADIOM network is heated by waste incineration.

Onex is labelled « Cité de l'énergie ». The association « Cité de l'énergie » provides tools which help the member cities to monitor projects which diminish their energy consumption in different areas.

We have also recently shown that there is still some energy to save with simple « every day » actions : last spring, we received a distinction for our improvement in energy savings, mainly by accurate adjustments and surveys of the heating devices of our administrative buildings.

But one of the main challenges in medium swiss cities is the **reduction of energy consumption in the old buildings**. Indeed, residential buildings account for about 50% of the thermal energy consumed in the canton of Geneva.

Also, according to our energy policy, Onex decided to focus on this problem because the expected advantages are twofold : first the energy consumption of the cleaned up buildings will diminish substantially, second this diminution in energy consumption will enable other buildings to be connected to the CADIOM network.

Therefore, Onex and the State of Geneva decided to launch a pilote project, called « **Onex rEnove** ». A working group has been created in order to elaborate a method that aims to facilitate the participation of building owners and managers in a large-scale energy renovation program. This working group includes the University of Geneva, the Haute Ecole du paysage, d'ingénierie et d'architecture of Geneva (HEPIA), the energy office of the canton, the City of Onex and a private partner.

The energy analysis of the residential buildings built before 1981, and the classification by architectural typologies, enabled us to propose attractive incentive measures :

- a pre-audit of the buildings
- facilitated authorization procedures
- simplified access to subsidies
- workshops in order to help adapt the pre-audit to the specifications of each building
- an awareness program addressed to the inhabitants

The owners have been informed through a lunch-debate. This debates, regularly organized by the City of Onex, aim to inform and exchange on different topics shared by owners and city administration in order to increase life quality.

The energy renovation of buildings is a way to increase comfort and quality of life. This is why the renovations will be accompanied by an awareness program showing and explaining the inhabitants how to live in, and use, their renovated homes. Indeed, habits and customs contribute to reduce the efficiency of the constructive measures taken.

2) Limit the need of non sustainable mobility

Mobility is good for health. But leisure activities which lead to too many motorised movements are a problem in growing cities like Geneva and its peripheral communes. Also, create green spaces contributes to promote social and sports activities. « Animated » green surfaces with games, urban gardens, nature in the city, places where people can meet, improve cultural and intergenerational integration. Altogether, a living city centre invites the inhabitants to be involved in the city and limits the need to use their vehicles in order to find spaces, nature and quiet places outside of the urbanized zone.

We created a **trail « nature in the city »** with the help of the botanical garden. Its attractive information pannels with drawings invite to walk and to discover the territory of the municipality. One of its goals is to make people know the local fauna and flora. There is always the conviction that people will protect and respect the living things they know and knowledge contributes to the identification of the citizens to her territory. This helps them to stay around.

One of our **urban gardens** has been set up by an association which has created itself for this purpose. It has been financed by the « Contrat de quartier » or **area contract**, an instrument provided by the municipality with a small budget and designed to favorise bottom up projects proposed by citizens. Urban gardens put forward the rythm of the seasons which is a stabilizing factor for people living in cities. Furthermore, they reduce the needs of mobility thanks to fruits and vegetables grown close to the consumers.

3) Improve the sorting of waste and the reuse of goods

All the genevan communes have to give their best in order to increase the sorting of waste and improve recycling until the end of 2017.

In 2012, Onex began to develop waste collection points and finished its network of recycling sites where all the recyclable wastes are collected. Repeated awareness programmes through articles, the creation of a new « waste » mascot, training at school, a poster campaign, a new leaflet explaining the different kind of wastes and the necessity of recycling have been tested. Furthermore, we took advantage of an intercommunal campaign for energy savings

organized with the support of the Services industriels of Geneva to show the tenants how to sort out household waste. This project consists of training unemployed people to visit the tenants and explaining how to save energy, and in our case, how to sort out household waste. Besides, they also distribute energy saving devices such as energy saving bulbs, adjustable water saving valves, and so on.

Onesians do also have two ways to get rid of goods they don't want anymore. First, every Saturday, at one different site of the commune, the inhabitants can get rid of bulky or unwanted goods for free : every 4th Saturday at least you have a site close to you. Second, for disabled or retired people who pay a symbolic tax, but also anybody who can afford to pay the full tax, there is a special service : an association working with young people in reintegration takes the goods away in a horse-drawn carriage.

The collected goods are sorted out : the still usefull ones are brought to the « Recyclerie », a premise, open once a month, where the inhabitants can take - up to 3 goods - for free.

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