Utrecht2040
Joint effort for a sustainable and attractive region

Together we can make Utrecht more beautiful
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The province of Utrecht is taking the lead in drawing up a strategy for the future of this region. Why are we doing this? Because at this time Utrecht is still an attractive place to reside, work, live and run a business. But urbanisation and the increase of traffic are threatening the present balance of attractive, accessible cities and villages, as well as beautiful landscapes. The province is threatening to become a victim of its own appeal. The qualities are strongly pressurized; in certain areas their capacity has been exceeded.

On a global scale we have to deal with crises in finance, economy and food. In the run toward 2040 we will be facing climate change, the depletion of fossil fuel, as well as a decrease in biodiversity. This compels us to come up with solutions that are viable in the long run. That is why it is important to focus on the future. That is why we need a strategy that can tell us what is coming for us, and how we can respond to it. A strategy that gives direction to what we do to preserve our present good quality of life for the future, and for our children and grandchildren.
The development of this strategy began in 2008 with the results from the State of Utrecht monitor and a scientific scenario report, Utrecht2040. During the conference ‘Together on the road to 2040!’ of that year the outcomes were discussed and supplemented. We have made great progress with a strategy consisting of six objectives and related challenges. Many people from the province have contributed to this: scientists, policy experts, members of the Provincial Council and various partners from the Utrecht region.

In the strategy a lot of attention is paid to the future and the exploration thereof. This is carried out by means of trends and possible social tasks. The translation of the strategy into concrete projects has only just begun and has not yet been completed. That is why this document takes the form of a working document.

In the coming time we will be taking follow-up steps, in an extensive dialogue with our partners: authorities, businesses and social organisations from the region. We will invite them to endorse the mission and to become acquainted with the objectives and tasks of the strategy, after which we can come up with proposals for concrete projects together. In the coming years, changing alliances of regional partners will be able to work on these.

I am convinced that this strategy will contribute to a sustainable and attractive province, on the road to 2040.

Wouter de Jong
Delegate for housing, environment and sustainability
Introduction

The strategy consists of four building blocks:

• *The strategic analysis.*
The strategic analysis of the region that was formulated by the province is based on the State of Utrecht monitor and various scientific trend studies.

• *The mission.*
This is the statement in which the joint regional partners inform the community of their objectives on the road to 2040. The new profile of the region is part of this statement.

• *Six objectives and tasks.*
The strategy provides insight into the long-term objectives and the social tasks. The objectives and tasks have been drawn up by the province of Utrecht and have been discussed extensively with regional partners and scientists. These objectives and tasks define the so-called icon projects.

• *The criteria for icon projects.*
The icon projects form the interpretation of the mission and the objectives and tasks. Icon projects can be proposed and managed by both the province and other regional partners. In 2010 an elaborate overview of possible icon projects will be completed.
Trends and red cards

Strategy development starts with the analysis of trends we will be facing in the coming decades. This concerns trends at a global, European and national level that have an effect on the region. The region also has its own developments, of course. By getting to know these trends better, we can prepare for the future and its social tasks. However, please note that this concerns trends under current policy circumstances.

Red cards derived from the State of Utrecht
The State of Utrecht is a monitor that measures the sustainability and quality of the region every other year. It provides a current picture of the province in socio-cultural, ecological and economic respect. When considered over a period of several years, the developments in the province and the effects of our choices can be measured. The red cards that are derived from this monitor also offer insight into the possible tasks; they tell us how far we are from attaining our existing ambitions.

Global and European trends
• Climate change and decreasing biodiversity.
In the coming decades the region will experience the global warming of the earth in, for instance, more intensive precipitation, more frequent peak drainage of the main rivers and dryer summers. Biodiversity will be under pressure globally as well as regionally; the amount of plant and animal species is decreasing.

• More economic connections with Europe.
There is increasing interaction between Utrecht, together with the Randstad, and the surrounding network of regions in the economic core area of Europe.

1 Scientific long-term studies and a few other documents were used for the analysis of trends. Sources: the scenario report Utrecht2040 of Utrecht University, the Prosperity and Environment study of the planning offices, the first and second sustainability outlook of the PBL, the trends from the structure vision Randstad2040, the development vision NV Utrecht and some sectoral studies. The trends have been tested by scientists during two meetings in 2009.
General and population trends

- **Individualisation and globalisation.**
  
  Family, social class and socio-political background are playing increasingly smaller roles in people’s lives. This is a characteristic of individualisation. In addition, an increased interrelation of the region of Utrecht with the rest of the world leads to globalisation, via migration, capital, goods and information flows. This can already be seen in the increasing number of nationalities among students in the city of Utrecht, among other things.

- **More people and a changing structure.**
  
  The percentage of people in the province of Utrecht continues to increase, by some 0.5% each year, until 2040. This makes Utrecht (together with the province of Flevoland) the province with the strongest population growth in the next thirty years. However, migration is an uncertain factor in this process. In some small residential areas there is a definite chance of population shrinkage. The percentage of elderly people and immigrants will increase, while the percentage of young people will remain practically the same. The labour force will continue to grow, mainly because of the increasing degree of participation of women and migrants until 2025. The decrease in household size will continue, while the number of one and two person households is increasing.
The ageing population and (local) population decrease have an effect on many policy areas, for example on the demand for housing, care, mobility patterns, the facility level and participation issues. The expected rapid increase in the percentage of elderly people can lead to adjustment problems in the community, for example where timely responses to the changing demands with regard to housing and care are concerned.

**Spatial trends**

- **Boundaries are blurring.**
The interrelation between regions and between city and countryside continues to grow. There are more contacts, as well as more exchanges of ideas, people and goods.
- **Demand for housing continues to be high.**
The demand for housing continues to be high, partly due to an increase in the number of people and of the number of one person households. This high urbanisation pressure puts a strain on the spatial quality. The A12-zone is an important development axis.
- **Less demand for business parks.**
In the next ten years the economy in this region will increasingly be determined by the services sector. Initially by growth of the general services sector, followed by growth in the (semi) public services in particular.
- **The risk of landscape cluttering.**
The spatial quality is strained. In rural areas we see cluttering, which concerns unwelcome elements in the landscape.

**Knowledge-based economy trends**

- **Increasing trade with Europe.**
There is an increase in trade and the exchange of services between the Randstad and other regions in the economic core area of Europe, especially along the London-Randstad-Ruhr Area-Milan-axis.
- **Increase of employment in knowledge-intensive services.**
It is expected that the knowledge-intensive sector will create more jobs in the region in the future. This will offer businesses and institutions, as well as their employees, an attractive location climate to live, work and recreate in.
• **Improvement in the transfer of knowledge.**

Utrecht University (Science Park) and Wageningen University (Food Valley) are starting initiatives to improve the transfer of knowledge between the research and business communities and society in general.

• Red cards derived from the State of Utrecht for the number of disabled and the number of patents.

**Mobility trends**

• **Increase in mobility.**

Utrecht is centrally situated and therefore functions as a meeting point and a junction of connections. Two important arteries intersect in Utrecht: the West-East connection (from the main ports and the Randstad to Eastern Europe), and the North-South connection (from Amsterdam to Eindhoven). If this Utrecht ‘junction’ is not functioning well, it has consequences for other parts of the country. In other words, it is the Achilles heel of the Randstad.

A considerable increase in mobility is expected for Utrecht. The long distance freight traffic from West to East will increase by some 100% until 2040, depending on the scenario. Regional traffic will also increase, as a result of the population growth, the large number of starters and economic growth.

• **Decrease of the emissions of traffic.**

The emissions of NO2 and fine particulate matter will decrease in the coming few years. However, many scenarios on the future indicate continuous local problems, also in the region of Utrecht. There is still work to be done here, and it also depends on the standards that are set. Noise levels will further increase.

• Red card derived from the State of Utrecht for the severity of traffic jams.

**Energy and climate change trends**

• **Increasing demand for energy.**

Despite the decrease of material- and energy-intensive industry, the demand for energy and the import of energy will increase. And all this while fossil fuels are scarce. The generation of sustainable energy is not getting off the ground fast enough to meet the increasing demand.

• **Consequences of climate change are also felt here.**

Even when the emission of greenhouse gasses is reduced drastically on a global scale, we will still be confronted with climate change in the future. In the region this will take the form of extreme weather conditions: heavy showers resulting in flooding, long periods of draught, long-lasting heat in cities and more often high
water levels in the major rivers. In addition, the rising sea level in combination with lower river levels in dry summers can lead to saltwater penetration. This will especially threaten low-lying parts of Utrecht where further soil subsidence is expected.

- **The environment is suffering.**
Climate change will change the natural composition of species, and leads to deterioration of the water quality and a shift of the growing season. In addition it causes heat stress in the cities.
- **Red cards derived from the State of Utrecht for the greenhouse effect and the risk of flooding.**

**Social environment trends**
The long-term changes in the social domain and in people’s preferences are difficult to predict. Still, we discern some trends.

- **Many children and young people in the region.**
Utrecht continues to be a region with many children; the number of young people (under the age of 20) will remain approximately the same until 2025. As a result, their share of the total population will decrease slightly. The knowledge level of young people is under pressure, partly due to school dropout rates. The quality of child welfare leaves room for improvement.
- **Segregation and less participation.**
In districts and neighbourhoods segregation occurs more and more often while there is increasingly less participation, but not everywhere and not for everyone. For example, labour participation of women and migrants is increasing.
- **Elderly people have a need for other housing facilities.**
The ageing of the population leads to more demand for small-scale health care facilities and suitable housing. Disabled people can also make use of these types of housing. Within a few years there will be an imminent shortage of health care workers. The ageing population can, in combination with general population shrinkage, become a threat for the level of facilities, such as the preservation of schools in small residential areas.
- **More interest in landscape and cultural heritage.**
In a globalising world that is becoming more and more complex, people are looking for security in objects from their own surroundings. These offer them a sense of identity and tie them to their surroundings.
- **Red card derived from the State of Utrecht for trust in the political system.**
This can be considered a symptom of a bigger phenomenon: the decreasing participation of a part of society.
Nature and landscape trends

• **Threat to biodiversity.**
The amount of plant and animal species is decreasing in Utrecht. Although some environmental and spatial conditions are improving, over-fertilization and acidification continue to be a problem. The additional urbanisation and the construction of new roads through the landscape increase the pressure on nature and the landscape.

• **More recreation and tourism.**
Interest in the cultural landscape is growing; more and more holiday-makers and tourists find their way there.

• **Red cards derived from the State of Utrecht for the variety of species in the countryside, and for the over-fertilization and acidification of the soil.**

Interaction between the themes

Many trends of different themes influence each other. A few examples.

• **Housing environment is transforming.**
The demand for residential and work locations will change due to the demographic changes and an economy that is more focused on services. The demand for decentralized energy generation is added to this, as well as demands from society for more meeting places. All this results in a housing environment that will look differently.

• **Suburbs experience an accumulation of problems.**
The suburbs of major cities are experiencing an accumulation of physical and social problems. Think of the barrier effect which is caused by the infrastructure that is present, for example by broad and sometimes elevated roads, an unhealthy environment, segregation and unsafe streets.

• **The landscape gets a different function**
In the rural areas the production landscape appears to be dwindling, while at the same time the consumption landscape and identity landscape are gaining ground. In other words: the percentage of farms that focus solely on food production is decreasing. In their stead businesses are emerging that also develop other activities in addition to their agrarian function: recreation, regional products and private/agrarian nature conservation. There is more appreciation for the landscape, for instance as part of the regional identity.
The future is uncertain

Trends tell us a lot, but they cannot show us what the actual situation in 2040 will be. Demographic changes are reasonably easy to predict, even though migration remains an uncertain factor in this. The development of the housing demand and mobility or the economic development are even more uncertain. Extremely uncertain are the long-term changes in the preferences, needs and behaviour of people, such as consumer preferences, the demand for care and the interest in culture and heritage.

It is necessary to point out that predictions are often extrapolations of trends. This means that unexpected events and surprises, such as a financial crisis, have not been taken into account. In the event of major uncertainties we use future scenarios to show the range of the development. To formulate a new policy you need to look for solid options, meaning options that work out well in each of several possible future scenarios we might end up in.
The Province of Utrecht provides its vision of the future of the region in a long-term strategy for the area and the community of Utrecht. The strategy stems from an analysis of the present situation and future trends. The pursuit of a sustainable region of Utrecht is the focal point here. This is also the starting point for the strategy.

The strategic analysis: an attractive region under high pressure
In the past year the present strengths and weaknesses of this region were analysed, as well as the opportunities and threats of the future. This analysis proved that the region is very attractive: to live, work and recreate here is so great, that many people are moving this way.

Three key qualities
• **Utrecht is centrally situated.**
 Due to its position in the heart of the Netherlands, the region functions as an important meeting point for, among others, knowledge workers and the B2B service industry.
• **Utrecht has an attractive city/landscape.**
 The diversity of residential, work and nature areas at short distances from each other makes this region unique. By city/landscape we mean the attractive landscapes, which are also present in the cities. Utrecht is a vital link between the Randstad with its urban dynamics and Eastern Netherlands with its peace and quiet and space. Those valuable links are also present within the province: from

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2 This was carried out with the help from the State of Utrecht and from trend studies of Utrecht University and the national bureaus for policy analysis and assessment.
low to high, from peat to sand and from creative work environments to attractive residential environments.

- *Utrecht is strong in knowledge and culture.*

The inhabitants of Utrecht have a relatively high level of education, the university is the largest of the country, schools are excellent and there are opportunities for a flourishing knowledge-based economy that everyone can benefit from. There is a large offer of landscape as well as cultural heritage in the urban area.

The combination of these three key qualities creates attractive location factors for the knowledge-based economy: highly educated people, a great cultural offer for knowledge workers and a great variety of residential, work and recreational facilities. Herein lies the strength of the region.
High pressure

The strong appeal leads to growth in various areas. At a national level, this region beats them all when it comes to population increase and economic development. This puts spatial planning under enormous pressure. Urbanisation is tangible evidence of this. From a social viewpoint, work participation, participation in the district and participation of citizens are all cause for concern; there are many people who stay behind or drop out. Without intervention, Utrecht’s success may well turn out to be a threat. The threats are:

- the central meeting point threatens to become a bottleneck due to its economic success. Utrecht will become unreachable.
- the attractive landscapes threaten to be affected by the economic success and urbanisation. On top of this, climate change creates a problem for the green-blue quality especially: nature and water.
- the key qualities knowledge and culture seemingly remain reserved for only a part of the Utrecht community, at least, the rest of the people do not benefit from them. This is a threat to the social cohesion and the social climate.

This situation requires a long-term strategy, which we use to find a balanced growth in the economic, socio-cultural and ecological areas, with less shifting of problems and without undermining the region’s appeal.
The global parallel: sustainable development

A strategy for the future of the province cannot pass over the developments in the rest of the Netherlands, Europe or the world. We live in a time in which the consequences of our behaviour on our environment become more and more visible. Increase in scale and technological developments have been used for the optimal organisation of the food supply, mobility and the energy supply, without much regard for the effects on other systems. Many believe that the balance between economic growth, social relationships and quality of the environment has disappeared. There is an increase in the demand for ‘inclusive’ thinking: when we make choices, the interest of other parts of the earth and the following generations should be included. Sustainable development is the motto. This concerns the preservation of a good quality of life on a small scale, such as in districts, and on a large scale: the world. The coherence between people, planet and profit (the three Ps) always comes first in this. It is important that our choices yield good results for mankind, Earth and the economy, today and tomorrow.

Strategic outline: sustainable and attractive

The situation in Utrecht smoothly links to the global task of sustainable development. Utrecht chooses a strategy of sustainable development and preservation of its appeal. We want to reinforce the things we are good at: a meeting point of knowledge and creativity, with a rich culture and a varied landscape. We want to achieve a balance in development in the economic, social and ecological areas. In this pursuit we aim for a well-balanced growth of the key qualities of the region. That means that we want to remain accessible, that we want to improve the city/landscapes in terms of quality and that we want to promote a knowledge-based economy for everyone, with participation opportunities for everyone.
**Role provincial organisation**

The *Utrecht2040* strategy requires an active province, a province that focuses on strategic key issues in a selective manner and one that is aware of the choices it makes. We will be active for those items on the social agenda where the province can make a difference, and which fall under the primary tasks and key authorities of the province.

We need a province that secures interests and that is strong in directing complex cooperative coalitions, for example in the development of areas. There is also a demand for a province that develops a vision, takes the initiative and that organises persistence. This requires a small, flexible organisation that can deal with changing coalitions. This way, we will also attain concrete results.

The invitation to regional partners to participate in the further development of this *Utrecht2040* strategy should also be viewed in this light. They are asked to present ideas and proposals for icon projects that they want to lead themselves. The province can also come up with proposals for icon projects, for which the tasks of the province have to be taken into account, naturally. Cooperation with regional partners is established based on equality and aims for synergy. This entails a different approach than the one we are used to, with a new role for the province. It will take some time to shape this new way of network collaboration.
Perspective and mission

Utrecht2040

Perspective Utrecht2040

The province of Utrecht is situated at the Northern wing of the Randstad, one of the strongest and most densely populated economic key areas of Europe. It is one of the urban networks that will propel the economic and social developments forward in the next decades. Our area forms a logistic junction of the important development axes along the A1, A12 and A2 highways. Because of the trend of changing main ports into brain ports, we are increasingly becoming a meeting place for knowledge and creativity.

We owe this chance to the three cornerstones of the region: our leading position in knowledge and culture, our central location, and the quality of our cities and landscapes. On the flank of the Randstad we form a connecting zone between the urban dynamics on the one hand, and the peace and quiet and space of the Eastern part of the Netherlands on the other. This position provides us with the relaxed urban nature and the quality of life that makes this area so appealing. These are the success factors of the past and the future.

We focus our attention on the development of our function as a meeting place in the knowledge-based society and the sustainable economy that lies ahead. Because that is where our strength lies and because this is the only way to break away from the negative effects of the current overpressure. The shift to sustainable development is necessary to maintain the balance of qualities. Without such a shift we will become inaccessible in the long term; social cohesion will decrease, the quality of our landscapes will be affected and we will depend too much on scarce fossil fuels. It is essential to cherish the meticulous balance between the pillars of knowledge/culture, location and city/landscapes.

Acting with the balance between people, planet and profit as a starting point is just as crucial for the global future as it is for the future of this province. We want a province that does not shift its problems to other areas on earth and future generations. It is a moral obligation as well as a strategic task to weigh the pros and cons, including the consequences for other areas: Utrecht2040, sustainable as well as appealing.
Mission **Utrecht2040**

We want a good quality of life for all residents of our province. We strive for a sustainable Utrecht and for the preservation of the appeal of the region. We reinforce what we are good at: being a meeting point of knowledge and creativity, with a rich culture and an attractive landscape.

**Utrecht is unique in this combination of qualities. That is why we want to coherently develop the economy, social relations as well as the quality of the environment.**

We agree that as of this moment, when making important decisions for this region, we will maintain the balance between people, planet and profit. We are working on decreasing and compensating and ultimately preventing the negative impacts of our choices on other stocks, for the next generations and for other areas on earth.

**Elaboration**

The Utrecht2040 mission, the treaty of Utrecht, forms the basis of all our actions in the future to arrive at a sustainable economy and a good quality of life for us, as well as the next generations. The point is to maintain and reinforce the key qualities of the region: our location as a meeting point, the knowledge and culture and city/landscape. This is how we envision the development of the outlines of the mission:

- We will form an innovative knowledge-based economy, with the spearheads life sciences, creative economy and sustainability. Where there are opportunities to participate for everyone. We will reinforce the transfer of that knowledge to businesses and the community as a whole.
- We will be climate-neutral and climate-proof in 2040, and will only to a small extent depend on fossil fuels.
- We shall use our cultural offer for social participation, and with that offer we will encourage breeding places for innovative and creative ideas.
- We shall make our landscapes more attractive by preserving the unique rich diversity, a larger biodiversity and a better visibility of our cultural history.
We have specified long-term objectives and tasks for six themes. Via icon projects we want to carry out the tasks together, on the road to a sustainable region in the future.

With help from the State of Utrecht, a sustainability monitor of area and community, we keep a finger on the pulse.

Role of the province
The provincial government will take its responsibilities in this. A province that does not meddle in all subjects, but selectively focuses on the strategic key issues of the community. Wherever we can make the difference. A province that is strong in directing complex collaboration coalitions, which develops vision and strictly protects central values, but also a province that dares to take initiative and operates in a solution-oriented manner. Through icon project we seek cooperation with regional partners, based on equality and aimed at synergy.
Striving for a sustainable and appealing region: that is the most important target of the Province in Utrecht in 2040. Sustainable development is the road we are taking. We achieve this by always taking into account what the effects are for other parts of the earth, for next generations and the domains: people, planet and profit.

The profile of the region
The purpose of the strategy is to utilize the key qualities of the region and to further expand them in the future: location and meeting point, knowledge and culture and city/landscape.

The task is to strengthen this profile while realising the various objectives. We do this in close cooperation with the partners in the province: municipalities, businesses and the NGOs.

The differences and similarities of our profile in comparison to that of neighbouring regions can be explored further. This concerns the Randstad, the east of the Netherlands, Flevoland and cities with a high knowledge profile like Amsterdam and Eindhoven. These are also the regions for possible collaborative alliances in the future. European regions with a comparable profile and policy task can also be approached.
Six strategic objectives

The Utrecht2040 strategy does not intend to be all-encompassing. Six objectives indicate the major social tasks for the coming decades. We aim for a province:

- which has room for excellent living, working and nature;
- with an innovative knowledge-based economy;
- that is accessible, by car, bicycle or public transport in a better environment;
- that is climate-neutral and climate-proof;
- in which all people matter and are able to participate in school, in their neighbourhood and in their job;
- with beautiful nature and a more varied landscape.
Economical use of the scarce open space is the starting point for the realisation of residential and work facilities in the future. This will have to be carried out in the inner city and therefore within the red contours: compact, intensive and preferably close to the public transport junctions. In addition, Almere will absorb part of the urbanisation pressure. The PLC Utrecht development vision endorses these tasks. However, this process does require specific financial arrangements.

Development of the knowledge-based economy creates a greater need for the combination of functions, such as living-working, working-learning and home office facilities. An inner city area where experiments can be carried out in terms of condensation and combination of functions is the A12 motorway zone. The mobility tasks that are at work here can also be included in the urban development plans.
Attention needs to be paid in the housing construction industry to the preservation of spatial and social qualities. This includes aspects such as health, quality of life and social coherence in the cities. In the rural areas focus is on the preservation of key qualities, such as openness of the landscape and the preservation of biodiversity.

**Option**
- Develop an innovative approach for the inner city construction task. This will have to be a high-quality approach, which takes into account other interests, such as the social need for meeting places and city parks. The approach must also enable new coalitions between partners that are less obvious. In addition, new forms of financing are needed.
We strive for an innovative economy for all sectors. The knowledge-intensive and services economy are especially of interest for a sustainable Utrecht, because in general they use relatively little energy and cause little mobility. Preservation of employment is always important in this pursuit. Spearheads in knowledge development are the life sciences/medical clusters, the creative industry and sustainability.

The economic appeal lies in the combination of the key qualities of the Utrecht region: location/meeting point, knowledge/culture and city/landscape. By focusing on these qualities and by reinforcing them, we promote the creation of breeding places for the knowledge-based economy. We support this growth with a specific knowledge and innovation agenda.

Another point of attention is the transfer of knowledge and the application of the knowledge between on the one hand knowledge institutions, such as schools and
research institutes and on the other hand the government, the businesses and the community as a whole.

In a knowledge-based economy higher education should not be the sole focal point; the intermediate vocational education (MBO) level should also be included. For young people with a primary and secondary education there are plenty of opportunities to benefit from the knowledge-based economy. The business community can make an important contribution by providing more fitting internships and apprenticeships. In addition, young people can be encouraged to choose further education that is well attuned to jobs in the favourable sectors of the future.

In the knowledge-based economy there is a need of more residential-work combinations, such as home office facilities. The development of new business parks can be avoided. Existing business parks can be made more sustainable by using other materials and new forms of energy supply. Business parks can also be used more intensively and new combinations of functions can be explored.

**Options**

- **Offer far-reaching combinations of functions at large-scale work locations: for example, with hotels, shops, educational institutions, childcare and congress facilities:** the innovative meeting place for B2B services.

- **Provide a transition to a sustainable economy and a sustainability economy.** Sustainable economy means an economy without shifting problems to other areas. A sustainability economy means sufficient employment rates among highly-educated people, as well as businesses that adapt their installations to make buildings climate-neutral.

- **Science for Society:** improve the transfer of knowledge between knowledge institutions and the businesses and the community as a whole. An example of this is feeding social debates in order to promote participation and citizenship. Residents can also be involved in the decision-making process concerning the future of the region, the so-called inclusive decision-making process. An example would be the development of knowledge alliances, such as the knowledge centre for climate and sustainability (KIC).
Residential, work and recreational locations must be accessible by car, bicycle or public transport, and should remain so. It is expected that the amount of traffic will only increase. In this case it is important to keep the economic core areas and the inner cities accessible. The flow of existing public transport, bicycle and road networks can be improved by making them less vulnerable for incidents. Furthermore, the choice of location and the construction of new infrastructure in cities must lead to an improvement of the air quality and decrease of noise pollution. In rural areas the improvement of the quality of the landscape comes first. In addition, solutions in which roads seldom function as barriers in the landscape are always sought. This is especially important in the case of valuable connection zones between landscapes. These points of interest have also been discussed in Randstad Urgent and the MIRT area agenda.
Compact construction in the inner cities, guiding the demand by introducing the ‘different payment option for mobility’, for example, or promotion of the knowledge-based economy and limiting commuter traffic: these are all possibilities for decreasing transport of people and goods by car. Making working hours more flexible may contribute to a better distribution of the volume of traffic over the day.

**Options**

- Limit the need for car mobility whenever possible and promote emission-free driving by means of electrically or hydrogen-driven cars.
- Improve the environment and the fit in the landscape in the event of planned infrastructural adjustments.
- Assess planned investments in infrastructure of, for instance, tram or railroad lines from a broad perspective. Pay attention to other benefits than just accessibility.
It is our objective to climate-proof the area of Utrecht. This means that the environment is able to withstand extreme weather conditions. In order to limit the results of climate change, there are various measures that can be taken. By storing water when there is intense rainfall, and enabling further water drainage in the river, the water supply is guaranteed in times of draught. The consequences of flooding also have to be met. The risk of flooding has to be limited. This can be attained by fortifying dikes, among other things. In the built-on environment extreme flooding will be absorbed. In order to make the environment more resistant to heat, green facades, city parks with shady trees and sustainable rooftops will be built.

Another result of climate change is the disappearance of plant and tree species. That is why we strive for a solid ecosystem, which enables better species migration between nature reserves. A climate-neutral province is about minimising the emission of greenhouse gasses: the remaining gasses can be captured and stored.
It is important to drastically reduce energy consumption by energy saving and innovations. Sustainable energy is stimulated; it can be generated from waste, soil energy and the sun, to name just a few options. In order to make sustainable and decentralized energy generating possible, the distribution and storage system of energy has to be adapted as well.

**Options**

- Integrate a climate proof spatial planning in area development processes; start some pilots.
- Develop geothermal power stations.
- Put maximum focus on decentralised sustainable energy generation.
- Promote energy farming by means of, for instance CO₂ reduction, CO₂ absorption and energy production.
Participation and active citizenship make a community healthy, as do liveable residential areas, districts and neighbourhoods. This is what we want to support. There are four spearheads: young people, elderly people, participation and citizenship.

Young people should have sufficient opportunities and should be offered good care. Education plays an important role in this. We want to improve the quality of education, attain a higher level of knowledge among young people, prevent early school drop-outs and improve the connection between education and the job market. Furthermore, effective care of a higher quality is needed and efforts will have to be made to notice and prevent derailment of young people. The responsibility for a safe home for each child lies with the parents and in the circles around the child.

**Utrecht2040**

*a province in which all people matter and are able to participate in school in their neighbourhood and in their job*
Elderly people and disabled people have different housing needs. It is important to realise small-scale forms of housing with care and wellbeing. Flexible housing concepts and a flexible use of buildings for different facilities also fit within this idea. On locations such as the Heuvelrug there are excellent possibilities for the further development of care in collaboration with accommodations and institutions for - alternative - personal development and contemplation.

The participation of citizens can among be promoted by a combination of functions in the built-up environment, by culture and by sport, among other things. The Olympic ambitions for 2028 can prove to be an important generator.

Active citizenship involves, among other things, the creation of more social involvement and more interest in politics. People can be tempted to actively contribute to the sustainable community of the future.

**Options**

- Develop more concepts for combination of functions: living-working-learning-care, and create green meeting places. Both elements enable more meetings and thus promote participation of inhabitants.
- Acropolis Utrecht: organise various forums in which active citizenship in the changing administrative and democratic environment is shaped.
One of the three important key qualities of the province of Utrecht is landscape. This involves a variety of natural areas and estates that all have their own unique qualities. Between those landscapes there are transition zones in the province which are also valuable. Think of the transitions between low and high and between peat, clay and sand. The cities in the region also have different faces: attractive city/landscapes and the historical inner cities of Utrecht and Amersfoort. The distances between the landscapes and the cities and villages are short. This is attractive for residents as well as visitors.

We want to improve the quality of the landscape. That is why we focus our attention on protecting the key qualities of the national landscapes, restoring and constructing characteristic Utrecht elements, preserving small-scale diversity, containing subsidence in peat meadow areas and discouraging cluttering. The strong points of the national landscapes can also be exploited more economically (recreation).
This may increase support for decent protection and generate resources that can support the landscape managers.

The quality of nature and its biodiversity should improve. In order to expand and connect natural areas, an obvious solution is the realisation of the Ecological Main Structure (EMS). The quality of existing natural areas should also be improved further.

The farming industry is an indispensable manager of nature and landscape. But nature is also threatened by nutrients and dehydration. For the sake of good quality of nature we aim for a sustainable and widened agriculture.

**Options**
- Stimulate a structural change to a sustainable and widened agriculture that is animal and environmentally friendly and in which there is space for the development of nature qualities and landscape management. In addition, extra income can be generated by businesses that expand their activities with, for example, care and recreational functions.
- Transform the rural areas in which there is, in addition to food production, energy generation, water storage, peace and quiet, space and identity. Identity bearers may be regional products or characteristic cultural-historical elements in the landscape.
Icon projects

Strategy goes hand in hand with implementation. Icon projects provide a concrete plan for implementing the long term tasks. Icon projects appeal to the imagination and are examples of sustainable development. They have the potential to grow from small-scale to large-scale projects.

Icon projects can be proposed by the regional partners of the province of Utrecht and by the province itself. In the coming time we, together with our partners, want to explore and appoint icon projects that fit within the strategy. The province of Utrecht also invites businesses, institutions and entrepreneurs to come up with good ideas and initiatives. This way projects for sustainable development can be combined regionally. In 2010 there will be an elaborate overview of possible icon projects. Wherever possible, the province of Utrecht will offer support in the development of project proposals.

Criteria

A project is a potential icon project when it meets the following criteria:

• the project contributes to the long-term objectives and long-term tasks of Utrecht2040.
• the project is preferably an integral one. The project proposal should seek to simultaneously realise tasks related to several themes. Shifting problems to other domains, in time or in space, has been charted and will be minimised.
• the project contributes to the profile of the region with its key qualities.

Other possible criteria are:

• The project will be carried out by several regional partners.
• The project is supralocal.
State of Utrecht scan
The projects for the future must always guard the fragile balance between economic, ecological and socio-cultural interests. The sustainability scan is used to measure this. Potential icon projects are tested using this scan. This offers a clear insight into the effect of the plans on the community. The expected effects and side-effects of the project on people, planet and profit are charted. The outcomes may be used to adjust and improve the project proposal.
Colophon

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Also check out www.Utrecht2040.nl