

FUT Symposium 2012-10-01

Urban Freight for Livable Cities:

-How to deal with collaboration and trade-offs.

A. Sharing the Urban Space

Local retailers as key actors for sharing the urban space - *Towards a network of urban consolidation centers: lessons from Binnenstadservice*

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Urban freight transport, or city logistics, is usually recognized for its unsustainable impacts on the quality of life in cities. It adds to congestion, nuisance, bad air quality and CO₂ emissions. Although it is widely acknowledged that city logistics activities are necessary for a city, as a location where people, goods, and services come together, a more efficient urban freight transport system could reduce the negative impacts. The current urban logistics systems are usually not designed, but more a result of requirements due to the geographical circumstances, city regulations and receiver demands.

Several reasons can be mentioned why it is difficult to organize urban freight transport in a more sustainable and efficient way. One of these reasons is that the organizations actually operating urban freight transport focus on a larger scale than one city alone and are not familiar with all local problems in one city, whereas actors in the city often do not see the larger scale logistics operations. Receivers ordering goods are responsible for the urban freight transport to take place, but often do not communicate with shippers or carriers. Usually, receivers do not consider themselves as part of the urban freight transport issues, and are therefore difficult to get involved in participating in solutions. However, receivers can influence solutions that move freight to other times as well as to other locations in order to save the urban space for other functions at times that residents and customers want to be there. Receivers have an interest in a high quality urban space and are (although they are often not aware) able to force changes in urban logistics activities.

This contribution, which is result from cooperation between research and practice, shows the lessons learned from the case of Binnenstadservice. This case shows the hurdles that have to be taken in order to convince receivers to become part of a solution. Binnenstadservice is new type of urban consolidation centre that works as a collaborative extension of the local receivers.

In this presentation we demonstrate the local effects of the first Binnenstadservice in Nijmegen. Next we discuss the growth to a network of local branches, so that the concept becomes more interesting for carriers (operating in several Dutch cities). We show the positive effects (for carriers but also for sustainability indicators) of a large scale urban consolidation center network in Dutch cities. This growth to more cities is essential, not so much for the local stakes and the efforts at one city to better share the urban space, but especially to make the concept financially viable. The lessons learned of this company from the pioneering phase with only one branch in the city of Nijmegen, to the more than ten branches now (and still growing) and the growth to a European platform are also presented.