

City-Citizen Interaction in Sustainable Traffic Planning

Case Mechelininkatu street

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ABSTRACT

This case study focuses on interactivity between citizens and public administrators in sustainable urban transport planning and decision-making, as well as barriers and challenges associated with those processes. This work primarily serves the promotion of bicycle traffic in Helsinki, but it is also applicable to other planning projects. Mechelininkatu street case was chosen in view of its topicality and challenging starting-points, where interests representing various modes of transport are struggling for an already limited street space. The case has also aroused active public debate.

Firstly, the issue is approached from the point of view of Helsinki Transport and Communication policies, and then the study proceeds towards formal decision-making processes related to traffic and street planning. Public participation practices and methods used in Helsinki, whose aim is to inform and involve citizens into the City affairs, are also described. After this, the concept of interaction, its prerequisites to succeed and future prospects are reviewed. A number of theoretical perspectives emphasize negotiating culture, since social networking has increased. There are also practical experiences of European cities providing a good framework of identified benefits and barriers related to effective citizen engagement.

Since both contextual and process barriers are related to transport decision-making processes, the research data consist of collected decision-making material and newspaper articles related to Mechelininkatu street case by 2010 - 2014, in order to understand the integrality of the process components. In addition, the research includes interviews with officials and decision-makers from City Planning Department and Public Works Department, and who have been involved in the process.

According to the summary of the interviews, feedback and decision-making minute analysis, similar barriers and challenges were observed as in previous theories and studies, for instance, problems with timing and informing. Thus, the next question is how to manage these challenges in the future in order to enhance more acceptable and sustainable transport.

Key words: citizen engagement, municipal decision-making, interaction, public participation, traffic planning, urban mobility planning

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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä tutkimuksessa perehdytään kaupunkilaisten ja julkishallinnon toimijoiden väliseen vuorovaikuttamiseen kestävästä kaupunkiliikenteen suunnittelusta ja päätöksenteosta sekä näihin prosesseihin liittyviin esteisiin ja haasteisiin. Tämä tutkimustyö tukee ensisijaisesti pyöräliikenteen edistämistä Helsingissä, mutta on myös sovellettavissa muihin kaupunkisuunnittelutapauksiin. Tutkimustapaukseksi valittiin Mechelininkadun liikennesuunnitelma sen ajankohtaisuuden ja haastavien lähtökohtien vuoksi, jossa eri liikennemuotoihin kohdistuvat intressit kamppailevat jo valmiiksi kapeassa katutilassa.

Tutkimuksen teoriaosuudessa käsitellään Helsingin kaupungin liikennepolitiikkaa ja viestinnän linjauksia, mistä siirrytään Helsingin liikenne- ja katusuunnitelmien päätöksentekoprosesseihin. Tutkimuksessa kuvataan myös niitä tapoja, joilla pyritään mahdollistamaan asukkaiden osallistuminen ja vaikuttaminen Helsingin kaupungin asioihin. Tämän jälkeen tarkastellaan yleisesti asukasvuorovaikuttamisen käsitettä, sen onnistumisen edellytyksiä ja tulevaisuuden näkymiä. Teoreettiset näkökulmat korostavat yhteisöllisempää osallistamisen kulttuuria, koska sosiaalinen verkostoituminen on kasvanut. Euroopan kaupungeista saadut kokemukset liikennehankkeiden vuorovaikuttamisesta sekä niissä havaitut hyödyt ja haasteet tarjoavat hyvän viitekehyksen tälle tutkimukselle.

Koska paikallisten olosuhteiden asettamat rajoitteet ja suunnitelmien valmistelussa ilmenevät haasteet vaikuttavat liikenteen päätöksentekoprosesseihin, tutkimusaineisto koostuu Mechelininkadun liikenne- ja katusuunnitelmien päätöksenteon asiakirjoista liitteineen sekä tapausta koskevista uutisartikkeleista vuosilta 2010 - 2014. Lisäksi tutkimusta varten on haastateltu toimijoita ja päättäjiä Kaupunkisuunnitteluvirastosta ja Rakennusvirastosta.

Tutkimuksen perusteella voidaan päätellä, että Mechelininkadun tapauksessa oli havaittavissa vastaavanlaisia vuorovaikuttamiseen liittyviä haasteita verrattuna kirjallisuudesta poimittuihin tutkimuksiin ja teoriaan.

Asiasanat: asukasosallistuminen, vuorovaikuttaminen, kaupunkiliikenteen suunnittelu, liikennesuunnittelu, päätöksenteko

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1 INTRODUCTION

Transport planning has broad-based effect on economic, public and social interest groups (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 348). In recent years, the city of Helsinki has been systematically developing bicycle traffic facilities that have appeared in the form of strategic goals, cycling promotion measures and growing public discourse. Long-term changes of city streets towards more effective and attractive places to live do not happen overnight and not without vision, courage, patience and consistency, especially required by authorities (Hawkes & Sheridan 2009). There should also be an understanding of political changes behind this transition, and followed by change in urban mobility behavior (Banister 2008, 75-76).

Sustainable urban mobility planning is not entirely straightforward, since the solutions also require the approval of the taxpayers in order to avoid complaints or interruption of the planning work as part of decision-making process (Banister 2008, 75-76). The need for citizen involvement is understood in improving the implementation of urban development measures (Auwerx, Bossaert, Martens, Cuixart & Forjan 2011, 5). Without a systematic and high-level approach to develop an inclusion strategy, the public participation is outdated (Kelly, Jones, Barta, Hossinger, Witte & Christian, 2004 Vol. 1, 26). The city of Helsinki aims to increase interactivity, even though in practice, the citizens have still difficulties to identify their influence on the issues (Lahti & Laine 2013, 33-36).

The purpose of this study is to get an understanding of the challenges and barriers related to the interaction processes in municipal traffic planning and decision-making. This study can serve as a basis if the city of Helsinki begins to develop the engagement practices in traffic planning process, and in particular, promote bicycle traffic planning especially in the inner-city. The current national legislation for public participation applies to local detailed planning and street planning (Land Use and Building Act 132/1999, § 62), but not to traffic planning. The statutory public consultation officially starts at the street planning phase. Alfasi (2003, 190)

criticizes how this type of a law requires hearing the opponents, but it ignores the obligation to listen to them. Sometimes legal and national requirements are not necessary nor the most effective way compared to the social and local rules to integrate the public into planning system (Batty 2006, 216). In Helsinki, traffic planning can proceed almost invisibly to the street planning phase, where the legitimate public consultation officially starts.

The European Commission's CIVITAS Initiative, whose aim has been to support European cities to move towards a more sustainable and urban transportation, has funded many collaborative projects, such as CH4ALLENGE and ELAN, and created tools and guidelines to draw up Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan SUMP (CIVITAS Initiative 2013). In substance, sustainable and safety mobility plans and Helsinki's own transport plans correspond largely principles of SUMP in Finland. However, the interaction with stakeholder groups, including citizens, is devoid of development. (Lukkarinen 2013, 4-8.) Thus, Helsinki City Transport and Traffic planning can be mainly viewed in relation to SUMP's reference framework regarding the citizen engagement.

The approach of this research is based on the idea that a case study is a valid way to move towards generalization of the phenomenon (Metsämuuronen 2000, 8). Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan, which reflects a traditional task of Helsinki City Planning Department Transport and Traffic Planning Division, and the issue to be prepared and decided in various municipal administrative bodies without change of the local detailed plan, have been selected as a case study. This interesting project was launched by the need of better cycling facilities in the inner-city, but the further the plan progressed, the more unrest occurred among citizens, politicians and media. The resistance towards the whole project suddenly expanded to enormous dimensions leading to difficulties in the project management. Questions of the critical factors, which determine partly the quality of transport planning processes, were raised. Those factors are the inclusion or exclusion of the public, the timing of public involvement in the

process and the boundaries of the debate (Booth & Richardson 2001, 148).

The problem field is opened through the following research questions:

- What kind of a planning process does the city of Helsinki has in use?
- How is participation organized as part of the decision-making process in Helsinki?
- What kind of challenges and barriers administrators and citizens find in the implementation of interactivity?

The study's approach is based on both theoretical and empirical analysis to understand the complexities of the interaction in a traffic planning process. The literature review deals with the political background, significance, benefits and challenges of interaction in decision-making processes both generally and in the context of urban transport planning and previous research. Some challenges seem to occur in public involvement despite of the unit of the public sector, for example in transport or environmental planning, and in decision-making in any case. Case study, which is the best way to collect and analyze the qualitative data (Roininen, Horelli & Wallin 2003, 34), turned out to be a good way to form an overall picture of multi-dimensional traffic planning processes and interaction practices related to them. Interviews with municipal officials and the citizens' feedback content analysis can open new perspectives on the challenges. Exploring decision-making material, part of which is attached to this report, helped to figure out the overall view of decision making and interaction processes.

2 TRANSPORT POLICIES, DECISION MAKING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE CITY OF HELSINKI

2.1 Transport and Communication policies in Helsinki

Helsinki City Council has approved the Strategy Programme (2013) to become force for years 2013 - 2016. One of its objectives is to increase walking, cycling and public transport share by one percent per each year during the council term. Efforts will be made to the continuity and safety of walking and cycling networks, to improved awareness of cycling and walking for health and environmental benefits, and to the prioritization of transport projects that increase the share of walking or cycling. (City of Helsinki Economic and Planning Centre 2013.) The previous and current council strategies have contributed to the creation of Helsinki Cycling Promotion Programme (2014), which has been supportive for political decisions generated by the current council.

According to the Helsinki Communication Policies (2015), the city of Helsinki emphasizes more fundamental and effective inclusion actions. Discussions and communication will be executed with the urban community and started with those affected in good time. Clarity of communication will be developed and its content is changed understandable. Communication skills will be improved in everyday work, and by training and knowledge sharing. In particular, the effectiveness and targeting of digital communication channels will be under review. (Viestinnän linjaukset 2015.)

2.2 Cycling promotion in Helsinki

Cycling Promotion Programme (2014) strives for more sustainable mobility in the city. In order to make cycling more competitive alternative than car driving, promoting measures will be visible and therefore communication has an important role to play, not forgetting other departments, whose contribution depends on the number of vacant planners and their time-resources. The program sets one of its objectives to define various

administrative roles and their goals to promote cycling. These goals will be deployed in collaboration with the cycling representative groups. (City Planning Department 2014.)

Cycling Promotion Program suggested establishment of Urban Mobility Policy in Helsinki (2014), which has been approved by City Board. This policy presents high-quality infrastructure to be constructed in compact central areas and sufficient space reserves in existing street space, in order to increase the number of cyclists. This street space is also struggling with other transport modes with their space requirements. (City Planning Department 2014.) Improving physical cycling facilities alone is not sufficient to change mobility behavior, but it must be connected, for example, to the promotional campaigns, restrictions of motor vehicle traffic and road safety measures (Cycling Embassy of Denmark 2013, 93). The Urban Mobility Policy also emphasizes the social impact assessment and its allocation within the project. Since the challenges to reach consensus on the objectives and their internal contradiction have been identified, the opportunities to implement the urban mobility objectives will be improved by the better agency cooperation, which is conducted at early stages of decision-making process. There are several differing administrative bodies, whose decisions have an impact on urban mobility needs and opportunities to choose different mobility patterns. (City Planning Department 2014.)

Inner-city areas in Helsinki have few cycling route networks, which is illogical due to its discontinuity and the lack of space. Compared to the suburban areas, planning solutions are atypical and challenging to implement in the inner-city. According to Helsinki City Planning Department, construction of cycle tracks will be mainly focused in the inner city during the next few years. Bicycle traffic arrangements can both include one-way cycle lanes or paths and intersection improvements. (City of Helsinki's official website 2016.) The construction of a cycle path network aims at comprehensively better cycling conditions and improved road safety by matching other traffic and cycling together, so that the

bicycle could be as everyday transport vehicle as the car (Pyöräliikenteen suunnitteluohje 1/2 2012, 5).

Mobility habits in Helsinki 2013 report (Turja & Aho 2013) shows that the percentage of journeys made by bicycle during the day has remained the same as two previous years, but the number of cyclists has increased. Thus, other modes of transport have increased their share including also car traffic. In 2013, the share of cycling trips was 11% in connection with all trips made in Helsinki. (Turja & Aho 2013.) This number is aimed to be increased to 15% by 2020, in the pursuit of overall comfortable and vibrant city, where the population is growing and thus car traffic growth must be restrained in order to guarantee the functioning of the transport system in the future (City of Helsinki's official website 2016).

2.3 Urban mobility attitudes

Transition from car driving to more sustainable transport modes will exist only, if communities adopt voluntarily some of the sustainable environmental thinking (Maltese & Mariotti 2011, 43). This voluntariness is facilitated by infrastructural changes, but limited resistance against the transformation of street structure may exist, also in strong cycling countries, such as in Denmark. Niels Jensen (2012), the cycle planner in Copenhagen had mentioned, that shop owner organizations, citizens and politicians tend to resist the redistribution of Major Street for cycle lanes, if car parking is reduced. (Gössling 2013, 203.)

Although the urban mobility problems are commonly acknowledged, motivation to change the mobility behavior from car to more sustainable transport modes is still a challenge and seems to be tied to cultural differences (O'Dolan 2013, 22). Certain social variables on population and environmental values, such as socioeconomic status thinking associated to the cyclists, and irresponsibility towards the environment have been found to predict public attitudes towards sustainable transportation in many studies (e.g. Xenias & Whitmarsh 2013, 83; O'Dolan 2013, 22). Life situation affects the choice of transport mode and its acceptability to

oneself. Citizens, who have changed to a new school, work place or apartment, are more achievable to change their mobility habits than local citizens that have lived in the same area for a long time. (Cycling Embassy of Denmark 2013, 93.)

Denmark has a long tradition of cycling, which is taught to citizens since childhood. Cycling is popular and socially acceptable: politicians take a lead by cycling themselves, advance cycling policies and have the courage to prioritize cycling projects, when they have to make decisions that might reduce the street space. 90% of Copenhagen-based citizens value the city good place to cycle. (Jensen 2009.) Gössling (2013, 203) quotes Jensen's (2013) words that it is all about normalization of urban cycling mobility. Not everywhere the new cycling infrastructure has been successful. In New York, the five-year investments in bicycle network have irritated middle-class original New Yorkers as they feel outsiders with their need of automobile transport from suburbs. They also have a fear for the deteriorations of the stability in neighbourhoods (Applebaum et al. 2011, 5).

According to Cycling Barometer (Marttila 2014), 96% of the citizen sample (n=2004) are at least some in favor of the promotion of cycling. However, more than half (60%) of the respondents own at least one car and rarely or never on bikes 43% of the respondents. Cycling advocacy was almost as great in the inner-city as in the suburban areas. Cycling was mostly supported by the age group 25-29 and public transportation users. 88% considered the improvement of cycling route network as the most important factor in increasing the cycling. (Marttila 2014.)

2.4 Traffic planning process in the city of Helsinki

Municipal-level planning is divided into three different stages (Ministry of the Environment 2016; City of Helsinki's official website 2016):

- More conceptual Regional plan is prepared by the regional councils,
- Master plans or City plans are prepared by the municipal administrative bodies and covers the whole city area. The plan includes also major transport and traffic solutions, such as Main Street and railway networks,
- Detailed and Local plans are prepared, at least in Helsinki, in connection with the traffic plan, which is drawn up before the more detailed street plan. Traffic plan determines e.g. the division of the street space between the different modes of transport, parking facilities, the number of car lanes and traffic control measures with a general level.

Minor traffic arrangements can be planned without revising the detailed plan. The Director of the Transport and Traffic Planning Division has the authority to decide on smaller traffic arrangements, such as traffic signs and speed bumps. Extensive and influential traffic plans are approved by the City Planning Committee, after which the plan proceeds to the street planning phase (Figure 1). The street plan is based on the approved traffic plan. More accurate street plan sets out the exact dimensions of the street, elevation, pavement materials, street furniture, plants, lightning and draining solutions. The Public Works Department is responsible for drawing up the street plan, which goes to the Public Works Committee for approval. If the cost estimate of traffic or street plan exceeds a certain limit, the plan is also approved by the City Board or even by the City Council. (City of Helsinki's official website 2016.) As noticed in the city of Helsinki, councilors delegate decision-making power to administrators, whose authority is not always sufficient to approve the issue.



Figure 1. Process flow of Traffic Plan and Street Plan in City of Helsinki

2.5 Public participation methods and tools used in Helsinki

The city of Helsinki provides a number of information channels and different tools in order to let citizens to participate and influence in City processes, especially at the planning and preparation stages. The processes closely related to the traffic planning are described in this study. As shown in the next section, much of decision-making processes and organizational structures can be learned also by reading the webpages published by the city of Helsinki. In addition, interaction professionals offer their expertise to administrators in order to help them to manage the public participation.

2.5.1 Sharing information

The highest decision-making bodies, such as the City Council, the City Board and the Department Committees generate initiative, meeting and decision documents, which can be followed via "Päätökset" online database. The City Planning Department's Plan Watch service offers an opportunity to subscribe to the newsletter, which keeps up to date with all the land use and traffic plans. Plans on the Map service provide possibility to monitor the current plan processes at different stages in the City Planning Department. Plans and decision documents are published in that service. Helsinki Channel -service publishes recordings and citizens' own videos as well as provides webcasts in order to follow current affairs in Helsinki. (City of Helsinki's official website 2016.)

2.5.2 Opportunities to influence

The City Planning Department uses the following non-statutory interaction channels on the Web:

- Feedback System (feedback is directed to the official in charge, who is responsible for providing the answer to the person given feedback),
- "Kerro Kartalla" service (an interactive website, where a specific local region or issue is under review, citizens' opinions and observations are gathered on the map and the accumulated data is utilized in the further planning),
- "Kerro Kantasi" service (citizens can give their opinion on and affect the issues becoming under preparation or already involved in the process, such as traffic plan draft),
- "Helsinki suunnittelee" official social media sites of the City Planning Department (enables debates about the current issues related to the urban development, monitoring of the Department's decisions and upcoming events),

- The City Planning Department is also present in other social media channels, such as Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn,
- A discussion forum maintained by the City Planning Department acts as a feedback channel, where the citizens can comment on specific plan under preparation. (City of Helsinki's official website 2016.)

Public meetings act as an arena for presentations and discussions related to current plan, and which are organized by different departments several times a year and are announced in the City's official website and on social media. Plans and projects can be found on-site at information and exhibition center "Laituri", which offers a platform to participate in discussions on urban planning in the city center. (City of Helsinki's official website 2016.)

Objections against the street plan must be addressed to the Public Works Committee through the Registry within the 14-day-period availability (Land Use and Building Decree 895/1999 43 §). There is opportunity to submit a written complaint against the Public Works Committee's decisions in accordance with Local Government Act (410/2015 134 §), much depending on the case. This opportunity can mean a long spiral of appeals and result in long processing times of affairs.

2.5.3 Citizens' experience of involvement in Helsinki

According to study (Bäcklund & Kurikka 2008, 13-17), which concerns citizens' experiences on participation and their habits to participate in municipal decision making in Helsinki, most of citizens felt that decisions are well-informed. Decision making was entrusted to municipal institutions by the opinion of over half of citizens. They regarded the newspaper as the best channel of information. The opportunities to participate and monitor decision-making were felt to be challenging, but however, more than a half of citizens followed the development of their local area. The feedback system was known lightly. (Bäcklund & Kurikka 2008, 13-17.)

Four years later the Urban Facts Department made a similar survey (Lahti & Laine 2013), according to which 85% of citizens were interested in the City affairs and decision-making. The public meetings were experienced the weakest source of information. As decisions under preparation were proceeding to the final approval phase, the information was considered to be available. In comparison with previous study, citizen access to information seemed to have increased due the new interaction tools, but at the same time, citizens' influence weakened slightly. Up to 70% of the respondents experienced their participation and empowerment opportunities as unsatisfied. Involvement in the association/group or party action, attendance in planning of social services or activities, preparation of complaint or appeal against the decision, acting in municipal position of trust or launching citizen's initiatives were seen the most effective ways to influence. More than a half expressed dissatisfaction with politicians' ability to make decisions in accordance with the democratic premises and the public promises. Interaction channels still remained unknown to a large proportion of the respondents. Most of the respondents would have liked to bring forth their diverse views. (Lahti & Laine 2013.)

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 The importance of interaction in decision-making process

3.1.1 Definition

The European Institute of Public Participation EIPP (2009, 6) defines it as *"the deliberative process by which interested or affected citizens, civil society organizations, and government actors are involved in policy-making before a political decision is taken"*. When a representative democracy is based on Trust Living Administration, participatory democracy complements its operations (Anttiroiko, Haveri, Karhu, Ryyänen & Siitonen 2007, 246). Local government represents present and future citizens, and their needs (Sobol 2015, 66). Then, the public is directly involved in the planning, preparation and decision-making of things close to them (Anttiroiko et al. 2007, 246).

Information exchange can be (Roininen, Horelli & Wallin 2003, 16; Svensson et al. 2004, 20; OECD 2001, 15-16):

- at its lowest one-way information-sharing,
- limited two-way consultation,
- at its heights complex relationship, such as active participation.

The last one mentioned means that citizens actively engage in decision-making, but the government or another decision-making body is empowered to make the final decision (OECD 2001, 16). It reflects the level and form of deliberative process and democracy, where reasoned arguments are shared and accepted on both sides, various aims and values are authentically considered, and which pursues more legitimate policies. (European Institute for Public Participation 2009, 6-7; Halvorsen 2003, 541; Lindenau, Tovaas & Wafering 2014, 19.)

3.1.2 Requirements for success

Irvin and Stansbury (2004, 61) raise up the most important matter behind the stakeholder analysis, and power-sharing between politicians, specialists and the wider public: the consistent engagement strategy, including also adequate financial resources, regular meetings and transparency to build mutual trust. A well-controlled project management and careful simultaneous cooperation with citizens should go hand in hand (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol.1, 11).

The levels of interaction vary and further the interaction methods applied to those (Roininen et al. 2003, 17-18; Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 65). The project stage and techniques chosen determine the achievable objectives and outcomes of citizen involvement (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 13). If the project deals with very technical measures, such as public transport preference at traffic lights, a lower level of informing and smaller sample of participants may suffice. If the project deals with wider transport policy, especially the citizens must be engaged more actively. (Ibeas, dell'Olio & Montequin 2011, 486.) This can be interpreted that intensive stakeholder participation is not required in every decision-making process and at every stage of the process. Booth and Richardson (2001, 143) present the infrastructure case, where community boards opportunities were restricted to certain everyday living issues as alignments, junction arrangements and amenity factors. Correspondingly in New York, such as institutions of the citizen association, are prohibited to inhibit the planning for safer streets and are obliged to consider the rights of all transport users, although this kind of institutions are seen as a vital partner (Applebaum et al. 2011, 8). The plan does not have to be changed in line with citizens' opinion and demands, if the main issues are identified and justified to the citizens using appropriate consultation tools (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 61). Thus, process performance should be paid attention more than to the end result.

Because planning cases differ in culture, land-use, traditions, legal structures, resources and temporal dimension, a specific involvement method is not applicable to all planning cases (Svensson et al. 2004, 19).

Different degrees of interaction will require time to build trust between the citizens and the administration (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 48; OECD 2001, 95).

Generally, the potential participants must be informed of the planning process. Otherwise there will be no need or motive to participate. Second precondition is that participants must be active or the interaction will not exist (Roininen et al. 2003, 21). Citizen involvement can also occur at the initiative of citizens, but in any case, the citizen engagement should be seen as a permanent and long-term part of the decision-making at every level (Auwerx et al. 2011, 10). Thirdly the interaction must function properly in order to have an influence (Roininen et al. 2003, 21), meaning that the improvement of, for instance, sustainable urban mobility planning demands direct and truthful communication and political reliability beside it (Lindenau et al. 2014, 19; Xenias & Whitmarsh 2013, 83). Halvorsen (2003, 536) highlights the importance of local meetings with comfortable sites for discussion, well-designed schedule and efficient use of time and accessibility, which attracts the population in different life situations. The key element of interaction is information and meaning sharing and processing between the actors on the field (Roininen et al. 2003, 17). Early stakeholder involvement and output of several alternative proposals seem to guide planning for success in the cases of street reconstruction (Svensson et al. 2004, 19).

Politicians receive visibility through the media, so their opinion on the plan receives high-weight value (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 49) and therefore, media management should not be ignored. Cycling campaign carried out in München caused a scandal-driven and critical media writing, but the mayor took over and turned the media discussion to sympathetic and for the benefit of campaign (Lindenau et al. 2014, 25).

The final aspect is, how the involvement effect on content of the plan (Roininen et al. 2003, 21). When citizens are heard face to face with decision-makers and can feel accomplished something due the meetings,

they bring new justification to the decision-making (Tesh 2002, 338). It is all about participants negotiating a conciliatory solution.

"The belief that stakeholder-based decision-making is a vehicle for increasing access to information and equalizing political power is a principal factor motivating the use of such processes by interested parties". (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 45.)

3.1.3 Towards the future vision

For example, in detailed planning, traditional authorization of city planner has included following areas: the use of the background information and the views of the stakeholders, expertise and responsibility of the plan content, technical solutions in coherence with legislation and practice as well as maintenance of the standard of living. Work tasks related to communication have been experienced as less important, unpleasant and extra in the Finnish planning culture. (Puustinen 2006, 310, 319.)

Administrative processes of transportation planning have long been based on the solitary and isolated authority, which constitutes top-down, expert-based and technology-centric decision-making process (Booth & Richardson 2001, 148). Situation in Western European countries has been more optimistic, since they have placed higher priority on participation compared to the East side (Böhler-Baedeker & Lindenau 2014, 352).

Public participation has gained more importance due to the development of communication channels and media, which have encouraged people to give feedback about decisions (Carver 2001, 61). Further social media and professional forums enable a person to be informed about an issue and give comments regardless of time and space (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 348). Greater transparency, as in environmental planning, is also consequence of better preparation of performance reports, influence of non-governmental institutions and increased informal information sharing (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 5). Booth and Richardson (2001, 148) have predicted that decision-making power will be more shared in communal and widely networked platforms and less

concentrated exclusively for policy-makers. This prediction has been revealed around the same time, when Land Use and Building Act came into force in Finland, and which brought the interaction of decision-making in a new and more participative light, such as the public display requirement of the street plan.

Laurian and Shaw (2015, 294-295) justify that theoretical perspectives underline more transparent and deliberative participation formats compared with the former participatory events. However, full power is not transferred to citizens, but the government is and remains the most powerful authority (Sobol 2015, 65). Also in bicycle traffic planning, the need for participative activities is stated. Without involvement of the public, and their active support, sustainable urban mobility, for example bicycle transportation planning has no starting point to proceed successfully and become as a habitual everyday practice (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 352, 358; Auwerx et al. 2011, 5; Marega et al. 2012, 7). Mäenpää (2016) introduces a few future visions: tasks previously belonged to public authorities will be delegated more and more to citizens, and as society networks and practices change, the more likely the power, grouping and citizenship become more communal and equal.

Although success of the planning process is partially depended on contextual characteristics and unexpected issues (Drazkiewich, Challies & Nevig 2015, 221), for instance, the EU funded CH4ALLENGE -project has generated the universal experience-based citizen engagement manual for application in the cities with different backgrounds. Its aim is to improve local transport planning processes and transitions to more sustainable transport system, and give also suggestions about the ways to avoid or mitigate negative impacts of interaction barriers. (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 5; Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 18.)

3.2 Benefits and criticism of deliberative processes

In the following text different viewpoints related to interaction are summarized. They are based on theoretical and practical studies.

Interaction increases understanding of each other (Staffans 2004, 104), as the officials and citizens empathize and listen to each others' mind-set and views. It allows the construction of tacit knowledge (Staffans 2004, 104). Especially foreseen problems observed by citizens and objectives are addressed during the planning process (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 10). Correspondingly, the public authority can express possible technical constraints and complexities regarding the plan under preparation (Svensson et al. 2004, 19). The constructed database supports decision-making during and after the process (Auwerx et al. 2011, 10).

The inspiration and excitement produced by the interaction supports innovation (Staffans 2004, 104), meaning that the participants bring new ideas as they get involved and are willing to affect the issues. Interaction strengthens the mutual trust building and thus, the social capital of community (Staffans 2004, 104), where interested people together are looking for acceptable solutions to problems, making reasoned decisions and pursue common objectives (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 10). Stakeholders feel more comfortable and influential in relation to decisions and measures, which results in more acceptable and responsible atmosphere among the community (Auwerx et al. 2011, 5-6). The public authority appears more transparent and more reliable for citizens (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 10), and the unfair preferential treatment of one group is decreased (Maltese & Mariotti 2011, 43-44).

Better decisions are made, because the personal advantages and objectives take forward at the early stage (Auwerx et al. 2011, 5-6). Utilization of the expert-knowledge between participants is expanded due the interaction (Staffans 2004, 104), resulting in decisions, which are formed with high-quality, efficient and reliable (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 10). Interaction enables to reach agreement on the issues and resistance can be avoided in later phases. It may lead to a slowdown of the decision-making process or an appearance of disturbances in the implementation phase, for example delays and cost overruns (Auwerx et al. 2011, 5-6). At first sight, the interaction process may appear time-

consuming and costly, but in the long-term, it will eventually return as income (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 33).

In environmental decision-making, where the sensitive and striking issues are dealt with, the motives to organize citizen engagement can be found from the benefits listed above (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 45). According to the research by Yosie and Herbst (1998, 60-72), the modern stakeholder processes differ from the traditional regulatory processes - the first ones offer wide range of information and aspect of the problem. The claim, that active participation produces more creative solutions to problems than non-participative processes (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 60-72) is parallel with benefits compiled by Staffans (2004, 104). Project leader, namely industry, was seen as a transparent and reliable partner after the process (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 60-72).

Drazkiewich et al. (2015, 220-221) found that deliberative characteristics in environmental decision-making and implementation had mainly positive impacts, which were enhanced by participants in favor of environmental goals and environmental groups united with influential stakeholders. The final decisions considered the local conditions and the environmental concerns due the increased public awareness of the environmental problems and their long-term consequences. As key stakeholders were included the process and all treated equally, and an opportunity to address problems and conflicts were provided, the process ended with a good implementation of decision. Although openness of the process may lead more complex and thus impeded decision-making process, it did not occur in the four environmental research cases he included in the study. (Drazkiewich et al. 2015, 220-221.)

Case studies (e.g. Lohr 1999, 28) seem to show that, for instance, workshops, public hearings, newsletters and advisory committees connect the public to planning process and assist the planners to produce user-friendly bicycle facilities. Congestion charging scheme in Central London was success, because as a result of the balance between the desired

scheme (effectiveness) and an acceptable scheme (the social norms) the project progressed to the implementation stage (Banister 2008, 77).

Local authority's public management procedure is closely related to the sustainable urban mobility planning (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 352, 358). Converting a street cross section for various transport modes, citizens are incorporated into the planning and decision-making process as users of the street as well as stakeholders. Active participation can be helpful in the determination of objectives, in which the problems are assessed, the solutions are identified, the options are reviewed and finally the strategic alignment is chosen and implemented. (Svensson et al. 2004, 19.)

Criticism is not avoided in relation to the benefits of participation in planning and decision-making processes. Yosie and Herbst (1998, 48-49) indicate that research evidence of the inclusion benefits is marginal, and processes are multi-dimensional and suitable for a certain context. The decision may technically be weak, policy conflict may appear and trust-level may decrease by the impact of controversial public hearings and meetings, despite the citizen engagement process carried out. In addition, the more difficult and controversial the decision under preparation, the more liability of government agencies may be reduced. (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 48-49.) It is difficult to prove whether the short-term investments income back later in savings and thus, indicate the deliberative actions were useful (European Institute for Public Participation 2009, 8) and had a direct and observable impact on policy outcome (Bickerstaff & Walker 2005, 2132).

3.3 Challenges and barriers in the interaction processes

The local circumstances, involvement strategy defined with objectives and process management, stakeholders involved and the existence of general rules for participation affect the emergence of conflicts (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 41). The more the decision-making process

includes public participation, the greater the risk of conflicts and time-delays to reach the decision (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 22).

Let us consider how to define the term "barrier". Barrier, which constrains and causes the delay or cancellation of a project or plan rejection by citizens and increases costs (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 40), may show up at any stage of the planning process. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 18). Decision-makers refuse to continue decision-making, time and money costs exceed over threshold and finally the whole project is delayed critically (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 2). As the concept "barrier" sounds impassable, it can also be understood more as a "challenge", which requires more input to overcome than usual. The barriers in interaction processes are complex and interrelated.

Barriers extend to the features of administrative bodies and participants, processes and outcomes (Laurian & Shaw 2015, 295). *Contextual barriers* consist of institutional, legal and financial barriers, which determine preliminary conditions of project to success, and are dependent on the existence of regional and national circumstances. Project must act within the limits of contextual barriers. As the planning process continues, *process barriers* as management and communication barriers may appear. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 17-20.)

Briefly, *institutional* barriers consist of competitive positions among institutions and administrative bodies. Problems will arise, if internal conflicts exist and institutions cannot create workable proposals together or bureaucratic systems are confusing and complicated. *Legal* barriers are related to laws and acts that lack regulations to implement a particular measure or way to accomplish it. *Financial* barriers limit the flexible use and amount of investments to different projects and measures. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 17-20, 67.)

During the CIVITAS ELAN -project, challenges were observed in the cities: selection of an appropriate level of participation, construction of communicative partnership among stakeholders, lack of political support

and incapability to involve citizens. Although an engagement plan well-prepared, unexpected events and negative citizen feedback can occur, after which the issues must be reviewed. (Marega et al. 2012, 15, 24, 50.) None of the participatory project can avoid criticism and conflicts, which belong to democracy (OECD 2001, 98).

As seen from Figure 2, which is compiled from GUIDEMAPS handbook, contextual barriers affect the overall size of participatory decision-making process and form core of the obstacles. Citizen engagement and project management are accomplished side by side. The problem occurring in one dynamic process reflects also another. The main focus of this study is on interaction process with all its considerable aspects.

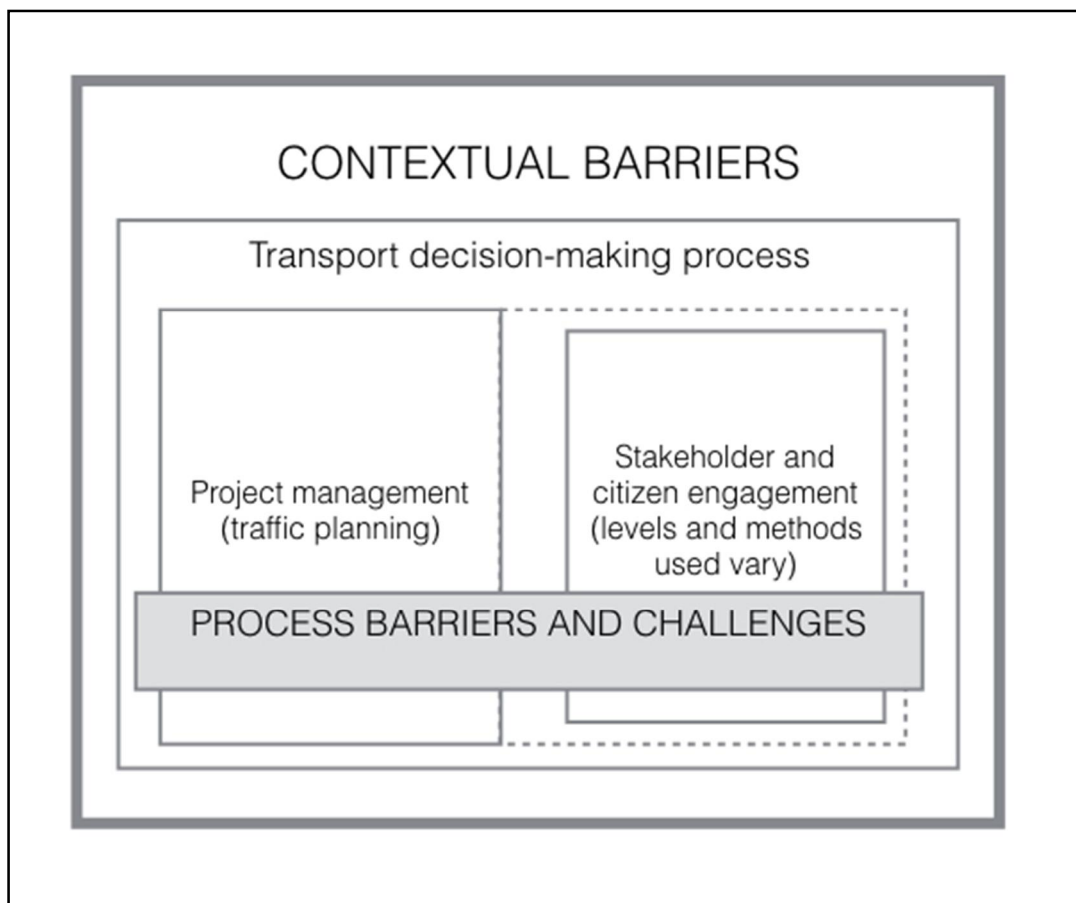


Figure 2. Factors affecting the success of the process (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol- 1, 16)

3.3.1 Lack of strategy and inadequate resources

In some countries, for example Germany, institutions may have no secure personnel resources to arrange citizen engagement process. Real culture for citizen involvement is missing, for example, lack of political will and support to hold fundamental participation process that reflects also at administrative level. Participation process schedule and measures are decided independently at every different level of administrative bodies without any coordinated involvement strategy. (European Institute for Public Participation 2009, 21.) The reason for this lack is usually problem- and location-centric nature of issues, because finding the right strategy to include citizens is not simple. When the officials begin to choose the most appropriate methods of participatory processes and thus face questions about the value systems, they have to take into account the starting points of every dissimilar case and therefore use more tailored framing. (Soma & Vatn 2014, 332.) The more participative processes are demanded, the more the facilitators, who plan, guide and manage group events, must have professional knowledge about the issues under discussion (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 12).

Citizens are required just as much time, efforts and tolerance of confrontations as officials, who need to use cognitive skills to interpret the views of citizens. When the amount of data increases during the process, greater use of time is required (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 30, 32) because of disperse of the interests and its treatment. Stich and Eagle (2005, 331) noticed that many professionals were careful of money invested in inclusion activities and the use of time with it, because those limits are set usually in advance. Switching the citizens' experiences and meanings into the urban planning requires a lot of work because of local differences, positions of power and limited expression capacity of planning documents (Staffans 2004, 279). Limited financial resources and capacity have a negative effect on prioritization and long-term durability of stakeholder consultation made by administrative bodies (Auwerx et al. 2011, 11; Kahane, Loptson, Herriman & Hardy 2013, 17). In Sweden, lack of time and money sets boundaries for a systematic citizen involvement in

transport planning rarely accomplished (Wahl 2013, 111). Majumdar, Moynihan and Pierce (2009, 70-71) want to emphasize that citizens are asked to comment on the plans, but administrators do not respond to their questions and their contribution on final decision-making process is not exposed. They assume that the reason for this is limited time resources.

3.3.2 Stakeholder identification

One component of the interaction planning is identification of the relevant stakeholders that is challenging and resource consuming (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 20-21). This challenge includes issues like figuring out the right amount of citizen representatives included.

The administrators may already have defined regular stakeholders to be involved (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2016, 11), but this method continues to limit inclusiveness of the social and political diversity and disorganized groups with less legitimacy and presence previously (Kahane et al. 2013, 11). In sustainable transport planning, appropriate stakeholders are hard to get involved, because the public consist of different, wide-spread modal users (Booth & Richardson 2001, 148). Since the streets experience a new kind of transformation, representatives of different transport modes want to defend their own interests. Because the power to control the street space is scattered among many sectors, it is a challenge to arrange communication and collaboration with all affected. (Hawkes & Sheridan 2009, 3.)

Working with large groups and various organizations produce more work by the organizers, who pick up rival feedback, follow up sessions and arrange the events cost-effectively (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 79). Narrowly defined stakeholders exclude those that are outside of the boundaries and unconscious of the activities, but who may want to be involved or have an interest in the topic (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 20-21). They seem to miss opportunities for collaboration.

Citizens do not belong in certain hierarchy, which makes them hard to control (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 22). New stakeholders might emerge at any stage of the participation process that destabilize the stakeholder structures and solutions made at earlier stages (van de Kerkhof & Wieczorek 2005, 742; Marega et al. 2012, 41).

3.3.3 Motivation of citizens and commitment of decision-makers

It is a challenge to activate and encourage citizens, especially neutral and less committed, participate actively in deliberations throughout the long planning process, moreover the participation is voluntary (Marega et al. 2012, 13; Tesh 2002, 338; Irvin & Stansbury 2004, 61). Public meetings have been plagued by the lack of audience for a long time (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 30). Activity of citizens usually subsides after the formal public sessions, because participant's particular role lasts only for a one moment (Kahane et al. 2013, 17).

Citizens are generally interested to act and participate in cases of the local issues, directly affecting them personally or as a group. Those issues are usually changes in work or living environment, new transport arrangement issues or when there is a need to defend the common interest. (Stich & Eagle 2005, 331; Reagan & Fedor-Thurman 1987, 95; Marega et al. 2012, 23.) Puustinen (2006, 72) estimates that in Finland, publicity of planning is often stayed at the local level because of site-specific interest shown by the citizens. When citizens are activated, they feel that the conflicts of interests, disagreements and upcoming changes affect them (Janse & Konijnendijk 2007, 37).

Activation seem to be thus dependent on the geographical location of citizens, but also scale and importance of the present case defines the degree of interest: If the people do not recognize problems related to the issue, and content of the policy framework is too abstract, individual people do not become active. On the other hand, professional groups participate in the issues at the wide-ranging political level. (Reagan & Fedor-Thurman 1987, 95.) The problem lies on inclusion levels of the

process flow: when the plan is still flexible and receptive to all viewpoints, the public show weak interest. Not until at the final stage, once the plan has proceeded to more concrete, more accurate and less capable to modify, citizens and politicians wake up to grim reality and begin to communicate. (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 352.) Spickermann, Grienitz and von der Gracht (2014, 215) suspect that citizens are nowadays more interested in preventing implementation of the measures in their neighborhood than enhancing of the common good, caused by possible continuing information gap.

Citizens can feel formal participation events unnecessary because of no real ability to influence on decisions. This leads lack of motivation to participate in deliberations, and to an idea of leaving things to others' concern. (Marega et al. 2012, 13; OECD 2001, 93.) Therefore, the participation method is not as important as representativeness, or in other words, to become heard by any means (European Institute for Public Participation 2009, 7). Citizens can get frustrated with the constructional details and working with policy decisions in the series of meetings (Irvin & Stansbury 2004, 58-59), but they do not feel to be consulted (OECD 2001, 98).

Politicians are often challenging to get them publicly commit and to take part in participative actions, and sometimes independent non-governmental organizations replace politicians (Marega et al. 2012, 15).

In Zagreb, Ghent, Brno and Ljubljana, the commuters and car drivers had been difficult to achieve in discussions on urban transport in comparison with the advocates of urban transport, who had already low threshold to take part because of high interest. The same applied to politicians and other decision-makers. (Marega et al. 2012, 22.)

In Poland, citizens address complaints against the issues that are pending, but do not take any active actions to change the conditions nor have a conversation with the authorities. Correspondingly, the local authority excludes the public and leaves involvement tools unused. (Sobol

2015, 71.) Survey regarding the detailed planning made in Tampere (Teittinen & Blåfield 2005, 15) found that participation was not a conscious choice to all people, but leisure time and range of events also determined the ability to participate at different stages.

3.3.4 Information and access to it

For example, Copenhagen has a number of large-scale campaigns, which have been running for 20 years to promote cycling. In spite of this prosperity, widespread dissemination of information to the public is still a challenge — not just in cases of new cycle routes, but upcoming changes in city traffic and other initiatives. Cyclists welcome the cycling knowledge both satisfied and unsatisfied. (Cycle Policy 2002 - 2012, 33.) Usually in the context of transport planning projects, the flow of information and a sense of involvement is interrupted, when the one-time participation process ends and evaluation had not been done (Taschner & Fiedler 2009, 10).

Administrators are not able to include the empirical knowledge from citizens. Planning documents are not able to utilize the local data of the residents. (Staffans 2004, 272.) On the contrary, citizens are allowed to enter the relevant information partly, which puts decision-makers to crucial position (Carver 2001, 62).

The participation processes on the subject of transportation and mobility include very technical questions, of which various stakeholder groups have something to say at first hand (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 350). The problem is that citizens often lack technical expertise, bureaucratic routines sounds unfamiliar and they response to concerns emotionally and not probably with a realistic and practical point of view (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 22). Citizens interpret and take a stand on the information available on their own terms, which affects their reactions on the issues (Carver 2001, 63-64). The public often do not understand the larger picture and the links between its parts, for instance, impacts of bicycle route

arrangements on development of urban transport that are or should be obvious to the professionals (Human & Davies 2009, 653).

The lack of comprehensive information including all aspects of the situation and the inability to recognize essence problems weaken identification of alternative solutions and its impacts, not forgetting the values. In transport planning, significant stakeholder groups may lack awareness of the obstacles encountered by various social groups like disabled, elderly or people with small children (Auwerx et al. 2011, 14). Citizens with low level of knowledge expose them already pre-set restrictions and standpoints, and they do not challenge the issues imported to the process. The process “educates”, but does not provide a genuine influence. (Kahane et al. 2013, 17.) In turn, both administrators and citizens can become more aware of what kind of conflicting issues and potential impacts are valued (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 24, 33).

Communicative barriers with the public have also time and physical aspects like if the meeting dates are inappropriate or the place, where the participation event is kept, is inaccessible or the information spread is hard to understand (Booth & Richardson 2001, 148). Citizens and experts express themselves verbally in the opposite way as experts use more detailed and theoretical language and citizens represent their suggestions using more practical and experiential language (Xenias & Whitmarsh 2013, 83). Stich and Eagle’s research (2005, 331) reinforces that there have been difficulties in communication between technical professionals and less technical public. In addition, sharing large amounts of information at a time will be intrusive for citizens and can be lost among other information flood (Marega et al. 2012, 37).

Access to the project information is also dependent on the participation tools used. The following are listed some ordinary ones used in transport planning and challenges related to them:

- Information or public meetings are the most common, but least interactive format and does not foster dialogue causing low-

attendance, particularly for the disabled elderly. Opposition of citizens, creation of confront atmosphere and discouragement of silent voices in public space may appear. (Taschner & Fiedler 2009, 21; Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 113.)

- Printed public materials consist of technical texts, which are hard to understand. Letters and leaflets compete with other mail and remain unread. More high-quality newsletters and fact sheets are expensive and reaches minority groups poorly. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 83, 91.) Traditional publications are hard to reach because of complicated access path (OECD 2001, 73).
- Internet websites limit the scope of public to catch them up (OECD 2001, 76), because not all have access to computer neither ability to read and comprehend the text. Some people have inability to use the software and high speed internet access. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 99.)
- Web forums are only used by certain groups and require activity from the authorities to react on questions and comments. Users ignore the forum if not well-published as meaningful causing the waste of resources. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 101.)
- Events
 - o Information centers and exhibitions are accessible only at the opening hours. It is time-consuming to organize many briefings for different defined groups. These offer a way for objectors to introduce their contrary option plan.
 - o Open space meetings are not suitable for specific topics.
 - o Workshops require a lot of effort. (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 111, 121, 135).

3.3.5 Process management

Communication problems are partially linked to receiving acceptance by the public. When groups fail to perform as predicted, participation face

problems (Majumdar et al. 2009, 72-73) as the idea finalized to a concrete proposal generates a lot of objections and alternative plans drawn up by the opponents (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 2). Since the costs of inclusion processes exceed and the benefits remain minimal, meaningful public participation process fails (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 30, 32). The reason for this waste may be also the use of participation process in non-ideal community (Irvin & Stansbury 2004, 61), because “*different publics have different characteristics*” (OECD 2001, 56).

Citizens’ resistance can result in a change of mind of decision-makers and unpleasant media coverage, which leads the loss of political and financial support (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 1, 20). Articles written by third part as media, which reaches broad audience and influence on their opinions, may be inaccurate or misleading criticism resulting in the public opposition (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 51; OECD 2001, 98).

Firstly, practical efforts as well as engagement and negotiation skills to manage the participation processes may be insufficient. Institutions lack expertise in how and when to plan and carry out participation process including the use of communication tools. (Böhler-Baedeker & Lindenau 2013, 6-7; Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 352-353.) This lack can lead to a situation, in which effective opportunities for discussion may not be provided for citizens at all (Marega 2013).

Secondly, roles and network of administrators and administrative processes are often unclear. Both input and responsibilities of other departments and municipal institutions are poorly defined (Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 352-353). Communication between policy-makers and the persons responsible for organizing involvement activities can have misunderstandings of the proper participatory method, unclear views about the participation goals and divergent interests (Janse & Konijnendijk 2007, 37). Therefore, even the presence of politicians in the process does not guarantee full support all parties as the opposite views of citizens are wanted to be avoided without encountering them (Taschner & Fiedler 2009, 10). The case in Majumdar’s study (2009, 72-73) shows that

cooperation with stakeholders resulted in opaque concerns and comments, because they lacked connection.

Timing and episodes within the process are important aspects of the participation. Stakeholder involvement usually occurs too late in the decision-making process leading to obstructive and uncomfortable situations between citizens and administrators, and formation of the competitive positions (Van Daley & Petersen 1987, 40), in which both sides defend their own views. Another time-related problem is to present the decision draft on the stage, when the possibilities of citizens to influence are non-existent (Laurian & Shaw 2015, 295). It follows that the citizen involvement can then be executed at lower levels only (Korver et al. 2012, 126), such as using one-way information sharing methods. Quite commonly practiced nowadays, citizens' freedom to make objections is limited to a predetermined time frame and to a narrow portion of clearly defined interests, because the social interests cannot be imported into the project after its publication (Spickermann et al. 2014, 215). Bickerstaff and Walker (2005, 213) noticed in their research that the conversation focusing on outcomes can be interpreted as regular, active and aware actors having an advantage over citizens.

Sequencing the participation opportunities too infrequently causes a wide gap between the collected opinions and planning documents (Staffans 2004, 278) that ignores changes in local circumstances and additional local "silent" knowledge between these events.

Deliberations maintained by the administrative bodies can be disconnected between active stakeholder groups and citizens, who can participate at any stage. When discussions are progressing from one stage to another, active stakeholders do not normally face the others behind the scene neither stakeholders at initial stages are attending to the citizen process management at later stages. (Kahane et al. 2013, 24.) The public does not have sufficient cooperation with each other (European Institute for Public Participation 2009, 21), which perhaps causes more inconsistent network of perspectives.

3.3.6 Representativeness of stakeholders

Involvement process is insufficient, because certain active public groups organized themselves determine what are relevant questions and challenges introduced to decision-makers. Conversation is not continuous and involvement process is unsatisfactory for the rest of the public.

(Böhler-Baedeker & Lindenau 2013, 6-7; Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker 2014, 352-353.) Human and Davies (2009, 652) see that this kind of partisan action prevents to develop an open discussion and learning platform. According to Yosie and Herbst (1998, 48), participants have a tendency to create stereotypes and perceive them as opponents, which makes it difficult taking into account different perspectives.

Although neighborhood associations are understood as informative, committed and strongest representatives of citizens in the district, their members, neither vocal individuals do not necessary present the whole community opinion (The City of Madison Department of Planning and Development 2005, 12-13; Carver 2001, 62). Deliberative events can be dominated by the members with high socio-economic status, which can trample lower social groups and cause power inequalities. The same applies to a few dissidents not presenting all citizens, and whom the individual citizens may disagree resulting in more complex problem field. (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 30; Reagan & Fedor-Thurman 1987, 105.) Individual citizens as the third stakeholder group are the weakest actors, especially non-organized older people with low possibility to state their opinions fluently (Marega 2013; Taschner & Fiedler 2009, 6, 9). If certain groups are overrepresented in participatory processes despite their actual roles in society, their opinions may weigh more than the others' (Taschner & Fiedler 2009, 9). Sometimes individuals gather or join the group to build opposition against administrator's disagreeable proposal (Kelly et al. 2004 Vol. 2, 54).

Members of non-governmental stakeholder groups see themselves or are seen as delegated representatives of certain community beliefs, ideologies and norms in certain constituency, which harms their openness to broader

views (Kahane et al. 2013, 11-12; Alfasi 2003, 195-196). Impatient and well-informed actors are unready to weigh their own interests in relation to the others' interests and objectives, as they try to interfere in the decision-making processes of their own origin (Anttiroiko et al. 2007, 263). In local planning, strong players have more resources, skills and influence available than minority representatives (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 47; Irvin & Stansbury 2004, 59). Before the plan achieves a formal process, some of the decisions have already been made as a background work in informal conditions by strong players. Thus, the starting points in this respect are unequal. (Fox-Rogers & Murphy 2014, 263-264.)

3.3.7 Expertise vs. experience and values

Citizens understand their own role in decision-making as supervisors, but administrative point of view, basic aim of citizen involvement has been to increase support for agency programs and plans, prevent resistance and put special attention to potentially troublesome citizens and citizen groups (Reagan & Fedor-Thurman 1987, 104; Alfasi 2003, 198). These positions shape a platform, where social values as well as scientific and economic data are competing with each other (Yosie & Herbst 1998, 3).

Decision-makers might disagree that open consultative processes would promote solutions and workable proposals, so they cannot follow a predetermined plan because of possible opposition from citizens (Marega et al. 2012, 13; Auwerx et al. 2011, 8). Since the process of sustainable development includes social, economic and environmental dimensions, local politicians are afraid of citizens' empowerment and the disappearance of representative democracy as complicated issues broaden (Sobol 2015, 69). Decision-making remains partly closed, as the authority has awareness about the limits of what participation can achieve. Therefore, they include only appropriate claims to discussions with citizens, in other words, ignoring citizens concern in a matter how much effort is put to citizen participation and causing dilution of the decision. (Böhler-Baedeker & Lindenau 2013, 6-7; Lindenau & Böhler-Baedeker

2014, 352-353; Irvin & Stansbury 2004, 62; Halvorsen 2003, 541.) Own authoritative mandate is justified by defending underprivileged citizens, although their real needs are not necessarily known, by serving common interest and by using terminology, when communicating verbally (Puustinen 2006, 315-319). Decision-makers rely on the knowledge and expertness of professionals that is used to justify unnecessary presence of the public in decision-making process (Sobol 2015, 69).

Inclusion of citizens raises expectations and allows construction of confidence. If the local government do not indicate to citizens that their views will be taken seriously in decision-making, participation methods seem purposeless in the future as citizens refuse to participate. (OECD 2001, 93.)

Active stakeholders are usually put first around the deliberation table. If citizens are allowed to use power to change policies, stakeholders' previous voices may be covered by citizens' recommendations and legitimacy of the decision is challenged. (Kahane et al. 2013, 24.) All the issues and policies, for example, highly valued sustainable pedestrianization are not negotiable, and depending on the planning stage, it is risky to involve the public into the decisions already made (Booth & Richardson 2001, 147). Calgary citizens claimed that they had been left unaware of the construction of a cycle track and without opportunities to have a word on plans. Traffic engineers were referring to the traffic survey results, which were used as an argument to point out good functionality of the new traffic arrangements. (Dormer 2014.) This case reflects the dilemma regarding the notion of involvement between the experts and non-experts.

4 DATA OF THE STUDY

4.1 Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan

The four-lane Main street, Mechelininkatu street is located in Töölö district in Helsinki, the western part of the inner-city (Figure 3). The street area is bordered by the park areas, and residential and commercial multistory buildings (see Images 1 and 2). At the beginning of the planning process, the traffic plan (formerly known as the cycle path plan) was limited in the street junctions of the northern Nordenskiöldinkatu street and Urheilukatu street. Later, the revised plan has shrunk in the northern Nordenskiöldin Square. As the name of the plan has varied the decision to another, even if content itself has not changed significantly, the plan has been named Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan in this study.

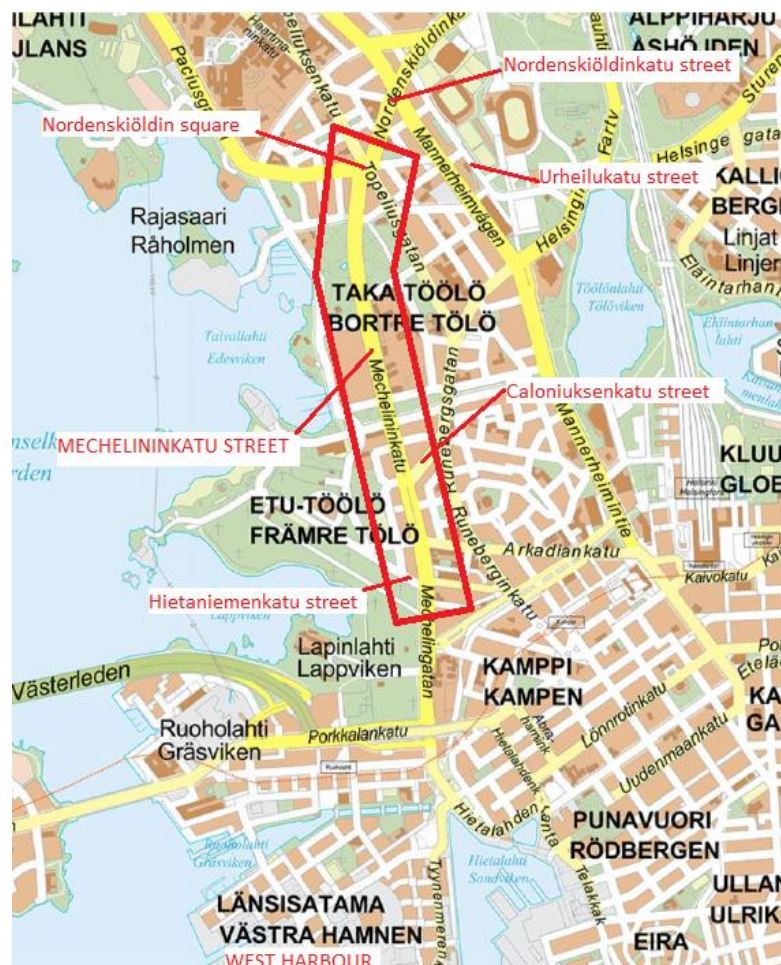


Figure 3. Mechelininkatu street planning area (Sito Aineistot: Helsingin kaupunki 2016)



Image 1. Current Mechelininkatu street to the north



Image 2. Current Mechelininkatu street to the south

The collected data associated to Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan includes decision-making documents approved by the City Planning Committee and the Public Works Committee since 2010. These documents contain decision texts of the Committee meetings, including plan descriptions, plan drawings and interaction reports with individual and official feedback appendices (47 pieces). Also, appeals against decisions

and initiatives of the City Council had been processed in the board meetings. (see Mechelininkatu street decision-making 2010 - 2014.)

For the study, newsarticles were also collected from Helsingin Sanomat and Helsingin Uutiset published in 2013 (see Heikkola 2013; Hämäläinen 2013; Moision 2013; Niiranen 2013; Salomaa 2013).

Mechelininkatu Street Plan Description consists of the following sections: premise of the plan, plan solutions and its main impacts, implementation of interaction and construction cost estimate. The plan description complements the plan drawing. According to the final traffic plan (see Figures 4 and 5), one-way cycle lanes and paths are built in accordance with Cycling Route Network Goals 2025 for the inner city. Car lanes are narrowed in order to calm driving speeds. The reduction of car lanes is not possible, because the passenger volumes of the West Harbour are increasing, and therefore, the street network is loaded more and more even the off-peak hours. This increase has been a justification for removal of the curbside parking (100 parking lots) from the section between Caloniouksenkatu street and Hietaniemenkatu street. Compensatory parking spaces are arranged in a nearby Hietaniemi area outside the planning borders. In addition, Mechelininkatu street will be provided with a speed camera. The pavements are narrowed from the current, so that space requirements of other transport modes are met. Tram stops close to Caloniouksenkatu street and Hietaniemenkatu street are combined into one, which is located near at Arkadiankatu street junction. This solution is based on earlier decision to develop tramline 8, and aim to increase speed and reliability of the tram services. Stops removed are replaced by a row of trees, and single trees are also planted in other destinations. One pedestrian crossing is removed due the removal of tram stop. Illegal performances on pavements made by freight and service traffic are prevented by permitting car stopping on the street at off-peak times.

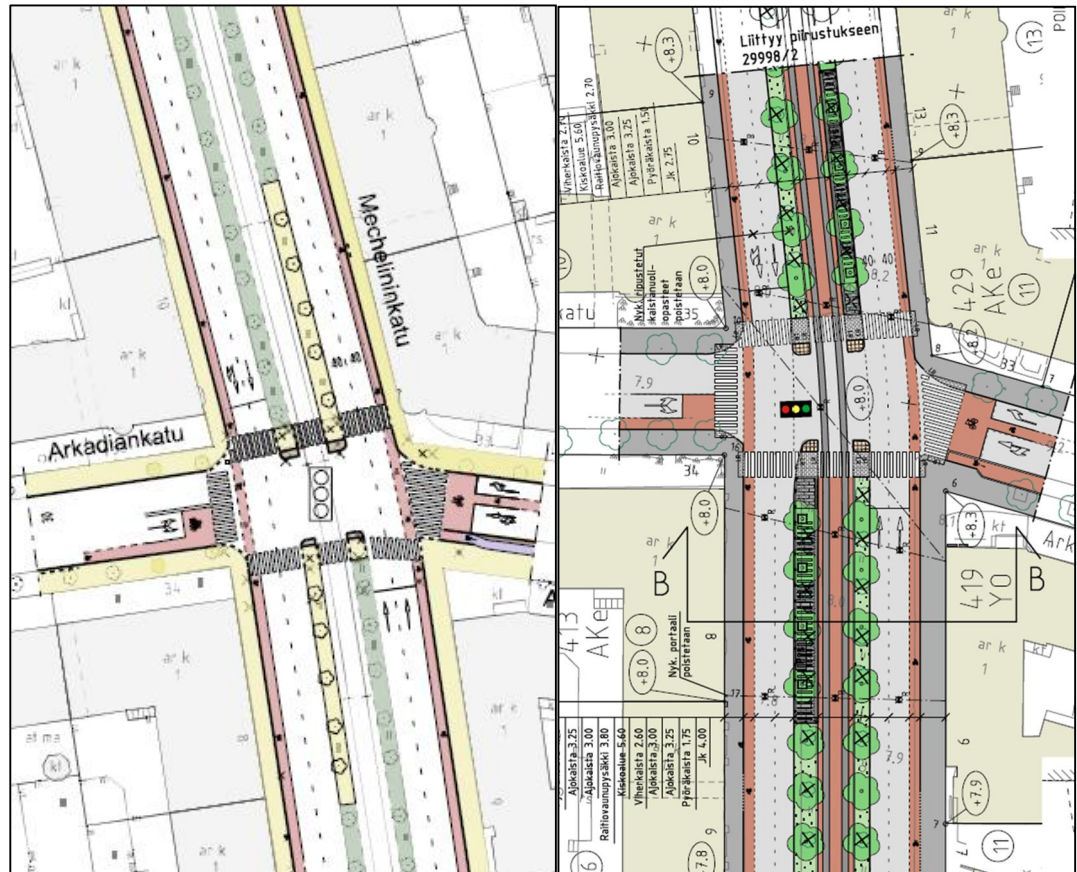


Figure 4. A screen capture of the Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan drawing on the left side and Street Plan, which is based on the Traffic Plan, on the right side from the same street section (Mechelininkatu street decision-making 2010 - 2014)

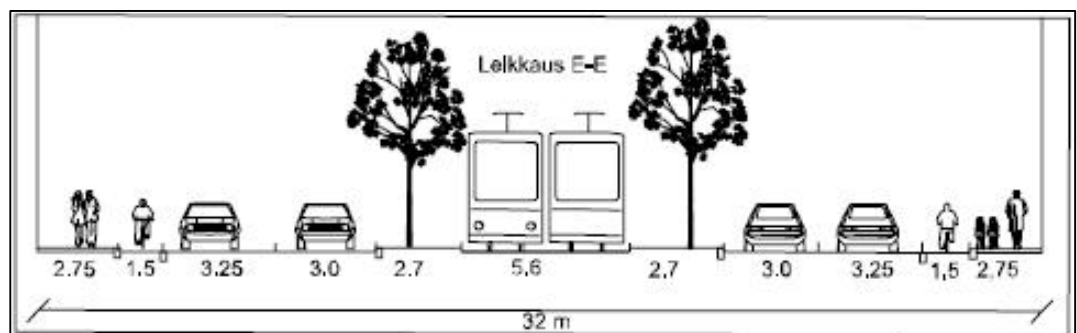


Figure 5. An example of the planned street cross-section in the Traffic Plan (Mechelininkatu street decision-making 2010 - 2014)

The final and complete traffic plan drawings are presented in appendices 1-3.

4.2 Data gathering

4.2.1 Interviews 9.10.2014 - 25.11.2015

Members of the City Planning Department and the Public Works Department from various administrative bodies were interviewed for this study. Interviewees had been involved in final stages of the plan preparation and decision-making process in 2012 - 2014. The interviewees were sent an interview request by e-mail, which described the purpose, objectives and preliminary research questions of the study. The interviews were conducted informally face to face in a public place in order to gain interviewees to express as much experiences as possible and in order to minimize the risks of information filtering. Because the researcher was allowed to return to the issue again with the interviewee after the interview session, the most essential issues were only written down from the point of view of the research problem. The interviewer supported discussion in depth and if the conversation was drifted away from the topic, the interviewer returned it back on track.

The main themes of the discussions were interviewees' personal experiences of the Mechelininkatu street planning process and commonly identified challenges related to the public participation in Helsinki. The discussions focused also on, how interaction of the transport decision-making is normally planned and organized in Helsinki, what kind of new methods City Planning Department is going to test in order to involve citizens, and what kind of development needs the interaction and traffic planning practices would require. An essential interview material from the perspective of the research questions was included to this study.

The interviewees and interview dates:

- The Chairman of the Public Works Committee Jarmo Nieminen,
17.3.2015
- The Chairman of the City Planning Committee Risto Rautava,
14.4.2015

- City Planning Department Interaction Designer Juha-Pekka Turunen, 9.10.2014
- City Planning Department Traffic Planner Niko Palo, 25.11.2015
- City Planning Department Traffic Planner Mika Kaalikoski, 19.5.2015
- Public Works Department Project Manager Penelope Sala-Sorsimo, 14.10.2014

4.2.2 Feedback and media data analysis

In the analysis of qualitative data, research material is broken down into conceptual parts, which are transferred to the general conceptual and theoretical level (Metsämuuronen 2000, 51). Metsämuuronen (2000, 54) cites Syrjäläinen's (1994, 90) version of the analysis procedure: after internationalization and theorization of data, the classification of the data, and refinement of the research questions and concepts are done. The frequency of the phenomena and deviations are stated, after which phenomena observed are classified again. After the formation of the thematic classes, those classes are supported or subverted by using the data. Finally, the results of the analysis are reviewed under broader theoretical context, leading to conclusions and interpretations of the study. (Metsämuuronen 2000, 54.)

Citizens' perspectives and background are interpreted on the basis of feedback data received during the decision-making process, assuming that additional data collection methods do not add value to reflect citizens' views. Metsämuuronen (2000, 46, 57) emphasizes that text content should be then approached with a critical eye, as whose point of view is spoken, what arguments are relied on, what is the relationship between the speaker and the text, and how speaker is trying to influence on reader.

The qualitative analyzing methods have been used in the following data:

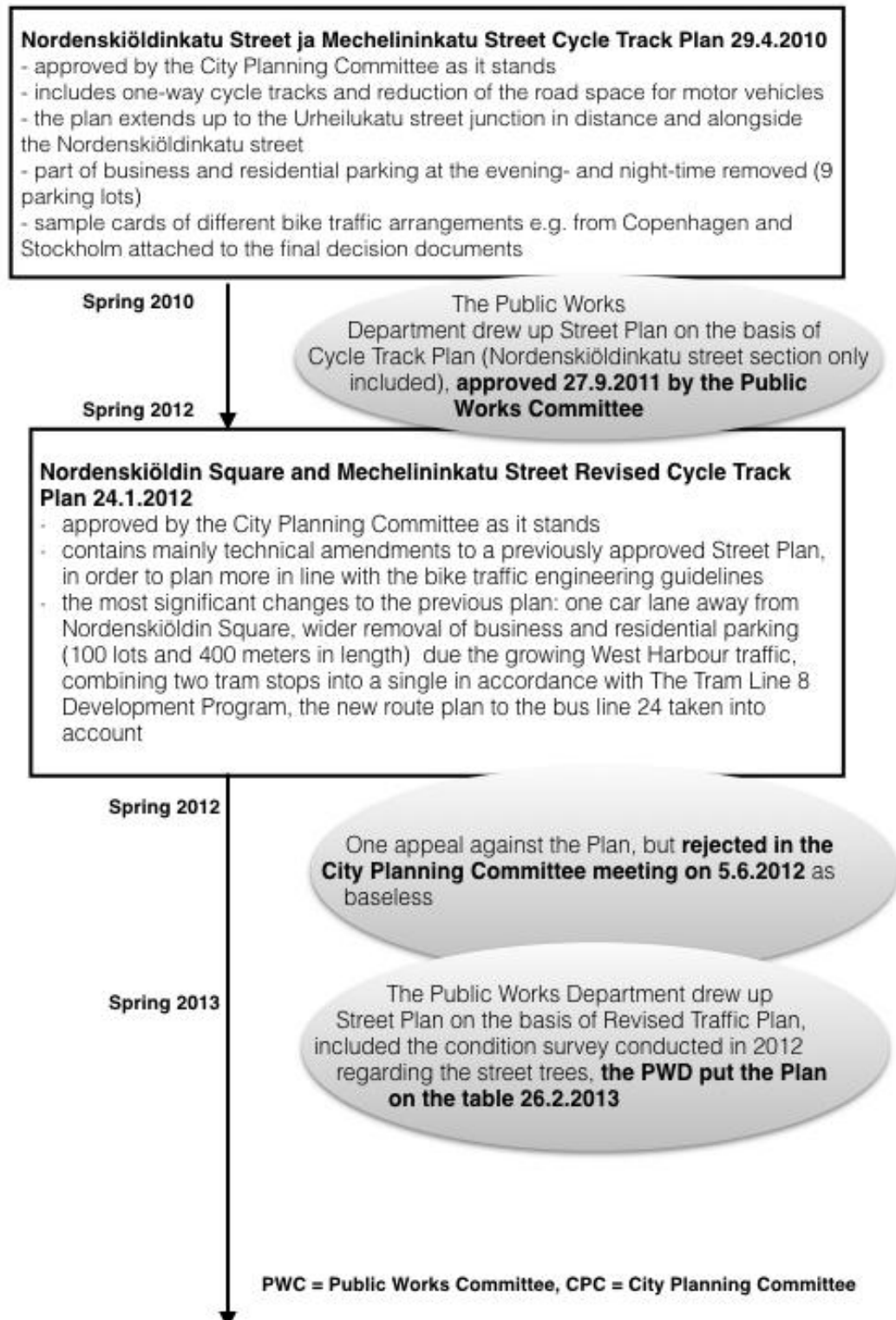
- written and formal citizens' feedback,
- articles in local newspapers,
- output of interviews with officials and decision-makers in various administrative bodies.

Decision-making documents were used to form decision-making process and interaction process flowcharts.

5 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Figure 6 shows the chronological progressive Mechelininkatu street decision-making process from 2010 to 2014. The central points of the issues, which had been presented at the board meetings, are described at each stage. Rectangular boxes of the flow chart reflect the meetings of the City Planning Committee and, correspondingly, oval boxes present the meetings of the Public Works Committee. In the figure 7, the same decision-making process is presented in more compact form and the implemented public participation alongside it. The flow charts are compiled in accordance with the texts of decision-making minutes derived from the “Päätökset” online database, the City Planning Department and the Urban Facts Department (see Mechelininkatu street planning 2010-2014).

5.1 Traffic planning process of the Mechelininkatu street



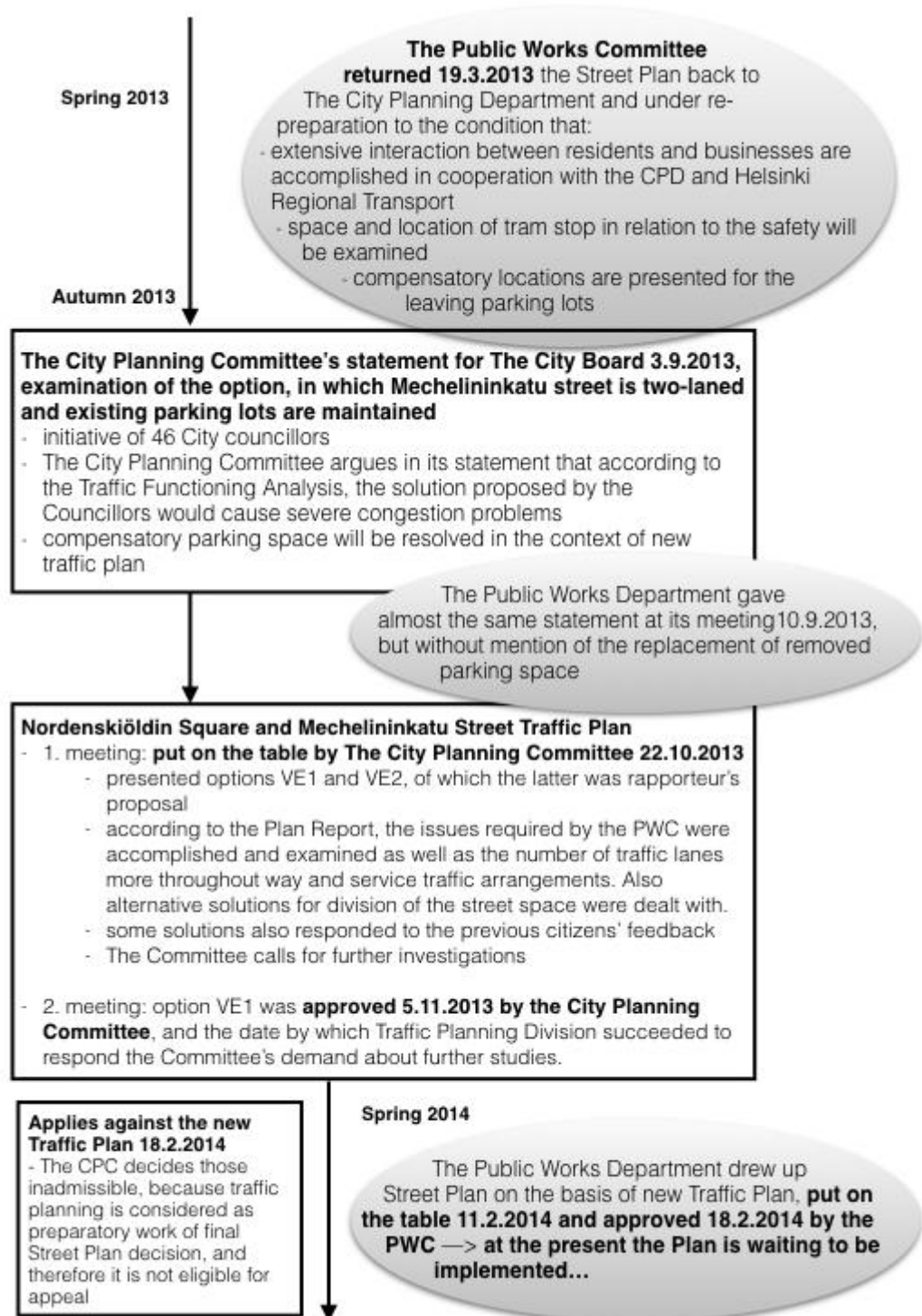


Figure 6. The flow chart of the decision-making process of Mechelininkatu street (constructed by the author)

5.2 Interaction process as part of decision-making process

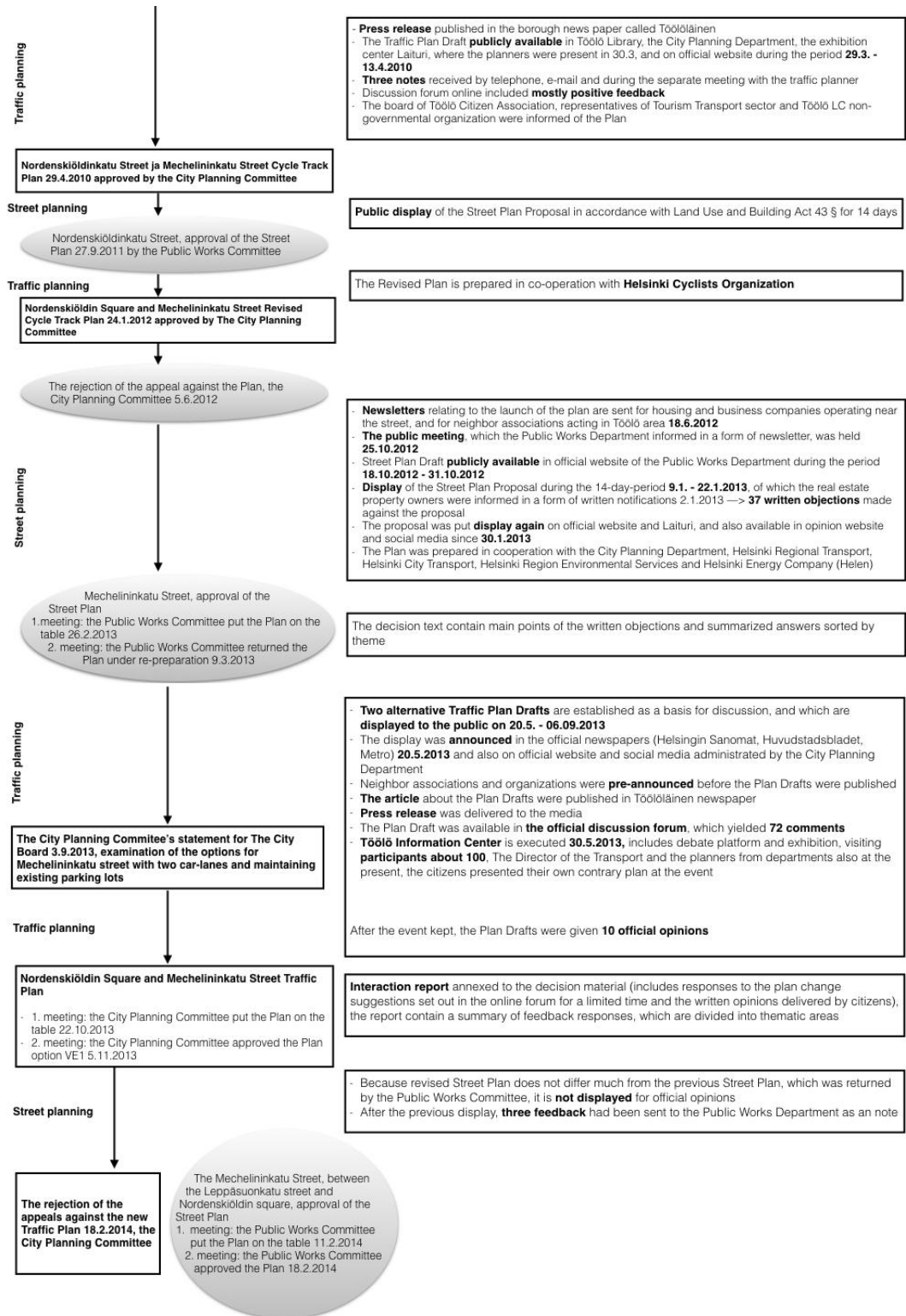


Figure 7. The flow chart of the decision-making process of Mechelininkatu street and the implemented public participation alongside it (constructed by the author)

5.3 Citizen feedback and media

Deducing by the content of feedback data, feedback givers were individual citizens, local housing organizations, community associations, as well as interest groups representing various modes of transport and local non-governmental groups. One feedback had been received from the internal governmental organization, which was indirectly associated with the traffic planning. Two of feedback were positive on the plan. Some feedback givers seemed to represent both individual citizen and non-governmental group at the same time. A few individual feedbacks were approved by dozens of signed supporters. Housing organizations' feedback was often the same content, but layout and structure of the text varied. Töölö area seemed to be very familiar to many feedback givers for several years.

First and most appeals against the plan (79%) were made during the juridical public display of Street Plan in spring 2013. Principally, the written appeals were negative toned and criticized the plan content, planning process and authorities' operations. The most interesting fact was that almost all of these feedbacks were targeted at the solutions, which would have normally belonged to the traffic planning stage.

Content of the objections shows that not all citizens were in favor of the way the local government had taken care of *citizen democracy*, which was experienced even weaker than before in generally and in this case. They felt poor possibilities to influence. They criticized the fact that in particular, local citizens' opinions had not been taken into account and administration had forgotten the community-sensitiveness. Information on the plan had not reached all those affected, in spite of all good relationships with the administration. The plan had been incompletely *informed*. Barely a handful of people had attended the public meeting in autumn 2012, only one plan option had been under review, information *sharing* had been inefficient, and some specific information channels, such as Internet had been overemphasized. The feedback givers insisted that the interaction process must be renewed, so that citizens can state their views on the plan again.

Distrust of both the administration activities and the organizational relationships occurred in citizens' doubts about accuracy of the available information. Some blamed the authorities an intentional cover-up of information from the influential citizens, and thus pursuing someone else's interests. *Information* was needed much more than the plan was able to give, for example, business impact analysis regarding the whole City, replacement of parking lots, street construction schedules, and how prerequisites of certain functions will be guaranteed after the change. According to feedback, the investigation reports were not considered *qualified*, such as Tree Health and Condition Survey by the Public Works Department. Decision material did not provide the clear and consistent arguments: plan drawings, plan description and the current local situation did not match each other. In other words, the plan had not been able to *adapt* local premises. Also, strategic *objectives* of the City and the plan solutions now made were considered contradictory.

Own *experiences* and *history* of local conditions were presented even in very detail, for example, one description was dedicated to a house corner. A variety of *perspectives* on the local situation and negatively presumed impacts were used as an argument against the plan solutions: the actual number of pedestrians; bus stop users; service traffic needs; the consequences of cutting down trees on health and cityscape; congested street intersections; profitability decline in a retail business; drop in housing values; various types of pedestrians in the area. Some also referred to traffic arrangements made *earlier*, such as changes in car parking and bus routes, which still caused irritation. Local circumstances were expected to deteriorate more. Mechelininkatu street was understood and regarded more as a valuable and old street more to *serve* local citizens than a main street to connect neighborhoods. The support between different modes of transport was distributed. The changes, which would weaken the status of the certain user group, were not accepted, such as the sidewalk narrowing or tram stop removal.

'*Factual*' information presented by citizens may not guarantee its veracity or timeliness, but it could be a way to affect reader in the hope of driving

own interests. The feedback givers submitted arguments against the plan solutions with reference to publications written by the City organizations and national Ministries, legislation, as well as many others.

Cycling was *treated* like a brief trend phenomenon by some feedback and should not be prioritized over the citizens' interest and other modes of transport. Some feedback givers, some of whom also reported being active cyclists themselves or in favor of promotion of cycling, believed that a sufficient alternative bicycle access already exists. Mechelininkatu street would be inconvenient to cycle and a new bike path is not required, when bike paths are also empty of cyclists elsewhere in the Helsinki region. Some expressed their concern on fast-driving cyclists, who do not follow traffic rules and pose a risk to pedestrians. Sometimes the whole cycle arrangements were seen as problematic. Investing urban tax money in cycling infrastructure was seen worthless and decision-makers lacked an understanding of the transport entirety.

Styles of writing, ways of arguing own objections, and influencing on decision-makers were also drew attention in this feedback analysis. Some feedback contained critical rhetorical *questions* for decision-makers and challenged them to legislative deficient ways to proceed in the matter. The word choices were sometimes exaggerated and reproached the plan strongly. Some spoke *incorrectly* about the administrative organization and those tasks, for example, street plan drawn up by Transport and Traffic Planning Division and vice versa. Individual citizen used often the "we"-*form* and referred to the discussions held in public forums. On the other hand, one protest was raised against the standpoint of housing organization.

All feedback did not declare the plan a failure, or propose a total abandonment of the plan. Part of the feedback *recommended* alternative solutions, for instance, transforming Mechelininkatu street to a two-lane street, placing the bicycle path at a same level with the sidewalk, dividing the pedestrian crossing into two sections, and making improvements on a wider street network.

The role of *media* was reflected in the fact that articles in the newspaper were monitored and definitive conclusions about the plan were made on the basis of news. At the same time, especially newspaper articles became *debate* arena for politicians after the plan had been returned to the City Planning Department for re-preparation. The views of citizens were advocated and failure of the interaction was admitted in media articles. Administrators *justified* their key solutions based on their research data and knowledge, not forgetting strategic aims. The City Planning Department wanted to show more open by providing Committee meetings, where citizens can have a free access.

Ten formal feedback were delivered to the City Planning Department during re-preparation of the traffic plan in 2013. Some citizens shifted to contact directly the traffic planner, but now much infrequently than at the street planning phase. Willingness to influence on the plan occurred, but the resistance was mainly as *sharp* as before and content of the feedback barely changed in the later stages. The decision-making process was still unclear to some opponents. The new traffic plan draft was disappointment to citizens, because it had not been modified in line with their *expectations*. Dissatisfaction of citizens was still pending, which resulted in partnership group structured by the housing organizations and business companies. The group strived to dismissal of the new approved traffic plan. In opponents' point of view, extent and quality of the interaction continued to be insufficient and further clarifications were demanded remarkably more, such as risk assessment, social impact evaluation and effects of seasonal cycles. Larger-scale development programs and transport system plans should also be approved by the local citizens and business companies according to some feedback.

5.4 Interaction experienced by the officials and decision-makers

Interaction designer Juha-Pekka Turunen observed that the project had attracted little discussion at early stages and the public interest in the plan had been limited to the final stages of the planning process, when there had been a few steps from implementation. Later at the process, members of the City Planning Committee had been contacted even directly. Reasoning for the traffic plan had remained inadequate, as evidenced by negative feedback flood. Interested group had continuously changed, because citizens tend to follow different communication channels and specific topics.

Project manager Penelope Sala-Sorsimo experienced the street planning process was time and resource consuming: correspondence with separate citizens and community associations, private meetings with five citizens/citizen groups, requests for further additional information and an organized bus tour with members of the Public Works Committee. Lot of extra work on interaction activities, which the Land Use and Building Act does not even oblige, had been done. According to Sala-Sorsimo, the project had wide-ranging, almost regional impact compared to a conventional street plan, which serves mainly local citizens living along and near the street. While a personal opinion is not necessarily the opinion of everybody concerned, she told that the provocative, misleading project-blocking activity produced by a couple of residents had been detected during the planning process. As the Finnish legal system allows a long appeal process (see Introduction -section), leading to long processing times of plan approvals, there was a risk that infrastructure construction funds would have been allocated to another project because of great time-delays.

At the presentation of plans in 2012, citizen participation had been weak and lacked representatives of the neighborhood associations. Sala-Sorsimo mentioned that only individual active citizens had been present. Committee members had been contacted directly. Communication had expanded considerably towards the end, because there had been little

discussion at the early stages. Sala-Sorsimo noticed that above all, the plan had been perceived as a bicycle path plan from the beginning of the project to the end, but in reality, the project concerned the renovation of the whole inner-city street, including improvements to the street structure, pipings, historical tree alley and tramway. The importance of plan reasoning should never be underestimated during the planning process, and which had certainly been emphasized in this case.

Chairmen of the Committees both agreed on the importance of citizen engagement. Jarmo Nieminen saw the public participation in traffic planning process of the Mechelininkatu street inefficient as it had initiated distrust of citizens to city administrators and its impacts had reflected on the street planning phase. In addition, the media had managed to determine the direction of the conversation. In spring 2013, he had established unofficial Facebook group, where members of Committee could follow discussion of citizens in the case of Mechelininkatu street. Without general view of transport system, the plan solutions can not be justified well-enough to conscious citizens, for whom significance of reasoning had been emphasized during Mechelininkatu street planning process.

According to Risto Rautava, the issue had overloaded officials' available working time to such an extent that approach of interaction had become mandatory and top-down democracy. Rautava took a positive position with the efforts, which had been made in order to find satisfactory solutions to the plan, even if those had been done in the context of an extensive interaction required by the departments.

Traffic planner Niko Palo had been responsible for the preparation of the Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan since 2012. Palo had seen the original plan for a viable and acted as bystander, when different plan options had been weighed. The debate among the public had been expanded at that stage, when preparation of the revised plan had been transferred to him. Citizens had continued to lack real interest in plan and thus, intensive interaction activities had not been implemented by the officials. Not all the

feedback had been reacted neither advocacy organizations of various transport modes consulted. When the planning had been progressed, new proposals had been presented and solutions emerged. Palo assumed that the public opposition had been well-organized with the aim of literally pull the project down.

Traffic planner Mika Kaalikoski, who had been involved the planning process since 2013, was asking for understanding from citizens to the plan solutions made. Citizens should be found confidence in planners' professionalism. He had received direct contacts from citizens during the planning, and in addition, the e-mail feedback and council initiatives had to been dealt with. The plan under re-preparation had been taken forward determinedly and in accordance with the original plans. Kaalikoski also emphasized impact assessment and monitoring after the reconstruction of Mechelininkatu street. If the new arrangements are found to function, the results can be utilized in further planning and citizen interaction processes.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

This study has provided a new perspective on the present and future interaction between administrators and citizens in municipal sustainable urban transport planning and decision-making. Helsinki has its goal of promoting cycling by a better bicycle path network, where the inner-city streets, such as Mechelininkatu street, are the primary construction targets. The City has recognized the importance and contribution of the stakeholders in order to achieve the objectives early in the process, since different interests with their space requirements meet in narrow street space, such as in the case of Mechelininkatu street. The interaction appears to be a complicated process, in which there is no particular solution to execute. However, the direction will be towards the deliberative interaction culture, where the citizen is seen as a partner, and more studies and handbooks are produced in order to manage engagement processes effectively. The dilemma is that even though the city of Helsinki offers plenty of interaction channels, carries out interactive processes and wants to involve citizens, the process barriers and challenges may always exist during the decision-making process, not forgetting the influence of local circumstances. As Carver (2001, 63-64) highlights, citizens react and interpret things by using their own premises, so the participatory methods used in the case of Mechelininkatu street might function in another context.

The case of Mechelininkatu street has raised questions about the factors mentioned by Booth and Richardson (2001, 148), and which are affecting the quality of traffic planning: what is the role division of citizens and officials, how should participation be scheduled and what are the limits within the debate taking place. Mechelininkatu street case shows that the citizens and administrators had opposing views over the above mentioned factors, and the project faced a lot of retardant process barriers, which had not been prepared for, and excessive use of resources in contrast to regular decision-making process. Finally, the project had created relatively great opposition of local citizens and mutual trust was weakened.

The bureaucratic structure seem to act as an institutional barrier, which was reflected in a slowdown of the procedure, as well as in the fact that citizens had no clear view on the responsibilities of departments. The same issues were addressed in both street and traffic planning stages and in several Committee meetings, including preparation of the final documents and justifications to the citizens, resulting in a lot of extra work for officials. Public participation took place separately in each planning stage. The project-like characteristics revealed the fact that there could be a long time-frame between the preparations of the different plans. This is problematic in terms of a continuous stakeholder commitment (cf. Kahane et al. 2013, 17) and does not take into account possible changes between events (cf. Staffans 2004, 278).

New participants appeared during the process, causing instability to decisions made earlier. On the other hand, those, who were assumed to have a strong regular role in planning, were consciously involved at the initial stage of the process. Co-operation with other departments and cycling representative groups seemed to work, but excluded the other transport users and their probably divergent views. Citizens proposed plan solutions, which indicates their desire to participate, and perhaps they should have been involved more actively to build a sense of inclusiveness. The content of the plan was changed between the years 2010 - 2012 in such a way that parking spaces were removed and tram stops were combined, which might have changed the effectiveness of the plan, and therefore, might have required more intensive interaction methods. However, the case showed difficulties to determine the appropriate stakeholders and the limited resources to identify them.

The political support for the project blurred, as politicians, citizens and officials debated publicly in media. Because citizens actively followed and quoted the media, there was continuous danger of incompetent knowledge-sharing and project downfall, since the departments were not able to intervene in the direction of the debate on time. The citizens were provided opportunities to discuss with planners, and the participatory methods used in this case are usual ways to connect the audience in the

planning (see e.g. Lohr 1999, 28), but the information did not reach all affected and was not enough to motivate them to act at the early stages. Thus, benefits raised in theory, in practice and in studies (see e.g. Staffans 2004, 104; Auwerx et al. 2011, 5-6) could not have been achieved in this case because of this information gap. The official appeals, which were given at the street planning phase and regarded traffic planning issues, prove this argument. Some Internet-based channels seemed to be unfamiliar to citizens, which may explain citizens' unconsciousness on the plan.

Citizens and politicians were more activated at the time, while the letter sheets were sent personally for housing organizations, and the street plan was put on display in January 2013. Citizens thought their weak opportunities to influence on the plan solutions related to traffic plan issues, but as the plan had progressed too much ahead, the interaction had turned into a one-way form (cf. Van Daley & Petersen 1987, 40; Korver et al. 2012, 126), when the discussion with citizens can only focus on the final outcomes. Although the participatory activities were re-executed largely, the plan content did not remarkably change in accordance with citizens' will. The reason for this may be the limited options for narrow street space, a predetermined schedule to get the plan completed and reach strategic cycling promotion objectives or the concern that investments will be lost to another project. The plan was taken forward, despite the objections. Citizens were given a new opportunity, but not all their opposition did turn around, despite the better justifications given to them. The already existing negative atmosphere seemed to contribute to the systematic and provocative opposition without any consideration of society well-being, which is suspected to be derived from lack of knowledge (cf. Spickermann et al. 2014, 215). In summary, lot of effort has been put at the final stages to involve citizens, but the benefits stayed low for both.

Citizens' values and experience had been difficult to receive due to the poor self-involvement, which was reflected in low attendance in public meetings at the beginning of the process. This study shows the same

problem as Reagan and Fedor-Thurman (1987, 95), and Lindenau and Böhler-Baedeker (2014, 352) have detected: when the plan is still in an abstract and customizable form, and no problems can be identified, the interest to participate is low. At the end, the interaction method itself was no longer relevant and citizens brought their opinions to decision-makers with direct contact. Thus, silence at the beginning of the process does not clearly imply alone that citizens would welcome the decision. This study is able to connect the site-specificity and willingness to participate, which is enhanced by Puustinen's (2006, 307) investigation of the Finns' interest in local affairs: citizens and companies near the geographical planning area showed the most interest in the plan, and who supposed the plan will affect them.

Certain members of representative groups' interests seemed to have advantage over the content of the plan. Also, non-governmental groups and individual citizens speaking of themselves in the plural were trying to influence the decision-makers directly, but were not likely to be representative of the whole public opinion (cf. The City of Madison 2005, 12-13). When the plan was approaching its final decision, the situation was "we" and "them", where stereotypes were strongly reflected, so the other points of view were hard to take into account anymore.

The clash of the views on power-sharing was clear: the citizens disagreed in the fact that the officials would have the best expertise without their advice neither the acceptable solution to present. Since the Mechelininkatu street plan was not valid for negotiation at the later stages, the participatory methods were used to inform citizens and to find support for the solutions already made. Citizens showed disappointment towards this power configurations that highlight the engagement process being much more important than its outcome.

The plan documents were not able to respond to the additional explanations demanded by the citizens neither reconcile their views and local knowledge into the plan, which is parallel to Staffans' (2004, 272) observation about an absorption capacity of the plan and its further output.

On the other hand, Mechelininkatu street case can be seen as slightly compatible with the learning process, which has produced information on certain concepts, such as values, local experiences and the need for impact assessments to improve preparedness of planning and answer further questions.

The opposition against the cycling infrastructure demonstrates unreadiness to approve relatively fresh facilities, but this Mechelininkatu street case does not reveal the whole community attitude: according to statistics (Marttila 2014), at least 96% are some in favor of the promotion of cycling in Helsinki. For example in New York (Applebaum et al. 2011, 5) and even in a strong cycling country Denmark (Gössling 2013, 203), citizens tend to defend other transport modes, depending on what is important to oneself. As the citizens often lack technical expertise and probably do not understand the larger picture and links between them (Kweit & Kweit 1987, 22; Human & Davies 2009, 653), other cycling promotion measures should also be paid attention to, such as disseminating correct cycling information (see section 2.2).

As a traffic planning process of Mechelininkatu street shows, nurturing democracy can mean both conflicting opinions and long-term mutual trust building. The question is, how these participatory processes are designed and possible barriers related to those are managed. As the previous studies indicate (see this study pages 19-20), a deliberative approach could provide an opportunity to reach more legitimate and effective urban mobility policies. However, the impact of local conditions, such as the right to appeal provided by legislation, should not be forgotten.

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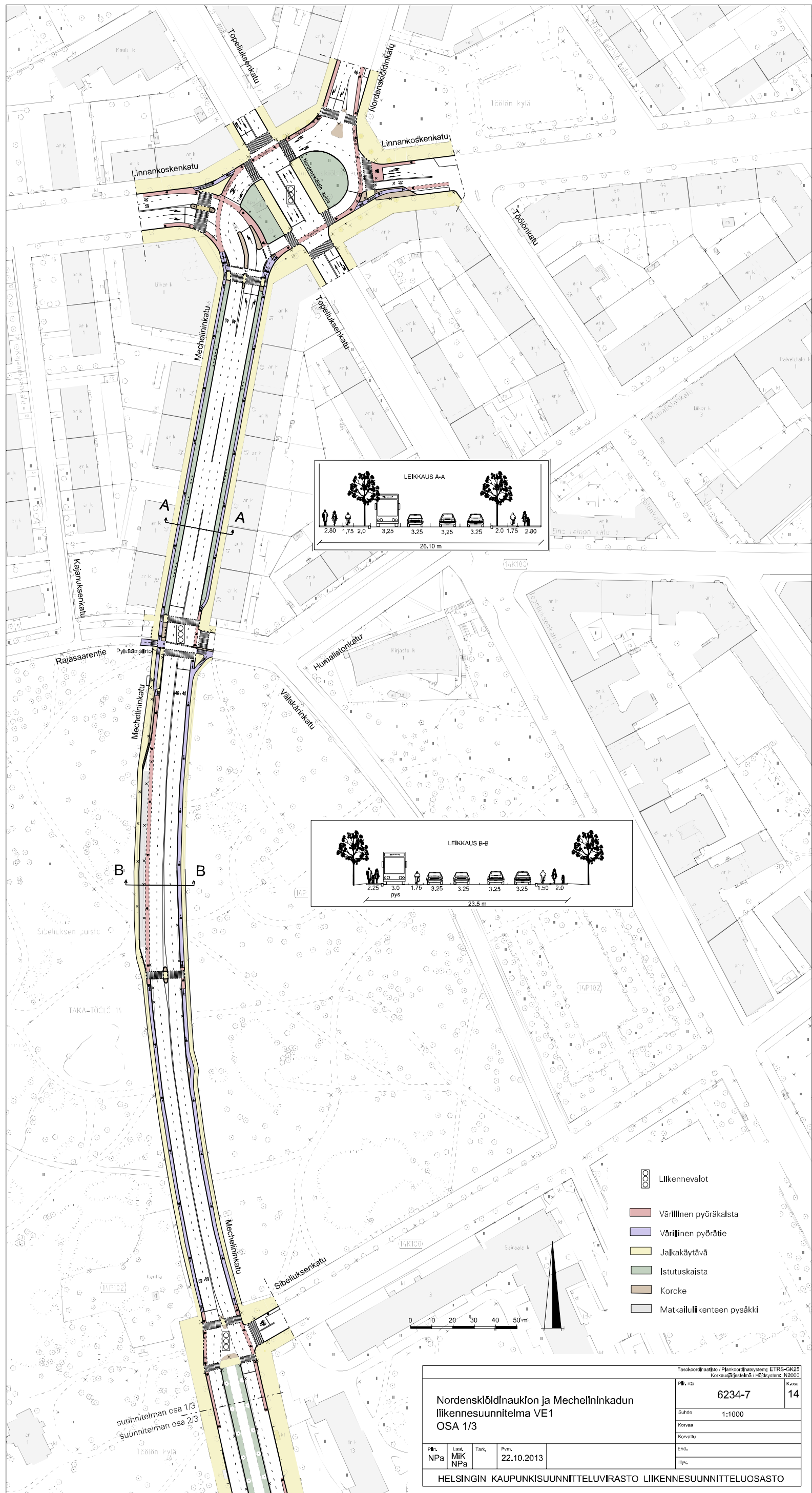
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APPENDICES

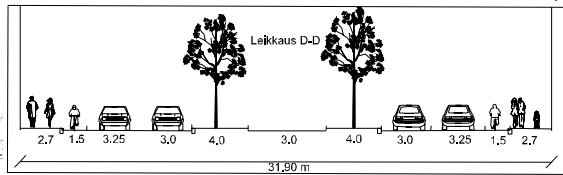
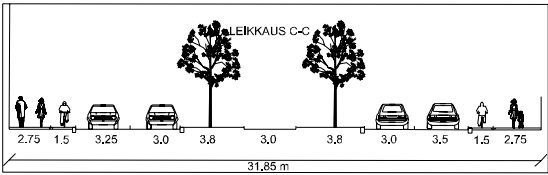
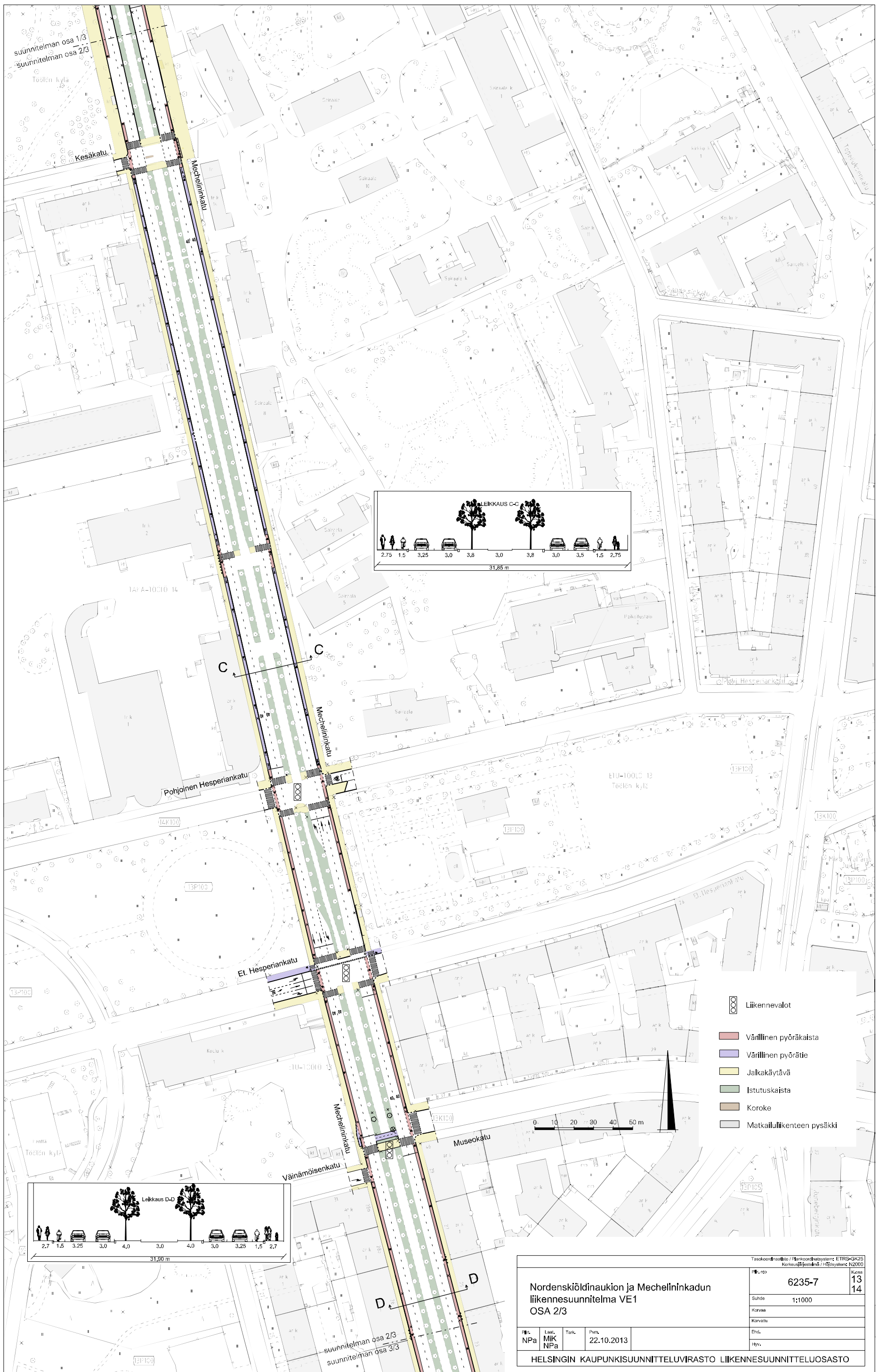
Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Appendix 3



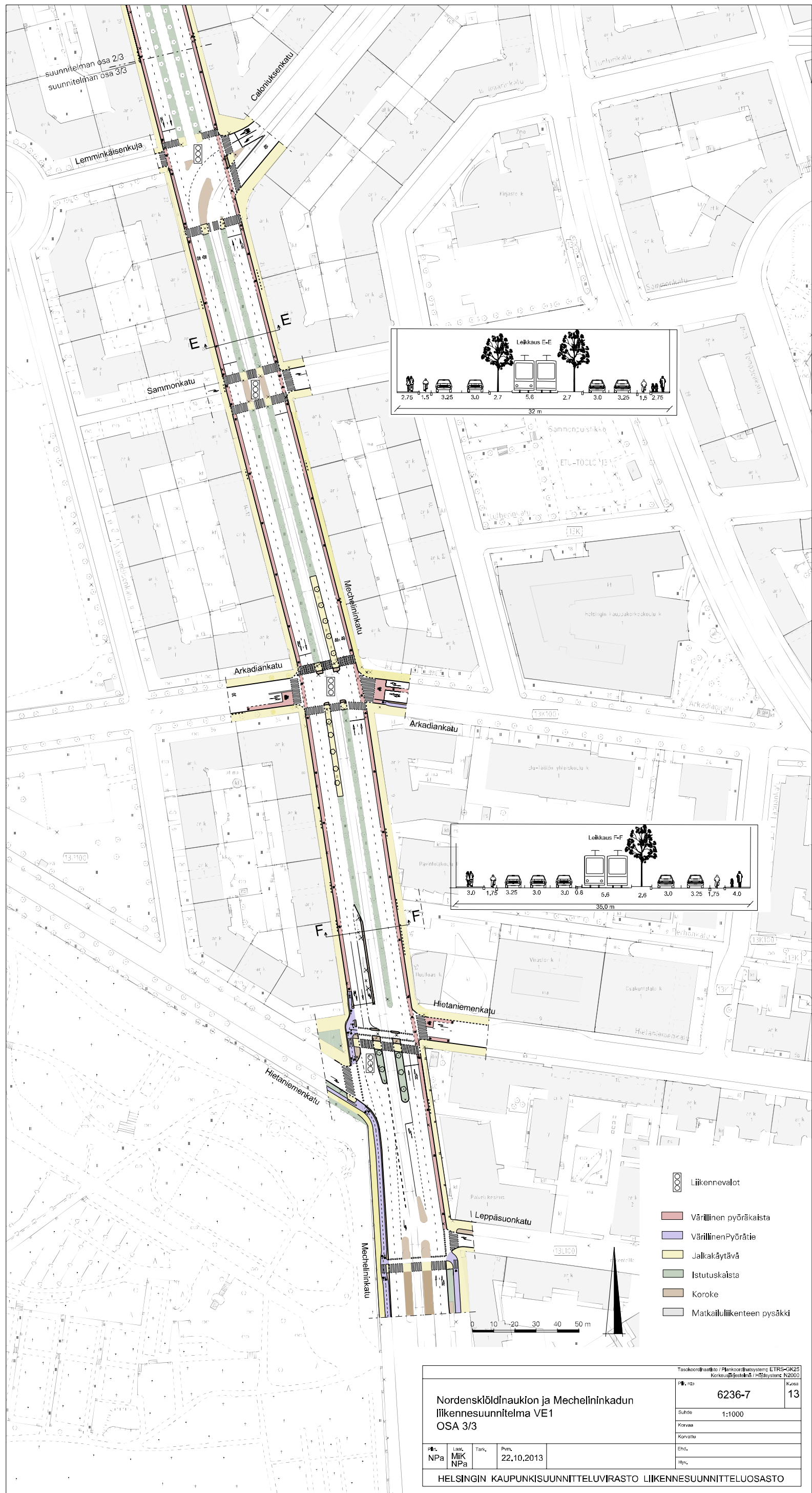
Nordenskiöldin Square and Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan, Part 1/3 (Mechelininkatu street decision-making 2010 - 2014)



- Liikennevalot
- Värillinen pyöräkaista
- Värillinen pyörätie
- Jalkakäytävä
- Istutuskaista
- Koroke
- Matkailuliikenteen pysäkki

Nordenskiöldinaukion ja Mechelininkadun liikennesuunnitelma VE1 OSA 2/3				Tiesuunnittelija / Planööri / Suunnittelija: ETRS-GK25 Korkeusjärjestelmä / Höörystelmä: N2000
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Nordenskiöldin Square and Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan, Part 2/3 (Mechelininkatu street decision-making 2010 - 2014)



Nordenskiöldin aukion ja Mechelininkadun liikennesuunnitelma VE1 OSA 3/3		Tiesuunnitelma / Plan Projekti / Projekt Keskustelu / Discussion Päätös / Decision	ETRS-GK25 N2000
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Nordenskiöldin Square and Mechelininkatu Street Traffic Plan, Part 3/3 (Mechelininkatu street decision-making 2010 - 2014)