



DECISION MAKERS SUMMARY FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY PLAN



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Imprint

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SUMP Resources

SUMP Guidelines: <https://www.eltis.org/mobility-plans/sump-guidelines>

SUMP Topic Guides: <https://www.eltis.org/mobility-plans/topic-guides>

SUMP Practitioner Briefings: <https://www.eltis.org/mobility-plans/practitioner-briefings>

SUMP Self-Assessment: www.sump-assessment.eu

Mobility Academy: <https://www.mobility-academy.eu>

1. What is a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP)?

Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning is a strategic and integrated approach to urban transport. It contributes to improved accessibility and quality of life through a shift towards sustainable mobility. SUMP supports fact-based decision making guided by a long-term vision. This requires a thorough assessment of the status quo and future trends, a common vision with strategic objectives, and an integrated set of measures from different policy areas, including regulation, promotion, financing, technology and infrastructure. The SUMP concept places particular emphasis on the involvement of citizens and stakeholders and on the cooperation among actors in public administrations and with the private sector.

Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning is based on eight principles:

- 1 Plan for sustainable mobility in the “functional urban area”
- 2 Cooperate across institutional boundaries
- 3 Involve citizens and stakeholders
- 4 Assess current and future performance
- 5 Define a long-term vision and a clear implementation plan
- 6 Develop all transport modes in an integrated manner
- 7 Arrange for monitoring and evaluation
- 8 Assure quality



image © Rupprecht Consult

Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning sets the new standard for innovative transport planning. It helps cities and regions integrate transport modes and encourage sustainable mobility. SUMPs contribute to realising key mobility goals, such as better air quality, improved accessibility and mobility, increased road safety, decreased traffic noise, higher energy efficiency, and enhanced quality of life. SUMP helps cities and regions to reduce their climate impact from transport.

The following definition of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan has been widely accepted in Europe and internationally:

A **Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan** is a strategic plan designed to satisfy the mobility needs of people and businesses in cities and their surroundings for a better quality of life. It builds on existing planning practices and takes due consideration of integration, participation, and evaluation principles.



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Eight principles

The concept of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning, as defined in the Urban Mobility Package, is based on eight commonly accepted guiding principles.¹

1 Plan for sustainable mobility in the “functional urban area”



Cities are connected with their surroundings by daily flows of people and goods, meaning the geographical scope of a SUMP needs to be based on this “functional urban area”. It is based on population density and travel-to-work flows and aims to capture the entire commuting area. Depending on the local context, this might be a city and its surrounding peri-urban area, an entire polycentric region, or another constellation of municipalities. Planning on the basis of actual flows of people and goods is an important criterion to make a plan relevant and comprehensive, even if municipal boundaries may follow a different logic and make this difficult to achieve.

A SUMP needs to pursue the general aim of improving accessibility and providing high-quality, sustainable mobility for the entire functional urban area. A sustainable transport system improves accessibility for all, regardless of income and social status; enhances quality of life and the attractiveness of the urban environment; improves road safety and public health; reduces air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption; and improves economic viability, social equity and environmental quality.

2 Cooperate across institutional boundaries



The development and implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan requires a high level of cooperation, coordination and consultation across different levels of government and between institutions (and their departments) in the planning area.

The basic elements are:

- Cooperation to ensure the consistency and complementarity of the SUMP with policies and plans in sectors related to transport (e.g. land use and spatial planning, social services, health, energy, education, enforcement and policing).
- Close exchange with relevant authorities at other levels of government (e.g. district, municipality, agglomeration, region and state).
- Coordination with public and private sector providers of transport services.

3 Involve citizens and stakeholders



A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan focuses on meeting the mobility needs of people in the functional urban area, both residents and visitors, as well as institutions and companies based there. It follows a transparent and participatory approach, actively involving citizens and other stakeholders throughout the plan’s development and implementation. Participatory planning is a prerequisite for people to take ownership of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan and the policies it promotes. Early and active involvement makes public acceptance and support more likely, thereby minimising political risks and facilitating implementation.



4 Assess current and future performance

A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan builds on a thorough assessment of the current and future performance of the transport system in the functional urban area. It includes a comprehensive review of the existing situation and establishes a baseline against which progress can be measured. To do this, the Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning process identifies objectives and ambitious but realistic targets which are consistent with the agreed vision for mobility, and then defines performance

¹ This section draws strongly on Annex 1 of the Urban Mobility Package (COM(2013) 913).

² OECD, Definition of Functional Urban Areas (FUA) for the OECD metropolitan database, 2013, p. 2. www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/Definition-of-Functional-Urban-Areas-for-the-OECD-metropolitan-database.pdf.

indicators for each target. Indicators are then used to assess current and future conditions. This status analysis also includes a review of current capacities and resources and of the institutional set-up for planning and implementation.

5 Define a long-term vision and a clear implementation plan



A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is based on a long-term vision for transport and mobility for the entire functional urban area. It covers all modes and forms of transport: public and private; passenger and freight; motorised and non-motorised; and moving and stationary. It also includes infrastructure and services. A SUMP contains a plan for the short-term implementation of objectives and targets through measure packages. It includes an implementation timetable and budget as well as a clear allocation of responsibilities and outline of the resources required.



6 Develop all transport modes in an integrated manner

A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan fosters balanced and integrated development of all relevant transport modes while prioritising sustainable mobility solutions. The SUMP puts forward an integrated set of measures to improve quality, security, safety, accessibility, and cost effectiveness of the overall mobility system. A SUMP includes infrastructure, technical, regulatory, promotional and financial measures. It addresses all forms of collective mobility (traditional public transport as well as new services based on sharing, including new business models); active mobility (walking and cycling); intermodality and door-to-door mobility; road safety; moving and stationary vehicles; freight and service delivery; logistics; mobility management; and Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS).

7 Arrange for monitoring and evaluation



The implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan must be monitored closely. Progress towards the

objectives of the plan and meeting the targets are assessed regularly based on the chosen performance indicators. Timely access to the relevant data and statistics must always be ensured. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of measures can suggest revisions of targets and, where necessary, corrective action in implementation. A monitoring report that is shared and communicated with citizens and stakeholders informs about the progress in development and implementation of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan.

8 Assure quality



A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is a key document for the development of an urban area. Having mechanisms in place to ensure a SUMP's general professional quality and to validate its compliance with the requirements of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan concept is an effort worth taking. Assurance of data quality and risk management during implementation require specific attention. These tasks can be delegated to external quality reviewers or another government institution (e.g. on the regional or national level), while it can be facilitated by the use of tools like the SUMP Self-Assessment Tool.



image © Gehl

2. What are the benefits of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning?

Creating a sustainable city

Increasing quality of life

There is strong evidence that Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning raises the quality of life in an urban area. Well-coordinated policies result in a wide range of benefits, such as more attractive public spaces, improved road safety, and less air and noise pollution. Such an attractive environment also encourages citizens to walk and cycle more often, which improves to their health - and even helps to save costs.

Creating economic benefits

Mobility is a major enabler for the local economy. A healthier environment and reduced congestion help to substantially reduce costs to the local community and attract new businesses and investors. In the global competition for innovative companies (and well-paid jobs), the liveability of a city has become an important factor; sustainable cities are clearly in the lead.

Contributing to climate and environmental goals

A more sustainable mobility system directly translates into reductions in emissions, noise, air pollution and land consumption. Cities can play their part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and in tackling the climate crisis. Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning is a core element of local and national climate policies.

Improving accessibility of transport

Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning is an excellent tool to create multi-modal door-to-door transport solutions. Bringing different actors together ensures that access needs of citizens and businesses are effectively provided for. It helps to provide good accessibility to services and to employment and education for all residents regardless of income and social status. SUMP offers an ideal framework to raise innovative ideas for a new mobility system, to realise new projects and implement complementing measures for an overall improvement of the transport system.

Implementing change

Making more effective use of limited resources

As financial resources are limited, it is crucial for cities to adopt the most cost-effective solutions. SUMP moves the focus from building new road infrastructure to a more balanced mix of measures. By combining infrastructure and technical measures with regulatory, promotional and financial measures, mobility goals can be achieved much more efficiently.

Creating synergies across sectors and boundaries

Urban mobility problems often cross municipal boundaries, relate to multiple policy areas or concern a wide range of departments and institutions. SUMP inspires a collaborative planning culture across sectors and governance levels. Well-connected solutions respond more appropriately to increasingly complex problems.

Winning public support

Involvement of stakeholders and citizens is a basic ingredient of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. A city government that demonstrates that it cares about the needs and wants of its residents and involves them appropriately can obtain a high level of public support. Participation becomes a source of ideas for planners, increases legitimacy and reduces the political risk of opposition to ambitious policies.

Gaining easier access to financing and funding

The cooperation of public institutions from different sectors and private actors allows to pool resources for joint measures. A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan helps transport authorities to attract funding and financing from new sources. Planners can demonstrate the impacts of individual measures assessed against key performance indicators, making funding proposals more attractive.

Planning in times of uncertainty

The emergence of new technologies, business models and consumer demands all serve to create planning uncertainties, but long-term objectives that enjoy wide support can provide a guiding framework within which you can more systematically prioritise policies and select measures as circumstances change.

3. What are the main elements of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning?

Since the publication of the SUMP concept in 2013, the process of developing and implementing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan has been applied in many urban areas across Europe (and worldwide). The “SUMP cycle” represents it by using the visual metaphor of a clock face (see Figure 1).

The SUMP cycle represents the four phases of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning, each of which begins and ends with a milestone and each of which is subdivided into three steps (for a total of twelve steps in the planning cycle). The milestones are linked to a decision or an outcome needed for the next phase and mark the completion of the previous phase.

All steps and activities should be taken as part of a regular planning cycle in the sense of a continuous improvement process.

This is, of course, an idealised and simplified representation of a complex planning process. In some cases, steps may be executed almost in parallel (or even revisited), the order of tasks may be adapted occasionally to specific needs, or an activity may be partially omitted because its results are available from another planning exercise. Nonetheless, the SUMP cycle has established itself as a useful guidance that helps to structure and keep track of the planning process.

Figure 1: The 12 Steps of Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning (2nd Edition) – A decision maker’s overview



Phase 1: Preparation and analysis

The first milestone, and the starting point for the SUMP process, is an explicit decision by policy makers to prepare a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. In the first phase, the groundwork for the planning process is done by answering the following questions:

What are our resources?

Analyse all available (human, institutional, financial) resources for planning and set up appropriate working and participation structures to get started. At this stage, decision makers need to ensure that the key institutions and policy makers support the SUMP's development and contribute to setting up a core planning team.

What is our planning context?

Identify factors that will have an impact on the planning process, such as existing plans or legal requirements. Analyse traffic flows to determine the geographic scope of the plan – and ensure that neighbouring authorities and stakeholders are 'on board'. Agree on the planning timeline and recruit external support as needed. Activities in this and the previous step are closely linked and often run in parallel. A key task for decision makers at this point is to ensure that the 'functional urban area' serves as the planning area for the SUMP. This is often an institutionally and politically complex decision.

What are our main problems and opportunities?

Analyse the mobility situation from the perspective of all transport modes and relevant sustainability aspects by using an appropriate set of current data sources. The concluding milestone of the first phase is a completed analysis of the major problems and opportunities related to mobility in the entire functional urban area.

Phase 2: Strategy development

The goal of the second phase is to define the strategic direction of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan in cooperation with citizens and stakeholders. The key questions in this phase are:

What are our options for the future?

Analyse the likely changes in external factors important for urban mobility (e.g. demography, information technology, climate) and develop scenarios that explore alternative strategic directions. Scenarios try to capture the scope of uncertainty that comes with "looking into the future" in order to have a better factual basis for strategic decisions.

What kind of city do we want?

Use visioning exercises with stakeholders and citizens to develop a shared understanding of desirable futures, based on the results of the mobility analysis and scenario impacts. A common vision and objectives are cornerstones of every SUMP. A vision is a qualitative description of the desired mobility future for the city, which is then specified by concrete objectives that indicate the type of change aimed for. Make sure that your objectives address the important problems and that they cover all modes of transport in the functional urban area. Decision makers need to get actively involved at this stage, as this is the point at which the strategic direction for the next years is decided.

How will we determine success?

Define a set of strategic indicators and targets that allows you to monitor progress in all objectives without requiring unrealistic amounts of new data collection. Decision makers should ensure that the targets are ambitious, feasible, mutually consistent, widely supported by stakeholders, and aligned with other policy areas.

At the end of the second phase, you have reached the milestone of a widely supported vision, objectives and targets. If possible, decision makers should adopt these strategic priorities to ensure a stable guiding framework for the measure phase.

Phase 3: Measure planning

With the third phase, the planning process moves from the strategic to the operational level. This phase focuses on measures to achieve the agreed objectives and targets. Here the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is finalised and its implementation prepared by answering the following key questions:

What will we do concretely?

Create a longlist of measures and assess their effectiveness and feasibility to select those that best contribute to meeting your objectives and targets. Bundle measures into integrated packages, discuss them with citizens and stakeholders, and assess them in detail to validate your selection. Plan monitoring and evaluation for each measure.

What will it take and who will do what?

Break measure packages down into actionable tasks (or 'actions') and describe them in detail, including their estimated costs, interdependencies and risks. Identify internal and external financing instruments and funding sources for all actions. On that basis, agree clear responsibilities, implementation priorities and timelines for each action. At this stage it is essential to communicate the actions to political stakeholders and the public. For example, concrete building projects can be controversial even if their related objectives and measures are supported by a majority. Decision makers are required at this point to recruit political and public support for the measures and actions of the SUMP, ideally achieving a formal agreement on responsibilities and timeline among decision makers and key stakeholders.

Are we ready to go?

Many authors may have contributed to the various parts of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. Now it is time to finalise the document and check its quality. Based on your organisation's conventions, a detailed financial scheme can be included in the plan itself or is part of a separate process. In either case, you should agree on a budget for each prioritised action and long-term arrangements for the distribution of costs and revenues among all involved organisations before SUMP adoption.

The most important milestone of the planning process concludes the measure planning phase: The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is adopted by the decision makers of the competent political body.

Phase 4: Implementation and monitoring

The fourth phase focuses on implementing the measures and related actions defined in the SUMP, accompanied by systematic monitoring, evaluation and communication. Here the actions are put into practice by answering the following key questions:

How can we manage well?

The responsible departments and organisations should plan the technical details of their actions, undertake implementation and procure goods and services if needed. As this often involves a large amount of parties, the overall coordination of the implementation process requires particular attention.

How are we doing?

Systematic monitoring will make clear whether things are going according to plan, allowing corrective action to be taken if needed. Innovative mobility schemes can be a great disruption (as well as a great benefit) for daily travellers. Understanding public opinion, based on an active two-way dialogue, is crucial for a successful implementation process.

What have we learned?

The last step of the SUMP cycle is about reviewing successes and failures, and communicating these results with stakeholders and the public. This review process also looks towards the future and considers new challenges and solutions. Ideally, decision makers will take an active interest in understanding what has worked (and what has not), so that these lessons are considered in the next SUMP update.

The milestone 'Measure implementation evaluated' concludes the SUMP cycle.

4. How do I start developing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan?

The development and implementation of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is a process that involves many stakeholders from different parts of the planning authority, politics, and beyond. The plan takes a comprehensive look at the transport system, works across sectoral boundaries and initiates a change process toward more integrated planning. A successful SUMP process therefore starts with building support among the most important stakeholders.

Take a clear decision to develop a SUMP

The starting point for developing a SUMP should be a decision to improve the current mobility situation and a strong conviction that change towards greater sustainability is needed. It should be clear from the outset that urban transport is not an end in itself but contributes to higher goals, such as enhanced quality of life and well-being. A decision to prepare a SUMP always means a commitment to the general aims of:

- improving accessibility for all, regardless of income and social status;
- enhancing quality of life and the attractiveness of the urban environment;
- improving road safety and public health;
- contributing to climate goals by reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption; and
- increasing economic viability, social equity and environmental quality.

Gain political commitment

Depending on the national and local context, a legal obligation from the national level, an official decision by a local political body (such as the local council), or a commitment by the local administration can be the driving force for developing a SUMP. In any case, real commitment is needed to make it a truly sustainable and effective plan. If there is no political champion at the local level, it may be a challenge to convince other politicians to get behind the plan. This requires persuasive arguments presented by someone who is respected by the decision makers.

Find a framework for SUMP

A project or measure can itself also be the trigger to start the SUMP process. With the decision for a big infrastructure project (e.g. a new tram line) or a major urban innovation (e.g. a low emission zone) may come the need to embed the measure into a wider planning framework. A SUMP can offer an integrated approach to a large project, providing complementing measures, long-term targets and a participative approach. Especially for big and innovative projects with high impact, a SUMP offers the comprehensive participation strategies that are needed to gain public support for the measures. An infrastructure project that affects the entire region may even provide the impetus to launch a SUMP at the level of the functional urban area together with neighbouring municipalities.

Argue with the problems your city is currently facing – and with the improvements a SUMP could trigger

A useful approach is to show the challenges and problems the city will face if nothing is changed, to stress the benefits generated by a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, and to highlight the fact that voters will reward good results. In order to communicate urgency, it can be effective to simulate the negative consequences of business-as-usual development (e.g. in terms of future congestion and resulting economic losses, or in terms of indicators such as road fatalities or years of life lost due to air pollution) and to present these to politicians with the help of maps and figures. Current rapid changes driven by digital technologies highlight the urgency of developing a coherent strategic approach for future sustainable mobility. When communicating the benefits, it is often helpful to make the link to current high-priority issues in your city - such as air quality, traffic, road safety, affordability of housing or economic growth - by explaining how a SUMP can help to solve them.

Consider small-scale measures for quick wins

Political commitment can be challenging to achieve as the full benefits of a SUMP only become visible after a time span longer than the electoral cycle. It may be helpful to highlight the option of including smaller-scale measures with high visibility in the SUMP. These can generate public support in the short-term and trigger a

first decision to develop a SUMP. For example, the temporary transformation of public spaces with “light and cheap” solutions can help people visualise the possible positive changes (e.g. reallocation of street space, a temporary bike path separated with flower planters or parklets instead of parking spaces).

Get inspired by other cities

Many cities in Europe (and globally) were standing at this first decision point before. Plenty of them took the decision to develop their first SUMP. It can be a great argument to point to these cities that have successfully carried out Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning. The European city network provides an excellent basis to learn and get inspired by other stories and their successes and failures.

Start with some easy steps

If you have taken the decision to prepare a SUMP, you may feel like you are standing at the foot of a big mountain. Especially at the beginning of your journey, it helps to think about the mountain in stages, with small steps and reachable goals. With its four major phases, its steps and milestones, the format of the SUMP cycle will support you in this journey. For a smooth start to your process, the following ideas can be helpful:

Establish connections and collaboration in your functional urban area

- Organise a planning workshop with transport planners from surrounding municipalities. Not all municipalities may be interested, but if you simply start with those that are, the others may join in later.
- Identify common problems that require cooperation (e.g. congested commuter routes) and meet to identify solutions that benefit all municipalities (e.g. better commuter train or bus connections, Park&Ride or bicycle highways). It is often easier to establish cooperation around a concrete project than around abstract plans.

Open the conversation for fruitful cooperation across institutional boundaries

- Start involving colleagues from other relevant sectors (e.g. spatial planning, environment, economy, tourism, social services or health) in mobility planning processes. For strategic plans, strive for inter-disciplinary steering groups where the most relevant departments are represented. Also invite representatives of related sectors (e.g. environmental NGOs, business associations, health experts, police, youth council and school representatives) to stakeholder meetings.
- Identify cross-sectoral challenges. It is often easier to establish cooperation around a concrete project with common benefits (e.g. a walking campaign for school children planned jointly by the police, education and mobility department) than around abstract plans.
- Organise a meeting with colleagues in other departments and discuss the benefits of joint action. If an expert from a forerunner city is able to contribute to such meetings, this can often help to get messages across. The benefit is even greater if they are from a place that is perceived to be similar to yours.

Mobilise citizens and stakeholders

- Identify relevant stakeholders. Next to the general public, it is important to involve a balanced group of institutional representatives, such as political parties, citizen and community groups, business organisations, transport operators, etc.
- Identify and involve citizen and stakeholder groups early in the process. Actively communicate the decision to develop a SUMP, but also enable them to get engaged in the debate. It is crucial to listen and collect citizens' ideas and visions, in particular in the less technical planning phases when processes are more open and flexible.
- Organise a SUMP kick-off event with stakeholders and citizens and an interactive format. This could be, for example, a workshop, a public discussion or a world café.
- Start exploring ways of creatively engaging citizens. This can include conventional formats such as newspaper articles, radio pieces, website announcements, posters in public spaces, or household letters, as well as newer formats such as social media, short videos, a drop-in centre or a dedicated (interactive) website.

Start working towards a common vision for the city

- Together with citizens and stakeholders, you can start working towards a shared vision. Visioning exercises such as future search workshops can help you develop a shared understanding of how the city should look in the future and what change is needed to get there.

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