IURC North America

INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION: SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE CITIES II

European Union Regional Action - North America

2021 - 2023

IURC
INTERNATIONAL URBAN AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

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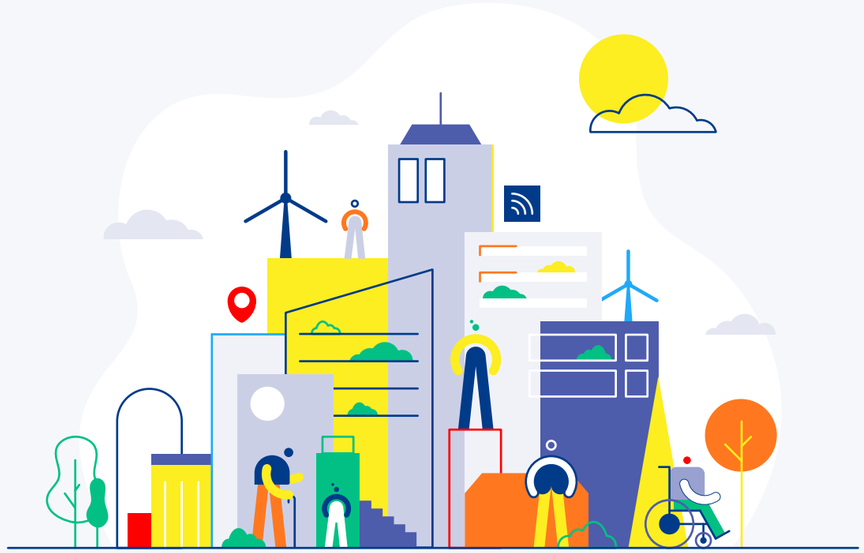
About IURC NA

The European Union's International and Regional Urban Cooperation (IURC) programme is the world's largest city-to-city cooperation programme and an international network of reference for urban innovation and sustainable urban development. IURC North America partners European cities with Canadian and USA cities to facilitate knowledge exchange through online tools and face-to-face support such as study visits, participation in thematic and networking events, and capacity building.



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IURC NA in Numbers

8
Partnership Agreements Signed

16
Study Visits

8
Urban Cooperation Action Plans

7
Events

18
Cities Participating in Pairings & Trios

20
Webinars

+400
City Representatives & Stakeholders Involved

Number of cities participating in the IURC North America Network

33
EU

5
Canada

13
USA

18
LA

City Pairings

North America		European Union
Ottawa, Canada	↔	Zaragoza, Spain
St John's, Canada	↔	Braga, Portugal
Windsor, Canada	↔	Mannheim, Germany
Aurora, USA	↔	Bergamo, Italy
	↔	Rimini, Italy
Boston, USA - Northern Virginia Regional Commission, USA	↔	Barcelona Metropolitan Area, Spain
Metropolitan Kansas City, USA	↔	Metropolis GZM, Poland
Pittsburgh, USA	↔	Dortmund, Germany
San Diego, USA	↔	Madrid, Spain

Areas of Cooperation

NA City/Metro Area	EU City / Metro Area	Thematic Area	Topics
Aurora, USA	**Bergamo & Rimini,** Italy	**Nature Based Solutions** **Mobility & Transport** **Tourism & Culture** **Digital Transition & Smart City**	— Development and management of green areas and waterfronts — Cycling, intramodality, electric vehicles and metropolitan connections — Tourism & Culture — Reducing/eliminating the digital divide and attracting entrepreneurs
Boston & Northern Virginia Regional Commission, USA	**Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB),** Spain	**Renovation Wave** **Mobility & Transport** **Urban Agenda**	— Energy efficiency in buildings — Streets for people, superblocks, metropolitan connections — Planning - SUD strategies, public space, urban models
Pittsburgh, USA	**Dortmund,** Germany	**Digital Transition & Smart City** **Food Policy**	— Settlement of technology companies and start - ups for the development and production of relevant components for hydrogen technologies — Food democracy or innovative tools to develop regional supply chains and efficient food logistics
Metropolitan Kansas City, USA	**Metropolis GZM,** Poland	**Renovation Wave** **Mobility & Transport** **Education, Jobs & Skills** **Digital Transition & Smart City**	— Energy efficiency in buildings — Streets for people, metropolitan connections — Clusters, innovation centers — Crosscutting
San Diego, USA	**Madrid,** Spain	**Mobility & Transport** **Nature Based Solutions**	— Electric vehicles and alternative fuels, intermodality, micro - mobility, traffic engineering, low emission zones, and accessibility — Linear parks, water harvesting, heat islands, alternative infrastructure & construction materials, and placemaking
Ottawa, Canada	**Zaragoza,** Spain	**Mobility & Transport** **Tourism & Culture** **Ecological Transition & Green Deal** **Waste Management**	— Sustainable Urban Transport & Mobility: Strategies for sustainable land use / transportation planning — Digitization of tourist destinations — Exchanging challenges and experiences mostly related to climate change & energy transition — Waste Management and Circular Economy
St. John's, Canada	**Braga,** Portugal	**Mobility & Transport** **Tourism & Culture** **Education, Jobs & Skills** **Renovation Wave**	— Hydrogen/Electric mobility — Incorporating circular economy practices in the tourism sector — Clusters, innovation centers — Energy efficiency in buildings
Windsor, Canada	**Mannheim,** Germany	**Mobility & Transport** **Renovation Wave** **Nature Based Solutions** **Sustainable Agriculture**	— Micromobility — Energy efficiency in buildings — Greening, water management — Food systems - urban gardens

Ottawa - Zaragoza, Spain

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Mobility & Transport**
- **Tourism & Culture**
- **Ecological Transition & Green Deal**
- **Waste Management**

- Sustainable Urban Transport & Mobility: Strategies for sustainable land use / transportation planning
- Digitization of the tourist destination
- Exchanging challenges and experiences mostly related to climate change & energy transition
- Waste Management and Circular Economy

Sustainable Development Goals

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Culture/Cultural Heritage
- Public Procurement
- Energy Transition
- Urban Mobility
- Circular Economy
- Jobs & Skills
- Housing

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Clean Energy
- Sustainable Industry
- Building and Renovation
- Eliminating Pollution
- Sustainable Mobility

Despite the differences between Ottawa and Zaragoza, we have been able to share similar challenges and solutions, and the IURC participation has given us the opportunity for a partnership at local level with a global perspective.

Fernando Bermudez, Director of External Relations office, City of Zaragoza

Case Study

The EVENTSOST system is transforming the tourism and events sector in Zaragoza, while Ottawa is analysing its adoption as another step to ensure that economic growth is accompanied by sustainability, a smaller carbon footprint, and a positive social impact.

Zaragoza and Ottawa are working together to enhance their tourism industries and become regional event centers. During their second study visit, representatives from Ottawa learned about Zaragoza's methodology for measuring and controlling CO2 emissions from events. EVENTSOST is a certification system that promotes sustainable practices in event planning and development. It aligns with the United Nations Agenda 2030 and incorporates principles of circular economy, climate change mitigation, economic development, inclusivity, and equal opportunities. The City of Ottawa is analysing the adoption of the EVENTSOST certification system to promote tourism and economic development aligned with its sustainability goals. Additionally, Ottawa invited Zaragoza to join the Hybrid Alliance, an international network fostering collaboration in producing hybrid and multi-city events. Therefore, the partnership between both cities is promoting at a larger scale the implementation of sustainable principles in tourism, economic development, and the film industry.

Read the Case Study

The cities of Ottawa and Zaragoza focused on sharing knowledge and best practices on efficient, innovative, and sustainable practices for ecological transition, taking advantage of progress on their waste management & circular economy master plan (Ottawa), recent investments in infrastructures and technology (Zaragoza), projects for retrofitting social buildings for energy efficiency, tourism & culture as means for sustainable economic development, and specific advances in urban mobility and transport such as electric buses and micro-mobility.

Zaragoza gained insights from Ottawa's sustainable urban mobility initiatives, particularly the Area X.O. project focused on connected and autonomous vehicles. Ottawa's Film Office model impressed Zaragoza, showcasing an effective operating model, streamlined film permit processes, and the office's integral role in the city's economic development. Additionally, Zaragoza learned from Ottawa's Invest Ottawa Model, understanding how talent and investment strategies can attract new businesses, nurture young talent, and foster start-ups. Ottawa gleaned valuable lessons from Zaragoza's economic development strategies tied to tourism and culture.

The connection between these strategies and achieving sustainability objectives, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions in housing, public transport, and waste management, stood out.

Zaragoza's strong network of EU support for sustainability initiatives and strategic alignment across services were notable, highlighting the effectiveness of coordinated efforts in pursuing shared sustainability goals. Ottawa recognized the lack of a similar funding model in Canada and the need for a more coordinated approach among Canadian cities to achieve sustainability goals.

Both cities discovered that despite historical, physical, and geographical differences, they face similar challenges. IURC became a platform for partnership, offering opportunities for mutual learning and collaboration. The shared lessons and experiences create a foundation for ongoing collaboration and the potential for both cities to continue influencing and inspiring each other in their respective journeys towards a sustainable and resilient future.

What Zaragoza has been doing, on so many different projects for mobility, to advancing all these projects at the same time is great for other cities to see and I think it will help Ottawa plan its future projects and do more on sustainable mobility and trying to achieve our greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Deborah Lightman, Program Manager, Active Transportation Planning, City of Ottawa

St. John's - Braga, Portugal

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Mobility & Transport**
- **Tourism & Culture**
- **Education, Jobs & Skills**
- **Renovation Wave**

- Hydrogen/Electric mobility
- Incorporating circular economy practices in the tourism sector
- Clusters, innovation centers
- Energy efficiency in buildings

Sustainable Development Goals

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Culture/Cultural Heritage
- Sustainable Land Use
- Energy Transition
- Jobs & Skills

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Clean Energy
- Building and Renovation
- Eliminating Pollution

While participating in the IURC program, we found motivation in St. Johns' path and pioneering initiatives. In the same way that St. Johns has demonstrated the limitless potential of urban opportunities, we pledge our dedication to advancing urban and regional projects in collaboration with our global partners.

Nuno Gouveia, Advisor to the Mayor, City of Braga

Case Study

A Canadian model of urban farming sparks a strategy for the prevention of fires and the generation of incentives for repopulation in Galicia and the Northern Region of Portugal.

Three of the worst fire seasons in the EU have been suffered in the last six years. This demonstrates the upward trend indicated by experts, a situation due in part to the effects of climate change but aggravated in the region of Northern Portugal and Galicia by the progressive abandonment of the rural areas and the consequent cessation of productive activities traditionally linked to the forestry area.

Braga is located at the heart of this vulnerable region. As an important business and cultural centre in northern Portugal, the city has the vision to reassure its position as a model for sustainable tourism and economic development, which is facing the challenges posed by increasing deforestation and the progressive abandonment of rural areas. In search of best practices to deal with this challenge, a delegation from Braga paid a visit in the spring of 2022 to its Canadian partner, St. John's, which sparked an idea to replicate the success story of the O'Brien urban farm, as an agriculture incubation program for new entry farmers.

Read the Case Study

Braga and St. John's embarked on the cooperation centered on ecological transition, emphasizing the renovation of public buildings for energy efficiency, waste management, sustainable agriculture, and social innovation. During the visit to Braga, St. John's expressed interest in replicating the Human Power Hub as a model for social innovation since it offers insights into city-community partnerships with wide-ranging social and economic benefits, demonstrating the exchange of a vast amount of positive information in a short period. During the visit to St. John's, Braga selected the O'Brien farm as a model to be replicated in the Northern Region of Galicia and Portugal.

Lessons learned from the cooperation include recognizing the relevance of connections between municipal and private sectors for innovative solutions and sustainable development. They also shared the importance of leveraging political and financial commitments for long-term community assets. Adapting successful models from other regions, as seen in the replication of the O'Brien Farm, highlights the potential to be inspired by global solutions to address local challenges.

Insights from the IURC program emphasize the key role of international cooperation in stimulating innovative thinking. Visioning the future is facilitated through knowledge exchanges, enabling learning from others' successes without the inefficiency of developing ideas from scratch. The involvement in IURC provided a unique and enriching experience for Braga's and St. John's representatives, allowing them to engage directly with other practitioners and contribute to the collective fostering of sustainable and inclusive urban growth.

From the initial pairing process with the City of Braga to the study tour programs, webinars and site visits and carefully curated international workshops, the IURC program and pairing with Braga has brought new perspectives to our work. The program and pairing have been instrumental in inspiring St. John's in the recent implementation of our Climate Action Plan, offered insight about creative approaches to mobility and transportation and provided us with new thinking about models and opportunities for city-community social innovations.

Elizabeth Lawrence, Director, Economic Development, Culture & Partnerships, City of St. John's

Windsor - Mannheim, Germany

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Mobility & Transport**
- **Renovation Wave**
- **Nature Based Solutions**
- **Sustainable Agriculture**

- Micromobility
- Energy efficiency in buildings
- Greening, water management
- Food systems - urban gardens

Sustainable Development Goals

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Sustainable Land Use
- Energy Transition
- Climate Adaptation
- Urban Mobility

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Clean Energy
- Building and Renovation
- Sustainable Mobility

A win-win constellation was established. Not only valuable information and knowledge was acquired but also many friendships were made. The exchange via IURC shows that despite sometimes very different circumstances, all cities are struggling with the same challenges. It is worth looking beyond the horizon, as it opens up new perspectives and shows possible ways for solutions.

Emily Hruban, EU Affairs and Global Sustainability, City of Mannheim

The collaboration between the cities of Windsor and Mannheim focuses on renovation wave, sustainable urban mobility, nature-based solutions, and innovative wastewater-to-energy technology. Specifically, Windsor has implemented a retrofitting subsidy program called R-DEER, and Mannheim is keen to explore its details and assess possibilities for replication. Windsor, in turn, seeks insights from Mannheim's waste-to-energy facility and aims to adapt and replicate successful practices. Additionally, the cities are engaged in mutual learning in the realm of sustainable urban mobility, with Windsor interested in Mannheim's fare collection technology and Mannheim intrigued by Windsor's use of bike racks on public buses.

The pairing, based on similarities in size and industrial focus, highlighted the importance of sharing approaches and successes in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The challenges of showcasing progress and meeting world-class benchmarks, funding limitations, and the necessity for continuous improvement were emphasized. The collaboration underscored the need for municipalities to work with endorsed tools and resources from higher levels of government.

Reflecting on the IURC program, both cities shared notable lessons. Networking, cooperation, and knowledge exchange were emphasized as crucial elements in every partnership. The potential of autonomous mini-robo-shuttles for last-mile logistics, challenges faced by cities in implementing Mobility as a Service (MaaS) solutions, and the importance of public authorities in bringing stakeholders to the same table were recognized. The IURC platform provided valuable opportunities for themed knowledge sharing, showcasing successes, and discussing challenges. Peer-to-peer mentorship proved valuable, and both cities took advatage of other educational opportunities that addressed significant challenges for municipalities.

This program was fantastic in terms of bringing together two different perspectives on common issues facing municipal service delivery. I am grateful for the opportunity to have broadened my world view on such issues and am confident that the experiences I had will enhance and inform my decision-making in the future.

Karina Ritchers, Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change, City of Windsor

USA

Aurora - Bergamo & Rimini, Italy

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Nature Based Solutions** — Development and management of green areas and waterfronts
- **Mobility & Transport** — Cycling, intramodality, electric vehicles and metropolitan connections
- **Tourism & Culture** — Tourism & Culture
- **Digital Transition & Smart City** — Reducing/eliminating the digital divide and attracting entrepreneurs

Sustainable Development Goals

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Culture/Cultural Heritage
- Public Procurement
- Climate Adaptation
- Inclusion of Migrants & Refugees

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Building and Renovation
- Farm to Fork

Many cities are taking action to build more sustainable, more resilient and inclusive urban communities, but they need others to help deliver this agenda for the benefit of everyone. City-to-City cooperation, also with non-EU partners, is an extraordinary way to make their impact be significant.

Alessandra Pesaresi, City of Rimini

The specific cooperation objectives from the cities of Aurora, Bergamo, and Rimini included developing a joint project around multicultural events to enhance social cohesion within their communities. Their aim was to create a shared framework for designing such events, allowing each city to implement them independently in collaboration with their respective communities. In addition to this, the municipalities exchanged knowledge on community gardens and urban farms with positive social impacts and shared action plans for public-private partnerships to regenerate abandoned buildings for housing, social, and cultural purposes.

The cities participated in three study visits, with Bergamo and Rimini visiting Aurora in May 2022, Aurora and Rimini visiting Bergamo, and Aurora and Bergamo visiting Rimini in June 2023. Through this cooperation, the cities learned from each other by sharing best practices, perspectives, and solutions to common urban challenges. They recognized the importance of stakeholder engagement and the active participation of local communities in driving sustainable urban transformation.

In addition to learning from each other, the cities gained insights from IURC. They recognize the capacity of cities to combine international cooperation and advocacy with concrete actions. They also acknowledged that cooperation among cities is crucial for driving change and innovation to address common global challenges. City diplomacy and networking played key roles in promoting and affirming cities' priority topics and values at the international level. The cities aim to showcase their achievements nationally and internationally, build knowledge and understanding among peers, and establish professional networks to further their collaborative efforts.

The city of Aurora, Illinois, recognizes the valuable input received from international peers succeeding in influencing local policies. Fostering on the lessons learned, leaders and technical staff had the opportunity to: showcase successes achieved in community participation, economic development and projects addressing climate change, effectively placemaking Aurora, support the global goal of IURC.

Alessandro Minnella,
Senior Planner, City of Aurora

Boston & Northern Virginia Regional Commission - Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB), Spain

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Renovation Wave**
- **Mobility & Transport**
- **Urban Agenda**

- Energy efficiency in buildings
- Streets for people, superblocks, metropolitan connections
- Planning - SUD strategies, public space, urban models

Sustainable Development Goals

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Public Procurement
- Climate Adaptation
- Housing

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Building and Renovation

IURC has been an amazing tool to align the International Strategy of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area with our priority to foster cooperation with North American metropolitan governments. Our metropolis are facing the same challenges in terms of climate change, resilience, urban regeneration, housing or sustainable transport. However, the way to approach them is quite different.

Xavier Tiana, Head of International Relations, AMB

Case Study

The Barcelona Metropolitan Area's quest for civic innovation across 36 municipalities leads them to explore replicating Boston's Mayor's Office of Urban Mechanics, the City's pioneering civic research & design team.

When AMB first learned about Boston Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics (MONUM), they were immediately intrigued and recognized its potential to drive civic innovation and collaboration within their metropolitan area. MONUM was established in 2010 as Boston's pioneering civic research and design team. As one of the first initiatives of its kind in the United States, they operate across agencies and communities to explore, experiment, and evaluate novel approaches to government and civic life. Through Boston and AMB's participation in the program, both entities have had the opportunity to exchange experiences around civic innovation, gaining valuable insights into the key ingredients and success factors of the MONUM model. By sharing challenges and lessons learned, AMB is looking to tailor the model to suit their unique needs and challenges.

Read the Case Study

The Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB), the Northern Virginia Regional Commission, and the City of Boston focused their cooperation on urban planning processes, innovative public spaces, and expanding green areas. To address urban heat islands, they exchanged information about diverse climate shelter models. Lessons learned include recognizing climate change as a top priority and understanding approaches to tackle it according to cultural and political differences. The Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics in Boston inspired transformative strategies through civic innovation. AMB's organizational structure inspired Boston as they are restructuring their planning department and provided Boston and NVRC with a new approach to planning public spaces, housing, and mobility, among others. NVRC demonstrated the potential role of public private partnerships in urban renewal, exemplified by Crystal City and the Amazon HQ2 development.

The three entities commended the effectiveness of the IURC program in fostering cooperation, organizing thematic workshops, and connecting them to networks with other cities from diverse countries. They emphasized the value of peer-to-peer exchanges for urban transformation and the significance of increasing staff capacity through online and in-person meetings and going into more detail following exchanges, ensuring the successful adoption and application of policy and technical innovations.

The City of Boston thanks the IURC program and staff for their dedicated efforts to build strong relationships across continents. While our contexts vary, we share many similar and deeply entrenched challenges. Boston was proud to share Mayor Michelle Wu's vision for a Green New Deal, and to learn from innovations in the Barcelona metro area and Northern Virginia to inform our work and achieve climate and economic justice in our communities.

Katherine Eshel, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office of Environment, Energy and Open Space, City of Boston

Metropolitan Kansas City - Metropolis GZM, Poland

Areas Of Cooperation

- Renovation Wave
- Mobility & Transport
- Education, Jobs & Skills
- Digital Transition & Smart City

- Energy efficiency in buildings
- Streets for people, metropolitan connections
- Clusters, innovation centers
- Crosscutting

Sustainable Development Goals

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Urban Mobility

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Sustainable Mobility

> IURC NA programme gave us a fantastic possibility to find US partners, who are facing similar challenges and working on similar projects and solutions. Together we can exchange our ideas, share experience and develop solutions, which improve the quality of life for our residents.

Krystian Gryglaszewski, Metropolis GZM

The metropolitan areas of GZM and Metropolitan Kansas City cooperated to define methodologies for metro areas to test solutions that can be quickly validated and scaled up across several cities. As a result, a prototyping academy is being developed in both metropolitan areas utilizing common indicators to facilitate result comparisons. The first objective will be to reduce speeding, traffic fatalities, noise, and GHG emissions by improving mobility and transport. The second will be to transform underused or abandoned areas into thriving public spaces co-created with communities and artists.

GZM gained valuable insights from Metropolitan Kansas City, including concrete planning methodologies as well as the river regeneration project. Expert contacts were established between specialists from both metropolises and cooperative methods with local/metropolitan stakeholders were explored. Conversely, lessons learned by Metropolitan Kansas City from GZM included understanding organizational and governance challenges, identifying similarities in strategies for building public awareness, and engaging local government. The concept of rapidly testing scalable solutions emerged as a powerful strategy, influencing how the region organizes to pursue new federal funding opportunities.

Both cities participated in the IURC online and in-person activities, facilitating the exploration of projects and the exchange of ideas, challenges, and best practices related to common interests, such as sustainable mobility and climate change adaptation. Learning from global leaders offered insights into what works and what doesn't, minimizing the repetition of mistakes in community initiatives. Their presence in IURC alleviated the isolation often associated with climate work, providing participants with a sense of engagement and connection to a larger conversation beyond their day-to-day projects.

> Participating in the IURC program yielded invaluable lessons and collaborative opportunities. Through the pairing process, we discovered shared organizational challenges and embraced the strategy of rapidly testing scalable solutions. Learning from global leaders provided diverse perspectives, and underscored the intersectionality of climate challenges, revealing unexpected connections between disparate issues and solutions. Looking ahead, our commitment to rapid iteration persists. Sharing detailed findings with our counterparts at GZM remains a priority. The IURC program has not only broadened our knowledge but ignited a collaborative spirit that will shape the future of climate solutions in our regions. We are grateful for this enriching experience and anticipate a continued journey towards sustainability.

Jeremy Knolls, Climate Action KC

Pittsburgh - Dortmund, Germany

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Digital Transition & Smart City**
- **Food Policy**

- Settlement of technology companies and start - ups for the development and production of relevant components for hydrogen technologies
- Food democracy or innovative tools to develop regional supply chains and efficient food logistics

Sustainable Development Goals

1 NO POVERTY

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Sustainable Land Use
- Energy Transition
- Climate Adaptation
- Urban Mobility
- Urban Poverty

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Clean Energy
- Farm to Fork
- Eliminating Pollution
- Sustainable Mobility

The IURC program is a very good opportunity to expand existing partnerships and build new networks to shape the future of our city in a sustainable and climate-neutral way.

Fabian Zeuch,
Urban Diplomacy Officer,
Department for Mayoral and City Council´s Affairs/ International Relations,
Dortmund

The cooperation between the cities of Pittsburgh and Dortmund revolves around two key areas: global food policy and hydrogen technologies. In the realm of food policies, the cooperation focuses on sustainable public procurement, food democracy, and the exploration of innovative tools for developing regional supply chains and efficient food logistics. The second area of cooperation centers on implementing hydrogen technologies across various sectors, with a particular emphasis on local public transportation. Additionally, the partnership involves exploring the development of hydrogen-related technology companies and start-ups.

Dortmund has gleaned valuable lessons from its cooperation with Pittsburgh. The German city has already incorporated suggestions from Pittsburgh into its ongoing implementation of the climate action program “Climate Air 2035,” particularly in agriculture and nutrition. Pittsburgh’s expertise in addressing food poverty, evidenced by a published report on local food security, has been particularly influential. Conversely, Pittsburgh has drawn significant insights from Dortmund’s experiences. The coordinated efforts of technology centers, the private sector, and academia in Dortmund have provided Pittsburgh with new insights into effective city-community partnerships, showcasing social and environmental benefits.

From the broader perspective of the IURC program, Dortmund’s participation has strengthened its commitment to international exchanges, recognizing that cities worldwide share similar problems and innovative solutions. The program has proven helpful in making Dortmund’s solutions visible and accessible to a global audience. Furthermore, the exchange has played a preparatory role for future projects, such as Dortmund’s hosting of the IGA 2027, and the experiences gained during visits like the BUGA Garden Show in Mannheim, contributed to Dortmund’s readiness for upcoming endeavors.

The field visits were well planned out and very beneficial! The field visits allowed for a deeper understanding of specific projects and the interconnection between the various partners working in the energy and food sectors throughout Dortmund.

Karen Abrams, Director of City Planning, Pittsburgh

San Diego - Madrid, Spain

Areas Of Cooperation

- **Mobility & Transport**
- **Nature Based Solutions**

- Electric vehicles and alternative fuels, intermodality, micro - mobility, traffic engineering, low emission zones, and accessibility
- Linear parks, water harvesting, heat islands, alternative infrastructure & construction materials, and placemaking

Sustainable Development Goals

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

EU Urban Agenda Topics

- Public Procurement
- Urban Mobility

EU Green Deal Policy Areas

- Sustainable Mobility

The IURC program is very motivating from the beginning since it arises from sharing urban problems and concerns with colleagues. Together, we can share both our successes and our lessons learned, creating a lasting impact in our cities and maintaining a fluid professional relationship.

Pedro Fernandez, Head of International Mobility Projects, City of Madrid

Case Study

The Canalejas Mobility Hub is a driver of sustainable urban mobility in Madrid, and the City of San Diego is eager to replicate it. By transforming underutilized parking structures into mobility hubs, both are becoming sustainable, accessible, and healthier cities.

In 2021, the cities of Madrid, Spain, and San Diego, USA, started their cooperation as part of the International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) program in North America. With a shared focus on mobility and transport, both cities eagerly exchanged challenges, solutions, and innovative ideas to enhance sustainable mobility options across their respective municipalities. One particular project that captured the attention of San Diego officials was the Canalejas Mobility Hub in Madrid, a successful example of repurposing parking structures into multifunctional spaces dedicated to sustainable mobility. Inspired by its success, San Diego aims to learn from Madrid's experience and replicate this transformative concept within its urban landscape, while Madrid anticipates gaining insights from San Diego's development and operational process. The cooperation between these cities signifies progress in expanding sustainable mobility options globally, prioritizing sustainability, accessibility, and healthier urban environments.

Read the Case Study

The specific cooperation objectives between San Diego and Madrid encompass the exchange of knowledge in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of mobility hubs, with San Diego expressing interest in replicating Madrid's successful Canalejas Mobility Hub. Additionally, the collaboration aims to share insights on enhancing the efficiency of public transport, managing traffic, and increasing the electrification of motorized vehicles.

Madrid has gained valuable firsthand knowledge from San Diego, particularly regarding real-world mobility challenges related to sustainability and the environment. Conversely, San Diego has learned significant lessons from Madrid. The recognition that large-scale infrastructure projects can be achieved innovatively, leading to substantial changes and benefits for the city's residents, has been a key takeaway. The challenges associated with installing new public right-of-way features to support biking and transit are acknowledged as complex and challenging in both cities. San Diego sees the development of a mobility hub as a complementary solution to support alternative mobility options for residents and visitors. The exchange of real shared knowledge and experiences on micromobility, electric vehicles (EVs), and bike infrastructure, as well as urban greening, has been highly beneficial. Follow-up discussions post study visits have provided opportunities to delve deeper into those topics, allowing for a better understanding of challenges, solutions, and lessons learned.

Reflecting on the IURC programme, several positive outcomes have been highlighted. The program provided international visibility to the projects and ambitions of both cities, as well as to city officials and technicians. The program's design fostered collaboration and the exchange of ideas. The focused thematic networks on topics such as Renovation Wave, Nature-Based Solutions, Mobility, and Economic Development have broadened the impact of the partnership, involving more people and municipalities in critical discussions. Webinars with in-depth presentations and discussions on highlighted topics further enhanced understanding, allowing a greater number of participants to learn about tried and tested programs and projects that can be replicated in both cities. The relationships established through the IURC program have extended professional networks and encouraged the continuation of the cooperation, as well as the possibility of receiving support when seeking solutions to everyday issues.

The IURC program has provided not just my City, but myself as a Director in a large U.S. City, the opportunity to not only vision what we need to do to transition to a more sustainable future, but also observe and experience real-world solutions. The City pairings and the Learning Exchange were a great immersive experience that has resulted in real action within our own City to pilot new ideas for mobility, resiliency, and corporate partnerships. What is an even greater opportunity that builds on the pairings are the numerous information sharing webinars on topics that while are not core focus areas under our IURC pairing, are nonetheless still important to our City and the successful implementation of our own Climate Action Plan and sustainable practices.

Alyssa Muto, Director of Sustainability and Mobility, City of San Diego

IURC - NA WEBINAR SERIES 2022-2023

IURC - NA Webinar Series 2022-2023

Renovation Wave

IURC Annual Event Ecological Transition and Green Deal

Nov 23, 2021

Recording & Presentations

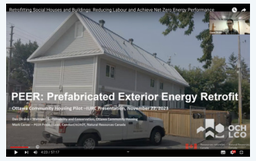
Retrofitting Social Houses and Buildings

Mar 8, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Retrofitting Social Houses and Buildings: Reducing Labour and Achieveing Net-Zero Energy Performance

Nov 22, 2023



Recording & Presentations

Mobility & Transport

Public Transport towards a 2030 Zero Emissions Target

Feb 22, 2022

Recording & Presentations

Launching Mobility as a Service [MaaS] in Your City

Feb 9, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Low-Emission Zones- Addressing Air Quality, Reducing Congestion & Increasing Economic and Racial Equity

Apr 26, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Tools for Increasing Bike Ridership - Infrastructure, Incentives, and Campaigns

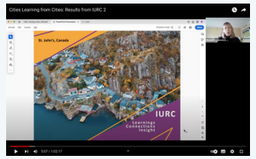
Jun 28, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Other

Cities Learning from Cities: **Results from IURC 2**

Dec 6, 2023



Recording & Presentations

Shaping the Future of Sustainable & Resilient Cities Through International Cooperation

Jan 10, 2024

Recording & Presentations

Education, Jobs & Skills

Kick-off IURC-NA Thematic Cluster on Education, Jobs and Skills: Urban Regeneration & Innovation

Nov 10, 2021

Recording & Presentations

Innovative Local Economic Development: Programmes and Strategies for Post Covid-19 Recovery

Mar 17, 2022

Recording & Presentations

Nature Based Solutions

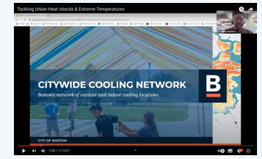
Fostering Social Cohesion & Community Engagement through Urban Agriculture and Green Spaces

Apr 12, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Tackling Urban Heat Islands & Extreme Temperatures: How Cities are Implementing Climate Shelters and other solutions

Jul 12, 2023



Recording & Presentations

Transforming Urban Public Space: Addressing Climate Change, Accessibility, and Social Inclusion

Oct 18, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Circular Economy

Where Do Cities Get Started with the Circular Economy? From Framework to Action

Dec 1, 2022

Recording & Presentations

What Do Businesses Need From Cities? A Roundtable On How Cities Can Support Circularity

Jan 19, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Workshop on Developing Circular Economy Strategies for Your City

Mar 29, 2023

Recording & Presentations

How Do Cities Get Started? Integrating Circular Economy Into City Plans

Jun 14, 2023

Recording & Presentations

Circular Economy Primer: Promoting and Facilitating Change in Your City

Jan 24, 2024

Recording & Presentations

THEMATIC NETWORKING EVENTS

7th – 9th April 2022

IURC - KANSAS CITY

Renovation Wave Networking Event

How Can We Accelerate GHG Reductions in Existing Buildings?

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

- Developing an energy hotline.
- Providing energy audits and supporting a DIY approach such as the one implemented by Neighbors Helping Neighbours.
- Creating a list of demonstration buildings/ homes and contractors.
- Educating city staff to ask probing questions during the building permit process.
- City staff providing energy audits.
- Implementing an energy rating system based on data analysis (possible cooperation with utility companies).
- Educating on the return on investment of energy reductions.
- Announcing information about incentives through social media networks like the Metropolitan Energy Center has been doing.
- Advocacy for the state to do more around building and retrofit codes.

INCENTIVES

- Subsidizing the construction of demonstration buildings to develop the labor market and supply chain.
- Developing a program such as Kansas City's Exterior Homes Improvement Program that includes funding for energy audits and incentives for improvement.
- Providing sales tax rebates for energy performance upgrades in certain areas through sales tax sharing agreements such as those implemented in Aurora, IL.
- Providing property tax rebates for energy performance improvements which supports maintaining affordable rents in Orlando, FL.
- Providing first retrofits in low-income neighborhoods before a mandate is implemented (no income qualification is required in the case of St Paul, MN).
- Focusing on one sector and doing it well. ex. Firehouses or beauty salons.

REGULATIONS

- Requiring an energy performance audit/rating whenever a building changes function/use.
- Performing property standard inspections to trigger existing buildings to improve their energy performance.
- Outlining building benchmarking and building performance standards.
- Requiring listings, including for approval of AirBnb licenses, to announce energy scores.
- Requiring minimum energy scores to sell.
- Funding roaming energy retrofit managers.

TECHNOLOGY

- Implementing aerobarrier for air sealing .
- Utilizing wood fiber and low embodied carbon insulation to avoid carbon increase.
- Conduct thermal scans drives.
- Incentivize heat pump bulk buys.

Solutions to Transition to Renewable Energy Sources

ELECTRIC VEHICLE SOLAR CHARGING SYSTEMS

1. The system is growing.
2. In Kansas City there is a focus on the 11,000 city employees to expand the network
3. This technology is useful to test demand in new spaces and eventually change them to permanent systems.
4. It can be also useful for limited or tight spaces or where the initial infrastructure is expensive.

SOLAR ARRAYS

The Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC) has extensive experience supporting local governments with procurement and requests for proposals (RFPs) for solar arrays and it has become a revenue stream through solarizenova.org. They have also developed a robust solar map that shows homeowners and business owners the amount of energy that can be generated on their rooftops.

Solutions to Transition to Renewable Energy Sources

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

Europe has a long tradition of incorporating the SDGs in its programs and initiatives. However, in the USA, they have just started to become a framework for local government, private businesses, and academic and philanthropic institutions. Regional governments are interested in learning how to use them as guides for collective action.

CHALLENGES TO TRANSITIONING TO RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

1. Photovoltaic cells may become a service where municipalities lease solar arrays. However, there is a complex relationship between municipal taxpayer money and public perception.
2. Municipal staff taking an electric vehicle for longer trips where it might be difficult to recharge and how to reimburse city staff for those expenses when typically it would be free within the system.
3. In Europe, several cities don't allow private vehicles in certain areas or only allow electric vehicles. This measure has not been implemented in most North American cities. However, they are starting to deploy high-accurate vehicles or low-emission lanes.
4. Conservative leadership may become a challenge when discussing climate change and these solutions. A way to push them forward is by changing the language of these priorities and reaching your audience based on what's critical to them.

Featured Program

ENERGISPRONG

After an Energiesprong retrofit, a home is net zero energy, meaning it generates the total amount of energy required for its heating, hot water and electrical appliances. It also provides superior indoor comfort. This can be achieved by using new technologies such as prefabricated facades, insulated rooftops with solar panels, smart heating, and ventilation and cooling installations. A refurbishment comes with a long-year performance warranty on both the indoor climate and the energy performance for up to 40 years. A complete home makeover can be completed in less than 10 days, and some have been done in as little as a day!
In general, an Energiesprong renovation or new build is financed by future energy cost savings plus the budget for planned maintenance and repairs over the coming 30 years. This allows residents to keep the same cost of living. In the case of housing associations, tenants pay the housing association an energy service plan which is the equivalent of their previous energy supplier bill. The housing association can use this new income stream to partly fund the renovation works. Typically, legislation needs to be amended to allow such a conversion of the monthly energy bill into a monthly energy service fee for the housing association.
https://energiesprong.org

Participating Organizations

Arnold Development Group
www.arnolddevelopmentgroup.com

Bridging the Gap
www.bridgingthegap.org

Building Energy Exchange KC
www.be-exkc.org

Climate Action KC
www.climateactionkc.com

Heartland Conservation Alliance
www.heartlandconservationalliance.org

Metro Energy Center
www.metroenergy.org

Streetcar KC
www.kcstreetcar.org

2nd - 3rd June 2022

IURC - OTTAWA

Waste Management & Circular Economy Event

Creating a circular economy – the case for strategic local reuse initiatives

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

- Connecting agencies that are working towards the same result
- Understanding the differences between regions and learning from each other (Europe vs North America)

WHAT CHALLENGES ARE FACED IN THIS PROCESS?

- Reduction is the biggest hurdle to break through
  – Reuse aspects need to be incorporated into the design process of any product or project to make fulfillment as simple as possible

HOW CAN THIS CHALLENGES BE OVERCOME?

- Emphasizing diversion
- Creating bylaws, legislation and codes which promote reuse activity
- "Living like our grandparents"
  – Emphasizing a simple lifestyle that requires reuse (mason jars, minimal plastic packaging etc...)
- Finding the motivation points of consumers and producers to incentivize behavior
  – Using this to change culture and habit until new habits have been developed
- Taking a systematic approach (Understanding how the hole system leads to results)
  – Point based solutions tend not to work because they address a surface level problem instead of what is responsible
- Embracing the market's ability to contribute
  – Shortening supply chains, finding ways that the market can incentivize itself to make the change

WHAT DOES A SOLUTION LOOK LIKE?

- Community supports
  – Planning neighborhoods to have the resources to allow for waste reduction and reuse
  – Inspiring community-based success
- Build products to last so that reuse is possible
- Strategies to bust convenience
  – Create incentives, change mentality and culture around the waste
  – Social innovation and balance
- Build of existing infrastructure
  – Modify and use existing infrastructure to ease change to keep people comfortable
- Connect municipalities with industry so solutions can be collectively influenced and decided upon

Organics to biogas: Innovative solutions to get organics out of the waste stream, reduce GHGs and create circularity

DEVELOPING TOOLS TO MANAGE WASTE PROCESSES:

- Support to municipalities for organics processing infrastructure
  – Cost can be distributed between public and private industry
- Having different project delivery models, private vs public have different risk sharing options depending on implementation

REGIONAL APPROACHES:

- Tailoring different approaches to different regions, some may not have capacity to require a full facility
- Addressing organic capture in ICI sector
- Is organic processing a municipal problem to solve
  – Main driver is landfill capacity of community

INNOVATION FOR THE FUTURE:

- Thinking about combining/combined waste streams
- Developing creative innovation within regulations which help produce the optimal result
- Need processes to manage non-monetary costs

Policy innovation at the local level to reduce plastic waste

CHALLENGES:

- Systemic issues
  – A culture of disposal
- Inefficiencies in policies and political structures
- Industry leverage and a refusal to change

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

- Focus on the materials that are used in production
  – Changing to more sustainable and reusable based materials for day-to-day life
  – Developing new strategies for packaging and creating channels for innovation
- Developing a monetary strategy to identify who is responsible for funding innovation
  – Creating a fair system that allows industry to adjust and innovate while not taking all of the financial burden with municipalities taking the benefit
- Creating positive infrastructure to develop this change

PUSHING FOR THE FUTURE:

- Tackling problems on the micro community sized scale to create a macro/global difference
- Using the leaders and influential people within a community to influence change and create new culture
- Time management and creating manageable goals to facilitate an appropriate timeline is important in creating visible change

Participating Organizations

Circular Innovation Council
www.circularinnovation.ca

LCBA Canada
www.lcbacanada.com

Reducing Plastic Waste in Canada
www.linkedin.com/company/reducing-plastic-waste-in-canada

Zero Waste Europe
www.zerowasteeurope.eu

10th – 11th November 2022

IURC - ZARAGOZA

Sustainable Urban Mobility & Transport Event

The fourth IURC-NA Thematic Networking event, **Sustainable Urban Mobility & Transport (SUMT)**, took place **in Zaragoza** on the **10th – 11th of November 2022**, in coordination with the host city of Zaragoza, Spain. Participating cities created professional connections and networks while sharing knowledge to advance public transport for zero emissions, shared & micro-mobility strategies, and reducing the use of single occupancy private vehicles. The following insights were shared by a cohort of 13 cities from Europe, Canada, and the US.

Main reasons cities need to advance sustainable urban mobility and transport:

- Climate
- Livability- Quality of life
- Sea level rise
- Pollution & traffic congestion
- Heat
- Ecosystems & biodiversity
- Equity, Justice, Inclusion
- Health

CONGESTION & POLLUTION

Zaragoza, Spain

- Successful methods can include limiting the traffic speed and length of the lanes step by step and using incentives or reducing the number of parking spaces. Zaragoza has no congestion in the city. Meanwhile, traffic has been reduced by four times due to reduced space allocated for cars.
- Parking spaces can be more expensive than getting a monthly pass for public transport. 'Park and Ride' systems allow people from the suburbs to park in a parking space for free, given they take the tram or public transport to the city center.

San Diego, USA

- Carrot & stick: make car driving slower, reducing car lanes while expanding alternative means of transport.

Ottawa, Canada

- Imposing congestion pricing – however, it requires political will and good technology in place for it to be successful.

Santa Monica, USA

- Low-emission zones. However, in California, vehicles cannot be restricted from entering certain areas, such as low-emission zone.
- A solution has been to establish a low-emission zone for delivery vehicles. It is part of a bigger plan and framework to reduce emissions for the 2028 Olympics, including strategies to help the shift/transition. The strategy involves working with companies (e.g., food delivery) and installing cameras at parking spots to monitor the delivery vehicles.

Barcelona Metropolitan Area, Spain

- Low-emission zones. AMB has the biggest in the South of Europe. Deciding the type of vehicles that could & should access the low-emission zone is essential. There are exceptions and special considerations for those with disabilities or lower incomes.

Metro Kansas City, USA

- Reducing embodied carbon emissions of roads and bridges through performance specifications.

San Diego, USA

- Adding sensors for air quality in micro-mobility vehicles.

EXPANDING THE USE OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Metro Kansas City, USA

- Prototyping new tech for EV charging.

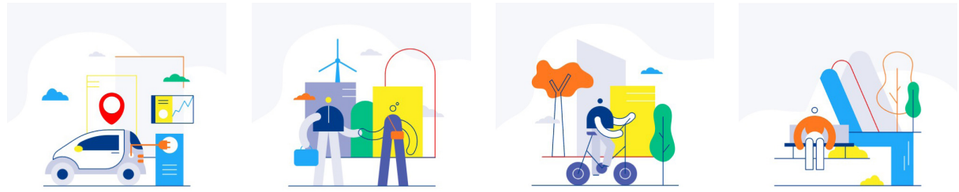
Dortmund, Germany

- Charging EV's at lamp posts.

ADAPTING AND IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE

Ottawa, Canada

- Ottawa's new Official Plan introduced the concept of "walkable 15-minute neighborhoods" as compact, well-connected places with a clustering of a diverse mix of land uses; this includes a range of housing types and affordability, shops, services, access to food, schools and local childcare, employment, greenspaces, parks, and pathways. They are complete communities that support active transportation and transit, reduce car dependency, and enable people to live car-light or car-free.
- 'Complete streets policy' (started 7 years ago) – transforming the way roads are built and restructured, which has changed the mentality in designing roads. Intersections are built very differently and with those with disabilities in mind. Now the process is much more standardised and used as the base to shape future designs and design elements.



EXPANDING AND INCENTIVIZING ALTERNATIVES MOBILITY OPTIONS

Pittsburgh, USA

- Mobility as a service 'MaaS' app – A platform that includes a variety of travel options, including access to bikes, motorbikes scooters, stations etc. It was developed through a public-private partnership. The aim to provide more choices, and make mobility affordable, accessible and easy to use.

Bergamo, Italy

- Cities are using systems like Pin Bike to provide economic incentives to people who use their bicycles for bike-to-work and bike-to-school routes.

Dortmund, Germany

- Apps can be developed like City Cycling to encourage the usage of bike lanes.

Metro Kansas City, USA

- Low-cost bike lanes connecting trails through Kansas City.
- Expanding mobility systems (light rail, bike lanes, buses) to include less dense suburbs and blighted areas of the city.

IMPROVING AND EXPANDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Madrid, Spain

- Transforming the municipal bus company fleet to hybrid.

Rimini, Italy

- Expanding the BRT transport to reach new destinations.

Bergamo, Italy

- Adding new tramway lines, and a new railway station.
- Implementing the Electric bus rapid (E-BRT) project. The tramway lines operate on a reserved track (and is several times more expensive compared to E-BRT), whereas E-BRT is a line on the street.

Barcelona Metropolitan Area

- A program that promotes getting rid of your car to get free transport for 3 years. After 3 years – city found that people continued to use public transport, and not switch back to private vehicles.

Mannheim, Germany

- Increasing capacity of public transport & accessibility. On-demand service has been financed to solve the problem of last-mile transport to bring people to stations & public transport destinations, introducing EUR 2.00 ticket (for those with pass), or + EUR 1.00 ticket (with monthly pass). Aim of trying to increase public transport usage for those who are travelling toward the same route. However, the high cost of implementation is still a challenge Mannheim is working to resolve.
- An alternative to congestion pricing is to have a mandatory requirement to pay a certain fee (e.g. 0.5% of salary) towards public transport (amounting to approx. EUR 20 – 40).

Pau, France

- Build 1 line of hydrogen bus 'HeBus' (2019) – that goes from the North of the city, allowing access to many services along the route, as well as being affordable. There are no delays on the line – it has priority over all other vehicles. Planning to build a hydrogen station nearby (private company owned), using hydrogen instead of batteries.
- 'Mobility donation / contribution' – a system in which every company that has more than 10 employees are required to pay taxes to fund public transport.

Zaragoza, Spain

- State collects money from taxes for oil & energy – and pays quantities to the municipal cities for public transport. The state subsidises 5% of the total cost, where the municipal budget subsidises about 70% of the trip; meanwhile promoting accessibility to all people for public transport (e.g. for those retired, it is free). Subsidy comes from general funds. It comes back to the point of – political will.

Metro Kansas City, USA

- Stations that reduce infrastructure demand.
- Encouraging through programs like The Green Commute Challenge, a free competition among Kansas City area commuters to reward taking sustainable transportation options to work.

10th – 12th May 2023

IURC - BALTIMORE

Urban Regeneration & Economic Development for Social Inclusion

Affordable Housing

CHALLENGES

- Affordability- housing costs are increasing in almost every city, which makes it harder to create and maintain affordable housing.
- Legislations- The differences between regional, state, and local legislations affect the ability of the city to build housing.
- Limited housing stock- Current shortages of construction materials and a lack of construction impede new housing development.

SOLUTIONS

San Diego, USA, aims to build 10,000 new affordable housing units in the next 10 years and has reduced the barriers to success through planning policies, development processing, and funding. Three new programs are having good results:

- 100% affordable projects receive permit processing in 30 days
- The project Bridge to Home provides funding to build housing and has increased the number of units by 1,000 in 18 months
- Capacity building for new developers so they are more competitive
- Penalizing residential vacant properties to make use of them

Additionally, the City has initiated a process to sell several city-owned properties to construct new affordable housing units, including Civic Center Plaza, which contains City Hall and encompasses five contiguous city blocks of downtown San Diego to drive thousands more units into the market.

Bergamo, Italy, also shared that they are regenerating the city by recovering abandoned buildings and areas into residential and cultural spaces.

Attracting and Securing Population and Talent

CHALLENGES

- Lack of housing- Retaining locally educated/trained young talent is challenging due to expensive/scarce housing.
- Industrial changes- Population migration after the collapse of specific industries, such as fishing in St. John's, may lead to a lack of workforce to satisfy growing service markets, such as the development of the energy industry.
- Higher Education Competitiveness- It may be difficult for cities to secure talent when students have better offers abroad.
- Remote work- Cities need help attracting and retaining young talent in city centers since the remaining population is usually older, and the younger talent that can now work remotely is relocating.

SOLUTIONS

In **St John's**, Canada, the collapse of the fishing industry resulted in the migration of a large part of the population. In its economic development plan, this was highlighted, and one of the areas they identified as an opportunity to assist with immigration retention and community connections was to develop a community "farmers" market to provide a gathering place where people of varying perspectives, cultures, and interests, including tourists, could connect and share.

The food market launched six years ago in a city-owned plot near the university and the city center, attracting many local and international students and introducing local people to new cultures, tastes, and flavors. This project helped people connect to the place, and St. John's population has grown the most over the past 50 years.

Dortmund, Germany, has an innovation model, which has grown over decades, where stakeholders focused on neighborhood collaboration to create an innovation network, which includes technological, social, and cultural initiatives. This network consists of many projects and actors who work together to increase the attractiveness of Dortmund as a business and living location and to ensure its continuous and sustainable development. In 2021, Dortmund was the first German city to be awarded the iCapital Award as "Innovation Capital of Europe" by the European Commission.

Halifax Partnership in **Halifax**, Canada, offers several labor programs and resources to support employers' local and international recruitment and retention efforts. The National Connector Program is based in Halifax, the birthplace of the initial Connector Program. This initiative provides communities a turn-key solution that increases talent retention through intentional networking. It is found in 30+ Canadian Communities, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States, including Detroit, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and Portland-Maine. Additionally, employers looking to fill labor needs can use the Atlantic Immigration Program and the Global Talent Stream to hire international talent.

Halifax partnership also offers the Living in Halifax Toolkit, a ready-to-use marketing kit showcasing Halifax's quality of life to support hiring and retention efforts.

Chihuahua, Mexico, is building training centres to increase incentives for people to stay and attract newcomers.

Equity & Systemic Racism

CHALLENGES

- Lack of community engagement- Economic development practitioners have a hard time making community voices heard.
- Fear- Practitioners are sometimes afraid to talk about the realities of race.
- Systemic Racism- Despite talent and jobs available, racism excludes people from being part of the network of good opportunities.
- Inequitable services and infrastructure- In some cities, there is a difference between the services provided in white and black and Hispanic neighorhoods. For example, in Boston, the train reaches white neighborhoods, but delayed buses go through black and Hispanic neighborhoods.

SOLUTIONS

The biggest economic development challenge in **Boston** are the intertwined issues of the racial wealth gap and wealth inequality. Mayor Wu has inaugurated a practice for each department to evaluate new programs and policies with a focus on racial equity to ensure all initiatives work to remedy these economic and social disparity. This prioritization has helped expedite roughly $100 million dollars of investment in sustainable and affordable public housing, grant commitments for entrepreneurs of color to start or scale a small business, and government contracts to minority business owners. Boston is also supporting programs like tuition-free community college, a federally funded Good Jobs program and demanding more proactive plans for diverse hiring from employers.

In **Turin** libraries are becoming important social hubs. There people meet, build relationships, and can work together around policies and culture. This new approach has become a resource to make long term solutions a success. This initiative is part of the Neighborhood Houses national scheme in which there is an investment of approximately 400 million euros in different infrastructures in the city, including creating and refurbishing libraries. For Turin, cooperation amongst stakeholders is key of for the success of urban policies. Therefore, they support programs where the community builds a vision together, manages conflicts and creates paths for collective learning.

Funding for City Projects

CHALLENGES

- Continuous access to capital- Access to capital for business development can take time to obtain or sustain after a first investment.
- High-interest rates and inflation- Investors are scared to invest.
- Lack of capacity- Often, local/municipal government needs the technical knowledge or staff to channel resources/funding for development. Also, cities may receive funding, but they also need the capacity to manage and implement it on time and with the right impact.

Empty Dowtowns

CHALLENGES

- Hybrid or remote work models- The mix of remote and in-person work has become increasingly popular due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the number of people at downtown offices. This shift in work patterns has also decreased foot traffic downtown, affecting businesses and commercial real estate. Retail and hospitality businesses are particularly impacted, relying heavily on foot traffic and commuters for their revenue.

>>

<< Urban Regeneration & Economic Development for Social Inclusion

Governance & Urban Planning

CHALLENGES

- Limited room for maneuver- cities are limited by authorities to deliver on specific challenges, and there are concerns if there is a skew to do something which diverts from the policy.
- Working in silos- There is a lack of conversations about the intersection between the city's multiple problems. Also, a lack of integrated planning generates too much focus/bias on some areas leaving others unattended or operating without a good strategy.
- Balancing Sustainability and Economic Development- Balancing economic growth and sustainable urban development is challenging. For example, success in tourism brings new challenges, such as collapsing services, gentrification, etc.

SOLUTIONS

Cities suggest there should be more awareness about how the main urban challenges (environmental, demographic, urban, geographic) are complex and need to be faced at the same time. They also point out how there needs to be a shift from a quantitative approach to a qualitative approach to development.

Another critical aspect is to have a political leader with a strong vision and commitment to motivate and implement.

Sustainable Tourism

CHALLENGES

- AirBnB- In many EU highly tourist areas, the historical centers have displaced long-term residents for tourists since housing has been transformed into short-stay residences. This phenomenon has also triggered gentrification since the goods and services now cater to visitors instead of locals. The hospitality industry has also been affected since historic centers don't have the building typology or available plots of land to convert into hotels.

SOLUTIONS

In **Rimini**, the new sustainable urban development strategy has been based on a vision encompassing three aspects: environment, seafront development, and enhancement of cultural heritage to attract all-year-round tourism. The City has developed a framework with tangible and intangible actions such as raising awareness about the sustainable use of the sea, community outreach, and school programs to transform how residents perceive the sea, which had been long associated only with seasonal tourism and partying. Some of the actions include:

- Investment in the sewage system which used to give the City a bad image. The new water treatment facility not only solves an operational problem, but it has become an attractive overlook part of the waterfront redevelopment.
- Redesigning the waterfront to incorporate sustainable mobility and recreation.
- The enhancement of cultural and historic places for all-year-round development.
- Awareness campaigns for people to embrace the idea that Rimini is not by the sea but a city of the sea.

International Cooperation

CHALLENGES

- Lack of collaboration- Cities compete to attract certain businesses instead of joining forces to solve global issues.
- Lack of global vision- Cities try to reach only their own goals while leaving other municipalities behind.

SOLUTIONS

Municipalities must be curious about different perspectives and solutions and eager to share with other cities. In programs like the IURC, cities have discovered different approaches to shared challenges and learned about new best practices that can be adapted to their cities.

Participating Organizations

Downtown Partnership
www.godowntownbaltimore.com

Impact Hub Baltimore
baltimore.impacthub.net

Mag Partners
www.magpartners.com

Sonavi Labs
www.sonavilabs.com

ABC Construction Education Academy
cea.abcbaltimore.org

Cross Street Partners
www.crossstpartners.com

Outlook Studios
www.ovfx.com

Betamore
www.betamore.com

18th – 20th September 2023

IURC - MANNHEIM
Green Urban Transformation

CITY/METRO	PROJECT(S)
EU	
- DORTMUND (GERMANY)	**AQUAPONIC PLANTS AT THE HANSA COKING PLANT (NATURE-BASED SOLUTION)** The aquaponic plant at the Hansa coking plant, which went into operation in June 2023, was part of the EU research project "proGIreg" (productive green infrastructure for post-industrial urban regeneration). The aim was to strengthen green infrastructure in formerly industrial areas. Within the framework of the research project, the large aquaponic plant was erected, which is suitable as a multi-year interim use for fallow land. The long-term goal is to produce healthy food for consumption on unused land in the urban environment and to develop economically viable business models. The plant already serves as a research object for students of the university of applied sciences and international guests. In addition, alternative economic concepts for the operation of the plant are planned. One promising idea, for example, is to rent out the hydroponic beds in plots. Inspired by established concepts such as rental gardens, the operating concept "rent-a-raft" was developed.
- MANNHEIM (GERMANY)	**THE CLIMATE STRATEGY DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF MANNHEIM** **Measures and strategies to boost climate action**, focussing especially on **energy-efficient urban redevelopment in urban heat islands** as well as outlining the intersection to climate adaptation.
- METROPOLITAN AREA OF BARCELONA (SPAIN)	**NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS (NBS) FOR SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL METROPOLITAN RIVER RESTORATION:** *H2020 CLEARING HOUSE AND LIFE URBANGREENINGPLANS EXPERIENCES IN THE LLOBREGAT RIVER.* The Llobregat River is one of the key areas of the metropolitan green infrastructure in terms of ecological, economic and social values. The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) has been working for years to improve the environment and landscape of the river, seeking a balance between its environmental values and social use. From 2006 until today, the incorporation of NBS has been every time more significant. Within this framework, the presentation focuses on the lessons learnt from two valuable experiences: H2020 CLEARING HOUSE (CH) and LIFE UrbanGreeningPlans (UGP).
- RISORSE PER ROMA SPA - ROME (ITALY)	**BOTTOM UP PROCESSES, ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP, COMPLEMENTARITY OF EUROPEAN FUNDS ARE THE KEYSTONE FOR THE GREEN URBAN TRANSFORMATION** Through European projects/programmes such as RU:RBAN –URBACT (2018-2022), IUC-IURC (2019-2023) and GenerACTOR -INTPA (2022-2024), ANCI Lazio and Risorse per Roma/City of Rome are enhancing participatory and bottom up processes in the territory of Rome and Lazio aiming at the following purposes: **urban agriculture spread throughout the Lazio Region and a large Ring Road for Bicycles in Rome.** Through the complementarity of European funds and the synergies between these local actions and projects bottom-up initiatives from citizens and local stakeholders are promoted, strengthened, developed and disseminated at international level, to be exchanged with other cities and towns. Also, a virtuous circle of mutual understanding/collaboration is started between citizens/associations of citizens, local and territorial bodies and international partners and **Green Urban Transformation** is promoted and implemented.
- BERGAMO (ITALY)	"Oh no, everything is getting worse!" "Don't worry, my friend, we have a plan...rather a strategy!" "A strategy? What do you mean?" "Have you ever heard about "Cli.C.Bergamo!"?

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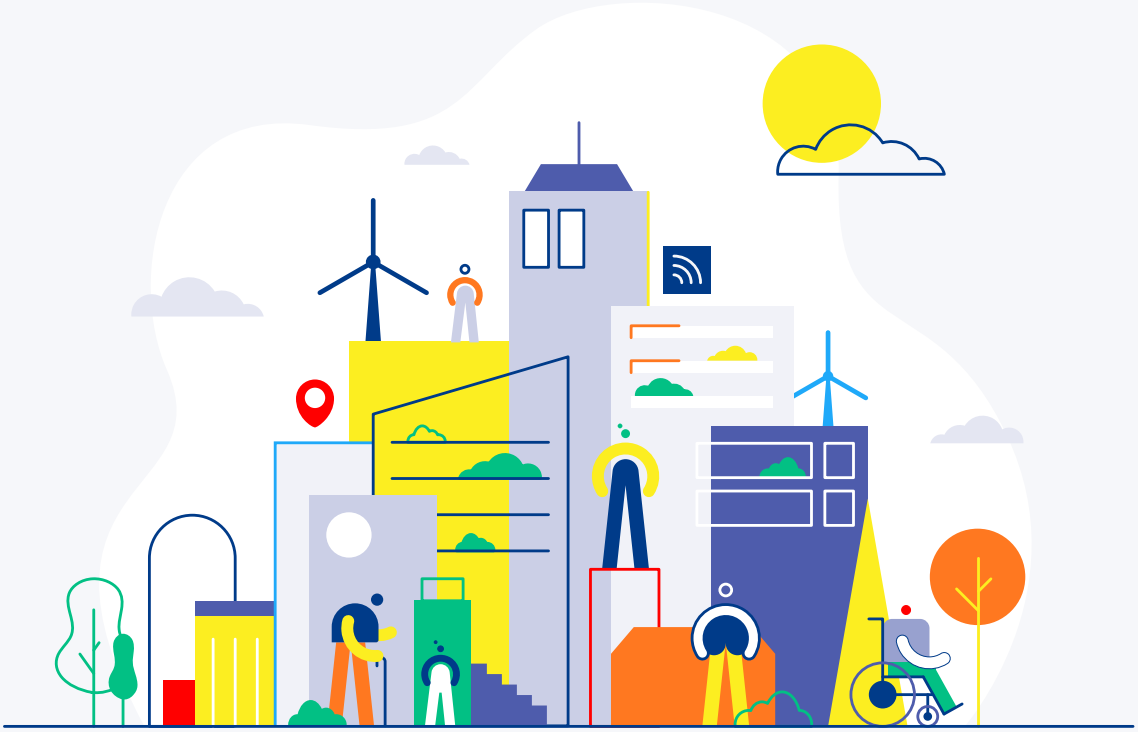
<< Green Urban Transformation

CITY/METRO	PROJECT(S)
EU	
- BERGAMO (ITALY)	In 2020, the Municipality of Bergamo declared the climate emergency status and signed its commitment. to reach climate neutrality. In 2021, for the first time in its history, Bergamo approved and adopted a Climate Transition Strategy called Cli.C. Bergamo! - Cli.mate.Change.Bergamo! Thanks to this strategy, the Municipality - along with three crucial partners - aims to face the effects of climate change by putting in practice both mitigation actions and adaptation actions like de-sealing, mapping its territory to identify the most vulnerable areas, setting up a network of sensors for measuring weather-climate parameters, experimenting Renewable Energy Communities and much more. And, of course, this strategy includes engaging citizens. Our goal is also to include in this strategy not only the entire Municipality but also the whole area of Parco dei Colli which counts, in addition to some of the territory of Bergamo, eight other municipalities.
- BRAGA (PORTUGAL)	**STRATEGIC MODEL OF BRAGA FOR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY** The Strategic Model for the Sustainable Development of Braga is a comprehensive plan aimed at guiding the sustainable growth of the city across multiple dimensions. Based on the intersection of economy, environment, and society, the model seeks to balance urban progress with environmental preservation and the enhancement of citizens' quality of life.
- RIMINI (ITALY)	**SEA PARK** A project that involves all the 15-kilometer promenade and transform existing gray infrastructure into a new green infrastructure. A new key value is given to the sea: from being a background it becomes a central element. The sea becomes the founding element of a new concept of wellness and for the development and innovation of the business sector, thus generating a new concept of tourism: Sea Wellness. This new concept will also trigger a radical requalification of the accommodation sector. A fundamental prerequisite for the new leading role deriving from the sea is the protection and enhancement of the quality of its waters.
- VILA NOVA FAMALICÃO (PORTUGAL)	Vila Nova de Famalicão is an industrial municipality but also a green city. To improve the public space quality, the municipality actions need to reflect the sustainability paradigm. The **Urban Drainage System Program** integrates green spaces and strengthens the water system. At same time, the program provides public space with higher heritage and social value.
- GZM (POLAND)	**METROPOLITAN FLOWERY MEADOWS** The programme is addressed to non-governmental organisations and the inhabitants of the Metropolis GZM. The action aims to support the survival of pollinating insects, furthermore it affects the rainwater retention capacity, improves the microclimate and reduces the effects of air pollution. **METROPOLITAN PROTOTYPING SCHOOL** Participants in the School created a temporary space arrangement of part of the campus of the University of Silesia in Katowice. The area in question is a section of the Rawa valley near the Faculty of Social Sciences. Greenery and urban furniture appeared in the place of the removed parking spaces. In future, the Rawa, restored to its natural state, will be the axis of a river park combining natural, ecological and research functions. This will create a green learning zone, combining the potential of Katowice's universities and interacting with the already existing cultural zone.

CITY/METRO	PROJECT(S)
NA	
- PITTSBURGH (USA)	**PITTSBURGH GREENWAYS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM** Greenways are permanent conservation areas that were designated in the late 1980s in effort to consolidate steeply sloped, unbuildable land for the purposed of protecting hillsides and preserving open space resources following the collapse of Pittsburgh's steel industry. In 2021, the Pittsburgh Greenways Partnership Program was created using the Hazelwood Greenway as a pilot program to show how greenways could improve social equity and climate resilience if communities were given financial support to maintain them. As part of the pilot, extensive community engagement was conducted and lots of collaborative programming was used to increase awareness of and use of the greenway. For three summers, the City of Pittsburgh has continued to work in the Hazelwood Greenway and have since expanded the model to the Seldom Seen and North "Pittsburgh Greenways Partnership Program" Charles Street greenways, replicating the community engagement process and making physical improvements to activate those underutilized spaces.
- NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION (USA)	**NORTHERN VIRGINIA'S REGIONAL STORMWATER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN** For over 10 years, Northern Virginia Regional Commission has provided coordination to the Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners, a group composed of local governments, drinking water and sanitation authorities, schools, and businesses that share the common goals to keep residents in the region healthy and safe by reducing the amount of pollution from stormwater runoff that reaches local waterways and empower individuals to take action to reduce pollution. To meet these goals, the Partners conduct an annual Regional Stormwater Education Campaign to engage and educate residents on ways that they can improve their stormwater-related knowledge and behaviors. Overall, the campaign has allowed localities in the region to take a unique, collaborative approach around public engagement, and in turn, reach a broader range of communities to address water quality and other stormwater pollution issues.
- WINDSOR (CANADA)	**PECHE ISLAND SHORELINE PROTECTION PROJECT** Peche Island is an 86-acre island located 330 metres off the Detroit River shoreline at the eastern edge of Windsor Ontario. The island, owned by the City of Windsor is open for public use from June to October annually; with visitors encouraged to practice leave no trace principles. The interior of Peche Island preserves Provincially Significant Wetlands, and the entire island is an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. A number of special concern species and species-at-risk call the uninhabited island home. In collaboration with the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA), The City of Windsor oversaw the creation of natural barriers (sheltering islands and a 600-metre revetment wall), aimed at preventing erosion damage and enhancing fish habitat. The Peche Island Shoreline Protection project took three years to complete at a cost of approximately $4.5 million, was funded through a partnership between the City of Windsor, ERCA, and various funding sources.
- ST. JOHN'S (CANADA)	**UPGRADING VETERAN'S SQUARE:** *TURNING A TRIAL INTO A LASTING CHANGE* In 2017, the City of St. John's trialed a new temporary way of arranging road space at Veteran's Square. After listening to feedback from people in the area, City Council decided to make this new arrangement permanent. Three years later, the area was rebuilt with a safer street design and new park space. The new park space has more than 200 new plantings, including 16 different types of trees, shrubs, and perennials.



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