

***Regional Action Plan Stadsregio
Parkstad Limburg***

REFORM:

***Integrated Regional Action Plan for Innovative, Sustainable and Low Carbon
Mobility***

General information

Project:	REFORM
Partner organisation:	Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg (PSL)
Other partner organisations involved (if relevant):	
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.” Robert Swan, polar explorer

The ambition of Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg is to become energy-neutral in 2040. We envisage on achieving this through our energy use reduction until 2040 with one third and to generate the remaining two thirds with renewable resources in the region. With this dot on the horizon, Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg does a spatially realistic, scientifically based approach statement about its future energy management.

PALEST Limburg Energy Transition (PALET) forms the basis for a coordinated and systematic conversion of the regional ambition and local potential in concrete actions and projects in the PALET 3.0 implementation program, the current stage of PALET.

With that PALET 3.0 is an important pivot point in the whole process so far: how we succeed in achieving the many opportunities that can be translated in a structured way into projects for the current and first implementation period 2016-2020, with the dot on the horizon again and again to become an energy-neutral region in 2040.

In the implementation program, the long-term goal is therefore translated into concrete actions for the short period, in this case currently 2019-2020.

As part of the implementation program the participation of Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg as partner in the REFORM project is a logical step to fulfill the need to replace the current regional traffic and transport plan with an up-to-date regional sustainable urban mobility plan (SUMP) and integrate this regional SUMP into the regional policy to energy reduction.

Therefore Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg will use this Action Plan for the SUMP as pillar of the section ‘Infrastructure, Traffic and Transport’ within the program of PALET 3.0, current period till 2020, and PALET 3.1 (2021-2024) and updating every 4 years in accordance with the PALET implementation schedule.

On a broader policy context, the Operational Program South Netherlands 2014-2020 (OP Zuid) is a European subsidy program for the Southern provinces of the Netherlands: Zeeland, North Brabant and Limburg. One of the goals of this program is promoting innovation in accordance with the transition to a low-carbon economy within built areas.

With the participation in REFORM, Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg wants to ensure that the sustainable urban mobility planning will influence these goals of OP Zuid. During the preparation and implementation of the SUMP the integration of innovative and sustainable actions of this action plan aimed on the reducing of CO₂ emissions or a low carbon economy clearly relate to the goals of OP Zuid.

Due to the geographical location and taking into account the national and provincial policies in the area of cross-border cooperation, it is logical to make the next step with the city of Aachen and the Aachen city region in order to develop and implement the regional SUMP of Stadregio Parkstad Limburg.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Regional Policy for Sustainable Mobility

Both province and municipalities are currently working on the environmental vision.

This is a strategic long-term vision for the entire physical environment. Mobility and infrastructure are important themes in this. It is important to take care of good coherence between the different visions on provincial, regional and municipal level and to take this as the starting point for the concrete plan development and programming.

A regional SUMP will be the connecting link to the theme of Mobility and Infrastructure.

PALET provides the framework for the energy transition policy of the Parkstad Limburg region, with the aim to strive to be an energy-neutral region by 2040. Traffic and transport is an important pillar in this, because 16% of current energy consumption is attributable to this sector.

Therefore this is linked to the Sustainable Mobility program line, which will be seen in the development of our regional SUMP. The current mobility policy is laid down in the Regionaal Verkeers- en Vervoers-Plan (RVVP) 2011-2020. The term is almost expired. The regional SUMP also serves to update and replacement of this RVVP.

The Vision of the Region for Sustainable Mobility

The Parkstad Limburg region is a unique region with specific challenges and goals in the area of traffic and transport that cannot be separated from other policy fields.

There are no large-scale bottlenecks with regard to regional accessibility. The car is the most attractive means of transport in the region, with a share that is considerably higher than elsewhere in the Netherlands. This can be explained from a historical-cultural perspective and the limited attention in the past decades for behavioral change and stimulating alternatives, but also attribute to the fact that large-scale facilities mainly located at car locations and public transport and bicycle networks less developed and competitive.

On the one hand, this characterizes the still considerable lag that the region has in terms of sustainable mobility, on the other hand it also indicates the potential for a shift of the mobility climate.

Challenges in the area of environment, health, quality of life, safety and justice also seem more urgent in the Parkstad region. That is of course linked to the ambition of Parkstad Limburg to be an energy-neutral region by 2040 (with traffic & transport as one of the themes), but is also related to the population decline (quality of life) that the region faces and the fact that there are relative major problems in health and well-being.

This makes Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg a pre-eminently region where it is essential to use the resolving capacity of more sustainable mobility and approach this from a multi-sectoral /multi-governance perspective. A regional SUMP that should not be approached from a narrow accessibility context, but especially from a broad inclusive transition assignment focused on quality of life, sustainability, health and well-being.

The awareness of the usefulness and necessity for a change / transition in which more walking, cycling, public transport and (sharing of) electric mobility is central is still insufficiently present with the policymakers.

This seems to be both an administrative and governance issue and characterizes the considerable challenge there is for creating governmental and social support in and along with all involved municipalities to achieve an ambitious regional SUMP 2040.

In our vision on (new) mobility there are five important developments that are of great influence in the coming years on the mobility landscape:

- 1 The emergence of automatic transport
- 2 A traffic system that is connected and in which vehicles and road users communicate with each other and with the infrastructure
- 3 More electric (public) transport that makes a positive contribution to the air quality of our cities
- 4 Sharing systems that are also easily and cross-border accessible via MaaS (Mobility as a Service) solutions (as it is becoming increasingly easier to share (cost) via more effective means of transport)
- 5 New means of transport like e-steps, drones and speed pedelecs are being added and makes it possible to travel more intelligently, but also ensures new challenges and space claims in our network.

All these developments can contribute to a greater or lesser degree and with the right direction healthier, fairer, coherent, pleasant, accessible and cheaper mobility system whereby data and data systems as building blocks are essential.

Here are 4 important points of attention:

- 1 Technology, new services and data are not a goal in themselves, but a way to use.
- 2 New mobility is also low-tech
- 3 Technology and behavior must be viewed together
- 4 Altered roles are just as important as the content.

Finally, on the above mentioned relevant trends and developments, which also touch the Parkstad Limburg region, must be anticipated and it is clear that we need to think differently about regional and local mobility. Obviously, an integrated and multi-sectoral approach is also applicable here.

The goal of the implementation of our Action Plan is a regional SUMP: Future-proof, accessible, smart, clean and boundless mobility so that people in the City Region of Parkstad Limburg can move freely according to wish and need.

REFORM activities towards the development of the Action Plan

In the first phase of the REFORM project, Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg (PSL) developed a number of activities that led to parts of the Action Plan:

The **two plenary meetings** with both mobility officials and civil servants of sustainability have ensured that the current view on mobility issues must be changed to an integrated people-oriented approach to meet the challenge of a sustainable and future-proof mobility system in PSL. As result of the meetings PSL introduced the “Mobility” round table as entity to promote the integral design and cooperation in the area of Mobility, Sustainability and Spatial Planning

- PSL has the explicit desire to update and improve the quality of Transport Hubs of Public Transport as part of regional and provincial policy.

With the composition of a consortium of stakeholders during the **Focus Groups on Technical Sector meetings**, PSL has given substance to thinking in and looking for creative solutions for improving and up-to-date design of transfer points in public transport to strengthen the mobility chain.

The results of the consortium are concrete recommendations and designs for the 9 major and 14 smaller transfer points in PSL summarized and bundled in 4 significant reports on the multifunctional implementation of the transfer points in the areas of design, sustainability, smart mobility, wayfinding and maintenance.

- The **‘Walk and Talk’ meeting** organized by PSL in the framework of the REFORM project focused on the need for change with regard to sustainable mobility solutions. In the context of an integrated approach for the SUMP, PSL invited Ronald Rovers as key note speaker to indicate the need for change in the area of sustainability and mobility. He is an expert in the field of circular building and has his own internationally renowned research institute RiBUILT.

After his inspiring speech, the Walk and Talk Meeting started and related to the challenges of the integrated approach, leading to a regional SUMP. The themes of Cycling, Public Transport, E-Cars and Behavior Influence and Change have been discussed extensively.

With the ideas of the discussion and the knowledge that the actions of the Action Plan must be implemented and included in the SUMP, the stakeholders involved will make a lot of effort, especially for the sustainable use of bicycles and public transport in particular.

- The **‘Scientific Café’ meeting** started with an interactive lecture by Arie Bleijenberg from scientific research agency TNO. He has done research on the mobility issues of the future based on statistics. Based on his research the speed of the means of transport such as car has remained the same in recent years, so we are looking for other travel options to cover our kilometers.

The goal of the Scientific Café was to encourage conversation, debate, interaction, and dialogue between the involved stakeholders and challenged them to think differently to the mobility issues.

In this context, PSL organized an interactive quiz via an app on the mobile phone. During this part of the Scientific Café, the stakeholder received six statements in the field of sustainability and mobility issues. First, the stakeholders were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed and what the relevant keywords are for the individual participant in these statements.

For each statement 6 minutes was used to discuss the answers that were shared on the screen. By doing so the themes of Cycling, Public Transport, E-Cars and Behavior Influence and Change have been discussed extensively and that gave each participant the opportunity to look at other and different solutions, as well as to explain his or her motivation on the solution.

The ideas and inspiration, which came out of the discussions on the statements during the Scientific Café Meeting, will be taken forward to the implementation of the Action Plan into SUMP of the involved municipalities of PSL.

- The **Citizen Survey** of PSL was done last year (2017), in line with the Citizen Survey Scheme conducted every two years.

For this survey PSL used quantitative and qualitative mobility figures of the so called “Parkstadmonitor”. The municipalities of the PSL arranged this survey.

The survey reveals the degree in which residents are satisfied with the following aspects of traffic in the neighborhood: traffic on roads and streets; traffic speed on roads and streets;

parking area possibilities; sidewalks and footpaths; pedestrian crossings; safety school routes; bicycle facilities; bus connections; priority regimes

The survey of 2017 was done by the municipalities of Heerlen, Kerkrade, Voerendaal, Brunssum, Simpelveld and Landgraaf, all members of PSL. The municipalities Nuth and Onderbanken, who are also part of PSL, have no scores in this survey and the explanation therefore is that these two municipalities are busy to merge with each other.

In the context of the development of the regional SUMP, the citizen survey of the Parkstad Monitor is a good overview of the current traffic situation at municipal level. The report also provides a clear indication of the trend at the traffic level through its long-term nature.

PSL considers the results of the Parkstad Monitor as a useful basis and suitable as background information for the next steps in the formation of the regional SUMP.

With the intended integral approach for the SUMP, PSL will carry out a further inventory, in addition to the figures on traffic, of the available and relevant data on demography, movement patterns, modal split, target groups, health, environment, etc. to get a complete picture of the problems and challenges in the Parkstad region.

With this inventory, PSL will not limit itself to the traffic domain, but immediately look for the common ground and starting points in other domains such as the environment and health. Such a multi-level approach increases the resolution of the regional SUMP.

POLICY CONTEXT

The Policy Instrument of PSL, which is Operational Program South-Netherlands 2014-2020 (OP Zuid), has the emphasis to promote and stimulate innovation elements in respect to the transition to a low-carbon economy in the built environment. Operational Program South-Netherlands 2014-2020 (OP Zuid) is a program aimed at the southern provinces of the Netherlands, being Zeeland, Noord-Brabant and Limburg. For that reason, the province of Limburg as an entity is the party involved and therefore the Managing Authority.

The Action Plan aims to impact OP Zuid in the field of sustainable and innovative mobility solutions in connection with the regional energy transition PALET. The regional SUMP will become the 'Infrastructure, Traffic and Transport' pillar under implementation program PALET 3.1 (2021-2024) and therefore has, just like PALET, the year 2040 as a dot on the horizon.

Together with the development and implementation of the regional SUMP we as PSL have to take into account a Dutch law change, the so-called Environmental Law (Omgevingswet). The introduction of this new law runs parallel in terms of time with the implementation of the regional SUMP.

With the development and implementation of the regional SUMP the current regional traffic and transport plan (RVVP 2011-2020) will be replaced. With an integrated coordination and collaboration between Mobility, Sustainability and Spatial Planning departments at the one hand and PSL in a directing and leading role between the civil servants involved in the affiliated PSL municipalities at the other hand this Action Plan includes actions that we can describe as 'low-hanging fruit' that will be harvested in the coming years.

Initiating the actions of this REFORM Action Plan based on mutual solidarity and broadly supported involvement of the municipalities of Parkstad Limburg will guide the formation of our regional SUMP in 2021.

ACTIONS

ACTION 1: Leisure Lane

The Background

From the REFORM Good Practices 'Maastricht Bereikbaar' and 'Bella Mossa' PSL has taken the higher and better use of the bicycle as lessons learned to provide a more sustainable solution for commuting in the region. With the employers' approach from Maastricht Bereikbaar by helping and stimulating employees to use the car less, avoiding rush-hour traffic and choosing the (E-) bicycle as a sustainable alternative and the possibility to earn rewards with running and cycling through the use of the 'Bella Mossa' app. Important elements of both GPs are the strong degree of influencing behavior, which actually leads to a behavioral change in the field of sustainable mobility solutions.

Description

In the Parkstad region, a unique cycling and walking route with international allure will be built in the coming years. A route that connects the attractive green areas and beautiful urban parks. The Leisure Lane will be the link in the international network of long-distance cycling routes between the German Vennbahn and the Belgian coal track.

It is an attractive bike path through the entire region with which you can experience the landscape and culture in the region. It makes parks within the urban area accessible and connects urban functions and the touristic attractions in Parkstad in a smooth way. IBA (International Bau Ausstellung) Parkstad has developed the Leisure Lane together with Parkstad municipalities and the Province of Limburg. IBA Parkstad gives the Leisure Lane an extra quality boost by increasing the landscape value. The starting points are biodiversity and attractive planting.

Meanwhile, the first possibilities are being explored to apply smart mobility on the Leisure Lane. The special width of this bike path (4.5 meters wide) and its appearance offer sufficient possibilities for this.

When designing the Leisure Lane, which is a recreational bicycle connection from north to south within the Parkstad Limburg region, it is important to connect this cycle route well with existing bicycle connections running from west to east within the region in order to optimize the use of the Leisure Lane with commuting traffic.

Players involved

Province Limburg, IBA Parkstad and 5 municipalities PSL

Timeframe

From 2019 until the end of 2020

Costs

Within budget of involved players (see above) and therefore not relevant

Funding sources

Own resources of involved players (see above)

ACTION 2: Bike Sharing System

The Background

As result of the two plenary meetings, PSL introduced the “Mobility” round table as entity to promote the integral design and cooperation in the area of Mobility, Sustainability and Spatial Planning. In connection with this and the inspiring meetings Walk & Talk and Scientific Café (as described as ‘REFORM activities towards the development of the Action Plan’) PSL has decided to opt for a bike sharing system, which is given the opportunity to promote the use of E bikes as a sustainable mode of transport in favor of the car. The promotion and stimulation of this bike sharing system is part of the behavioral influence of car users to show them a better, cheaper and more sustainable transport alternative.

Description

Currently there are two providers of a (E-) bike sharing system as partners available, Nextbike and Velocity. Nextbike is at the forefront of offering reliable, flexible and high quality single bike systems.

Nextbike offers station-based, free-floating and hybrid systems so that an appropriate system can always be integrated into the region. Nextbike works together with cities, public transport companies, companies and universities to offer a sustainable business model.

Since April 2017, Nextbike has been active on the Dutch market, together with partner Arriva, single bikes have been rolled out in Maastricht and Dordrecht.

Limburg has the pilot of testing E-bikes from Velocity. In Parkstad, Kerkrade is getting the scoop with the first lending point of the E-bike project Velocity Aachen.

Velocity Aachen is a network of lending points for E-bikes. Residents and visitors of the Meuse-Rhine Euregion, a cross-border partnership of, among others, Parkstad Limburg and city region Aachen, can use the bicycles after one-off registration, via an app or using a chip card.

At the moment, no choice has been made with regard to the options for a (E-)bike sharing system within the city region of Parkstad Limburg, however it is desirable to make a choice for one of the systems from uniformity and scale point of view, taking into account the possibilities and needs of the users of the (E-)bikes in regard to sustainable mobility.

Players involved

City Region Parkstad Limburg in a coordinating and directing role to choose one of the providers, Nextbike or Velocity, in consultation with the 8 participating municipalities

Timeframe

Until the end of 2020

Costs

Under investigation by Parkstad Limburg and depending on choice (E-)bike sharing system, together with need and demand of local situation of municipalities.

Funding sources

Not specified yet, because of investigation of costs.

ACTION 3: SUMP-integration 'THINK SUMP'

The Background

From the two plenary meetings and the meetings of Walk & Talk and Scientific Café in particular, it emerged that an integrated approach and looking at the mobility issues differently are the starting points for the development and design of the regional SUMP. The choice to place pedestrians and cyclists first is essential to transform the current mobility situation into a sustainable, safe and healthy mobility solution.

With the integration and implementation of SUMP in the region of PSL a specific and important role of influences and chances of human behavior is necessary.

Description

'THINK SUMP' is the working title of a program of which PSL will start, together with as much as possible stakeholders, to think and change the way of thinking about mobility. This means that the mindset for mobility needs to lead to a behavioral change of people with regard to their own mobility and the sustainability of it.

The program will start with the policymakers at the intersection of Mobility, Sustainability and Spatial Planning and will be extended to the stakeholders of an improvement of the bicycle infrastructure, the development of a clean city distribution, the stimulation of electro mobility for both bicycle and car and the stimulation of the (use of) public transport in PSL.

Players involved

PSL in a coordinating and directing role in consultation with the 8 participating municipalities and the involved stakeholders to influence and change behaviour in regard to sustainable mobility in the region.

Timeframe

Until the end of 2020

Costs

Development of program has (estimated) costs of €50.000

Funding sources

Working budget of PSL

ACTION 4: Bella Mossa

The Background

Bella Mossa (REFORM GP3) is a gamification process to promote sustainable mobility, which was used in the city of Bologna. Gamification is a proven process consisting in adding game like elements to encourage participation in using sustainable mobility solutions with quite a new approach. In line with the outcomes of REFORM stakeholders' meetings like 'Walk & Talk' and 'Scientific Café' the innovative approach itself and the goal to use (E-)bike more ensures PSL to use this action.

The implementation of Bella Mossa, in combination with the behavioral influence/change and the employer approach of Maastricht Bereikbaar, provides an additional and integral range for stimulating walking and cycling as a sustainable mobility solution, which improves the quality of life.

Description

Bella Mossa is a technical device through an app on a smartphone. Bella Mossa uses gamification as a fun way to encourage people using sustainable mobility and quite a new approach. In the Bella Mossa initiative, there are challenges among single user or companies' teams that aim at fostering a sustainable way of moving.

Parkstad Limburg wants to incorporate this Good Practice from the REFORM project to further promote the use of the bicycle as a sustainable mobility alternative. Of course, the use of the app can also stimulate the other possibilities of sustainable mobility.

This action in combination with the behavioral influence/change and the action 'Parkstad Bereikbaar' encloses a large package of measures, which lead to a reduction of CO2 emissions and sustainable quality improvement of the living environment in Parkstad Limburg

Players involved

PSL together with program management of Maastricht Bereikbaar will investigate the use of the app as a tool in the employers' approach of Maastricht Bereikbaar (REFORM GP10).

Timeframe

Until the end of 2020

Costs

Under investigation by Parkstad Limburg to use Bella Mossa as an app in combination with the employers' approach of Maastricht Bereikbaar.

Funding sources

Under investigation by Parkstad Limburg and depending on the possibility of claiming funding sources from OP South by a call under program 4F "The transition to a low-carbon economy in the built environment and Innovation promotion"

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The nature and character of the above described actions is a combination of a behavioral influence/change program and concrete additional measures to facilitate and shape the changes.

By implementing the actions, which are all aimed at a sustainable mobility preference, namely the cyclist/pedestrian in the first place instead of the motorist, our Action Plan generally leads to the objective of our participation in the REFORM project, namely to influence policy instrument Operational Program South-Netherlands 2014-2020 (OP Zuid) by focusing the actions on low-carbon energy in the built environment and promoting innovation.

The possibilities for the financial resources of this program are therefore real and will be addressed in cooperation with both the province of Limburg and the municipalities involved. From the coordinating and directing role, PSL has contact with the responsible department of Operational Program South-Netherlands 2014-2020 (OP Zuid), so that a financing application within the framework of low-carbon energy in the built environment depends on the planning and budget of the action from the Action Plan. The amount and the granting of the financing can therefore not be specified at this time.

With the efforts in the field of behavioral influencing/change and the conscious choice to put the (E-) bike / pedestrian at the top of the mobility chain, the resulting actions, as described in this Action Plan, will not stand alone.

In the coming years, attention will also be paid to making the other parts of the mobility chain more sustainable. The following elements are important here: updating and improving transport hubs public transport, proactively setting up the infrastructure for public charging stations E-cars, placing solar panels on parking spaces and the development of an E-car policy and E-car Sharing System.

The exemplary role of both civil servants and employers, the cooperation and collaboration between central government, province, the municipalities involved and local market participants and the action-oriented integral approach in the areas of mobility, sustainability and spatial planning will lead to the broad-based transition to a sustainable and vital mobility climate in Parkstad Limburg, the regional SUMP of Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg.

ENDORSEMENT

This action plan will be (politically) endorsed by:

Charles Claessens

Alderman for Management and Maintenance, Mobility, Sustainability & Environment

Date:

Signature(s):