

# Peer review of the city of Turku



What is

# A Sustainable Urban Transport Plan?

- The European Commission has recommended and member states support the preparation by cities of "*Sustainable Urban Transport Plans*" (SUTP's) as the key tool to manage urban transport problems and help to provide solutions to urban transport problems. (See the "*Thematic Strategy for the Urban Environment*")
- The European Commission is looking to the 12 Bustrip cities to be the first to prepare and implement SUTP's and to share their experiences and learning.
- European experts have helped to develop the model of a SUTP - the process of preparing the plan and the policies it should include - now lets see if it works!

# Turku - BUSTRIP so far...

- You have begun the work to prepare and implement your SUTP over the next two years
- Your self assessment report has been completed and reviewed by the team of Peer Reviewers
- Peer reviewers - from other Bustrip cities - has carried out a review of your city over the last week to provide friendly independent constructive comments
- Peer reviewers will prepare a full report within a month

# The Team

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# What were we looking for?

A Transport system that:

- Allows the basic access and development needs of individuals, companies and societies to be met safely and in a manner consistent with human and ecosystem health, and promotes equity within and between successive generations;
- Is affordable, operates fairly and efficiently, offers a choice of transport mode and supports an competitive economy as well as balanced regional development;
- Limits emissions and waste within the planets ability to absorb them, uses renewable resources at or below their rates of generation, and, uses non renewable resources at or below the rates of development of renewable substitutes while minimising the impact on the use of land and the generation of noise.

EU transport council 2001

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/trans/index.htm>



Peer Review of the progress towards sustainable urban transport  
City of Turku August 21-25 2006



# What have we found?

- Turku is a good city
- Turku has unique qualities
- ... but you are facing problems

# Turku - a good city!

- The economic situation is getting better
- Unemployment is decreasing
- Air quality meets EU standards
- No real congestion
- No empty flats

# Turku has unique qualities

- The Market Square is the best in Finland
- The River Aura adds life to the centre
- The nicest archipelago in the world

# ... but you are facing problems

- Weak regional planning
- Insufficient public transport
- Problems for pedestrians and cyclists
- . . . will increase congestion
- Fierce competition for the City Centre

# General comments

- The city has a high level of ambition in many plans and programmes
- There is a lack of long-term perspective in planning of land use and transportation
- Politicians and officials sometimes don't have the same agenda
- There is an urgent need for better cooperation between municipalities in the region

# High ambitions

... but the implementation is sometimes slow or non-existing (for example expansion of the cycle network in the city centre, and reduced number of lanes for increased traffic safety at Linnankatu).

# Lack of long-term perspective

The dominating perspective today is the four-year agreements made by the ruling parties. Sustainable means long-term!

# Different agendas

... and all municipal departments don't have the same goals either. In general it seems to be good cooperation between departments, but planning of land use and transportation could be better integrated.

# Regional cooperation

The municipality of Turku is oriented from coast to inland, while the development is taking place mainly along the coast. Planning of land use and public transport must therefore be done in a regional scale. Today there is more of competition than cooperation between municipalities.

# Weak regional planning

- The region of Turku has split structure of settlement which leads to more and longer car transports.
- Turku is a regional centre which provides and pays for most regional services. Still the services are used by people from the whole region. This leads to an unbalanced economic situation.
- . . . more

## . . . weak regional planning

- Many small municipalities compete instead of cooperate which makes long term strategic planning very difficult, particularly for sustainable transport.
- The Turku region needs a common general plan, not only each individual municipality.
- The existing general plan for Turku lacks a long term sustainable plan and impact assessment.

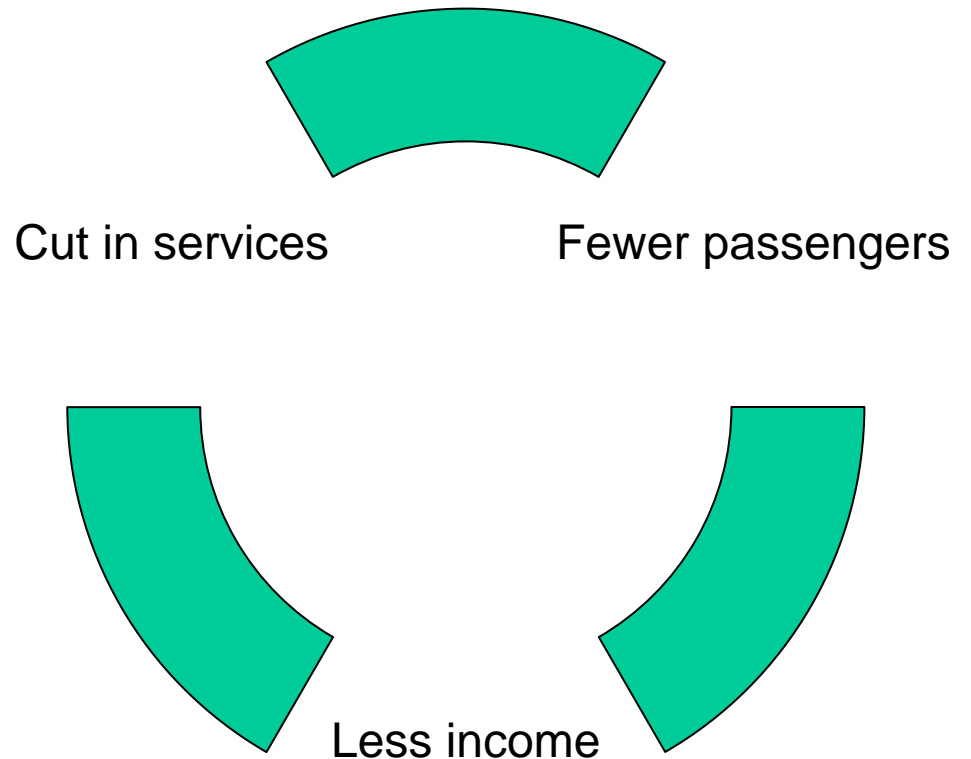
# Insufficient public transport

- Negative development
- Bad information
- Unclear line system
- No regional coordination

# Negative development

The current PT service situation falls down into a closed loop.

Few customers mean less income, less income means cutting services



# Improve information

- Time tables on stops. All bus stops should include basic information: timetables, ticket prices etc.
- Announcing stops in buses
- Real time information system

# Unclear line system

- Reorganizing line system / time tables  
Fewer and more frequent lines

- New ticketing system

Eliminating cash from the buses will increase the speed of the buses and will make safer conditions for the drivers.

# No regional coordination

- Regional buses should be planned by the region

A regional PT authority should be considered.

- Bus priority

Priority for buses at signalized intersections and separate lanes in the streets.

# Cycling and walking

- Walking and cycling are important transport modes
- Many investments in pedestrian and cycling facilities have been implemented
- Turku has some good plans concerning the pedestrian and cycling conditions improvement
- Cycling is promoted in Turku

# Important transport modes

- Compact structure and small gradients; Walking is most important in the city centre area and in residential areas.

# Good cycling plans

- The pedestrians and cycling plan, The city centre traffic plan, The Turku Barriers-Free programme; also a regional cycling development plan was made in 1999.

## However,

- Cycling should be respected as an important mode of transport
- The cycle plan should be implemented
- Network in the city centre is incomplete. Many links already exist, but they must be connected
- Many unsafe intersections
- . . . more

## However,

- Winter maintenance on cycle roads should be improved and have priority
- For cycling safety, car speed should be reduced
- Extend the car-free zone in the city centre
- Signing and marking for cyclist should be improved

# Congestion will increase

- So far, the roads are sufficient
- Growing population and urban sprawl and lack of bus and cycling services will increase car traffic
- You can increase road capacity . . .
- . . . or change modal split

# The City Centre

- Unique qualities
- Many potential customers
- Good accessibility with public transport
- Competition with external centres

# Unique qualities

- The atmosphere of the historical city
- Kauppatori
- Aura river
- The Market hall
- The ferry passengers

# How to compete

- Improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
- Parking info system should be improved
- Street parking should be more expensive than the parking houses
- Develop street life (. . . more)

## . . . how to compete

- Employees should pay market price for parking
- Start an independent city retailers organization
- Competition by car accessibility will be fighting a losing battle

# Conclusions...

See the BUSTRIP project as an **opportunity** to . . .

- Improve the image and the function of public transport and cycling to increase the usage!
- Raise the public awareness of the importance of sustainable planning!
- Develop the cooperation between politicians, stakeholders, departments and different municipalities!

# Questions?

- Did we miss anything?
- Did we get anything wrong?

# What next.....

- For us:  
Write our assessment report which will be with you in a month's time
- For you:  
Comment and correct our report  
Start your work on preparing a Sustainable Urban Transport Plan!

Thank you for your hospitality and support and we look forward to our partnership in the future.