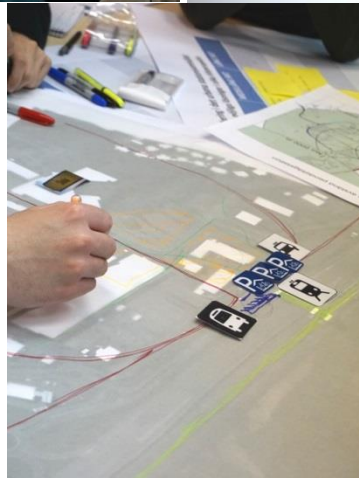


ANNUAL REPORT 2015

# Urban Station Communities - the way to resource- efficient travel

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# 1. About the overall knowledge process

## 1.1 Introduction

Marked by great commitment from all project participants, this has been a very eventful year. Interest in “Urban Station Communities” has remained considerable – from academic and various public bodies at local, regional and national levels.

## 1.2 Background and purpose of the overall project

The future role of station communities is critical in the development of towns and regions. Developing said communities will promote: social and land-use planning that is transport-efficient; sustainable economic development; and, region attractiveness. Urban development around stations is a challenge shared by many bodies and stakeholders.

“Urban Station Communities – the way to resource-efficient travel” is a knowledge process within the framework of Mistra Urban Futures. In “Urban Station Communities”, various projects and activities are initiated to increase knowledge about: the complex elements in station area planning; and, creating the right conditions for developing station communities into attractive and sustainable places in which to live and set up home.

In 2012, a research and practice overview was drawn up (Mistra Urban Futures Report 2013:3). In 2013, the project was given a more formal structure when the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities, the Swedish Transport Administration, the Västra Götaland region and the Västra Götaland county administrative board decided to finance process management. Agreements on financial contributions were also concluded with participating municipalities. Our work in 2013 is described in Lägesrapport 2013 (“Status Report 2013”). A number of projects were initiated and many activities were carried out in 2014. The report you now have in your hands gives an account of what happened in 2015.

The overall “Urban Station Communities – the way to resource-efficient travel” knowledge process now involves the following parties:

- The Västra Götaland county administrative board.
- The Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities.
- The Swedish Transport Administration.
- The Västra Götaland region.
- Eleven municipalities (Ale, Alingsås, Borås, Kungälv, Lerum, Gothenburg, Härryda, Partille, Stenungsund, Trollhättan and Varberg).

Other partners are involved in various projects and activities. Said projects and activities are initiated based on the seven focus areas set out below. These have been jointly identified by the project parties as critical for the development of urban station communities.

- Noise, vibration and risk.
- Dialogue and collaboration.
- Lifestyle values, identity and local marketing.
- Structure and design of sustainable communities.
- Land use and land values.
- Flexible, sustainable transport.
- The station’s role in its catchment area.

## 1.2 Focus of the work in 2015

In 2015, process management focused on formulating a direction for the work in the next three-year period, 2016 – 2019. The year was also marked by some of the initial subprojects reporting results, primarily from pilot studies. A number of funding applications for the coming years have also been drawn up.

### **1.3 Process management and steering group**

A regional steering group for the overall “Urban Station Communities” knowledge process was appointed in 2014. It had five meetings during the year. The group comprises the following people:

- Andreas Lidholm, the Västra Götaland county administrative board.
- Henrik Zetterquist, the Swedish Transport Administration.
- Jörgen Ryding, the Swedish Transport Administration.
- Maria Sigroth, Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities.
- Mikael Cullberg, Mistra Urban Futures.
- Ulrika Bokeberg, the Västra Götaland region.

Throughout the year, Alice Dahlstrand (the Swedish Transport Administration), Amie Ramstedt (Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities) and Ulf Ranhagen (KTH/Sweco) took care of overall process management.

## **2. Projects**

Below, there are details of the projects that were ongoing or started in 2015.

### **2.1 From knowledge creep to transdisciplinary knowledge agents: sharing and translating knowledge into urban station community development**

This project in the form of a pilot study was led by three researchers: Joakim Forsemalm of the University of Gothenburg and Radar arkitektur & planering AB; project manager Ingrid Svetoft of Halmstad University; and, Magnus Johansson of Malmö University. The initiative for a pilot study was taken following discussions at a meeting attended by all parties in “Urban Station Communities”.

To understand the breadth of the various knowledge requirements and knowledge relationships, the research trio carried out transdisciplinary workshops focused on key projects and future development potential in Båstad, Laholm, Trollhättan and Stenungsund. The pilot study is described in “Learning to develop regions through municipalities – Urban station communities as a tool for sustainable transport systems” (Mistra Urban Futures Report 2015:18). This report can be downloaded from Mistra Urban Futures’ website. The project also submitted a research application to FORMAS (the Swedish research council for sustainable development).

In the pilot study, transdisciplinary exchanges of knowledge are identified as being extremely limited. Seldom or never do the agents in the focus group meetings sit around the same table. The study further identifies that metaphors can be a bridge for communication between, for example, politicians and civil servants or civil servants and researchers. Such metaphors can even be described as boundary objects. The study presents the proposals set out below.

#### **1. Create temporary working groups around current expansion projects in locations near to stations**

By creating temporary working groups around ongoing station development projects that are judged to be of regional interest, it is possible to bring together representatives from: the municipality concerned; the county administrative board; the region in question; county traffic operators; and, private building contractors.

It is recommended that working groups work in two steps. Step one: identify development potential and conflicts of interest. Step two: develop possible ways of handling these conflicts (taking into account relevant legislation and ongoing planning processes).

Working groups are not intended to replace the roles and tasks of the various parties. Rather, they are a complement, a meeting place where the various agents can discuss the challenges affecting the expansion of a station community. It is then up to the municipality and the other parties involved to prioritise between the various proposed solutions.

## **2. Facilitate knowledge transfer and dialogues between politicians at regional and municipal levels**

There is a risk of imbalance between politicians and civil servants. The latter have wide opportunities to participate in professional discussion of the significance of urban station communities. Politicians are not always given the same opportunity. At several workshops, it emerged that there was a desire to create opportunities for better knowledge transfer between politicians. Thus, for knowledge transfers between politicians at local and regional levels, a meeting place similar to that above for civil servants is suggested.

*The project was financed by:* Mistra Urban Futures; Region Halland; Region Skåne; and, Skåne county administrative board.

*Project participants:* Region Halland; Region Skåne; Skåne county administrative board; Radar arkitektur & planering AB; Halmstad University; Malmö University; municipalities; and, GR (Gothenburg region).

*Contact person:* Joakim Forsemalm, Radar arkitektur & planering AB, joakim@radar-arkplan.se.

### **2.2 Safety and pleasant sound environment in urban station communities**

This project focuses on ways of counteracting the problems of noise, vibration and risk. Currently, these present an obstacle to urbanisation around stations. This is partly because of an unclear allocation of responsibilities and contradictory guidelines. There are also deficiencies in today's solutions in respect of functionality and aesthetics requirements in urban locations. A pilot study mapping out conditions, regulations and agents has been completed and can be read via Mistra Urban Futures' website. The pilot study highlights the following:

- The need for a holistic approach – noise, vibration and risk affect the entire community.
- The opportunities for the local authority are frequently limited.
- The incentives to find solutions need to be increased.

Greater possibilities for developing:

- Technical innovations (deal with problems near the source).
- Complex problems require more and wider incentives so that clear goals can be reached.
- Responsibility needs to be coordinated and allocated between agents and those affected.
- Wider calculation and finance models.

As the issue is of a complex nature, the steering group is working on the project's future financing, direction and management at both national and regional levels.

*The pilot study was financed by:* The Swedish Transport Administration; and, SP (consultant, White Arkitekter).

*Project participants in the pilot study:* The Swedish Transport Administration; SP; municipalities; and, White Arkitekter.

*The pilot study's contact people:* Krister Larsson SP, krister.larsson@sp.se; and, (for the continuing project) Alice Dahlstrand, alice.dahlstrand@trafikverket.se.

### **2.3 The role of stations in developing small communities and the areas around them**

The purposes of this project were: to study how a train station at a small site can contribute to regional and local development; and, to generate knowledge about residents, people who may move to the area and entrepreneurs. The project will contribute to there being greater consensus and more collaboration between regional and local bodies involved with community and catchment area development linked to public transport. It has resulted in three reports, a "knowledge compilation", a mapping out and an empirical study. A report summarising the three interim reports is being drawn up.

In brief, the project identified: gaps in research knowledge as regards small communities; and, the fact that the literature is strongly pervaded by the "urban ideal". The mapping out shows that it is not possible to identify a single factor that determines whether or not a station community will develop

positively. Instead, there are several interacting parameters. However, proximity to Gothenburg, nearness to the coast and efficient public transport are important.

The empirical study is based on in-depth interviews with residents of three station communities. These interviews highlight a number of factors affecting the decision to live in a small community. The importance of good travel connections with the surrounding region is critical in the decision to live in small communities. Such importance is primarily attributed to job possibilities, but varies between communities. The decision to live in a specific community is attributed to financial restrictions. Ahead of the community itself, respondents valued good travel connections with the region and the general character of small communities and the areas around them.

The interviews also showed a positive attitude towards community expansion in close proximity to the station area. Coming after travel connections with the region, the traits and character of a community and its immediate surroundings seemed to be a sought after secondary value/settlement motive. Character traits were primarily evaluated from the perspective of providing children with safe and inspiring environments.

*Financed by:* The Västra Götaland region; Region Halland; and, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (municipalities are making in-kind contributions).

*Project participants:* Region Halland; the Västra Götaland region; municipalities; the University of Gothenburg; and, Kulturgeografiska institutionen.

*Contact person:* Linda Billberg, the Västra Götaland region, linda.billberg@vgregion.se.

#### **2.4 Sustainable and attractive station communities**

This project is being carried out with support from VINNOVA (Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems). The goal is to contribute to the growth of station communities by developing and demonstrating products and services for efficient land use and sustainable local mobility. Lerum and Ale (two municipalities) are providing the cases. Over the next two years, they will be working with a wide consortium of researchers and public and private agents.

The project will be working on:

- A calculation tool suitable for various groups (e.g. planners, estate agents, bankers, construction companies, etc.). The tool should, for example, show the climate effect of various exploitation choices and enable bankers and estate agents to offer accommodation calculations with time budgets and climate footprints.
- A service and incentive platform for sustainable local mobility.
- Development and testing of services linked to sustainable local mobility.
- Collaboration and dialogue with potential users (in order to get a bottom-up perspective).

*Project participants:* the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities; the Västra Götaland region; Västrafik, the municipality of Ale; the municipality of Lerum; ICA; Ale Bygg; Handelsbanken; Svensk Fastighetsförmedling; Derome; Wallenstam; Skanska; HSB; Förbo; Jutabo; Bzzzt; CleverApps; Chalmers University Of Technology; SP Technical Research Institute of Sweden; Viktoria Swedish ICT; and, IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute. The project was initiated within the framework of the Mistra Urban Futures international knowledge centre and is being coordinated by the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities.

*Contact person:* Åsa Hult IVL, asa.hult@ivl.se.

### **3. Associated projects**

To increase knowledge related to the indicated focus areas, “Urban Station Communities” also collaborates with several other projects. Several of these are described below.

### **3.1 Climate-smart and attractive transport nodes**

The project's overall goal is to enhance knowledge of the relationship between stations and their urban surroundings. This is aimed at achieving energy-efficient and attractive town structures. The project asked the question whether station-proximity effects could be achieved at distances greater than 600 m. Achievement would be: through spatial structure and design; and, by combining various methods and tools in transdisciplinary planning processes.

To improve sustainability and attractiveness in the interface between station buildings and the surrounding areas of the community, the project has developed new knowledge and new methods for urban design. Using an inclusive process, the project has worked (at many different scales) to explore the possibilities for: an expanded "station-proximity principle"; and, town spatial factors for sustainable mobility. This research was intensified via workshops in Uppsala, Lund and Borås. The final report, drawn up by a research team at the Royal Institute of Technology and Luleå University of Technology, can be downloaded via *Mistra Urban Futures'* website.

*Contact person:* Ulf Ranhagen, ulf.ranhagen@abe.kth.se.

### **3.2 Service production for sustainable and dynamic towns – design of collaboration platforms in complex planning processes – ongoing**

The Royal Institute of Technology, Konstfack (University College of Arts, Crafts and Design) and others are running a project regarding collaboration platforms for developing dialogues in complex planning processes. This project is also closely linked with the sustainability certification of urban districts (HCS). The project's finances include funds from VINNOVA. Process management for "Urban Station Communities" has linked in the municipality of Varberg as a case in this project. "Urban Station Communities" is also closely monitoring this project through having a representative on the project's advisory board.

### **3.3 Low carbon stations for low carbon cities**

The Swedish Transport Administration has provided economic support for the European Yellow design Foundation team's research into station areas and how, through more efficient planning of passenger and goods transport flows, carbon dioxide emissions can be reduced. Anne Leemans is one of the researchers on the YdF team. In Sweden, YdF has investigated Stockholm, Malmö and Gothenburg. Results have been compared with those from other countries. In this way, the project has developed recommendations that can be used in the design of station areas and flows. The final report can be downloaded via *Mistra Urban Futures'* website.

## **4. Submitted applications and applications in progress**

Chalmers submitted an industrial PhD funding application to the Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research. This doctorate would be connected to the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities. It would compare the processes around station communities in Sweden with those in South Africa.

Lena Hopsch, PhD and senior lecturer, submitted an application for funding from the Västra Götaland region's mobility programme (MoRE) and for co-financing from *Mistra Urban Futures'* for a research exchange between Chalmers and the Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO). The research would focus on the question of how "resident dialogues" can be used to develop strategies for designing entrances to station communities. These entrances would be expressions of sustainable transport, local identity and regional needs.

The research trio who worked on the pilot study "From knowledge creep to transdisciplinary knowledge agents: sharing and translating knowledge into urban station community development" have, based on the results, submitted an application to FORMAS. The project applied for aimed to:

- Create (based on knowledge from case studies) better understanding for how professional planners identify, understand and face up to various forms of obstacles for sustainable urban development.

- Give proposals for new ways of working with sustainable urban development.
- Give proposals (based on case studies) for how best to support professional learning that leads to new forms of professional behaviour that: promote sustainable urban development; and, provide the basis for establishing an infrastructure for learning. In turn, this infrastructure must support the growth of alternative and community-based models for sustainable development, with bottom-up urban development.

Mistra Urban Futures also granted an application, from process management, for seed money to initiate and design a major research application in connection with spatial planning of existing and new station communities. This is in co-creative processes with the Royal Institute of Technology, Chalmers, the University of Gothenburg and the Faculty of Engineering at Lund University as research agents. Assisting participants and co-financers are the Västra Götaland region, the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities and the municipalities of Härryda, Kungälv and Stenungsund.

## 5. Major activities

### **Workshop day, 12 May, with two separate themes (pleasant sound environment and commuter parking)**

Altogether, some thirty civil servants (representing seven municipalities in western Götaland), the Swedish Transport Administration, the county administrative board and Västtrafik took part.

This workshop day was divided into two different parts. Commuter parking was the main subject of the morning. The sound environment occupied the afternoon. Work started with a description of the cases and presentations from experts. The latter contributed knowledge and perspectives. In the workshop, the participants worked practically on four real cases (the municipalities of Ale, Härryda, Kungälv and Lerum) in groups comprising representatives from the various organisations. Methodology was based on backcasting. The results of this were then transferred, with discussion and application, to the four cases' physical environments. Proposals were presented on sketch maps. The second part of the day (sound environment), followed the same format.



Photo: Workshop, 12 May 2015

### **Stenungsund workshop – travel centre location**

In Stenungsund, the work of siting a new travel centre is currently in progress. A siting investigation was carried out in 2012, but a decision on the location of a new travel centre has yet to be taken. The municipal executive board decided that a workshop day should be held. Process management for “Urban Station Communities” was contacted to facilitate the workshop and contribute knowledge. The workshop was aimed at helping the municipality move further ahead in its process for siting the travel centre.

Fourteen politicians and nineteen civil servants participated. The day started with descriptions of: the background; the problems that were faced; and, which investigations had been carried out. Ulf Ranhagen and Amie Ramstedt, the day's process managers, gave a presentation of station development in the world at large.



In the workshop, participants used a form of multi-criteria analysis involving the weighting of set goals and the ranking of the alternative locations. Said ranking was based on how well each alternative met each goal. This exercise resulted in tables showing how the various alternative locations satisfied the set goals.

### **Urban research and urban lunch time**

During the year, these projects within the framework of “Urban Station Communities” gave reports at the following Mistra Urban Futures' events:



- Urban research – Low carbon stations for low carbon cities.
- Urban lunch time – The role of stations in developing small communities and the areas around them.
- Urban lunch time – Safety and pleasant sound environment in urban station communities.

## 6. Evaluation of Mistra Urban Futures

In the spring, an evaluation of the work in Mistra Urban Futures was carried out. There was an international evaluation panel. The Gothenburg platform was able to demonstrate great commitment through a number of subprojects. Continuation for 2016 has been given the go-ahead.

## 7. Planning of “Urban Station Communities”, 2016 – 2019

During the year, process management started planning a continuation of “Urban Station Communities” (2016 – 2019). The idea is to focus more clearly on local and regional accessibility and to link ongoing projects and activities more closely to each other via an overall process that has joint, co-creative activities. In this way, knowledge, expertise and findings can be shared between projects and their participants.

## 8. Trainees and students

Our exchanges between academics and practitioners also entail students and trainees being involved in our work.

“Monitoring of two workshops in ‘Urban Station Communities’”, project work, David Eriksson, the Blekinge Institute of Technology.

“A push in the right direction – about influencing behaviour and nudging towards passenger travel that is more sustainable”, master’s thesis, Sara Linder, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in Alnarp.

“How can future methodologies be applied in the planning process? Case study of the Kisumu (Kenya) and Centralen (Gothenburg, Sweden) bus parks and railway stations”, Varvara Nikulina, Chalmers University of Technology.

## 9. Other events in the project

In 2015, besides a number of events under the aegis of Mistra Urban Futures and presentations in various local and regional contexts, “Urban Station Communities” also participated in several national arenas and was represented in others. These are a few examples:

- Sections of the steering group took part in a session at Almedalen (an annual week-long event that has become Sweden’s biggest political meeting place).
- The “Sustainable and attractive urban station communities” project was invited to give a presentation of itself at an event in which, amongst others, the Minister for Housing and the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications participated.
- Ulf Ranhagen presented the project at a seminar with the “Environmental Objectives Committee” of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.