

Light Traffic Transportation in the Context of Land Use Planning: Recommendations and Examples

The presentation focuses on how light transportation. The basic assumption in the presentation is that an everyday environment that provides good opportunities for light traffic encourages people to physical activity. Walking or cycling to school, work or hobbies benefits and increases when physical conditions are favourable.

One of the key activities in creating favourable physical conditions is land use planning. In Finland, land use planning is being guided by Land Use and Building Act with the objective of promoting good living environments and sustainable development of communities, a high quality of building as well as establishing an open and interactive culture in land use planning. From the viewpoint of physical activity, it is however remarkable, that favorable conditions for physical activity are not being listed among the goals set for different planning levels. This is worrying since current trends in urban planning tend to lead to fragmented urban structures and long distances.

Residents commute, shop and take their children to activities more often by car. Its long-term negative effects can also affect public health, if opportunities for everyday exercise in the form of walking and cycling to work, school and services decrease. Therefore it is important to create guidance, recommendations and checklists for urban planners of how to create favorable conditions for walking and cycling. It is also important that local politicians are aware of the dimension of physical activity when making decisions related to urban planning.

The presentation highlights recommendations for planning of physical environment and includes also examples of good planning practices and realised projects.

The presentation is based on series of research projects in the field of physical activity combined with land use planning that has been carried out at the Department of Architecture, University of Oulu. The research work is being financed of Ministry of Education and Culture and Ministry of Environment. It been carried out in co-operation to different municipalities, including City of Oulu.

For more information, see: www.liikuntakaavoitus.fi

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