

Opportunities and Challenges of a Car-Free City

One of 10 Hot Topics Showcased at URBAN FUTURE,
Europe's Largest Event for Sustainable Cities

~2019 URBAN FUTURE Global Conference Programme Now Available~



Gerald Babel-Sutter, Founder and CEO of the URBAN FUTURE Global Conference (UFGC) | Birigt Rusten, Programme Manager at FutureBuilt | Stein Stoknes, Programme Director at Future Built

Oslo, 22 November 2018 – Six months from now to the day, the URBAN FUTURE Global Conference (UFGC19) will tackle some of the greatest challenges and opportunities facing cities from around the world. 3,000 “CityChangers” are expected to attend the conference from May 22-24, 2019 in Oslo.

The topics at the conference range from how to re-design cities to reduce car traffic to courageous leadership and bold actions cities need to become more sustainable. But the conference is more than just talk. CityChangers attend the conference to be inspired, share, laugh, to see things differently, create, walk, cycle, swim and experience Oslo, the city that has been named “European Green Capital 2019” by the EU.

Commenting on the agenda for 2019's event, Gerald Babel-Sutter, the founder and CEO of the URBAN FUTURE observes that "creating cities that provide happy residents seems like a rather obvious political battle, but we still see that many cities have few green spaces, unavailable sea front and tight car traffic. At the UFGC, you will meet those innovative, creative and enthusiastic CityChangers who really believe in and make change happen." As well, he highlights the popular *Fuck Up Night* (part of a global movement and event series that shares professional failure and the lessons learned) that will once again play an important role in this year's agenda.



The event programme has been developed over the past four months, co-created with 200 experts and organizations. From a starting point of well over 120 themes, the final agenda has been narrowed down to 10 key topics that will be looked at intensively in around 60 sessions and 36 Field Trips:

- How to build sustainably
- Car-Free City Life
- Happy City
- Business & Innovation
- Circular Economy
- Cutting Carbon Emissions
- Green Public Procurement
- Leadership
- Metropolitan Areas Management
- Electrification

At the conference, more than 200 expert speakers from all over the world will share their knowledge and real-life experiences within these 10 themes, for the benefit of big cities and smaller communities alike.

A Closer Look at Car-Free City Life

One of the main themes is Car-Free City Life, making the setting of Oslo, considered to be a world leader in this area, particularly relevant. Most cities around the globe struggle with traffic challenges, realizing car-centric cities won't work in the long run. But what does it take to make the car-free city a viable option that improves quality of life without negatively impacting on one's ability to get from A to B?

At the conference, different speakers will explore such leadership challenges as how to get citizens more involved, what mobility options are worth taking a closer look at and how we can re-design cities to prioritize people, not cars.

"Green city life means having ready access to clean air, clean water and the establishment of green designated areas. In Oslo, the Car Free City Life initiative was established to create a greener and more inclusive city with space for everyone," notes Hanna Marcussen, vice mayor for Urban Development in the Municipality of Oslo. "By reducing the area designated to private cars, we allow more life in the streets. The overall aim is to create a better urban environment within a large area of Oslo, and prioritize people rather than cars."

Sustainable Architecture for a Sustainable Future

Yet another topic covered at the conference addresses that fact that Net Zero and even Net Positive buildings are now possible. Yet they remain the exception, rather than the norm. Why is that and what can be done in order to help Net Zero/Net Positive construction to go mainstream?

"Norwegian companies are frontrunners in terms of sustainable architecture thanks to numerous pilot projects that are subsidized with funding at the national level. We look forward to talking about some of these projects and sharing our experiences at URBAN FUTURE," says Birigt Rusten and Stein Stoknes at Future Built, one of the key partners of the 2019 event.

The programme is now online at www.urban-future.org/programme, tickets are available at www.urban-future.org/tickets.

**On the URBAN FUTURE Global Conference**

The UFGC is the world's largest meeting place for CityChangers, people who strive to make their cities more sustainable with lots of passion and commitment. They implement concrete projects, thus improving life in the respective city. The UFGC brings our brightest minds together, regarding itself as a neutral platform without a political agenda. The conference was founded in 2014 by Gerald Babel-Sutter and is taking place in a different European city every year from 2018 forward. Since 2014, visitor numbers have tripled.

For more information, go to www.urban-future.org.

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