Enacting a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan

In a nutshell

SUMMARY

It is best practice to adopt a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) in order to provide an integrated approach to all modes of transport while taking into account planning for the surrounding environment. The SUMP aims to improve safety and security, reduce air and noise pollution, lower emissions and energy consumption, improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of transportation and enhance the attractiveness and quality of the urban environment and urban design. The measures that can be included in a SUP are described in the following best practices:

- Fostering cycling and walking through cycling infrastructure, bike-sharing schemes and promotion of walking
- Implementing a large-scale car-sharing scheme
- Integrated ticketing for public transport
- Improving the uptake of electric vehicles in urban areas
- Fostering passenger intermodality
- Implementing a congestion charge
- Limiting free parking spaces in cities
- Implementation of logistic service centres

Target group

Public administrations responsible for mobility and/or public transport in their territory

Applicability

This best practice is applicable to all public administrations responsible for mobility and/or public transport. Local and contextual factors may influence the specific measures that can be included in the SUMP and their applicability.

Environmental performance indicators

- Modal share of journeys (% of journeys made by car, motorbike, public transport, cycling and walking)
- Accessibility of public transport (share of inhabitants living within 300 metres of an urban public transport stop with a minimum frequency of 15-20 minutes) (%)

Benchmarks of excellence

N/A

Description

A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) is a tool for cities to create a modern, sustainable transport system. The plan should provide an integrated approach to all modes of transport whilst taking into account planning for the surrounding environment.

A mobility plan is designed to satisfy the needs of people and businesses in cities and their surroundings, whilst simultaneously building a better quality of life. It builds on existing planning practices and considers integration, participation, and evaluation principles. A successful transport policy is one that improves safety and security, reduces air and noise pollution, lowers emissions and energy consumption, improves efficiency and cost-effectiveness of transportation and enhances the attractiveness and quality of the urban environment and urban design.

A SUMP builds on the existing regulatory and policy frameworks in a municipality. It requires (Eltis, n.d.):

- A participatory approach - involving citizens and stakeholders from the outset and throughout the process of decision making, implementation and evaluation, building local capacities for handling complex planning issues, and ensuring gender equity;
- A pledge for sustainability - balancing social equity, environmental quality and economic development;
- An integrated approach – of practices and policies between policy sectors (e.g. transport, land-use, environment, economic development, social inclusion, health, safety), between authority levels (e.g. district, municipality, agglomeration, region, national, EU), and between neighbouring authorities (inter-municipal, inter-regional, trans-national, etc.);
- A focus on the achievement of measurable targets, derived from short term objectives, aligned with a vision for transport and embedded in an overall sustainable development strategy;
- A review of transport costs and benefits, taking into account wider societal costs and benefits, also across policy sectors;
- A method comprising the following tasks: 1) status analysis and baseline scenario; 2) definition of a vision, objectives and targets; 3) selection of policies and measures; 4) assignment of responsibilities and resources; 5) monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

The plan should have the positive benefit of fostering a culture amongst planners and decision makers to strive for a truly sustainable development of urban transport. The measures that can be included in a SUP are described in the following best practices:

- Fostering cycling and walking through cycling infrastructure, bike-sharing schemes and promotion of walking
- Implementing a large-scale car-sharing scheme
- Integrated ticketing for public transport
- Improving the uptake of electric vehicles in urban areas
- Fostering passenger intermodality
- Implementing a congestion charge
- Limiting free parking spaces in cities
- Implementation of logistic service centres

Environmental benefits

The emphasis of a SUMP is in integrating and improving existing plans, creating an integrative approach to the issue. Environmental benefits include lower levels of atmospheric pollutants and GHG emissions, more public spaces, greater biodiversity and improved mobility and access for citizens.

Side effects

There are no cross-media effects in the implementation of this best practice.

Applicability

The applicability of different aspects of a SUMP will be influenced by the city itself. Contextual factors from city layout to public finances can determine what is feasible to enact in the urban area. Limiting factors include narrow streets, which can act as a barrier to tram lines, ribbon development which can make it difficult to widen roads for bus lanes (and by their nature encourage use of private vehicles), whether public transport companies are publically or privately owned, public resistance to modal change (e.g. banning city centre car access, allocating space and resources to cycle lanes over car transport, lowering city speed limits, etc.) and so on. There are six main barriers to implementing an effective transport plan (i) resource barriers, (ii) institutional and policy barriers, (iii) social and cultural

barriers, (iv) legal barriers, (v) side effects, and (vi) other (physical) barriers (European Parliament, 2010). Approaches to overcome these barriers need to be identified. Cost, of course, is another limiting factor for the scope of public authority measures.

Economics

The cost of implementing a SUMP varies from city to city and is difficult to have an exact figure. Possible funding sources include (Rupprecht Consult, 2007):

• Local taxes: a special local transport tax for public transport paid by public or private enterprises, developers;

• Revenue funding: tickets, parking fees, city centre pricing, congestion charging, advertisements;

• Private sector operators, developers, industry; knowledge and skills – SMEs;

• Fundraising activities involving appropriate sponsors;

• Local budgets: from different municipalities and different policy domains;

• State subsidies (regional sources if applicable);

• EU subsidies.

In France, authorities generally spend between €200,000 and €400,000 on the development of a mobility plan. The city of Aachen in Germany has come up with a scheme to jointly finance a part-time mobility manager through its environment department cooperating with its chamber of industry and commerce. This inter-department funding provides the necessary human resource in a tight financial situation.

A SUMP may also allow a city access to certain funding pools that would have previously been unavailable, as well as contributing to fulfilling EU legal obligations. When implementing measures it is important that they are assessed with an eye to costs and benefits as well as value for money.

Driving forces for implementation

Apart from environmental benefits a SUMP can provide improved mobility and accessibility for citizens, can enhance the reputation of the city internationally, and can contribute to a better quality of life in terms of noise reduction, cleaner air and improved road safety. A well executed SUMP also has the possibility to utilise land previously reserved for transport and make it a more social, publically useable space, improving the quality of the urban area.

SUMPs provide an opportunity to engage the public and stakeholders in the planning process, and in doing so gain a level of “public legitimacy” in the measures that are to be carried out. SUMPs allow a direct form of democracy and can foster positivity towards the political decision making process.

The integration potential within a SUMP is a major positive for many cities. SUMPs allow sectors, departments and institutions to work together for a common goal. The policy relevancy of a SUMP expands across sectors, taking in, for example, land use, economic development, social inclusion, etc.

The starting point for any city within Europe that wishes to enact a SUMP should be a desire to improve not only the mobility of citizens, but quality of life overall. Enacting a SUMP takes dedication and a tangible commitment, but the benefits are sizeable.

Reference organisations

- Örebro, Sweden
- Nantes, France

Literature

CIVITAS VIVALDI Project (2006) Implementing a large-scale sustainable transport strategy. Retrieved from: goo.gl/2FK0f

Civitas, (2011, September 22), The parking policy, main stake in mobility issues: The Nantes example [PowerPoint slides]: Retrieved from: http://www.civitas-initiative.eu/docs/2037/1_-_NANTES.pdf

CIVITAS, (2011), Developing a new clean public transport fleet, Nantes/France CIVITAS VIVALDI 2002-2006. Retrieved from: http://www.civitas-initiative.org/index.php?id=79&sel_menu=16&measure_id=62&back_id=30

Eltis, the urban mobility observatory. Available at: http://www.eltis.org/

Elvingston, P. (2012, January). Promoting a new way of thinking, Örebro, Sweden. Retrieved from: http://www.eltis.org/index.php?id=13&study_id=3058

Nantes Métropole, (2010), Plan de deplacements urbains: Articulating planning, urban design and mobility policy [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from: http://civitas-initiative.eu/docs/Rouleau_Tiraoui_Nantes_case_study0.pdf

Nantes Métropole, (n.d.) European Green Capital Award Nantes 2012 2013, local transport, available from http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/EGCNantesUKChap2-F.pdf

Rupprecht Consult (2007) Sustainable Urban Transport Planning Manual: Guidance for stakeholders. Retrieved from: http://www.pilot-transport.org/fileadmin/WP2/Pilot_EN_WEB.pdf

VIVALDI Project (2006) GRD1 – 2001-40060 D9; final evaluation report. Retrieved from: http://www.civitas.eu/docs1/Nantes_Evaluation_Results_Report_extract.pdf