

# The Leefbaar Eindhoven manifesto City Council election 2018 - 2022





## **Introduction**

Leefbaar Eindhoven is a local political party without any ties with other political groups, neither nationally nor provincially. Since 2002 we are represented in the City Council. Our perspective is a city with a social face, a strong economy, metropolitan facilities, a diverse range of events and plenty of space for green. A city pleasant to live, work and leisure. A municipality that does what is required.

Eindhoven is controlled by the City Council and the College of Mayor and Aldermen. The City Council is the highest body of Eindhoven responsible for all important decisions; the policy of the municipality of Eindhoven. The College of Mayor and Aldermen is responsible for the execution of policies and the daily administration. The Aldermen are appointed by the City Council. Leefbaar Eindhoven focuses on the main lines of governance.

In the preface we outline the challenges facing the city and our vision on it. After that, some ideas are worked out in more detail, followed by a final word.

## **Preface**

At the center of the Brainport region Eindhoven is booming. Close cooperation between the business community and knowledge institutions strengthened our economy. Because Eindhoven is becoming more attractive, more and more companies and people settle in the city and tourism is increasing. Because Eindhoven is economically important for the Netherlands, the national government has designated the region as Mainport.

Unfortunately, there is also a downside. Not everyone benefits from this upward trend. The city still has many people depending on social welfare and care and people without work, while crime also causes concern. Simultaneously the financial state of the city is worrying. Because year after year more money was spent than came in, the financial position is abominably bad. Eindhoven is struggling with high debts and interest charges. At the same time, the resilience, the piggy bank required to absorb risks, is too affected. The current Council and College passed the consequences of this financial mismanagement on to the citizen and entrepreneur and increased local taxes. At the same time hoping for more funds from the national government in The Hague. As The Hague is reluctant in doing so, pointing out that Eindhoven first has to arrange its own affairs before asking for money, we consider this wishful thinking.

A political party must have a sense of reality. Leefbaar Eindhoven has that. We do not ignore it, moreover we emphasize this. If Eindhoven wishes to maintain its social face, strengthen the economy and maintain and improve metropolitan facilities, a prudent financial policy must be pursued. This means that tight political choices must be made, even if they may be painful. Because if we don't do this, the money will run out. As a consequence necessary investments and the level of facilities needed will come under further pressure.

The outcome of the upcoming local Council election is crucial for the near future of the city. Eindhoven faces two major challenges. Restructuring its financial state and ensuring that the Mainport status of the Eindhoven region is worked out in cooperation with the national government. In this cabinet period, a total of 900 million euros is reserved for tackling regional bottlenecks. Eindhoven has to benefit as much as possible from this one-off opportunity. That is why Leefbaar Eindhoven strives for a high-quality College of Mayor and Aldermen, where there is no room for Aldermen "in training". A College that shows decisiveness and vision and tackles these challenges.

A proper balance has to be found between spending cuts and making investments. Between reducing debt and supplementing resilience. All this depends strongly on the current situation. Not only on social developments

and interest rates on the capital market, but also on questions whether investments lend themselves to co-financing by the State, Province or European Union, and whether public-private partnership is possible. This applies to infrastructural projects as well as to those in the social sector.

Leefbaar Eindhoven believes in opportunities and possibilities and stands for innovation and talent development. The Brainport region is growing and the new economy offers room for more prosperity and welfare. In order to be able to continue the upward trend, the basic facilities must be in order. A good business climate, sufficient retail and housing supply, metropolitan facilities and top events. Good schools and the right social facilities. Leefbaar Eindhoven stands for free choice of school and care where it is needed. The right care. In Eindhoven still too many people are not participating. In collaboration with the business community, Eindhoven must ensure that everyone has a chance of paid work. Work must pay. It can not be the case that someone with a minimum wage from a full-time job has a smaller disposable income than someone with a social security benefit.

Doing business has to be beneficial for entrepreneurs. For this purpose, a good business climate is indispensable, with accessibility playing a major role. In order to prevent the silting up of roads, Leefbaar Eindhoven wants an integrated traffic policy. No stamp policy in which traffic and environmental problems are only moved elsewhere, such as at the Vestedijk. That is why we are in favour of developing better Park & Ride facilities on the outskirts of the city. We want the right balance between living environment and economy. Between environment and traffic, with room for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, public transport and plenty of space for green.

## **Governance and security**

The City Council is in charge, the College is subordinate. The City Council has transferred a lot of powers to the College. For political reasons, the current College has no fewer than seven aldermen. This is not only costly, but also unworkable. Both administratively and for the citizen to whom it is unclear who is responsible for what. Leefbaar Eindhoven wants a slim College with clearly defined powers per alderman. One alderman per domain. An alderman for finance who guards the budget. Mandating of powers to the College must be revised and possibly curtailed, so that the City Council itself is more at the helm of the municipality. Leefbaar Eindhoven also wants a slim administration. This is only possible if the College is better in control and regulations for citizens and entrepreneurs are reduced.

Within the municipality, integral safety is primarily the responsibility of the mayor. In order to guarantee the quality of life and safety in the city, the mayor, the police, the judiciary and the municipality must strictly enforce laws and regulations. We want a safe and clean living environment. No nuisance by anyone. Free spaces will not be tolerated.

We think the new safety policy is excellent. By combining information about population composition, unemployment, care provision and crime, a better picture is obtained of the causes of the problems so they can be tackled better.

## **Finance**

Leefbaar Eindhoven wants a balanced budget in which structural expenditure is covered by structural income. The resilience is intended to absorb financial risks, not to cover shortages arising from current policies. This piggy bank has to be replenished.

Mismanagement can not be passed on to the citizen and entrepreneur. We want to freeze local taxes. Taxes may not serve as dairy cow to close gaps in the budget. On the contrary, a better policy should lead to tax cuts.

The dog tax is also used as a dairy cow. Leefbaar Eindhoven wants to abolish it. This is a tax from a gray past when the dog cart was still seen by the government as a means of transport to be able to tax this. Under the motto "the polluter pays", it is nowadays justified to reduce nuisance caused by dog droppings and to cover the costs of cleaning. Because people are now obliged to clean up their dog's poo, this justification is no longer valid. Dog tax does generate money, but administration of it also cost money. For us, the most important thing is that dogs contribute to the well-being of people.

On the expenditure side, a closer at subsidies is needed. This is not self-evident. Subsidies aim to provide an incentive for the subsidy recipient to reach maturity; it is not a charity.

### **Economy, durability and green**

In the Eindhoven region technology, design and innovation ensure economic growth, but other economic sectors also contribute to employment. Leefbaar Eindhoven opts for sustainable economic growth without damaging climate, water, soil and biodiversity. Sustainable innovations deliver money and jobs. Economy and the environment go hand in hand. This takes into account the needs of future generations.

Wherever you are in Eindhoven, within a few minutes walk or cycling you will find lot's of parks and other green spaces. We want to keep it that way and strengthen it wherever possible. The inner city must also be further greened.

### **Traffic**

Eindhoven is at the center of an important economic region that wants to grow. Because the city and the region must be easily accessible, we argue for a ring road around Eindhoven. The city center must be accessible to entrepreneurs, visitors and residents. Also with the car. In order to limit car traffic in the city, Park & Ride facilities must be located on the outskirts of the city.

Either we close streets for car traffic, or we ensure traffic flow. No queues. Less congestion = less acceleration / standing still = less fuel = less CO2 emission. That is why we strive for a 'green wave'.

Road narrowing and speed bumps only in extreme necessity. Often these only lead to annoyance and more insecurity because this also hinders emergency services such as the police, ambulance and fire brigade.

### **Social policy**

Although the region is economically strong, still to many people depend on social welfare or are unemployed. We want to support those in need, but this is not a charity. Some service in return is required. That is why we do not oppose national regulations in this area. If you do this, you will eventually be presented with the bill.

People with minimum income and status holders are offered many additional facilities by the municipality and through government-funded organizations:

housing, remission of taxes, the food bank, school trips and sports for children, cleaning aids for asylum seekers and free public transport. On the other hand, people are queuing up for housing and are concerned about the cost of living, housing, education, care for the elderly, health care and sports. People who do not qualify for those extra facilities, find this hard to cope with and unjust. This creates a dichotomy in society and we do not want that.

Leefbaar Eindhoven wants that care will stay affordable. Everyone should receive the care to which he or she is entitled. Nothing more, nothing less and therefore strict control is required. It is not self-evident that people are automatically entitled to free facilities. We do not exclude more personal contribution and a budget ceiling.

Animal welfare is also an integral part of social policy. We are in favour of a good shelter for animals in need and oppose ritual slaughter and loud firecrackers.

### **Citizen participation**

Many citizens are connected to their neighbourhood and take responsibility for it. They do voluntary work, organize cleaning actions, set up a playground, manage a community center and think about safety. That way they improve society. They do not want the municipality to solve everything for them with a standard solution, but ask for customization and an administration that thinks along with them.

The more responsibility citizens take themselves, the smaller the role of the municipality becomes. Leefbaar Eindhoven wants the municipality to ultimately only play a supporting role. The municipality participates with the citizens, instead of the other way around. Good communication between citizens and the municipality is necessary and in this respect there is still room for improvement.

### **Culture and events**

The city has many top events, such as Glow, the Dutch Design Week, the Marathon, the Lichtjesroute and music festivals. Partly because of this, the city is attractive, tourism is increasing and that is good for the economy.

Leefbaar Eindhoven is in favour of a diverse range of events. In principle, events must be financially self-sufficient and should not be thwarted by regulations putting unnecessary strains on organizers, including finance. The city center should remain accessible for big events. Not only the one

mentioned above, but also the carnival parade. That is why it is important to take this into account with future traffic plans.

Leefbaar Eindhoven is in favour of cultural entrepreneurship. We want the Parktheater, the Muziekgebouw, the Van Abbemuseum and the Effenaar to be accessible to a wide audience. The Van Abbemuseum must be open to privatization or merger with other parties.

We like to support and encourage smaller-scale cultural projects and new initiatives, provided that they are well-founded, feasible and accessible to a wide audience. Possibly projects which can be visited free of charge.

Because it would lead to a better tourist spread with advantages for both cities, the director of the Eindhoven City marketing organization launched the idea of moving the Van Gogh museum from Amsterdam to Eindhoven. As a result, Amsterdam would be relieved from the burden having to many tourist and Eindhoven would get something nice. Good idea, but whether this is feasible is another matter. Nevertheless, we welcome this thought. Leefbaar Eindhoven wants to dedicate itself to the establishment of a Rijksmuseum within our city. A technology museum would fit in perfectly.

## **Sport**

Eindhoven is a sport city. We are proud of the achievements of our athletes. Proud of our Indoor-Sport Center, the Pieter van den Hoogenband Swimming Stadium, the Ice Sport Center and all those other sports facilities. Both for individual sports and top sport events with international appeal. These are metropolitan sports facilities that need to be maintained.

Leefbaar Eindhoven stands for recreational sports and believes that sport should be affordable for everyone. Top sport events enrich our city and stimulate recreational sport.

We want vital sports clubs. We do not object that sport is linked to the social domain and sports facilities are also used for other activities. But it must be custom work, because the starting points of the various clubs differ. We are not in favour of forced relocation, splitting and merging of clubs and believe that athletes should have the freedom to choose a club that suits them. This also applies to parents of young athletes. Moreover, we do not want to put extra pressure on clubs because of the simple fact that volunteers are already scarce. After all, the core business of a sport club is to make sport possible for its members.



## **Final word**

As an opposition party, Leefbaar Eindhoven has always been constructive, but critical. We have constantly warned for the disastrous financial consequences of the boundless ambitions of the current College. Now, as a voter, you have the opportunity to vote for another City Council and College.

Leefbaar Eindhoven doesn't make empty election promises and doesn't howl out of the blue. We need to turn things around: a new realistic policy is required.

Leefbaar Eindhoven remains optimistic. We are convinced that together with other parties we can bring the city a little closer to our goal: a liveable Eindhoven. A Leefbaar Eindhoven!

