



# D.T2.2.1 PILOT ACTIVITY

## CONCEPTS FOR THEMATIC WORKING GROUP 2 - PILOT REGION MARIBOR

**Concepts of pilot actions testing community involvement techniques and tools aiming at inclusive UGS governance-**

A participatory planning process addressing the rehabilitation of an urban green area based on consensus-of the owners and users

Authors: Maribor Development Agency and Municipality of Maribor





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. Background and objectives .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Tackled challenges .....	3
Motivation and aspired results.....	3
Starting point.....	3
<b>2. General implementation strategies .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Contribution to testing the model .....	4
Chosen elements of the model .....	4
Input from the local assessment .....	5
Role of stakeholder platform.....	5
Potential interconnection with other project activities.....	5
Evaluation indicators to measure the success of the activities.....	6
<b>3. Procedure and schedule.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Overall description and aim of the pilot activity .....	7
Planned measures .....	8
Individual steps .....	8
Outcomes and interdependencies between individual steps .....	8



## 1. Background and objectives

Successful sustainable development and governance of UGS inevitably require new ways of integrated or comprehensive planning and maintenance, which involves the perception and voice of different sectors and actors: local decision-making bodies, experts (urban planners, architect, geographers), businesses and citizens. Until recently, the latter were not actively incorporated in the governance process. This led to inharmonious and uncoordinated urban development and poor identification of relevant citizens in on-going processes. Consequently, civil society and vulnerable groups have often been excluded and deprived.

Therefore, several approaches and methods have been developed by experts on how to involve and mobilise community perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, opinions or viewpoints; one of them is participatory planning, which is an “open, accountable process through which individuals and groups within selected community can exchange views and influence decision making” (Internet 1). It focuses on the involvement of different stakeholders, providing them with a space and an opportunity not just to listen and watch, but instead interact with the processes.

The partners in Working group 2 will work on development and testing smart methods, techniques and tools for integrating a participatory approach into policy and practice related to UGS management. The focus will be on mobilisation and active involvement of citizens (as users of UGS) and community (civic) groups into greenery design, revitalisation and maintenance processes with an aim to upgrade urban ecosystems.

The model for ensuring and facilitating community participation in UGS planning and management will be formed on the basis of the analysis of different case studies from around Europe. The case studies emphasise participatory practices and active involvement of civil society into planning, management and utilization of UGS. The model, primarily focusing on benefits of green infrastructure, will explicate the approaches and actions to raise awareness among citizens (communities) about the unknown or lesser known environmental, social and economic potentials of UGS.

The model rests on three possible scenarios that a community might have to negotiate in the processes of planning, governance and management of UGS. The scenarios anticipate different community positions and provide strategies to address them.

- Development of new green spaces.
- Elimination of green spaces.
- Transformation of green spaces.

These are the general outlines of typical situations that may occur when a local community, municipal authority, or owner and/or investor initiates action to do something about UGS. The scenarios encompass possible practices in UGS development and take into account the different stakes of the community, as well as owners, investors and/or authorities. It should also be noted that the central point of departure is that “Green is Good”. Furthermore, the model envisages a situation where citizens are not aware of the various benefits that UGS can have for people’s well-being and healthier life in the city; they may not be acquainted with its potential for ecological protection, such as the reduction of air pollution and urban noise, improvement of urban climate, improving and maintaining urban ecological balance, promotion of biodiversity, improving economy, contributing to the security of citizens, etc.).



The three scenarios can have different specifics on local, regional or national levels that arise from different environmental, social, economic and political backgrounds and contemporary development of green infrastructure. However, the main objective of the analysis of case studies is to collect and analyse different examples and experiences of UGS challenges around Europe. The different examples will assist in designing concrete, reliable and verified guidelines, tools and methods for empowering and actively involving the community into planning, governance and maintenance of UGB. What is more, although our model primarily focuses on community involvement it also emphasizes the motives, desires, interests and reservations of other inevitably involved stakeholders, such as municipal authorities, experts, owner and/or investors.

## Tackled challenges

The municipality of Maribor, as well as the region of Podravje have degraded urban green areas and both see great potential in adopting participatory methods while renovating them into multifunctional open spaces.

The common challenge is the mixed ownership with various views upon the usage of the UGS, which is often included in the Local spatial planning as development areas, but with no investments the areas are degraded and abandoned.

Therefore, the pilot activity will test the participatory methods on a small-scale rehabilitation pilot activity, implementing quadruple helix approach, resulting in community-led planning for rehabilitation of a green area in Maribor.

## Motivation and aspired results

MRA will implement a small-scale rehabilitation pilot activity in the centre of Maribor City (where also the MRA premises are located).

As the strategic orientation of both region and city recognises the potential of using participatory methods while renovating degraded UGS, the results of the model prepared and tested within the pilot activities can become a useful tool for rehabilitation of other similar degraded UGS within the municipality and/or region.

Therefore, MRA is aiming to set up a feasible and transferable concept of community-led planning with owners and citizens for rehabilitation of degraded urban green areas with mixed ownership and low involvement of particular private owners.

## Starting point

The pilot area is located around the semi-rehabilitated building complex with several owners and users.

We will base our pilot activities on three concentric *activity circles* by animating different stakeholders):

- 1) Unused backyard owned by MRA - people employed (or otherwise involved) within the premises of the MRA office building;
- 2) Shared parking lot owned by the Municipality of Maribor - organizations located in the MRA office building or Karantena building;
- 3) Entire pilot area, with 10 different (public and private) owners, and all entities registered to use their premises - mixed (from wild parking, wild plant life, road and parking infrastructure, hydrants, driveways, cultivated and maintained green areas).

We start by animating the users of mentioned areas to decide about the renovation process of mentioned areas.



## 2. General implementation strategies

The process for the selection of methods and techniques started in the Second Transnational project partner meeting in Maribor (on 20th and 21st of April in 2017), when the TWG 2 lead partner first presented the Framework concept and later on the template for the analysis of case studies from partners' regions and wider. After that the partners presented to researchers from ZRC SAZU the pilot region, problems with the community involvement, pilot ideas and main challenges that they want to reach during the project. Based on an interesting debate at the Transnational PP meeting in Maribor (21st of April), where partners had an opportunity to talk about the pilot actions, ZRC SAZU team prepared a Draft model with the detail description of methods and techniques. Afterwards the partners choose the methods and techniques which will be tested during the pilot actions.

### Contribution to testing the model

The small-scale rehabilitation pilot project conducted by MRA will test the Community Involvement Model, by beginning the restructuring of UGS, as the main goal is the transformation of green spaces.

However, as there is a mixed ownership, the pilot activities will test two types of participation: Consultative participation; and Self-mobilised participation.

Through both types all four phases (Identification, mobilisation, management, and sustainability will be tested.

The main challenge will be the formation of a community, as there are no residents. Therefore, the rehabilitation of degraded green area will be based on consensus of owners and users, which will be achieved through both above mentioned types of participation.

Awareness raising will be achieved through participation at social and cultural events promoting green spaces, drawing attention towards the pilot area.

### Chosen elements of the model

Considering the activates already concluded, MRA has chosen following four approaches of the Community Involvement Model to be implemented during the small-scale rehabilitation pilot activities:

- Detecting and defining the community - Structure space and brainstorm

Involvement at thematic social events, dealing with green issues, where different suggestions can be built on what the best usage and design for the green areas will be.

- Forming a Community Consultative Assembly (CCA)

Upon facing possible "eternal opponents" and "trolls," tasks will be handed out to them, to present the problem in as detailed possible manner. In this way, we will either get new insight upon which to improve the situation, and/or give the person(s) an opportunity to reflect on and contextualise their criticisms.

- Bring them in

One of the identified problems with the area is the lack of users' involvement, as they generally work in the area and are therefore less motivated to dedicate extra time to contributing to the green area. Therefore, focus will be on raising the quality of the working environment, thus combining their activities with their work.



- Building responsibility

In order to ensure the sustainability of the rehabilitated small-scale area, the simple protocol of responsibilities will be set up among the users.

MRA will, thus, achieve a combination of two participative types that should ensure positive results:

- Consultative participation

Consultations with interested stakeholders, as there are various users of the UGS involved, who are neither residents nor owners of any of the UGS involved in the pilot activity, the implementation of the pilot activity cannot be based upon their suggested vision of the development of the pilot area. Their responses, however, will be integrated into the implementation of pilot activities.

- Self-mobilised participation

As MRA (project partner) and municipality (associated partner) are two of the owners within the entire pilot area, they have a unique opportunity to start self-mobilisation, by implementing the small-scale rehabilitation pilot project, setting up the grounds for scaling up the activities, hopefully achieving the spill over effect to other owners/stakeholders.

## Input from the local assessment

The Local assessment was a document providing an overview of the local, regional and FUA level situation of the UGS. Some of the most important elements of the assessment were the analyses done, upon which further activities can be based.

The most vivid example are the strategic aspects, which provide the legislative framework within the city by providing an overview of following strategic documented, which are in power (local and/or national level): Spatial Development Plan, Spatial Plan, Integrated Urban Development Strategy, Local Environmental Plan, Climate Change Strategy, Transport Strategy, Cycling Strategy, Strategy of Tourism Development.

Additionally, the good practice examples of participatory budget planning were provided, which will be used as the background for the pilot activities.

## Role of stakeholder platform

The stakeholder platform is a tool where various stakeholders will meet face to face, in order to discuss the issues regarding the small-scale rehabilitation pilot project.

As the idea is, to conduct step by step rehabilitation, the platform will start expanding from the users of the MRA office building, to users of the shared parking lot located in either MRA office building or Karantena, and finally to all users, registered at the address of one of 10 owners of land within the pilot area. The stakeholders will provide content, validate the proposals and participate in the rehabilitation.

Furthermore, the platform will be the tool do determine the management model of the urban garden, as well as the dissemination opportunity, through which the stakeholders (owner, users) will recognise the worth of the rehabilitated area, in order to scale up the activity to be implemented in the entire pilot area.

Above all, the platform will be used for attracting attention to the issue and pilot area, as platform members have an outreach towards the general public, which will eventually be animated to participate in activities.

## Potential interconnection with other project activities

An answer can be provided only after all models and pilot activities are prepared and disseminated.



## Evaluation indicators to measure the success of the activities

As there are 3 circles of activity, indicators are for each of the circles individual.

Circle 1	Indicator	Minimum
Meeting of users	Attendance of user organization representatives	50% of user organizations
Upgrade of backyard	Mutually agreed usage of backyard	1
Conceptual rehabilitation	Approved concept of rehabilitation	1
Users protocol	Approved protocol for management and maintenance of the rehabilitated area	1
<b>Circle 2</b>		
Meeting of owners and users	Attendance of owner and user organization representatives	1 owner 50% of user organizations
Upgrade of shared parking	Mutually agreed usage of shared parking	1
Conceptual rehabilitation	Approved concept of rehabilitation	1
Users protocol	Approved protocol for management and maintenance of the rehabilitated area	1
<b>Circle 3</b>		
Meeting of owners and users	Attendance of owner and user organization representatives	50% of owners 50% of user organizations
Upgrade of shared parking	Mutually agreed usage of shared parking	1
Conceptual rehabilitation	Approved concept of rehabilitation	1
Users protocol	Approved protocol for management and maintenance of the rehabilitated area	1
<b>OVERALL</b>		
	Survey responses	50
	Conceptual design for the rehabilitation study	1

## 3. Procedure and schedule

These below listed elements are intended to be collected to ensure an efficient learning effect for the end version of the model:



- what methods and tools were selected, amended and implemented (and how)
- how many people were involved/reached
- generation, professional background, social status (if possible)
- what was the response
- content: was the selected method suitable for your purposes?
- how was the method accepted,
- difficulties in implementation, trustworthiness of method/implementation;
- would a different method better suit the addressing of the problem? which? why?
- how would you improve the method?
- what did you learn from using the selected methods?
- please share your experience/story to be used to illustrate the examples in the final model

## Overall description and aim of the pilot activity

The pilot activity will consist of three circles.

### Circle 1:

- MRA identified the unused backyard, self-owned for initial activity.
- The primary user group are the owner (MRA) and 7 organizations renting offices - and their employees.
- A “suggestion box” and “online” surveys will be conducted among all the users of the MRA office building, to gather proposals on the usage of the backyard (and shared parking lot).
- MRA will organize a meeting of representatives of all organizations, to determine the mutual use.
- MRA will use the mutual agreement as the basic inputs for the community based preparation idea projects.
- The representatives of all organizations will select the idea best suited.
- The best suited idea will be the basis for conceptual design prepared by a landscape architect.

### Circle 2:

- MRA identified the shared parking space, owned by municipality of Maribor for follow-up activities.
- The primary user group are the owner (MOM) and users of two buildings (MRA office building and Art Centre Karantena) using the parking lot.
- A “suggestion box” and “online” surveys will be conducted among all the users of the MRA office building and Karantena, to gather proposals on the usage of the shared parking (and backyard).
- MRA will promote and host the joined meeting of the owner and representatives of organizations registered in either of the two buildings (MRA office building or Karantena), to determine in what way can the publically owned shared parking be upgraded, into a rehabilitated green area.
- MRA will use the agreed upon suggestion as the basic inputs for the community based preparation idea projects.
- The representatives of the owner and all organizations will select the idea best suited.
- The best suited idea will be the basis for conceptual design prepared by a landscape architect.

### Circle 3:

- MRA identified the entire proposed pilot area as the final activity.
- The primary users are the owners (10) of the various parts of the area, and as secondary stakeholders the city and FUA population was identified.
- An “online” survey will be conducted among owners and stakeholders.
- MRA will promote and host the joined meeting of the owners, to select the best suited proposal from the survey for the rehabilitation of the green area.





- MRA will use the best suited proposal as the basic inputs for the community based preparation idea projects.
- The representatives of the owners will select the most appropriate idea project, to become a development vision for the pilot area.

The agreed upon vision for development of the area will become the basis for conceptual design prepared by a landscape architect.

## Planned measures

A conceptual design for the rehabilitation of the pilot area will be prepared, that will incorporate the protocol defined by the users. The conceptual design will be developed by students, using the inputs of the identified stakeholders of each circle and verified by voting upon proposed posters prepared and exhibited. Thus, we can say the protocol for the usage and maintenance of the green areas is the only measure planned, but there will be an individual protocol for each of the three cycles. These protocols will determine how the stakeholders will use the green space and how to maintain it.

## Individual steps

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Involved people</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Costs</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
Suggestion box and online survey, articles in local newspapers, social events	September	MRA	Users of the MRA office building, Karantena, owners, and general population of Maribor and FUA	MRA office building, Karantena, Online	100€	Collecting suggestions for the use of the backyard of the building
Meeting circle 1 stakeholders	October / November	MRA	Users of the MRA office building	MRA office building	85€	Brainstorming, word cafee, problem tree??? the usage of backyard
Meeting circle 2 stakeholders	October / November	MRA	Users of MRA office building and Cultural centre Karantena, and Municipality of Maribor	MRA office building	85€	Determining the upgrade of the parking space into a green area



Meeting circle 3 stakeholders	October / November	MRA	Owners within the pilot area	MRA office building	85€	Developing a vision of rehabilitation of the green area
Preparation of community based idea projects	November/ January	MRA	Interested users and students of architecture and woodworks	Pilot area, MRA office building	4.000€	Preparation of idea project on how to rehabilitate the pilot area.
Meeting circle 1 stakeholders	February	MRA	Users of the MRA office building	MRA office building	85€	Selection of the best suited proposal / idea project
Meeting circle 2 stakeholders	February	MRA	Users of MRA office building and Cultural centre Karantena, and Municipality of Maribor	MRA office building	85€	Selection of the best suited proposal / idea project
Meeting circle 3 stakeholders	February	MRA	Land owners of the pilot area	MRA office building	85€	Selection of the best suited proposal / idea project
Preparation of conceptual design	March / April	MRA	Landscape architect	N/A	30.000€	Preparation of conceptual design for all 3 circles, based on selected proposals.

### Outcomes and interdependencies between individual steps

We gather proposals about the pilot area rehabilitation from primary and secondary users of individual areas. The proposals are discussed with the primary users for each of the circles. Primary users decide on the usage of the circle. We involve the community (designers, students, architects...) to prepare idea project, which are based on the use decided upon by the primary users of individual cycles. The community prepares idea projects. The idea projects are presented to primary users of each circle and they decide upon a best suited solution. Best suited solutions, 1 per each circle, are used for the preparation of the conceptual design - which is the final output of the pilot activities.

Based on the conceptual design, stakeholders can start implementing the ideas according to their own time plan and financial resources.