

Urban station communities

Progress reporting for 2013

THE NARRATIVE

Our project is on urban station communities. Its aim is to explain and solve the challenges of developing sustainable urban station communities by building more densely and travelling more energy efficiently. It is hoped that some of these solutions may even benefit towns and cities with similar challenges. We started a year ago and our first challenge was to increase our knowledge of how to solve the complex issues of planning in and around stations. Many different stakeholders have participated in our meetings. At the first workshops, we got questions about other such projects, both in Sweden and internationally, focusing on

- urban planning,
- transport planning,
- the environment,
- business life,
- quality of life and
- what attracts people to live and work in urban station communities.

To answer these questions we did a research overview and a summary of the practical experiences compiled from existing knowledge. From this overview we could see that the municipalities who managed to solve their housing and transport problems, did so by cooperating with other stakeholders and applying for financial support in various ways. So it is clear from this that cooperation and funding are both essential. We need more knowledge to be able to deal with the challenges involved in developing urban station communities. We also need to find ways of involving all the stakeholders.

At our kickoff on the 13th of September were those municipalities and organizations that wanted to get involved. Among those were the ten municipalities that are going to serve as pilot cases. Ulf Ranhagen, Board Member of Mistra Urban Futures in Gothenburg, gave the municipalities 10 recommendations for planning sustainable urban station communities of the future.

There are currently ten municipalities involved in the project in the Gothenburg region who differ in many ways but a number of them raise the same type of challenges and need for knowledge. Each municipality has chosen one station community that will serve as a pilot case. All these station communities are in the process of developing, or plan to develop the area near a station. They want the station to serve as a catalyst for sustainable urban development. It is not possible to create one single project that answers all the questions we have. "The urban station community project" will be an umbrella under which a number of projects will be initiated. The key questions are:

1. How can we design solutions that are accepted by all authorities and don't have a negative effect on the character of the town?
2. Which unique lifestyle values and identities do the station communities have that the regional centre doesn't? What happens to that identity during transformation?
3. How do we create this vision and dialogue and plan and act in accordance with this vision, despite criticism and limitations?
4. What effect does choice of city planning structure have on economic, social and ecological sustainability?
5. How can you build commuter parking that does not restrict other values like safety, land value and aesthetics?
6. How can public transport be structured so as to be a flexible solution that suits people's lifestyles.

We have initial thoughts on which areas we need more knowledge on in order to develop sustainable urban station communities. We already have 10 municipalities as pilot cases and several of the key government agencies involved in the project. We have now invited researchers to join us in the work of forming and carrying out the project. Mistra Urban Futures invited researchers and the ten municipalities to Urban Research on the 6th December to a seminar and discussion arena where around 30 people participated. The focus was Urban station communities - what are they and what will they become?

Anne Leemans, Brussels, Secretary - General at the Yellow design Foundation made a presentation of their international research about low carbon stations and low carbon cities exemplified with the situation in two cities in Sri Lanka. There was also a presentation from the process leaders Amie Ramstedt and Alice Dahlstrand who are working for the urban station community project about the project, focusing the need for knowledge on areas that the participating municipalities have themselves identified as important. Our plan during the spring is to actively form

various sub projects from the ten communities and their challenges and need for knowledge and apply for financing.

- Overview and comments on your projects Progress Table

We have carried out everything according to plan. All that remains is to decide completion dates for the research projects. This will be done in cooperation with the municipalities and the researchers.

- Summary of Achievements;

1. Established partnerships / working relations
 Currently involved in the project are:

- 10 municipalities
- The Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities
- The County Administrative Board of Västra Götaland
- The Swedish Transport Administration
- Region Västra Götaland

2. Developed working methods / trans-disciplinary approach
 Workshops with those involved from the authorities, the municipalities and the academic world.

3. Impact on fair, green and dense based governance and policies
 It is too early to say.

4. Footprints at academic production and agenda¹
 Joakim Forsemalm from the University of Gothenburg and Karl Palmås from the Chalmers University of Technology did a research overview and together with them and the others in the project a summary of the practical experiences compiled from existing knowledge. Mistra Urban Futures Report 2013:3

5. Communication and events
 See progress table

6. Demonstration projects
 We have recently started work on applications for research funding for R&D projects on cooperation, attractiveness, solutions for problems with noise, vibration and safety and traffic planning near the stations.

7. Capacity development through dissemination, training and research school
 We raised awareness of the challenges surrounding urban station communities, the need to cooperate to find sustainable solutions together. We have used newsletters, seminars, workshops, and information meetings with for example politicians.

- Effectiveness (spending in relation to budget, results in relation to spending)

¹ Scientific production, including lists of articles etc. to be presented in appendices

The working time, the seminars and workshops are all according to budget. With this said the real work (research, implementation and the piloting) are all in the future so we cannot comment on this yet.

- Challenges and risk management
Finding funding and researchers interested in our projects.

- Main lessons learned
We were surprised and encouraged by the interest and support shown by municipalities and the authorities.

- Steps a head
Starting and completing the R&D project work.

Progress table

Status	Progress
Completed	+
On track	X %
Delayed	!
Not started	0
Cancelled	-

Activity/ deliverable	Description	Ready date	Progress
Workshops	Workshops with 20 stakeholders Workshops with 85 stakeholders	2012-12-10 2013-03-06	100 %
Report on the state of knowledge	Research and practical overview	2013-06-01	100 %
Meetings	Meetings with managers and politicians in the municipalities	Spring 2013	100 %
Kickoff	Kickoff with municipalities	2013-09-13	100 %
Interviews	Interviews and workshops with the municipalities	Autumn 2013	100 %
Research workshop	Urban research workshop with researchers	2013-12-06	100 %
Research and development projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation Attractiveness Solutions for problems with noise, vibration and security Traffic planning near the stations 	To be decided	5 % 5 % 5 % 5 %