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## *A green welcome to Zurich*

The Zurich City Council is honoured to host the 48<sup>th</sup> IFLA World Congress. We wish you a successful conference and a pleasant stay in Zurich.

The heart of the city of Zurich beats green. It began in 1959 during the first Swiss garden design exhibition, the G|59. At that time, everything that garden design and landscape architecture had to offer was put on show around the Lake. The seeds sown then are still bearing fruit today. Zurich's heart is beating as green as on the first day.

Zurich has been pursuing the rigorous strengthening of green spaces for a long time now, and with success. International rankings regularly place the city at the top of the world league table when it comes to quality of life. The high quality of the open spaces plays an important role here. The variety of flora and fauna is very great: the latest surveys suggest between 12 000 and 16 000 species. Zurich is managing to balance the needs of urban life with those of nature. In regular surveys, the public state themselves to be satisfied with our provision of green spaces, and accord them great importance.

We do not wish to rest on these laurels, nor shall we. For the demands we are placing on the green spaces are changing all the time. Zurich will continue to grow, in particular through increased

density. For us, though, there can be no urban development without high-quality green and open spaces. For the new parks which we have opened in recent years we have earned international recognition time and again. Most recently the European Garden Heritage Network presented the MFO Park in Neu-Oerlikon with the European Garden Award 2010. This is the fifth award for the MFO Park since its opening in 2002.

The juxtaposition of different uses is what characterizes the town or city as a habitat, and it needs careful planning. As a comprehensive strategy for green and open spaces, and for Green Knowledge, the City of Zurich's Office of Parks and Open Spaces has developed the "Green Book of the City of Zurich". It provides a clear statement of aims and concrete strategic statements designed to secure the high priority given to greenery in Zurich. So that the heart of the city may continue to beat green in the future, for the benefit of the city's people, and for the protection of nature.

With this in mind, the Zurich City Council is delighted to give you not only a hearty, but also a green welcome. We would be happy if, besides the congress, you found some time to enjoy Zurich's green spaces.

**Ruth Genner**

Member of Zurich City Council, June 2011