



# Part-time amenity migrants: Revealing the importance of second homes for senior residents in a transit-oriented development



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## ABSTRACT

Transit-oriented development (TOD) has been proposed as a model for sustainable urban and regional development beyond the troubled heritage of modernistic planning. Key to TOD is mixed use and reduced dependence on private cars. However, functionalistic land-use divides persist in the principles of TOD, such as the division between leisure and work and between permanent residences and second homes. These divides relate to, and are emphasised by, a strong focus on urban qualities within the TOD discourse, while discussions on landscape amenities are set aside. Following recent research on compensation theory and amenity migration, this study argues that densification of TODs could increase residents' dependency on second homes in the countryside. The study provides insights gained from semi-structured interviews with senior residents in newly-built apartments and houses in a TOD location in Sweden. The interviews revealed how the importance of multiple dwellings is enhanced by the densification project and how car dependency is built into the model. The term 'part-time amenity migrant' has been coined to describe this phenomenon and increase awareness of landscape amenities in TOD locations.

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## 1. Introduction

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is frequently proposed as the key to sustainable planning (Calthorpe, 1993; Dittmar and Ohland, 2004; Lund, 2006; Boschmann and Brady, 2013). The concept was introduced by California-based architect Peter Calthorpe, who characterised TOD as “moderate and high-density housing, along with complementary public uses, jobs, retail and services [...] concentrated in mixed-use developments at strategic points along the regional transit system” (Calthorpe, 1993, p. 41). The model argues for a compact city with mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly urban development within walking distance of a public transport hub. With this urban pattern, TOD aims not only to reduce car travel, facilitate public transport and foster urban qualities, but also to curb urban sprawl and protect farmland and other rural assets. While the academic literature is dominated by North American case studies, the concept and its application have spread worldwide (see Pojani and Stead (2014) for an illustration of its transfer to Europe).

In Sweden, similar strategies for TOD have a long history, but regained importance in the early 1990s (Boverket, 1994; Schylberg, 2008; Qviström and Bengtsson, 2015). Today, TOD strategies (supported by planning history and the contemporary urban landscape as much as by international discourse) are one of the main pillars in regional policies for urban development in Sweden's three major metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Scania (e.g. Regionplanenämnden and Stockholms Läns Landsting, 2010; Region Skåne, 2013). However, TOD as a planning strategy has not gone uncontested (e.g. see Bunce, 2004; Quastel et al., 2012). Considering its prevalence in policy debates for contemporary planning worldwide, critical assessments of TOD are needed in order to further improve future planning. This paper aims to contribute to such a critique, focusing on young retirees (age 65–75) and their relational understanding of TOD as a living environment.

As within the related discourses on New Urbanism and smart growth, proponents of TOD argue that their strategy would facilitate a move beyond modernist planning, in particular its dependence on the private car and its monofunctional zoning of land use (Calthorpe, 1993; Goetz, 2013; see Qviström and Bengtsson, 2015, for a critique). However, while some functional divides of land use have been successfully overcome, others are left unchallenged or are even enhanced. A key division is that the focus is on urban values, with a sharp demarcation (spatially and conceptually) from the countryside. With New Urbanism, of which

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Calthorpe is one of the founders, and the thrust for densification within planning, TOD proponents find ample support in the contemporary planning discourse when emphasising this divide. The marketing of dense, bustling cities with a ‘creative’ urban lifestyle has been identified as a hegemonic ideal in the current planning debate in Sweden, irrespective of the size of the town or township in question, reinforced by the polemical debate in which density equals sustainability and urban sprawl is inherently bad (Tunström, 2009; Qviström, 2015; see Quastel et al., 2012, for a critique of the “sustainability-as-density” model).

Partly due to the sharp distinction between city and country, TOD focuses on providing urban qualities and leaves landscape amenities to the countryside or protected greenbelts. For instance, when analysing reasons to move to a TOD in California, Lund (2006, p. 360) notes that only 6% of the respondents shortlisted recreational activities, which that author interpreted as a process of self-selection: “I attribute this to the fact that TODs [...] often have limited access to recreational opportunities”. In other words, the TOD model is not designed to attract those prioritising outdoor recreational activities, let alone amenity migrants. This focus on urban qualities involves systematic neglect of the role of outdoor recreational activities and landscape amenities in urbanisation processes and patterns. Such neglect is perhaps reasonable if we consider amenity migrants to be a minor (and therefore less important) group or one that will eventually leave the city. However, much of the population in Sweden and elsewhere ‘sojourns in nature’ during holidays and weekends. Such a temporary and recurrent move to the countryside is of great importance for quality of life, but is also a significant generator of car traffic (Luka, 2013).

McCarthy (2008, p. 130) defines amenity migration as “the purchasing of primary or secondary residences in rural areas valued for their aesthetic, recreational, and other consumption-orientated values”. Adapting and adopting this definition, amenity migration can be regarded as not solely being restricted to those who own or move permanently to a peri-urban location, but also including the use or access of second homes (see also Gosnell and Abrams, 2011; Halfacree, 2012). Taking into consideration the fact that 53.5% of the Swedish population has access to a second home (Marjavaara and Lundholm, 2016), densification strategies in Sweden cannot ignore multiple dwellings. The amount of travel for recreational purposes makes this even more apparent; almost half of all daily trips are for leisure activities and are also the longest trips made (Westin and Vilhelmson, 2011). We are therefore introducing the term *part-time amenity migrant* in this paper to acknowledge the need for specific studies into the importance of multiple dwellings in the context of densification. This is because densification within TOD can involve increased dependency on second homes in the countryside that are accessed using private cars.

A recent study by Strandell and Hall (2015) illustrates the importance of part-time amenity migrants in the planning discourse on TOD. They validate *compensation theory* as regards the relationship between densification and the use of second homes (see also Holden and Norland, 2005). The theory assumes that people have basic needs for outdoor life and contact with nature and that a lack of access to gardens, parks and leisure opportunities in people’s primary residential environment will be compensated for by spending time in second homes, other ex-urban green spaces or long-distance leisure travel. Holden and Norland (2005) show that access to a private garden correlates with less energy use for long leisure-time travel by plane or car, although they note that the mechanism behind this remains unclear and recommend complementary qualitative studies. This need is also illustrated by Strandell and Hall (2015). They fail to prove statistically a correlation between access to public parks and the amount of leisure travel and call for qualitative enquiries to explain the residents’ rationale. The present study offers one such qualitative enquiry.

As part of the rich and varied international discourse on second homes and amenity migration, the importance of second homes in Sweden has been well documented, especially in quantitative studies (e.g. Müller and Marjavaara, 2012; Müller, 2013; Marjavaara and Lundholm, 2016). While studies of mobilities are an emerging theme within the second home literature (e.g. Hidle et al., 2010; Halfacree, 2012; Lagerqvist, 2013), we found no previous studies on the interplay between TOD and the use of second homes. A recent study focused on the elderly and how their migration is related to ownership of a second home (Marjavaara and Lundholm, 2016). Its authors conclude that: “later-life migrants are more likely to migrate to rural and amenity-rich areas [...] which] suggests that migration to second homes contributes to rural migration in the Swedish context” (2016, p. 238). Furthermore, that study showed that the migration in question primarily targets “rural locations close to other metropolitan areas.” This could be phrased differently: elderly people with second homes contribute to ‘hidden urbanisation’ or urban sprawl. The complex role of second homes in countryside development is not discussed further in our study, but it should be mentioned that they can be regarded as an asset and not only as a problem (Gallent, 2014). However, irrespective of their role in the countryside, the relationship between densification and second homes sheds new light on TOD projects.

While elderly amenity migrants contribute to urban sprawl, they are also a target group for urban densification projects. Therefore they are a group that needs to be studied within landscape planning research in general (see also Yokohari and Bolthouse, 2011), and within TOD studies in particular (Boschmann and Brady, 2013). Even though age grouping can be a problematic way of treating the population (assuming heterogeneity within the group), Westin and Vilhelmson (2011) argue that there is a decrease in travel after the age of 75, which motivates separate treatment of young and older pensioners (the official retirement age in Sweden is 65–67). For instance, a significant decrease in car driving is noted after the age of 75, when leisure and service trips decline in number (Hjorthol et al., 2010; Westin and Vilhelmson, 2011). Furthermore, Westin and Vilhelmson (2011, p. 18) note that “young pensioners perceive themselves as having significantly better health, are more satisfied with their present mobility resources and situation, and make more trips than older pensioners”. As mobility is a key factor in wellbeing and quality of life of the elderly (Hjorthol et al., 2010; Stjernborg et al., 2015), the decrease in mobility and reduced quality of life after the age of 75 are likely to be interrelated.

## 2. Material and methods

This study examined how young pensioners (65–75 years old) in a TOD in southern Sweden conceptualise the importance of their second homes and the role of landscape amenities generally in relation to their permanent residence and their second home. Empirical material was obtained in ten semi-structured interviews with 14 retirees at two different locations within the TOD zone of Svedala, a town in southern Sweden (see Fig. 2), during the spring of 2015. The interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis. Participants in eight of the ten interviews currently or until recently had access to a second home. Only one had moved from one apartment to another; all the others had moved from a large house to a smaller house or an apartment. The interviews lasted on average half an hour and took place in the interviewees’ homes, with the exception of one telephone interview. In four cases, couples were interviewed; as the interviews did not reveal differences in how the partners conceptualised their living or landscape amenities, they are treated as a couple in the analysis. The interviewees were equally divided between men and women and all were of Swedish origin. While each case is unique, we obtained saturation

concerning stories of dependence on second homes and therefore no more interviews were conducted.

We also conducted an interview with the head of the division for spatial planning and environment (*Samhällsbyggnadschef*), a telephone interview with the town architect, and interviews with two local politicians who hold key positions on the municipal building board for Svedala, in order to capture how the potential for TOD is perceived within local planning. In Sweden, the local authority has the main responsibility for planning, which motivates a strong focus on this level of planning (see [Persson \(2013\)](#) for a concise introduction to Swedish planning).

The town of Svedala has around 10,000 inhabitants and lies 20 km to the west of Malmö (pop. 300,000), which is the main hub in the Scania region (pop. 1,200,000) in south-west Sweden ([Figs. 1 and 2](#)). Regional trains depart from Svedala to Malmö every 30 min and take 15–22 min to reach Malmö's three railway stations. Svedala also has high-quality road access to the main cities in the region, namely Malmö, Lund and Copenhagen (which can be reached *via* the Öresund bridge). A regional airport (Sturup) is located just a few kilometres north-east of the town. Svedala was selected as a case because it offers an example of a small town with ambitious plans for urban densification in TOD locations, but also because it is where the open plains near Malmö (dominated by large-scale agriculture) meet forests and an undulating, more varied farm landscape with high values for recreation ([Fig. 1](#)). The exclusive residential locations in the region are primarily along the coast, while Svedala offers landscape amenities at a convenient commuting distance from Malmö and at an affordable price.

Svedala thus combines landscape and urban amenities in a TOD location and should therefore be a place where dependence on second homes is limited. Following [Flyvbjerg's \(2006\)](#) discussion on the strategic choice of a case study, Svedala was therefore selected as a critical case to test compensation theory: if the inhabitants of Svedala are dependent on second homes, inhabitants in other (and larger and denser) towns are likely to be at least equally dependent.

The comprehensive plan for Svedala from 2010 is the main strategic document for planning ([Svedala kommun, 2010](#)). According to the plan, the three main settlements in the municipality (Skurup, Bara and Klågerup) should be developed into densely built cities with a "city-like" building structure and a mix of apartments, shops, "cafés and other meeting places" in the city centre. For Svedala town in particular, the comprehensive plan illustrates the general approach to TOD portrayed in regional policy documents ([Qviström, 2015](#)).

Our interviews with young pensioners were carried out in two locations: *Segestrand*, an area with two high-rise apartment blocks north of the station (completed in late 2014) and the densely-built, small-house neighbourhood of *Tegelbruket* in southern Svedala, both within walking distance of the train and regional buses (but also with excellent access to the main road arteries) (see [Fig. 2](#)). One of the high-rise blocks, containing rental flats, was built by *Svedala hem*, a municipal company ([Fig. 3](#)). The other high-rise block, with privately owned apartments for senior residents, was built by a private company. The detached houses are all privately owned and were built within the last decade. They are 125–150 m<sup>2</sup> (net dwelling area, on one or two storeys), with a garden of approximately 700 m<sup>2</sup> ([Fig. 4](#)). The interviewee sites were selected to cover different living conditions in recently developed areas. However, due to similarities in the results, the two groups are not kept separate in the following analysis.

The interview questions and subsequent analysis focused on the relationship between the primary and second homes in three respects: i) the complementary roles of the two dwellings, ii) the role of amenities (especially landscape amenities) in both places, and iii) the importance and mode of transportation in both places. While such a focus does not capture every reason for purchasing or

owning a second home (e.g. as investment or for sentimental family reasons), it highlights its use values *vis à vis* the respondents' permanent dwelling. In other words, questions about leisure travel and second homes were asked to gain an understanding of the qualities of the TOD development in Svedala, not to discuss second homes as a planning dilemma in general.

### 3. The case of Svedala

The analysis of the interviews with the senior residents is structured around six themes. To capture the rich stories provided by the interviewees (and to demonstrate the interrelations between the themes), the first five themes are illustrated with one interview each. The section ends with the interviews with the two politicians, the head of the division for spatial planning and environment and the town architect of Svedala.

#### 3.1. To be in nature

The interviews capture how the second home compensates for amenities lost due to the move to a new flat or smaller house (c.f. [Strandell and Hall, 2015](#)). This is illustrated here with an interview with a couple who left their large house (240 m<sup>2</sup>) in Svedala to move into a rented apartment in November 2014. They had moved from Malmö in 1969 to buy a house in Svedala where they raised their children. They could now no longer manage the large house and garden and wanted to see a young family move in, which is what happened. They said that the "enormous garden" had become an obstacle. This was a story told by almost all our informants. While the reasons for moving to an apartment were clearly pronounced, the arguments for the location of their new home remained rather vague and general. Their primary explanation was that it was "close to most things", for instance shops, services the bus stop. While they appreciated the urban parks for walking, the surrounding countryside and forests had never been important to them for leisure or in everyday life because, as they explained, "we go elsewhere to be in nature: we have a cottage in northern Scania". They visit their second home (around 80 km from Svedala) roughly twice a month during the winter and more often during the summer in order to take care of the large garden (5000 m<sup>2</sup>).

Their decision to move to a flat in Svedala and get rid of the large garden was influenced by a complex set of factors, but social aspects and their second home played key roles. When planning to sell their house, they first considered moving to Hässleholm in northern Scania to be close to their second home, which they have owned for many years. However, Svedala was a more familiar place and the prospect of the newly-built flat was very tempting.

- H: "W [his wife] in particular is very keen on getting soil under her nails, so we need that option. The funny thing is that initially we put our second home up for sale [...] and it was quite hard to sell because it is so large and new, almost like a [permanent] house; it is only 7 or 8 years old. You know, it was completely rebuilt after a fire, so it was difficult to sell. So we waited a bit and at roughly the same time we got this message [an opportunity to buy the apartment in Svedala] and then I said to W that we should probably sell Svedala [their permanent house] instead of Ballingslöv [the second home]. Then it all went very quickly, it was very easy to sell the house [...]"
- [Interviewer]: "What about the second home, what kind of amenities do you have there that you don't have here [in Svedala]?"
- W: "Oh, we're able to open the door and walk out onto the lawn straight away, instead of entering an elevator here and going down [...] And all the flowers and trees, there are plenty of trees



Fig. 1. Map of Scania showing the locations mentioned in the interviews. (Map: Jens Bengtsson).

in the garden and in the surroundings, and we're able just to walk across the road and pick blueberries. We can sit outside and listen to the birdsong in the evenings and early in the morning."

- H: "The nights are almost the best part, so to say. You walk out and it's so dark and you just don't get it before you see it: the enormous amount of stars you would never see in a . . ."
- W: ". . . densely populated area, that's right."

The activity of gardening was clearly important for them, even if the workload was not without its problems: "Well, it remains to be seen how long we have the energy to keep it, then we'll have to get rid of it as well". A pivotal factor in their decision to keep the second home with its garden for the time being was the fact that it is a "nature garden", which requires less work, and they are less concerned about whether the garden looks untidy since it is a second home and not in a town. Another crucial factor was the landscape amenities that the place can offer compared with their residence in town: the immediate access and possibilities to experience nature, both as an object of contemplation with all their senses (birdsong or starry sky) and as an environment of active appropriation (berry picking and gardening). Thus, the second home offers compensation for their previous garden in Svedala, but only for the time being (as will be discussed in Sections 3.5 and 3.6).

### 3.2. Scenic values versus active lifestyle

The second story illustrates the different roles of landscape amenities in town and at the second home. This theme was most evident in the interview with a couple in their late 60s who had moved to a newly built rental flat with a view in the town centre after the husband developed diabetes and the old house became too much work.

"I loved my garden, so the tough part with the move was leaving the garden, not the house. . . but then we have a cottage at Lake Ringsjön that doesn't have a garden but does have nature. . ."

This couple emphasised the importance of actively experiencing nature in their second home. They conceptualised the amenities related to their permanent house differently, however, focusing much less on activities and more on scenery. During the interview, the couple kept going back to the importance of the view from the new apartment: the ability to view open fields was essential to them, and the thought of an apartment with windows facing a parking space in the city was mentioned as anathema.

Public transport was important in their decision to move to the apartment, as was the good reputation of elderly care in the town. The possibilities for recreation close to Svedala, on the other hand, played a very limited role:





**Fig. 2.** Map showing the location of interviewees' homes, which were within walking distance (1000 m) of the railway station (the two areas marked with red dashed lines). The shaded stretch is the pedestrianised area, i.e. the commercial centre of Svedala. The circles on the map are the TOD distances used in regional policy documents: 600 and 1000 m (e.g. *Länsstyrelsen i Skåne, 2010*). © Lantmäteriet, Gävle 2016. Medgivande MEDGIV-2016-5-05519. (Map: Jens Bengtsson).



**Fig. 3.** Segestrand, a new residential district (developed on a former industrial site) within walking district of Svedala train station. The two high-rise blocks were completed in 2014 (Photo: Jens Bengtsson).

A: "... to be honest we didn't use it [Torup and Bokskogen recreation area] much, we really didn't, since we have a cottage as well down by Lake Ringsjön. No, well, I suppose we have gone for a walk in Torup, [but] I love to sit indoors and enjoy the view."

[Interviewer]: "But now after the move, do you visit Torup?"

A: "No, we haven't been there at all since the move."

[Interviewer]: "I suppose it isn't really the season [for it]."

A: "That's right, but we won't use it in the future either because, if we go anywhere, we go to our cottage."

The second home, by Lake Ringsjön (~50 km away), was next to her grandfather's cottage, so the place was familiar. They bought it a decade ago. They go there regularly, usually on the weekends, and



Fig. 4. Tegelbruket, a residential area from the 2000s in southern Svedala, dominated by relatively small houses with small gardens (Photo: Jens Bengtsson).

they plan to spend the entire summer in their second home. Before moving to the new apartment they stayed in their second home for two and a half months. However, with the novelty of the new apartment there have been fewer visits lately. The lake as such is an important amenity: they have a small boat and “love to go fishing”. When asked what the second home can offer in comparison to the apartment, she said:

“You know, it’s the exact opposite; we lease land there and live right down by the lake and there are [only] ten cottages. . . well, there’s another kind of independence there, I mean I could just go for a swim every morning. It’s something different. . . you’re another person at the cottage, [there’s] another freedom.”

Moving there permanently, however, is not an option: “It’s a *sommarstuga* [summer cottage]”, they state, where the standards are too low for a longer stay. Hence, the interview illustrates a functional divide between, but also the complementary roles of, the convenient flat in Svedala and its “exact opposite” (the second home), which facilitates an active lifestyle.

### 3.3. Family ties, present and past

Another interview brings forward the recurrent theme of the importance of family ties. This couple sold their large house in Svedala, in which they had raised their children, to a family with children and have now lived in their new house for eight years. Commenting on their life cycle, they said:

“We’ve worked our entire lives and had children and now we’re on our own, so we wanted a smaller house and have a cottage as well and our plan is to spend more time there. Also, we plan, perhaps not this year but next year at the latest, to move to an apartment, to be able to spend even more time at the cottage.”

Their deliberation about their previous and possible future move seemed very pragmatic. Their children and grandchildren live in Malmö, so the next move might be to an apartment in that city. The proximity to the railway station was described as a bonus rather than a crucial factor in the move. They bought their current house in Svedala because it was small and would not require much maintenance and repair in the coming years:

- “We looked for a smaller house than the one we had before. And we searched for a house that would be easy to maintain since we already had our cottage back then. . . . [T]his was brand new . . .

[and] we wanted the garden to be easy to manage since we were away quite a bit at the cottage during the summer.”

- [Interviewer]: “So you still found it important to have a garden [at the new house]?”
- “Well yes, of course, absolutely, provided it was easy to manage. As you know, we had the opportunity to design the garden ourselves.”
- [Interviewer]: “But then you say that in the future you might move to an apartment, so then the garden would be of less importance?”
- “Well, but then. . . naturally you get older and older and the cottage of ours requires a certain amount of maintenance and then we prefer to invest it [the work/time] there. So. . . we’re aiming for a flat . . . we think. We’re not there yet, but those are our thoughts [laughter].”

The surroundings of Svedala, with its undulating open landscape and forests, were mentioned as an asset that they (in contrast to the other interviewees) used frequently. They often visit Bokskogen (a forest a few kilometres from Svedala) for walks, but took the car to do so.

Their rather matter-of-fact decisions to move from one to another principal home contrasted with their description of their second home, which is located in Åhus on the east coast of Scania, approximately 100 km away from Svedala. This is where they spend their summers, but they also visit the house a couple of weekends per month the rest of the year. When asked about what the cottage offers in comparison to their house in town, he said:

- “Well, it’s the sea, the closeness to the sea, the silence in the pine forest, and then we were born in that part [of Scania]. My wife is from Kristianstad and I’m from Hörby, so as a child. . . if you were going to the beach you headed for Åhus. So that was the reason we bought the cottage, really. We still have quite a few friends and relatives there to visit. But nature, the proximity to the sea and some kind of history behind it were the reasons for buying it.”

Historical connections were a recurring theme in the interviews; while the location of the permanent house was chosen in relation to current family members (e.g. proximity to children), the second home echoed family history and local identity (cf. Kaltenborn, 1998; Müller et al., 2010; Lagerqvist, 2013).

While outdoor recreation was primarily related to the cottage, shopping and urban qualities were, as is the case in most interviews, related to Malmö. While groceries could be purchased in the neighbourhood, the criticism of Svedala town centre was very strong:

- “Storgatan [the main shopping street in Svedala] is completely dead, you know, the entire centre is dead. That’s unfortunate, but it doesn’t affect us much. We don’t live here during the summer, that’s when we live down by the sea.”

This spatial division, between urban qualities (in Malmö), landscape amenities (at the second home) and convenience of everyday life (in Svedala), is reiterated in other interviews too.

### 3.4. Part-time dwelling

While the interviewees acknowledge the importance of their second home, they also emphasise its limitations; due to poor accessibility and low living standard it could never serve as a permanent residence. This is illustrated here with the story of a couple who moved to Svedala when their two children were born. They built a house in Svedala in 1977 on the edge of the town with a view across the open fields. When they found out that a new industrial development would block their view, they sold the house in 2005 and temporarily moved to the second home they had bought the year before. The size of the old house was also a reason for the move, so they decided to go for a new small house in *Tegelbruket* close to the railway station, which would need little maintenance. In the interviews, low maintenance was a frequently mentioned asset of new permanent dwellings. The possibility of parking the car next to the house was also an important factor, while the garden was less important than before due to their newly acquired second home. The surrounding landscape was of little importance—except for the golf course.

They visit the second home once in a fortnight to check on it. In spring they start to stay there at the weekends, and then in mid-May they move there until September. The house is situated in Beddinge strand, on the southern sea coast of Scania, approximately 25 km away. When asked what values they found there and not in Svedala, he replied:

- “It’s the closeness to the sea . . . and also it’s a new environment. But primarily the closeness to the sea. And we’ve always, for many years, ever since I was a child, headed for Beddinge when we go to the beach. [ . . . ]”
- [Interviewer]: “Have you ever thought of moving there permanently?”
- “Never . . . we lived there for a year while we were waiting for this house and it’s just not possible. . . [I]t’s not possible to live there after 1st of October [or] after 1st of November to 1st of March. As nice as it is during the summer, it’s that bad during the winter [laughter] [ . . . ] [Y]ou can’t even get hold of a taxi down there . . .”

Despite its values, the second home remains a “summer house” and a part-time dwelling, to no small degree due to poor public transport.

### 3.5. Car dependence and the uncertain future

The fifth theme, the issue of car dependence, is illustrated with a couple renting an apartment in one of the high-rises, who have a second home 20–25 min by car from Svedala (near Genarp, 10–15 km away), which was one of the reasons they moved to the town from Malmö last year. Another reason for the move was their children, who have settled in Svedala. While the possibility

of a garage in the basement was one of their requirements for the Svedala apartment, they nevertheless praised the public transport and the proximity to the shops. As was the case in almost every interview, accessibility to shopping, services and urban qualities were divided into everyday shopping (primarily of groceries) in Svedala with the urban qualities related to Malmö:

- “We are . . . in that phase [in life] when you need to consider if it’s close to all the shops. Accessibility is extremely important. You’re simply at that phase when proximity is useful, and at the same time we can easily travel to Malmö, which of course – both of us are from Malmö – we very much enjoy because it has everything and yet it’s close. We have a bus stop right by our house, . . . if we want to be independent of our cars we can go for that. [ . . . ]”
- [Interviewer]: “How important was public transport, such as train and bus [in the decision to move here]?”
- “Extremely important, extremely important. Today we have two cars because of our place [second home] in the countryside, but we won’t always be able to do that so that’s why we didn’t move to the countryside because there’s no public transport there. So you’re simply dependent on a car. I really want to stress that it’s extremely important. [ . . . ]”
- [Interviewer]: “[The presence of] nature and parks, was that something you thought of when moving here?”
- “We love nature and we find that it means an awful lot, so it’s really annoying that the houses are situated block [to] block [to] block and you have a brick wall on one side. You know, it isn’t pleasant. I think it’s important to have some nature to look at. . . We need light and nature and everything, you know, so that’s important.”

While the significance of public transport was stressed, the importance of the second home (which had been inherited from her parents) was emphasised too. The parks in Svedala were mentioned as an asset for dog walking, as was the scenic value of nature to be seen from the apartment, but to be in nature they go to the cottage, described as being located “in the countryside, in nature”:

- [Interviewer]: “How often do you go to your cottage?”
- “Oh, every other day, and then we stay there [overnight].”
- “Even in the winter?”
- “Yes, it’s fully equipped, but there’s no public transport so obviously you couldn’t stay there permanently” . . .
- [Interviewer]: “So do you go [to the cottage] by car?”
- “We drive by car, so far, but the day will come you know, with sickness and everything, that you can’t drive, and then you’re trapped in the countryside.”

This couple most explicitly expressed their concern for the future, although the other interviewees had a much longer drive to their second homes. All of them were dependent on their private car to access their second home.

### 3.6. Letting go of the second home

The interviews also contain stories of the process of letting go of the second home, and of compensatory leisure mobilities. One couple in the *Tegelbruket* area used to rent a second home close to Karlskrona (~200 km away) for several summers. When asked about it, they mentioned the freedom of not having another place to look after and how it allows overseas travel; they go to the mountains in northern Sweden for skiing in the winter and elsewhere in the summer. On the other hand, they actively use their small garden, installing a terrace and a greenhouse, and mentioned the freedom of only having to concentrate on one garden. Another couple sold their house and moved to an apartment to avoid gardening



and taking care of the house (as the husband became ill), but also to be able to spend their time and money on long-distance travel: they were currently planning a trip to the Caribbean for a month. These interviews added to the picture of a rather fuzzy (or fluid) boundary between part-time amenity migration and other kinds of leisure mobilities that may be equally unsustainable; their dependence on places other than Svedala (and their leisure travel carbon footprint) was not necessarily much less than that of the other couples.

Some of the couples mentioned the need to eventually let the second home go. One couple had already done so. They sold their second home while they still had their old house—a decision that they now “bitterly regret”, and they stated that “an apartment and a cottage would have been great”. They conceptualised the value of the second home in the same way as above; it offered freedom, a peaceful place as a complement to hectic everyday life in the city, to walk in the forest and as a space to roam. They compensated for visits to the cottage with more travel abroad, but the thought of a cottage is still there; a second home is the perfect match for an apartment, they argued. The interpretation of the new home in Svedala and the second home as a functional unit, with complementary amenities and social values, runs as a main theme throughout the interviews.

### 3.7. Planning for densification

The interviews with the head of the building and environment office (*samhällsbyggnadschef*), the city architect and the politicians confirmed the densification strategy for Svedala and a (complementary) reluctance to grant building permits for the surrounding countryside. The estimates of demand and of available lots for densification varied between the interviewees, but they shared a joint belief in developing a dense town. When asked if the latest development had made Svedala into a more urban site, one answered:

“Well, it depends what urban (*stadsligt*) is, but I would definitely argue that it has because I relate the concept of urban with higher and more dense. And right now nobody really longs for large gardens, lawns to mow and apples to pick; people ignore that completely, which means that you can build more densely”.

The importance of facilitating commuting to work (or school) was mentioned, as was the role of Svedala as a node in the regional polynuclear strategy (cf. *Region Skåne, 2013*). Furthermore, the interviewees raised the strategic role of senior residents in TOD projects in Svedala. If the elderly move from their large houses, this will cause a chain of up to four moves, one interviewee argued:

“So, if you consider that one thousand [residents] live in houses that are too large with too many stairs, too much lawn to mow, too much house to maintain, and then you offer apartments or smaller houses or just more convenient [housing] for the somewhat elderly. . . simply to get the chain of moves going to optimise [ . . . ] the use of the houses. And therefore these [urban] infills, which initiate chains of moves like this, are extremely valuable for society at large”.

This description, which was informed by a consultant report on chains of moves in Svedala (*Temaplan, 2005*), substantiated our findings on the reasons for moving to a new house or apartment. Another official interviewed cited the same report and confirmed that there have been plenty of discussions on chains of moves within the local planning department.

However, when mentioning the preliminary results of our interviews with the retirees (*i.e.* the importance of second homes), the interviewees generally questioned their relevance for planning in Svedala. The municipality has very few second homes, according to one of the interviewees, and does not plan for more: this posi-

tion was supported by the other politician. The need for improved public transport for recreation areas was mentioned by one of the interviewees, but when it came to second homes the sceptical attitude ran deep: for instance, facilitating travel to a second home was regarded as beyond the scope (geographically and thematically) of local spatial planning. One planner argued that it would be unreasonably costly, and even drew a parallel with planning in the former East Germany to emphasise how ideologically alien the idea of planning for second homes would be.

The dismissive tone and ironic comments show that the interviewed planners and politicians regarded the relation between second and first homes as an irrelevant and foreign aspect to consider within planning. Leisure travel as a sustainability issue did not fit with their discourse on TOD. By disregarding the issue of second homes and leisure travel as planning issues, they corroborated an (ideological) divide between primary and second homes (and between leisure and work) within planning, which has been noted in previous studies (cf. *Müller and Marjavaara, 2012; Persson, 2015*). These divides illustrate the polarisation of urban and rural in planning practice and discourse.

## 4. Discussion

Our study confirmed “the need for a relational perspective in analyzing leisure travel” (*Strandell and Hall, 2015; p. 22*; see also *Ettema and Schwanen, 2012*), not only with regard to second homes and landscape amenities but also urban qualities. The interviewed residents introduced the region into the discussion, rather than limiting the discussion to Svedala. When urban qualities were mentioned, the pensioners referred to Malmö rather than Svedala, but also to the proximity to other cities such as Lund, Copenhagen and Trelleborg. The proximity to a new supermarket and pharmacy were mentioned as being of importance, but otherwise the centre of Svedala was criticised for being dead or simply described as unimportant. Thus, walkability was only related to everyday needs (*e.g.* groceries, basic social services) and not to other kinds of urban leisure (cultural activities, restaurants or clothes shopping). While the train or regional bus was not used on a regular basis by all interviewees, it was clearly regarded as an asset for accessing urban amenities in Malmö and other cities.

Social factors were cited as the main driver behind the move to Svedala, whereas the choice of the apartment/house as such was often described as a (lucky) coincidence or a practical choice, rather than an active decision to move to that area. Accessibility (the train and the regional bus) was also mentioned, but not as the main reason for moving there. While public transport can play a key role for the welfare of elderly (*e.g.* to sustain social contacts), the identification of retirees as a target group for TOD is nevertheless worth commenting on. Retirees do not commute to work; the young couples who bought their previous houses farther away from the train station, however, are likely to do so.

Our interviews revealed an explicit interplay between decisions concerning the retirees’ new residence and their second home. The retirees rarely related landscape amenities to their dwelling in Svedala; they only made vague comments about access to the countryside *etc.* as a “bonus”, but certainly not as a driving force behind the move. However, visual qualities were mentioned, primarily by the residents of high-rise apartments. Nevertheless, it was striking how passive they were in relation to their outdoor environment in Svedala. They looked at the view from their house or apartment and perhaps went for a walk, rather than using the outdoor environment for physical or social interaction. These descriptions were in stark contrast to how they described their second home; this was a place for active engagement, gardening, maintaining the house and retaining historical connections through the house as such or



the relationship to the village (cf. Kaltenborn, 1998; Lagerqvist, 2013). While the new apartments offered convenient living (freedom from heavy chores, such as gardening, and worrying about building maintenance), the second home was clearly related to a sense of freedom too: to be able to do things, to move around freely. The distinction between an active and passive engagement with parks and other outdoor environments could explain why the role of public parks as a compensatory environment remains unclear in the study by Strandell and Hall (2015). Traditionally, public parks do not offer active engagement in the sense of creative appropriation. Based on our study, we would argue that public parks, urban forests etc. need to make up for the freedom experienced in the second home, e.g. the 'right to roam', and the ability to engage (physically and socially) with the place (e.g. through outdoor exercise, gardening or social activities) in order to compensate for the leisure travel to the second homes. However, further studies, such as longitudinal interviews or diary studies, are required to provide more detailed accounts of the role of landscape amenities for TOD residents.

In our study the distance to the second homes varied, from ca. 10 km to 100 km. In any case, the interviewees were dependent on their private car to get there. With increasing age this could become a problem and eventually force them to let go of the second home. The current commuting was not a problem for the young pensioners, but some of the interviewees were worried about the future (cf. Hjorthol et al., 2010; Westin and Wilhelmson, 2011). Thus the interviews revealed a system that is not only environmentally but also socially unsustainable. The elderly interviewees will lose their active engagement with the landscape and could become trapped in the city. If such car dependency is built into our dense cities, then the quality of life of elderly inhabitants could be at risk (compare with Stjernborg et al., 2015).

After the polemical debate on urban sprawl and compact cities, the current discourse on TOD enhances an exclusive focus on urban lifestyle and urban qualities, whereas our study illustrates the need to think beyond an urban/rural divide. Consequently, the largely dismissive comments provided by the planner and the politicians illustrate that the relationship between permanent and second homes is hardly a conventional question within local spatial planning in Svedala. However, our conclusion is not that there is a need to develop second homes in the vicinity of Svedala. Planning second homes in TOD locations is not likely to be economically viable, perhaps with the exception of hotspots for recreation and tourism (e.g. beaches). Rather, we argue there is a need to acknowledge the amenities related to second homes, and how to provide such qualities within urban planning. A more reasonable strategy would therefore be to emphasise the value of gardens and landscape amenities in and close to TODs to compensate for the one-sided focus on urban qualities and densification.

## 5. Conclusions

This study reveals that the decision to move to a new residence in a TOD cannot be understood simply by studying the choice between the former and the present dwelling. Rather, it should be interpreted as a triangular drama, between the old house, the second home and the new dwelling. We expect this conclusion to be relevant within a Scandinavian context, but less so in countries where only a limited section of the population has access to second homes. The move from a large house with a garden to more compact (and convenient) accommodation was related to the desire to keep a part-time dwelling in the countryside. While a divide between permanent and second homes is increasingly being questioned (Persson, 2015), our interviews hinted at another problematic divide: between a convenient *residence* in town and a

*dwelling* (i.e. active engagement with the place and its history) in the countryside.

To capture the importance of the second home, a new term was coined in this study: part-time amenity migration. By highlighting the dependence between dense TODs and migration to second homes, the concept of part-time amenity migration challenges the claim that TOD is, always and by default, curbing urban sprawl, reducing car travel and protecting farmland and other assets of the countryside. Furthermore, it permits the articulation of an implicit ambiguity in the concept of 'migration', namely between migration in the sense of a move from an old to a new principal home on the one hand and migration as the recurrent movement between principal and second homes on the other in a society characterised by high mobility and where multiple residences are common. Finally, it creates a relational understanding of what it means to live in a TOD.

The interviews illustrated the success of the TOD strategy: larger houses have been left for families with children, while the young retirees have moved to an apartment or a smaller house with a less demanding and smaller garden. However, they also revealed that while urban qualities can be accessed by public transport, the landscape amenities sought require travel by car. Furthermore, the active lifestyle of the elderly (which is crucial for their well-being) was primarily related to their second home, and was car dependent. This is not only environmentally but also socially unsustainable. That such unwanted side-effects have not been previously noted can be understood to be a result of the polemical planning discourse (focusing exclusively on urban qualities) and the methodological cityism (Angelo and Wachsmuth, 2014) in much of urban research. The focus on the city has ignored the dependence of urban development on its surrounding countryside. This is neither socially nor environmentally sustainable (considering the amount of travel by car) and requires increased attention as to how to offer landscape amenities within TOD as a complement to (the traditional use of) public parks.

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