



Achieving Net-Zero through Innovation in
Small and Medium sized cities

D5.2 Mobility Islands Proof Point

30/08/2024

UrbanDNA

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Description of the related task and the deliverable. Extract from DoA & GA	<p>T5.2 Mobility Islands (MI) Demonstrator (Leader: BAB, Duration: M1-M18, Contributors: UDNA, and ALL)</p> <p>T5.2 will support ongoing delivery of MI's (as test case) in an initial group of SMCs, specifically capturing facts, data and further insights on market analysis, benchmarking, knowledge (solution) capture, communication best practices, etc. This task will mobilise and support a portfolio of 'first wave' of MI locations in the engaged cities; expand the number of SMCs active and ready for action; and launch the 'Second Wave' candidate SMCs (feeding into T5.6), while also feeding into the Buyer's Guide for MIs (see T2.2/D2.2).</p>			
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3. About SMCNetZero

SMCNetZero brings together six successful urban innovation initiatives in Europe with seven (7) regional and Pan European networks and their partners to create a **Satellite Network of innovation actors** to support public sector representatives from Small and Medium-sized cities (SMCs), SMEs, academia, NGOs, and investors across Europe to **facilitate decarbonisation in SMCs**.

The SMCNetZero consortium is composed of:

BABLE Smart Cities, Germany (BAB)

ODRAZ - Održivi razvoj zajednice, Croatia (ODZ)

Smart City Cluster, Spain (SCC)

Southern Regional Assembly, Ireland (SRA)

BLOXHUB, Denmark (BXH)

WE BUILD DENMARK, Denmark (WBD)

UrbanDNA, United Kingdom (UDNA)

This project is unique in that its diverse consortium partners and broad commitment from target stakeholders in the Satellite Network ensure **focus in regions with less innovation capacity**, with written confirmed commitment from nearly 100 innovation actors at the proposal stage, to participate in the activities- including an emphasis on largely underrepresented regions and stakeholders.

The project will leverage its diverse Satellite Network to:

- Gain an in-depth understanding of SMC needs and barriers towards achieving Net Zero emissions.
- Raise awareness and simplify access to existing successful initiatives supporting decarbonisation.
- Support matchmaking between supply and demand sides by linking SMEs, researchers, and investors with SMCs.
- Help identify and open access to funding for enabling innovation deployment in SMCs currently underrepresented in the European innovation ecosystem.

SMCNetZero's vision is to **create and strengthen local innovation ecosystems' interrelations in SMCNetZero regions** through brokerage and knowledge-building activities as well as digital resources to increase capacity **for planning, deploying, and scaling up of decarbonisation solutions**, overall focusing on increasing the inclusivity of these innovation ecosystems and minimizing existing innovation divides.

To achieve this vision, SMCNetZero has the following primary strategic objectives:

- Open up opportunities and stimulate the dissemination of information and exchange of knowledge on best practices on decarbonization for SMCs (and as a result, SMEs).

- Increase implementation prospects between providers of zero-emission solutions and public authorities from SMCs by designing, developing and providing a digital space and accompanying toolkit for collaborating, learning and networking.
- Identify and engage innovation leaders from the public and private sectors from “strong” innovator regions and “moderate” to “modest” innovator regions within the project’s focus countries.
- Design and deploy engagement and knowledge-building activities for ensuring wide participation for SMCNetZero and maximum impact.
- Facilitate the understanding and implications of the implementation and scale-up of innovation projects in SMCs.

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4. Introduction

4.1 Orientation within the SMC NetZero Project

This **Mobility Island Proof Point (D5.2)** provides “A specific capture of the accomplishments of the network of cities in connection to Mobility Islands – including benefits and learning points for all parties”, and focuses on the activities of a group of small and medium-sized cities (SMCs) in advancing their activities in collaboration, specifically in the domain of mobility transition, through the development of Mobility Islands. It is intended that the approaches outlined will be replicable and scalable to other city themes of common interest.

This document should be considered alongside **Action Launchpad Report (D5.1)**, in that the latter addresses the broader context of supporting an SMC in addressing NetZero goals through tackling improvements at a city-wide level as illustrated in Figure 1.

The Mobility Island Proof Point is a potentially high impact demonstrator measure that is considered transformative and applicable to most cities, and so has been given particular focus here.

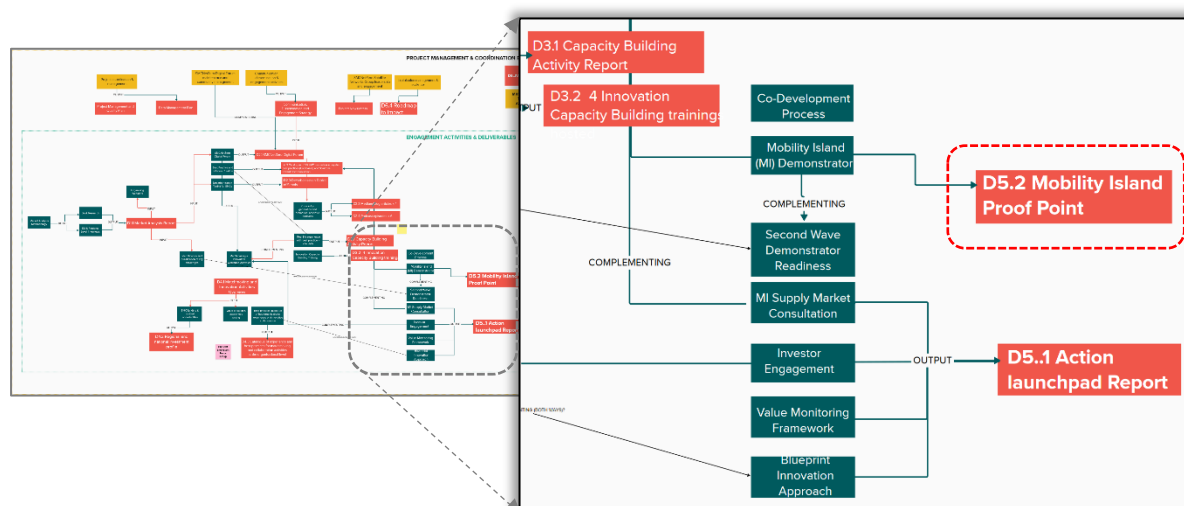


Figure 1: Orientation of this deliverable within the overall project

4.2 Intended Readership & Purpose

The intention is that this report, or excerpts from it, will be read and used by SMCs, particularly those involved or wishing to be involved in the Mobility Island initiative. It provides the first overall capture of the state-of-play and provides a useful comparison for that community to stimulate discussion and collaboration. The Small Giants Focus Group of the EU Smart Cities Marketplace, and the Digital Forum, provide important assets to support the ongoing collaboration.

The deliverable may also serve a useful reference for project partners, the European Commission, potentially Member State government agencies, and supporting SMEs.

4.3 List of Acronyms & Abbreviations:

- CCC: City Climate Contract
- MS: Member State
- Mob.Isl.: Mobility Islands
- Popltn: Population (of city)
- SMC: Small and Medium-size City
- SME: Small and Medium-size Enterprise

Accomplishments of the SMCs in Developing the Mobility Island Concept

4.4 The Mobility Island Concept

A Mobility Island is a physical facility that provides a very visible, pleasant asset that offers an informed choice of travel modes (e.g. eBike/Scooter, shared eCar, public transport), potentially specific to people’s personal circumstances (e.g. commuters, people with disabilities, family outing, tourists and so on). The vision is to locate Mobility Islands within a 5-minute walk of any point in a city. By initially locating these in obvious and logical locations, a city can drive and evidence a swifter transition to NetZero on a pan-city basis.

Mobility Islands are considered a bankable and relatively swift solution. They address one of the few major GHG-contributing sectors in a city; being Mobility and Built Environment, with Energy as a cross-cutting strand to both; in total contributing around three quarters of a city’s GHG emissions. Mobility, unlike the built environment, which is predominantly owned within the private sector, is more within the control of the public sector to influence and mobility islands provide a stimulus to support the shift to clean, green and active sustainable mobility.

The Mobility Island concept is discussed in several documents:

- The original Sharing Cities material, notably the **Mobility Island ‘Playbook’** – that provides a 40 page, easy-read overview of the concept alongside the experiences of the originating H2020 project for city project officers. The “playbook” is complemented by a shorter **‘Leadership Guide’**
- SMCNetZero **D2.2 “Solutions towards Decarbonisation (Mobility Island Buyer’s Guide)”** – that provides support to city officers in developing their mobility island project including options for business models and supply sources for their implementation
- SMCNetZero **D4.2 “Investment Profile”** – which considers the overall challenges of SMCs in accessing finance to support NetZero goals and uses the Mobility Island as a practical example to ground the discussion
- SMCNetZero **D5.1 “Action Launchpad Report”** – that introduced a **NetZero Roadmap** for SMCs and sets this document (the ‘Proof Point’) as a practical example within that overall roadmap.

The summary storyline is captured in Figure 2 which highlights 6 features:

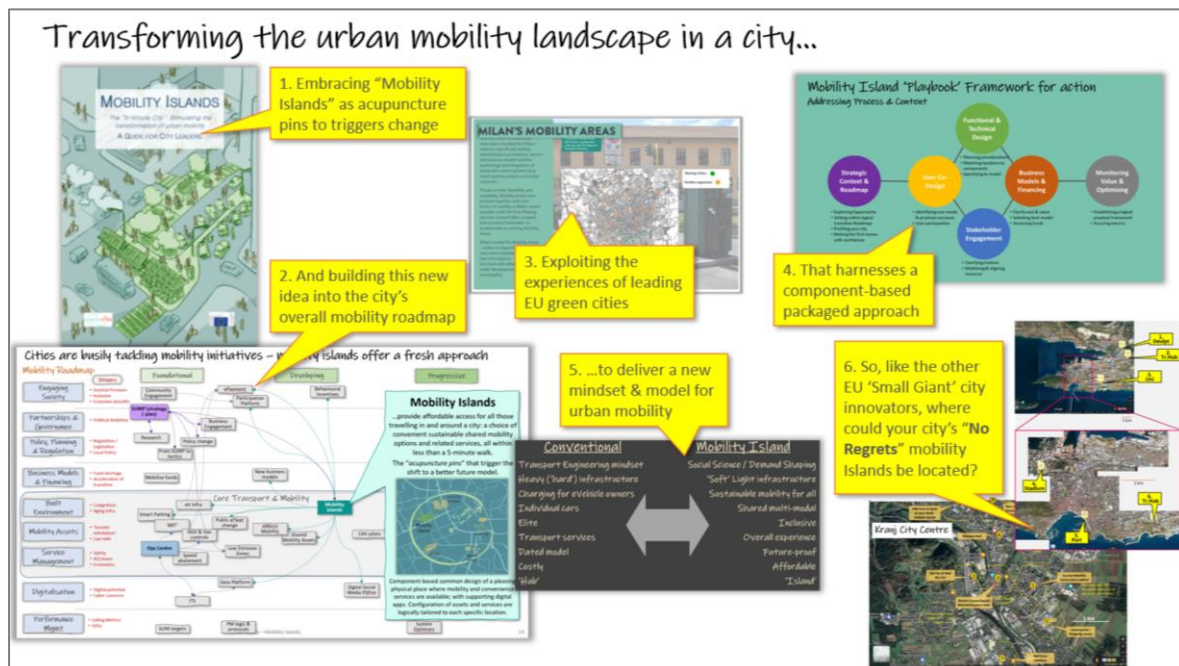


Figure 2: Mobility Islands as a Stimulus or Transformation

1. **Mobility Islands as a stimulus measure** to affect behaviour change through the already published Leadership Guide and Playbook intended to engage key stakeholders
2. Positioning Mobility Islands within a city's broader **Mobility Roadmap** (within Transport Plan / SUMP) with its various activities that support the transition to a new mobility model
3. **Building confidence in SMCs** through exploiting the experiences of early adopters
4. Tabling a practical **Solution Framework** for Mobility islands
5. Highlighting the **paradigm shift from old to new** mobility concepts in response to societal changes and the NetZero challenge
6. Offering a rapid on-ramp to a city's '**No Regrets**' **Mobility Island locations** within their city (i.e. locations that are low risk, achievable locations).

The Solution Framework referred to above, is an ongoing development exercise that provides guidance, methods and tools to help cities through the process from idea to implementation of Mobility Islands addressing, in an integrated fashion, the key components of the solution. These can be summarised (Figure 3) as follows:

- i. **Societal** – how to develop a compelling proposition for each stakeholder segment in a city that will incentivise adoption of the solution
- ii. **Technical** – covering the 5 major components (and elements) of the solution (Ref fig 3, and elaborated on Miro board)
- iii. **Business Models & Financing** – considering 6 different business model options with different ownership / control considerations, and offering some initial budget indicators
- iv. **Strategy / Roadmap** – setting the solution within the broader context of the city in general and the transition to a new mobility model in particular
- v. **Stakeholder Engagement** – providing pragmatic methods to engage and manage stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the project
- vi. **Value & Monitoring** – discussing what types of benefits emerge, for whom, and how these can be practically and helpfully monitored

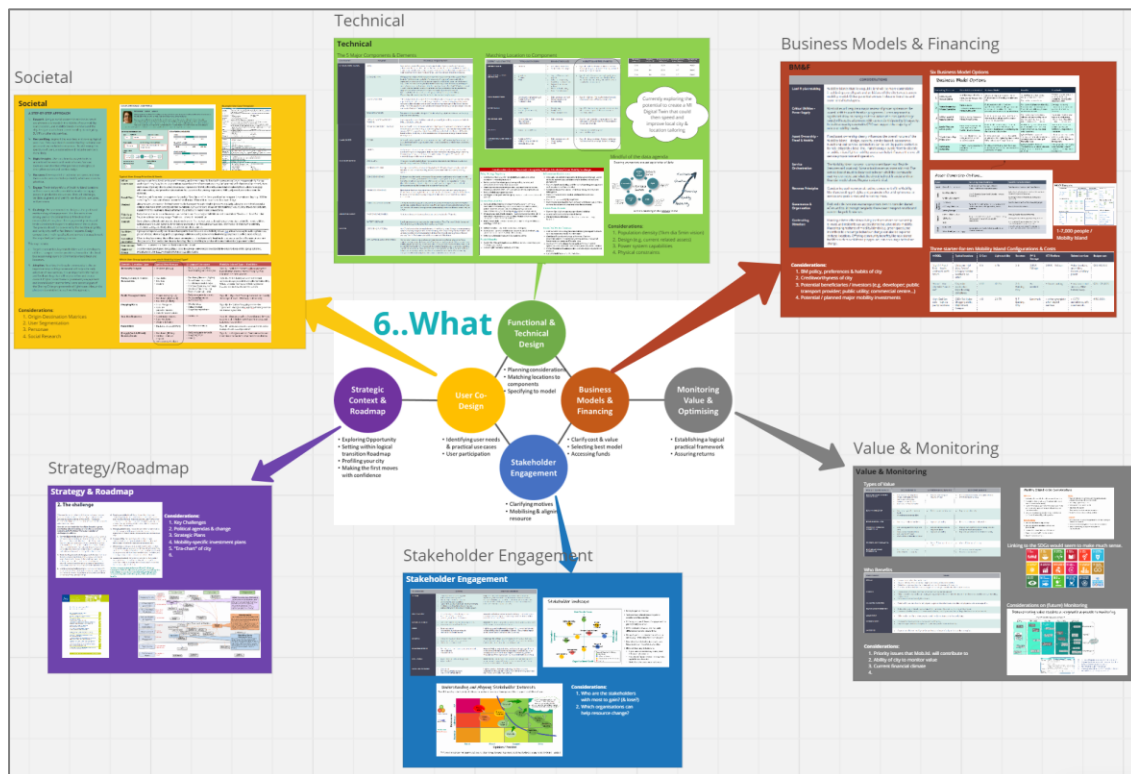


Figure 3: Mobility Island Solution Framework & Supporting Methods and Tools

The Solution Framework and supporting materials are captured on a SMC community digital whiteboard that is used to engage SMCs and progressively co-create / develop / capture reusable content. This includes documents such as the Mobility Island Policy Guide that seeks to solidify the concept within a city’s policy context and support the transition to plans and implementation project.

4.5 Supporting the SMC Mobility Island Proof Point

The SMCNetZero project has been working in collaboration with the EU Smart City Marketplace (SCM) ‘Small Giants’ Focus Group on the topic of Mobility Islands over the project period. (Mobility is one of the 7 shared common challenge topics of the latter).

The SMCNetZero project seeks to accelerate progress within these SMCs, make the Mobility Island concept more specific and support broader market engagement. Mobility Islands have therefore featured within the discussions as an example of how cities can take early action on climate change. And how the following strengths of smaller cities can be brought to the fore as a ‘proof point’:

- Their relative systemic simplicity, in that the red thread that connects inputs to outcomes is easier to track than in larger cities (where there is much more going on round about to obfuscate) and thus evidence benefits
- Their **agility in decision making** due to relatively less governance complexity
- Their **closeness to society** to understand community needs and gain support for actions and adoptions of new solutions
- And finally – and most importantly – their **willingness to collaborate** on open, equal and respectful terms (much the result of the common challenges they face; capacity constraints; paucity of funds, challenges in engaging the market etc.)

SMCs were represented at the Barcelona Smart City EXPO and World Congress (SCEWC) in November 2022, through an “Agora” session with European Commission (DG MOVE), Investor, and Small Giants representations. Although this was prior to the commencement

of the SMCNetZero project, the fact that the original proposal was retained on the reserve list aided in maintaining engagement and enthusiasm. These ongoing relationships also helped in corralling stakeholders to submit a bid for Horizon Europe funds in 2023 which, despite being particularly well received in the evaluation process, was unsuccessful (it was within a heavily over-subscribed City Mission call). This all emphasises the beneficial role that EU activities can play in engaging cross-EU communities; and when done with the same community it helps make the process less burdensome.

SMCNetZero has retained these ongoing relationships with the cities, and several SME suppliers, through holding group working sessions, and ad hoc individual discussions to support progress and build/maintain momentum. The Mobility Island concept has provided a practical measure to ground and focus discussions through example, addressing a high impact measure within the many NetZero solutions available to cities. Mobility also featured in the Capacity Building workshop held in Copenhagen within the '3+1 sectors' in focus (Built Environment, Mobility, Waste/Circularity, and cross-cutting, Energy).

The variance between participating cities can play a significant role in their ability (or not) to develop and implement solutions, be that due to developmental maturity, and / or regional contextual differences (culture, mobility paradigms, environmental conditions, financing options). By bringing together stakeholders from the various regions, together with their SMCNetZero local partners in support, the SMCNetZero project was able to help in capacity building and the bench-learning discussions between these different cities. The Mobility Island also played a useful role in addressing a common need across all cities, irrespective of maturity or contextual differences.

Of particular benefit from the regional variances was the ability to contrast different contexts and test the in-development guidance, methods and tools in these different settings. This all helps provide a blueprinted solution that can be adopted at scale across a wider set of geographies.

However, given that the SMCNetZero project represents, collectively, the largest, yet least represented, cities community, the project's actions are formative in that they address potential scale action in a community that is more predisposed to collaborate and share.

Current State of Developments

Each city is naturally at different stages in addressing NetZero and, within that, transport and mobility opportunities. Some have greater access to leadership support, capacity, and funds whilst others are more advanced in their policy, planning and project activities. As a result, progress varies and, as the SMCNetZero project has no funds to support city implementation activities, it has to work within these parameters, inhibiting its ability to actively drive and manage progress. The resultant positive side is, however, that the focus on bankability of the Mobility Island measure becomes more prominent.

4.6 Process

The suggested implementation steps for kick-starting a Mobility Island project are shown in Figure 4, and comprises three pragmatic actions with increasingly deeper involvement and richer outputs.

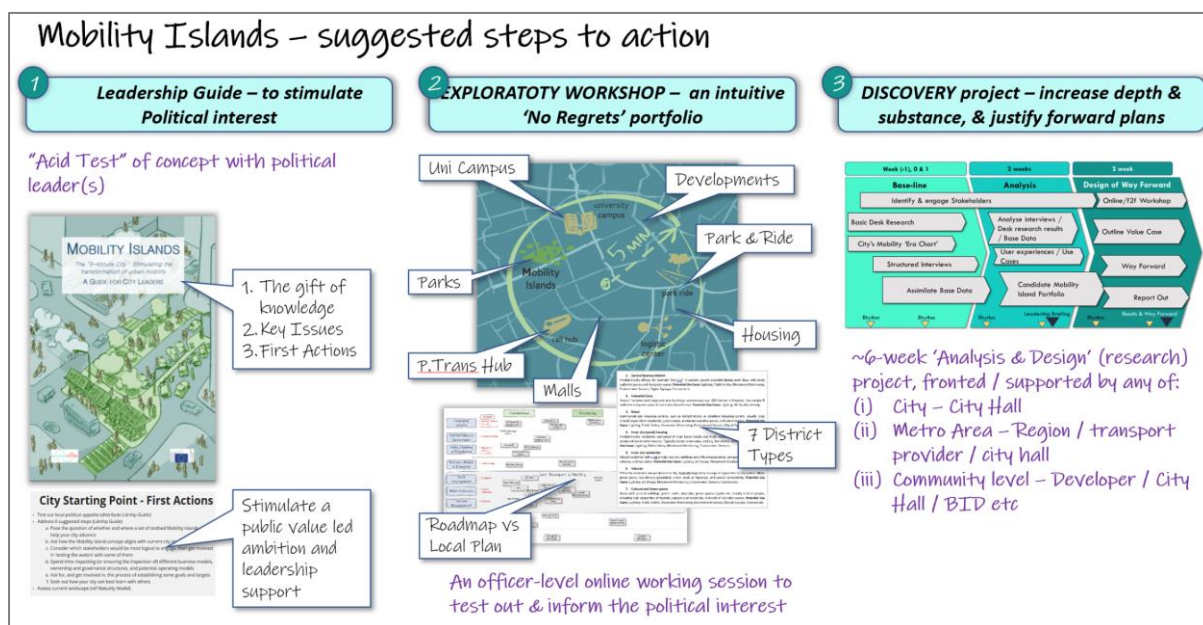


Figure 4: Suggested Mobility Island Implementation Steps

- Step 1 seeks to ensure top-down interest and emerging **political sponsorship** for the concept. This can be achieved by sharing the Leadership Guide – a brief 'train read' document – with the appropriate politician to stimulate interest. The guide informs of the concept, identifies the key issues, and proposed half a dozen first steps
- Step 2 involves the development of the **'No Regrets' portfolio of Mobility Island locations** in a city. This draws on the pragmatic judgement of appropriate city officers, based on: initial guidance captured in the 'playbook' (showing 7 typical example locations, and considering 7 different district types); and expertise of partners.
- Step 3 is a more involved and formal **'Discovery Project'**, over a matter of weeks to seat the concept within city policy, develop a more structured solution, initially engage potential users, outline potential business models, assess budget and potential sources of finance, and draft the business case.









In total, 20 cities have been involved in Mobility Island discussions (subsequent to the original Sharing Cities project) – of which 19 are SMCs, and one is an active collaborating large city. 16 cities have participated in a 'No Regrets' Mobility Island location exercise. The SMCs span Europe and further east, and range in size from 3,000 to 270,000 population. In some cases, the Mobility Island 'No Regrets' discussions pre-date the formal start of





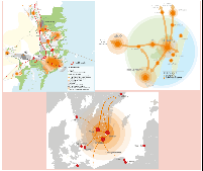
SMCNetZero however their involvement in most cases has continued throughout this project. The concept was initially communicated by way of a group on-line workshop; and then developed in city-specific detail through individual on-line sessions. No cities have been supported through a ‘Discovery phase’, due to SMCNetZero resource constraints. Some cities did however undertake additional activities that addressed some of the elements of the Discovery analysis and design phase, through access to external local funds. All cities are included as this provides the first overall capture of the state-of-the-art of Mobility Islands for SMCs.



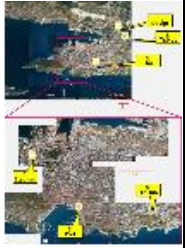

4.7 State-of-Art





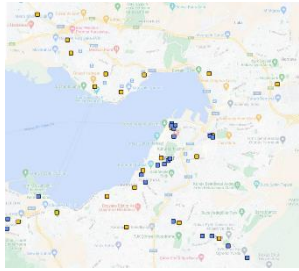
Table 1 provides a summary of the current state of these cities. The colour coding represents state of engagement (green – still active; amber – in abeyance though still engaged; red – halted).

Table 1: Current State of SMC Mobility Island Developments

City	Current State
Sandyford, IRE, 6k population 	<p>Launching the only Mobility Island trial program in Ireland. The concept supports local needs within the mixed-use business district, the wider Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) county, and integration within the Greater Dublin area. Sandyford houses 5,500 residents and a workforce of 26,000 within the business park. The development is managed locally, supported by a Digital Twin. The digital layer is run in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin, supported by both the Dept of Transport & SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland). This includes a separate project with Bike Sensors to gather Data on a sample of 200 cyclists who commute in and out of the Business District daily.</p> 
Kranj, SI, 60k popltn 	<p>12 locations identified during the ‘No Regrets’ exercise, including an existing mobility hub near the city centre, including also: station, park, stadium, commercial, historic centre, residential areas, park & rides, and (new) hospital. This portfolio thus addresses city centre/in-city/commuter needs.</p> <p>Kranj is a C-NSC Mission city, with new CCC, that highlights mobility changes in a wide-ranging manner, and discusses business models and financing considerations to support speedier achievement of NetZero goals.</p> 
Gera, DE, 100k 	<p>Gera is somewhat of a ‘ribbon city’ running along a river. Mobility plans that included ‘mobility stations’ had been in development with some early design and market engagement activities underway; so, the concept of Mobility Islands had appeal technically, as did the opportunity to collaborate and co-develop with fellow SMCs from around Europe. 7 locations were identified through a ‘No Regrets’ exercise, including: city centre, stations (3), commercial district, and an existing lower income residential area.</p> 
Sarajevo, BH, 270k 	<p>A significant exercise was undertaken with Sarajevo to capture the city context and address the Mobility Island opportunity. This was with City Hall staff, recognising</p> 

	<p>the need to engage the multi-municipality regional transport context (with the regional transport agency). 8 Mobility Island locations were identified, including: areas of culture, commercial, university, bus/rail station, park, park & ride, city hall, old town. Sarajevo has been successful in accessing EU funding on a related project which provided resources to undertake a ‘mobility island’ demonstrator project, which has been published in an EU Marketplace blog. Further collaborative development is desired by the city.</p>
<p>Burgas, BU, 120k</p> <p>● ●</p>	<p>Burgas was a partner in the Mobility island founding Sharing Cities project (2015-‘21), and 1 Mobility Island was planned. 8 more Islands were subsequently identified through a No Regrets exercise with a clear rationale for each location. These include: seaside attraction area (the original iconic WWII shelter, parking lot, city centre, bus/train station, & public park. Burgas was also a partner in the EU consortium seeking funding for a collaborative demonstrator. External funds are required to support further development in the city.</p> 
<p>Brasov, RO, 275k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>A detailed city context and Mobility Island assessment was captured with considerable support from the Mayoral advisor and local staff. 7 locations were then identified and developed in the city, with a clear rationale for each location. This was achieved with some modest additional resourcing. At the time, the notion of a significant political event involving other RO smart cities was tabled, as well as the potential for a multi-city nationally supported initiative. Political change occurred. The (public) Metro Mobility company had been providing staff support, albeit recognising that the initiative was focused only, at that stage, in the city. Metro Mobility priority changes slowed further development. Captured content is in place to support rapid restart.</p> 
<p>Alba Iulia, RO, 64k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>The Mobility Island concept received clear interest from city staff, and was seen to be very consistent with city mobility plans. Location considerations were discussed with the city, however ‘No Regrets’ location analysis not undertaken</p> 
<p>Piatra Neamt, RO, 80k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>A significant exercise was undertaken that identified 7 locations, including: tourist / sports facility, station, new opportunity area, city centre, and converted zoo. High levels of engagement and support to the concept were provided from city leadership, and progress in design was underway (using regional University). However, a change in the City Manager broke the relationship and caused the discussions to halt.</p> 
<p>Kalmar, SE, 42k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>The concept of Mobility Islands was explored by Kalmar, supported from the EU & International relations office. A local ‘No Regrets’ exercise identified 4 locations around the city centre, integrated into the overall mobility plan. Interest in collaboration through EU-project consortia to further develop the concept was thwarted by an unsuccessful EU call response. The opportunity remains to engage.</p> 

<p>Vaasa, FI, 70k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>The local University in Vaasa is deeply involved in supporting the city in developing its mobility plans, considering multi-spatial development needs (incl. inter-urban). A major focus is on car sharing, sustainable mobility modes, eV charge plans, and engagement and integration with communities. Expert input from the University lead supported alignment between ongoing plans and the Mobility Island concept, with active collaboration. Major challenges include shifting people from private cars, and funding constraints. The latter holding back the opportunity to actively collaborate in shifting from idea to action. Stimulus funding is required.</p>	
<p>Stavanger, NO, 130k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>Mixed stakeholder engagement occurred in Stavanger, involving the City Hall; Regional Agency; Bus Company; Smart City Event (Nordic Edge) Organiser (representing local industry). A 'No Regrets' exercise with some of above stakeholders resulted in a particularly interesting discussion around regional implementation of Mobility Islands. Local support to the concept amongst the various stakeholders was unclear, and as a result the dialogue closed.</p>	
<p>Split, HR, 160k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>The Split economic development agency (RAST), who also held accountability for international relations (incl EU activities) supported initial feasibility work. The very high tourist volumes and heritage status of areas in the city provided an excellent set of challenges that Mobility Islands could resolve, and the concept was well supported. 6 locations were identified, including: old city centre, stadium, transport hub, port, and University. Political and priority changes hindered continuance of discussions. Initiative presently held in abeyance, awaiting some form of stimulus (e.g. EU grant-funded project; smart city/mobility event; intense mobility challenges) to regenerate activities. Content is captured for re-start.</p>	
<p>Dubrovnik, HR, 43k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>Dubrovnik's physical location and mobility challenges (added to by high tourism) offers an interesting context for Mobility Islands. 6 locations were identified and captured with accompanying contextual insights with support of the local development agency (Dura). Adjacent mobility initiatives were in place, including car sharing, smart parking, and electric charging point location planning. Re-establishment of action plans is viewed as an opportunity, however some incentive or international collaboration on this topic may be required (and/or national stimulus).</p>	
<p>N.East Croatian Cities, HR</p> <p>●</p>	<p>A cluster of 3 cities (Koprivnica, Varazdin, Virovitica), serviced by a common Public Regional Energy Agency (REA Sjever), is in consideration – sponsored by the CEO of the energy agency. The Mobility Island concept is seen to be attractive as it brings electric light shared mobility solutions that are inclusive and affordable. However the concern is about the readiness of the cities to adopt such solutions – given the very traditional mindset, and reliance on public buses. The potential to integrate mobility islands within an overall regional mobility approach holds opportunity. REA continues to actively engage with the SMC/Small Giants community to track developments, and seek opportunities to collaborate – even in a 'fellow' or 'observer' capacity.</p>	

<p>Kosice, SK, 240k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>6 potential locations for Mobility Islands have been identified through a broader smart city assessment and captured in a report, including parks, station, city centre and University. Although the interest was in pace in the city, with no sight of follow-on funding, momentum has dropped off.</p> 
<p>Stirling, SCO, 30k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>Focused on energy master planning activities, including solar canopies around parking locations and bus station. City wide & Dept capacity constraints and sector focus precluded more detailed Mobility Island work, although considerable commitment to SMCNetZero blueprinting and roadmap planning activities.</p>
<p>Aboyne, SCO, 3k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>3 Phase I and 4 PhII Mobility Island locations have been identified, including (phase I) new housing development, town centre, and Community Centre/schools; with (PhII) infill M.I. within 4 existing residential areas. The concept is being developed as part of new national Local Place Plan (LPP) initiative and includes integration with (inter-regional) Demand Responsive Transport potential.</p> 
<p>Agdam, AZ 100k (planned)</p> <p>●</p>	<p>Ongoing ‘people-centric mobility’ master planning activities are underway that include the Mobility Island concept, for the initial re-build of this city development. This would connect a new residential development, through the leisure park, to bus/train station, and on to an industrial zone, as initial demonstrator. With success it would lead to anticipated later wider city adoption of new mobility model. Agdam is particularly interesting as it is in essence a new build, in a post-conflict prior Soviet societal context – so the social agenda is particularly informative.</p> 
<p>Edinet, MO, 15k</p> <p>●</p>	<p>Initial work on a number of different multi-sectoral smart initiatives were undertaken, as part of an EU regional supported project. This included mobility, and embraced the potential of Mobility Islands, located in the iconic tourist park connecting to the city centre (Phase 1). The Ukrainian conflict caused collaborative international activity to be put on hold.</p> 
<p>Izmir, TK, 4mln</p> <p>●</p>	<p>Izmir (not an SMC) has developed a portfolio of some 30 sites for Mobility Islands across the Metro area as part of an overall smart city transformation planning programme, and ongoing SUMP development. The city has also proactively collaborated with SMCs in seeking grant funds as a credible scale consortium lead. Design is progressing and shared with SMCs as a stimulus. The business and financing case has also been developed, offering additional insights to method and benchmarks for SMCs.</p> 

The learning from the original Sharing Cities activities, which addressed multi-modal sustainable mobility modal plans that then morphed into Mobility Islands for some cities, is captured in the published Sharing Cities Mobility Island ‘Playbook’.

The ‘No Regrets’ workshops highlighted a number of important insights:

- a) The ease of undertaking the exercise with one or a modest number of city officers
- b) Relying on judgement and experience, together with the input guidance, does provide a sound basis for an emerging portfolio to take forward
- c) Consistency of location choice typology, which validates the initial guidance
- d) Received benefits of the exercise in testing and challenging conventional thinking
- e) Applicability and flexibility of solution to suit multiple city sizes and characteristics
- f) Support to quality of prepared guidance materials
- g) The importance of a local committed champion
- h) Contrasting that, the need to ensure relatively deep and wide engagement within a city to ensure an enduring effect
- i) It remains hard to stimulate uptake of the various complementary portfolio of support materials by cities (yet no alternatives were tabled) – why is this?

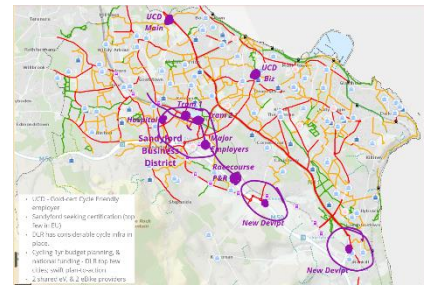
1-2 page, more detailed, summaries follow in subsequent pages for those cities that are more engaged and/or developed in their thinking as regards Mobility Islands. These highlight the diversity of city types that Mobility Islands can serve. And also reinforce the known challenges that SMCs face in progressing innovative ideas.

Sandyford, Ireland

Summary

Currently launching the only Mobility Island trial program in Ireland. The concept supports local needs within the mixed-use business district, the wider Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (DLR) county, and integration within the Greater Dublin area. Sandyford houses 5,500 residents and a workforce of 26,000 within the business park, so with most commuting the mobility agenda is paramount.


The physical development is managed locally, supported by a Digital Twin. The digital layer is run in collaboration with Trinity College Dublin, supported by both the Dept of Transport & SEAI (Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland). This includes a separate project with Bike Sensors to gather Data on a sample of 200 cyclists who commute in and out of the Business District daily.



Policy, Engagement & Decision making	<p>DLR is the administrative council in which Sandyford sits, and increasingly sees Sandyford as an agile testbed for innovation. The Sandyford Business District (SBD) is actively seeking partners to help drive this initiative, as many have staff policies that would benefit from the initiative, and thus potential budgets and capacity to support also.</p> <p>Engagement of Trinity College, the Dept. of Transport, and SEAI all help seat this from a policy and decision-making standpoint. The relative autonomy of SBD supports more agile decision making. This project, as the only live urban trial in IRE represents a big step in the context of "where next" for wider Dublin.</p>
Principal Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Disseminate information about shared transport modes 2. Encourage shift from personal vehicles to shared transport modes (e.g. cars, bikes) 3. Provide multiple travel options on a single platform for better accessibility 4. Work with Dublin Bus on a complementary possible Demand Response Transport solution
Location Choice	<p>SBD provides the core location. 4 Mob.Isl. locations are planned within SBD to bring mode vehicles together (the 5-minute vision), thru the initial 'No Regrets' exercise. With 1 main location for commuter parking, and a smaller one in SBD for local transit. 4 potential additional locations were identified in the wider Dublin area connected to University Dublin (University College Dublin?) (to engage students), and 2 new housing developments.</p>
Project shaping	<p>A 12-month trial begins 2nd H 2024 for the digital / people influencing layer. Considerable ongoing engagement with SBD businesses (major international to local SMEs) to define their needs and explore their potential investment (skills, funds).</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with DLR administration to align with policy and planning. Growing support from academic & potential business and other partners. SBD benefits from significant pan-EU experience sharing, and growing EU project activities.</p> <p>Early exploratory discussions with the Cherrywood Business District – some 5km distance away regarding a mirror development to connect with.</p>
Technical	<p>Concept renders in place for the main commuter hub / mobility island. Digital / data layer (app) in development.</p>

	Digital Twin in place to underpin and modernise visualisation and simulation capabilities.
Business Models & Financing	Due to SBD set-up, combined private business models and financing is much more feasible.
Societal	Current engagement significantly thru employers (26,000 in/out daily); early days with the 5,500 residents.

Kranj, SI

Summary	
<p>City of Kranj has been a very active member of the EU SCM Small Giants community for several years. The city has implemented a number of progressive mobility changes over recent years, to steer and shape the transition to a net zero future, including digitally enabled public and shared transport, a support platform and user card, and an initial, centrally-located mobility hub supporting eBikes and complementing a growing bike path network. A dozen mobility island locations were identified through a ‘no regrets’ exercise. Kranj is now also a elected member of 100 EU Mission cities of climate neutral and smart cities with a submitted City Climate Contract that highlights sustainable mobility changes in a wide-ranging manner. It is also focussed business models and financing considerations to support speedier achievement of NetZero goals.</p>	
Policy, Engagement & Decision making	<p>Kranj is led by a highly progressive Mayor and leadership team and has increasingly developed innovative plans across many domains. Innovation and transformation are championed by the Mayor who enjoys extremely high political and society support. At the initiative of the mayor, a strategic council for climate neutrality and smart community was also established, consisting of experts from various institutions and fields. Climate is one of the major themes of focus and both mobility and built environment are priorities within that and have multiple, emerging plans. The Mobility Island concept is a natural next step in the city’s journey and, as such, Kranj has been a great advocate of the initiative.</p>
Principal Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish early action plans to transition to clean, shared mobility to ensure the city remains a beacon of high-quality living 2. Ensure Kranj remains at the forefront of innovation and benefits from shared knowledge across EU cities
Location Choice	<p>12 locations were identified during the ‘no regrets’ exercise, including an existing mobility hub near the city centre. Other locations include the railway station, municipal park, sports stadium, commercial centre, historic centre, residential areas, park and rides sites and (new) hospital. This portfolio thus addresses city centre, city-wide and commuting needs.</p>
Project shaping	<p>The City Climate Contract (CCC) provides a more recent focus for Net Zero planning in the city and emphasises and accelerates city-wide sectoral plans. However over the past 5 years or more, much is already well underway in the area of mobility. The place-making Mobility Island agenda and the resultant digitalisation opportunities now receive considerable attention. The goal is for Kranj to become a carbon-neutral city by 2030. Various measures in the fields of mobility, energy and more will be developed and implemented. All planned</p>

	<p>measures and necessary investments are estimated to exceed 300 million euros, involving investments from both the private and public sectors. Kranz's project management approach follows the process defined in 'The 6-part Solution Framework'. The most important stages are planning and stakeholder engagement. The latter is essential at the start-up phases; planning, designing and then supporting project upscaling informed by their shared user experience.</p>
Technical	<p>The network of Mobility Islands is anticipated to include a wide selection of the assets and services that have been identified in the captured literature, obviously tailored to the different specific location needs.</p>
Business Models & Financing	<p>Business model options are still being explored, and the overall CCC sets the agenda for progressive action on a variety of sector specific business model and financing initiatives.</p> <p>The model for Mobility Islands is presently city-hall owned and, with other public sector and private sector representatives (CEO's, directors and so on) signing their commitment to sustainably mission actions, it is expected that private companies will establish a Mobility Islands under their own ownership to encourage and involve employees in sustainable behaviour. As mentioned above, funds (financing) are expected from the municipal and state level budgets, as well as from private sector investments. The city is also heavily reliant on EU funds, which will address topics such as the green transition, sustainable mobility, and digitalization</p>
Societal	<p>There is an existing, high level of engagement with local communities along with high levels of trust which provides an excellent foundation for further work addressing a wide portfolio of improvements which, in turn, benefit specific mobility island actions.</p> <p>30 bike stations have already been established along with one park and ride facility. Many electric charging stations for e-cars have been installed. Bike stations with rentable bikes, and bus stations equip all shopping centres to discourage car parking through more sustainable travel options. Within Mission City activities, a pilot project 'upscale' is planned which aims to develop an app to enable citizen access to multiple mobility options and recording satisfaction levels with mobility services. The app will also calculate the sustainability level of the each mobility option (the consumption of the energy, level of the produced CO2,...).</p> <p>Both, The city digital platform and City card with its beneficitation system, were set to make the services more attracted for people and award their sustainable habits.</p>

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Summary


A significant exercise was undertaken with Sarajevo to capture the city context and address the Mobility Island opportunity. This was with City Hall staff, recognising the need to engage the multi-municipality regional transport context (with the regional transport agency). 8 Mobility Island locations were identified, including: areas of culture, commercial, university, bus/rail station, park, park & ride, city hall, old town. Sarajevo has been successful in accessed EU funding on a related project which provided resources to undertake ‘Mobility Island’ demonstrator project, which has been published in an EU SCM blog & videos. Further collaboration on this is desired by the city.



Policy, Engagement & Decision making	<p>Sarajevo has been engaged and supportive of the Mobility Island concept since its introduction through the EU SCM ‘Small Giants’ initiative, as part of the city’s ambitions to improve transport. 2 Mobility Islands are now implemented, at the Otoka Olympic Pool and in Bascarsija (city centre). This was prompted by tactical access to EU funds for an eV charging project, which was expanded to embrace the Mobility Island concept. Technical decisions were made by experts (city, academia, private), with little societal participation. The ambition is still to complete the portfolio, with access financing, and leadership support. Regulation (e.g. permitting, asset ownership) have proven to present significant challenges.</p>
Principal Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To stimulate and support the shift to electric mobility 2. To experiment and demonstrate the Mobility Island concept for scale up
Location Choice	<p>The Bascarsija location was one of those 8 initially identified. The Otoka is in addition. Service owners/operators play a key role, and asset ownership / transfer (and thus business models) caused some challenges (city hall funds brought change; transfer of assets to external operators is in process). The ‘no regrets’ exercise portfolio is still considered a logical template to work to in the mid term</p>
Project shaping	<p>Implementation has advanced through 2022-24. The solution was led from within the EU-funded EV Charge project (for cars), however eBike, Smart Bench, Bike security assets (part of Mob.Isl. concept) added to augment user proposition.</p> <p>Societal participation is actively proposed or future activities to strengthen design and decision making.</p>
Technical	<p>eCar (private charge) was the base EU project scope. This has expanded or the 2 Mob.Isl. to include some new services (e.g. shared disabled eCars for children at pool; Bike theft-avoidance solution; Shared eCar Service). More is anticipated for next phase islands. Permitting for build (e.g. power system, undergrounds) proved complex.</p>
Business Models & Financing	<p>City Hall funded (via EU) the initial 2 Mob.Isl., and is seeking to transfer ownership to operators (e.g. Pool). The ownership and thus business model for these facilities – particularly as the portfolio expands – requires further work.</p>

Societal

Insufficient participation is a recognised shortfall, and will be addressed in future – to help underpin political decision making, and ensure needs-based Mob.Isl. designs.

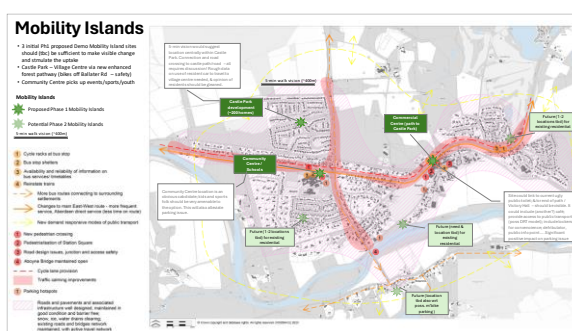
Gera, DE	
<p>Summary</p> <p>Gera is a ribbon city predominantly running north/south along the White Elster valley, and a significant sized city in a regional (Thuringia) context. The transition to sustainable mobility is a goal at both city and regional levels. Existing plans for 3 transport hubs could be complemented by the Mobility Island concept. 7 Mob.Isl were identified through a No Regrets exercise. Local stakeholder management, resource constraints (budget, capacity), regional/city transport alignment, and ongoing Council change all contribute to challenges in advancing the concept, despite commitment from the city point of contact to collaboration amongst the SMCs.</p> 	
<p>Policy, Engagement & Decision making</p>	<p>Gera has a transport plan, within which there is a project to implement mobility islands, dt Oct'21 which predated engagement with the Small Giants/SMCNetZero project. The latter project initially advanced slowly due to resource constraints; more recently due to challenges acquiring digital solution. A recent Council change has occurred (June 2024). This is not anticipated to change basic ideology, however the political and bureaucratic processes result in current uncertainty and will take time.</p> <p>Operationally, some professional role changes have occurred between the SMCNZ project's contact in the city (in built environment Dept), and colleagues in the Transport Planning and Transport Operations organisations. The necessary staff work will be required amongst these parties to make the case to Council decision makers.</p> <p>Stakeholder management is thus important to move the initiative forward.</p> <p>A No Regrets Mob.Isl. mapping exercise was undertaken with the city's contact point. Alignment and resource constraints (time, finance) remain as hindrance to progress.</p>
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve efficiency, affordability, convenience, and sustainability of travel 2. Align with inter-urban / regional transport planning ambitions
<p>Location Choice</p>	<p>Initial Mobility Station locations are set within the transport plan consistent with bus, tram and train transport plans, and stated ambitions to transition people away from individual car use. The no regrets exercise identified a portfolio of 7 phase 1 Mob.Isl. identified, consistent with the typical location guidance within the Mobility Island 'Playbook', and complementing the 3 initial intentions around islands.</p>
<p>Project shaping</p>	<p>Project development has taken some time, due to organisational circumstances. Already established transport priorities and plans (city / regional), combined with general transport system complexities, multi-operators, constrained budgets, etc., has slowed introduction of new ideas. The place-making intentions of mobility islands now features more strongly in Gera's current plans, differentiating mobility islands from traditional transport measures.</p>
<p>Technical</p>	<p>Progress of the existing 3-hub concept slowed through concerns about design and management of back-office operations (& alignment with regional plans). Basic design and initial market sounding / procurement readiness for the physical infrastructure did take place. Continuance with the Mobility Island concept integrated, together with incorporation of service support (e.g. customer interface / back-office system support) would be required. As well as integration with regional plans.</p>

	The selection of complementary (non-transport) services within the Mobility Islands needs further assessment. Regional DRT
Business Models & Financing	City Hall budget is the assumed model, at least initially. Project budget for the 3-hubs is in place. Overall funds are constrained. New business models could be explored.
Societal	Discussion on Mob.Isl has been internal; user engagement has been ongoing as part of existing systems
Next Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to align with evolving Transport Plan delivery. 2. Strengthen case, align stakeholders – update proposals for Council 3. Seek external finance to address knowledge, time, and funding gaps – collaboration through likes of SMCNZ & Small Giants (&other opportunities)

Aboyne, SCO

Summary

A Small Town in Scotland, of 3,000 residents, is presently developing a Local Place Plan (as part of the new national planning framework). 18 initiatives are being developed under 4 themes (one being Mobility, with 4 initiatives – incl. Mobility Islands and complementary Demand Responsive Transport within the ‘New Mobility Paradigm’ initiative). 3 Mobility Islands have been identified as a Phase 1 demonstration development, with 4 potential Ph2 in-fill Islands. Design, cost/budget, business models, and financing are in progress.



Policy, Engagement & Decision making

The National Planning Framework (NPF4), and requirement for County Development Plan, with options for Local Place Plans (LPP) provided top-down stimulus. The local initiative expands scope to integrate a Community Action Plan into the planning activity – thus incorporating the important aspect of societal insight and participation. The town has a Community Council, however with very limited powers; so alignment with County Council plans and staff, and setting of innovation aspirations that may attract stimulus funds is the strategy. As well as, for mobility, to consider multi-spatial regional transport planning which includes potential for demand responsive transport integrating public and other providers. Engagement of potential investors has started early, recognising the paucity of public funds, and potential attractiveness of the proposition for investors. The initiative is fully exploiting the portfolio of guidance.

Principal Objectives

- The initiative objectives are to:
1. Promote behavioural change to adopt and demonstrate a new model of mobility
 2. Provide safe facilities/services for cyclists, active travel, and sustainable light modes
 3. Improve overall place-making and mitigate current transport issues (e.g. parking; infrastructure quality)

Location Choice

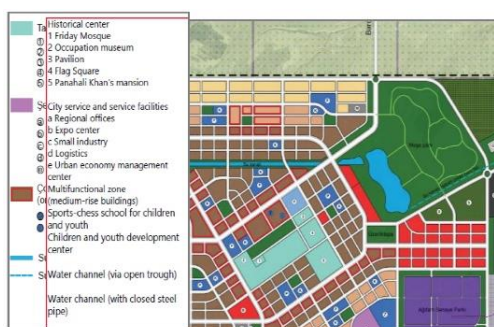
Phase 1 locations include (i) connecting a major new development to the town centre (ii) community centre/schools. Phase 2 provides existing residential area infill

Project shaping	This follows the Mobility Island solution framework. Planning is 2024, Design, financing and implementation planned 2025.
Technical	Focus will be on light transport: (e)Bike, Mobility Buggies (less able); with anticipated limited shared eCars. Designs will variously include services (lockers, greening, PV, café, toilets, etc).
Business Models & Financing	Current (Mob.Isl) infrastructure budget envelope is anticipated to be ~€100-300k. A mixed business model is expected with Developers, Council, Gov grant, potentially local business budget contribution. Mobile assets and rental options provide anticipated revenue. Land is public / developer / landowner – potentially (part) gifted.
Societal	Public engagement and consultations are underway (incl. landowners, businesses, schools and general public) positioned as part of overall planning, including survey, issue fix ideation, future place visioning, infra & service co-design. This is seen to be critical to success in supporting and rapidly adopting a new model.

Ağdam, Karabakh Economic Region (KER), Azerbaijan

Summary

KER is a post-conflict regeneration project. Ağdam is the regional capital which has been destroyed, a new masterplan published, and construction is underway. The President has stated that Ağdam should be ‘an example for the world’. Within Azerbaijan the World Bank / UN & EC are also funding a Joint Needs Assessment project, including smart city ambitions. This sets the scene for innovative undertakings and creation of a new model for city building, including mobility. Mobility Islands are intended as demonstrators within the overall masterplan and mobility plans.



<p>Policy, Engagement & Decision making</p>	<p>The initiative is stimulated by bold ambitions from Presidential level for Ağdam to be an international demonstrator. As such there is leadership interest in seeking leading practice solutions that are future-proof. The policies steering the city (indeed nationally) are changeable, and of growing ambition as regards sustainability (aided by the 2024 COP being hosted in Azerbaijan). The M.I. Policy Guide will be integrated into the ongoing phase of development. Ağdam is a member of the EU SMC ‘Small Giants’, so will benefit from ongoing knowledge sharing activities, and potential funded collaborative developments.</p>
<p>Principal Objectives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attract residents and businesses to the redeveloped city 2. Ensure affordable inclusive convenient services for businesses, residents & visitors 3. Provide a ‘demonstrator to the world’ (explore leading edge mobility solutions to define a locally appropriate new model and paradigm or transport)
<p>Location Choice</p>	<p>The initial locations connect the 1st residential area, via a park, and the public transport (rail/bus) station, to the industrial park. This is thus focused on supporting a new commuting model, family outings, and capturing regional travellers. 4 initial Mobility Islands are anticipated. Other innovative mobility measures are being assessed that will integrate with the Islands.</p>
<p>Project shaping</p>	<p>A 1st phase report (2023) proposed Mobility Islands as demonstrators. A new project is now underway that focuses on 4 themes (including Mobility, and related Urban Data Platform). Residents and businesses will arrive in Ağdam in late 2025, so progress is under increasing pressure. The Office of the Special Representative has been collaborating with the EU SCM Small Giants to learn about mobility options and Mobility Islands in particular, and thus embracing all assets that have been/are being developed. A masterplan is in place however no specific Mobility Plan (SUMP or equivalent).</p>
<p>Technical</p>	<p>Physical and technical development will be significantly influenced by experiences shared via EU SMC networks. The selection of the various components of the mobility offer, and place-making services requires a very agile approach and flexible design, notably as the social agenda and needs for returning displaced residents and attracted new residents and businesses is a significant unknown (the city is in ongoing re-build)</p>
<p>Business Models & Financing</p>	<p>Business model and budgeting has yet to be evaluated and detailed. Public sector investment and/or loan is anticipated for the demonstrator phase to provide the necessary control and steerage towards public value goals.</p>

Societal	Residents are due in Ağdam in 2025. Social norms in Az are different (more ‘top down’) so societal engagement is not presently the norm. Bench-learning with EU cities is seen to be a very valuable means to stimulate and explore new methods.
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Benefits & Learning Points

4.8 Mobility Islands as a ‘Proof Point’ for NetZero

The theoretical benefits for Mobility Islands are captured in the published ‘playbook’. They offer real potential to deliver benefits and stimulate a shift to a new mobility model.

Table 2: Mobility Island Benefits (ref Sharing Cities ‘playbook’)

Impacts	Social Benefits	Environmental Benefits	Economic Benefits
Improving access to mobility services for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced commuting times ○ Inclusive affordable access ○ Improved public safety ○ Fostering a sense of place ○ Removing range anxiety of EVs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced ownership of private vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased attractiveness of neighbourhoods, ○ Increased property value
Reducing congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved physical and mental health ○ More time to be productive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced carbon emissions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved productivity
Reducing air pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced burden on health services
Creating an intermodal mobility system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced dependence on private car encourages physical activity and reduces car accidents ○ Choice of travel mode 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced dependence on private car trips improves air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical activity improves wellbeing, reduces stress, increases productivity ○ Attractiveness of city
Ensuring efficient energy consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduced anxiety ○ Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More efficient use of natural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More efficient use of money
Generating economic opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased access to services offered to the community 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opening new market segments ○ Creation of local jobs

All conversations with the SMC community as part of the SMCNetZero and other discussions have validated these, added some more (included in above), and also indicated different priorities to the various types of benefits from amongst the cities.

The notion of the power of Mobility Islands as the ‘acupuncture pins’ to stimulate and speed the transition to a new mobility model (figure 5) has also been validated.

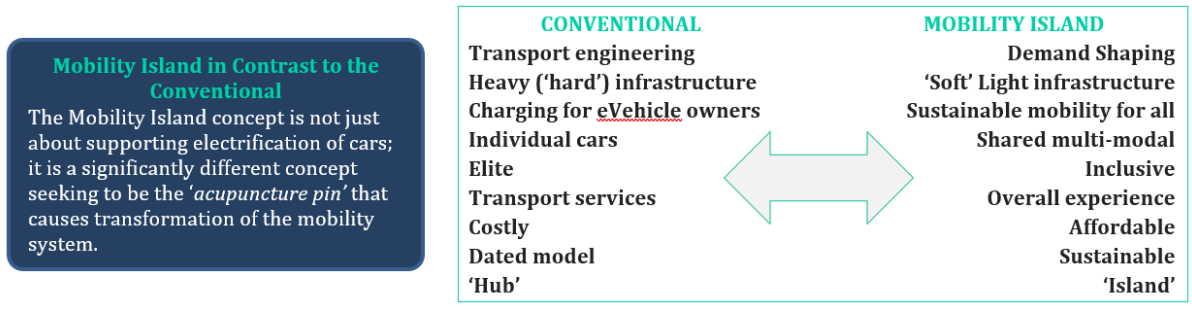


Figure 5: Mobility Islands as the 'Acupuncture Pins' to cause a shift in Mobility Paradigm

Early work has also been undertaken to put more substance to the costs/budgets, financial ROI, performance monitoring framework, business model options for Mobility Islands, to help ready the concept for deeper market penetration. This is a key factor in supporting investment, and releasing the essential moneys to cities to make advancement. More work on this is warranted.

Given the advancements in mobility, and importance of mobility transformation to the achievement of NetZero targets, Mobility Islands are seen as real potential 'proof points' for NetZero.

4.9 Learning from the Developmental Journey

The following benefits and learning points result from the engagement process with these SMCs specific to Mobility Islands (Table 3). Many will be common to the implementation of several other solutions.

(NB These have also been taken across into D5.1 'Action launchpad Report' as a proven and practical means to elaborate on broader SMC implementation needs).

Table 3: Benefits and Learning Points from Mobility Island Collaboration

Received Benefits	Emerging Learning Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobility Islands provide a relatively low barrier, very practical, solution to make tangible progress in addressing climate challenges - Mobility Islands have proven to be a solution that most cities can see the need for, and are very open to explore together - Starter materials are available to work from both in terms of content (outline design) and process (method/tools), and are seen to provide valuable guidance when read - The solution has been sufficiently tested to provide learning, flush out typical challenges, and thus get much 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration: Smaller cities are genuinely much more open to collaborate as equals than large - Commonalities of need (& thus potential solution) are actually much more common than perhaps at first thought. Changing mindsets to focus on commonalities rather than differences is the first big step. - Online sharing tools and workshops provide low investment (i.e. no travel required, and less time commitment) means to support collaboration amongst budget-constrained SMCs - Pragmatic approaches are much more important in a small city setting, and can lead to early practical action - Digitalisation tools (e.g. generative AI) likely hold significant potential for transformation – perhaps more so for capacity constrained smaller cities – quicker access to filtered valuable information still – at least presently – requiring human brain. Could

closer to de-risking investment and implementation

- **Designs** can be developed **specific to the context of SMCs** (not a ‘big city solution trying to be force fit into smaller cities’)

AI tools really help SMCs disproportionately advance?

- **Grant funding**, however, is vital to stimulate collaborative action – without which mobilising cities can be a severe challenge, and leads to more expensive bespoke solutions.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusions

The Mobility Island initiative, in the context of SMCs, **offers real opportunity to embrace the collaborative spirit of smaller cities, stimulate a shift in mobility habits** in a discrete set of places within these cities at only modest risk yet with significant upside, and **evidence gains**.

Here lies an opportunity for smaller cities, that represent the largest collective market, to make swift positive improvement, that can **provide valuable learning on method and solution that is very relevant for larger cities**.

Mobility Islands are about transport, however if it is only that focus and mindset that is applied, the potential to access meaningful additional adjacent benefits at a city-wide level is left untapped. They must be seen as **place-making** instruments.

Technically, the functional solution is clear. **Defining business models and financial instruments that work, and mobilising the modest financing to build a snowball effect, are crucial.**

Mobility Islands should also be seen as **‘early wins’** in the larger context of the challenge **to actually achieve NetZero targets**.

The Mobility Island initiative provides a genuine opportunity to complete the as-yet emergent concept of **blueprinting solutions for rapid scale adoption** in the market. This will provide a showcase of the approach that can be applied to other high impact solutions.

The SMCNetZero project and the EU SCM Small Giants Focus Group provide good foundations for support however are inadequate on their own. More and proactive support is required.

5.2 Recommendations & Next Steps

That action is required to strengthen this valuable concept is not the question. *How* to mobilise collaborative action is however proving an intractable chronic challenge. The following recommended actions are tabled – likely for further discussion, as the consortium partners are not in a position to identify, nominate, or mobilise the key principals for action.

1. Further **nurturing of the Mobility Island initiative** is undoubtedly warranted. Given the resource challenges of SMCs this can only be achieved by positive action at institutional and governmental levels, and requisite resource support. An initial planning approach module that could be rapidly replicated in SMCs should be developed. This would be low cost, high impact.
2. **Further work on the value case is a priority** – with complementary detail on budget envelopes, business model options, supporting value case, and performance indicators (to evidence gains and give confidence to investors), building on current materials.
3. From which **active engagement of the investor community** is warranted – as this could stimulate the movement of investors further upstream in the project development process, which could (particularly for SMCs) result in effective incentivisation to collaborate in the market – to achieve **faster scale adoption of NetZero solutions**. Money is a great means to focus minds!
4. **Blueprinting** of this solution in a broader sense, with initial guides, methods, and tools, has already made significant progress. This ongoing exercise should be

exploited, finished, stabilised, then digitalised. It could provide a model for other priority impactful NetZero solutions.

The European Commission is clearly in a position to influence and support such practical and value-adding actions that can help smaller cities (representing the majority of EU residents) strengthen the chances of meeting NetZero goals.