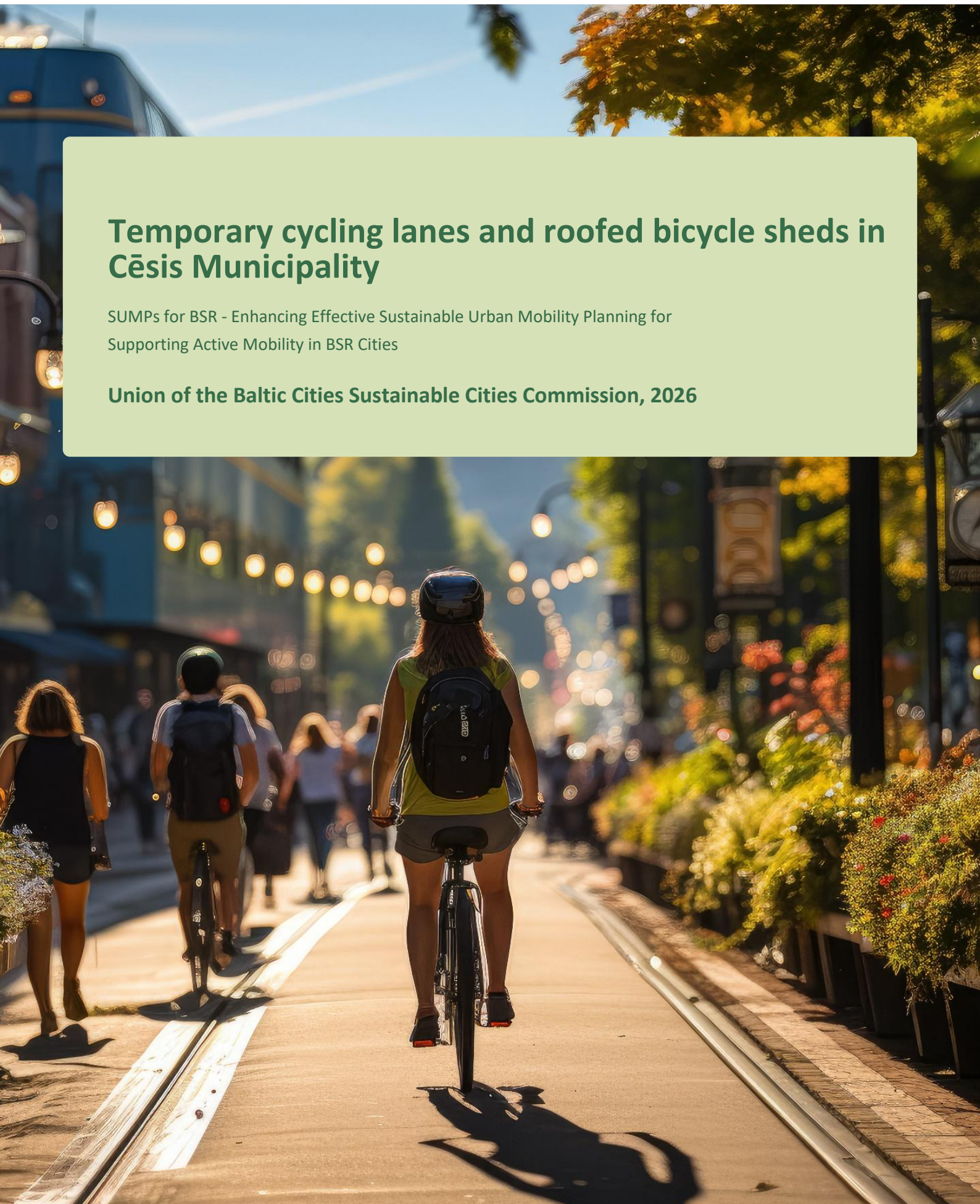


## Temporary cycling lanes and roofed bicycle sheds in Cēsis Municipality

SUMPs for BSR - Enhancing Effective Sustainable Urban Mobility Planning for Supporting Active Mobility in BSR Cities

Union of the Baltic Cities Sustainable Cities Commission, 2026



# Imprint

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## Project note

SUMPs for BSR project supports cities shifting their planning practices towards people-centred sustainable urban mobility planning, focusing on active mobility modes to fight the climate crisis. The project aims to increase the uptake of Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans (SUMP) as a strategic tool for sustainable mobility planning by developing tools and offering extensive capacity building for local authorities, especially in small and mid-sized BSR cities. A common framework on monitoring and evaluation for sustainable urban mobility planning will be developed to set up sound local processes suitable for smaller cities. Together with a unified model for testing and experimenting with innovative mobility solutions, it will help to evaluate the performance of the local mobility system and to provide crucial information for planning and decision-making.

## 1.1. Temporary cycling lanes and roofed bicycle sheds in Cēsis Municipality

### City profile

Cēsis is a small town in central Latvia with a population of around 17,000. It is known for its historic centre, surrounding natural landscapes and compact urban structure. The relatively short travel distances within the town make **walking and cycling viable options for everyday mobility**. At the same time, the dominance of car use and limited cycling infrastructure have remained challenges, particularly in residential areas and near public services.

Cēsis Municipality has been gradually strengthening its focus on sustainable mobility, supported by its participation in international projects and planning processes. **Promoting everyday cycling** has been identified as a priority, both to reduce car dependency and to improve quality of life, while also supporting an active lifestyle and independent mobility among youth. The small-scale experiment described in this case study formed a part of these efforts, testing practical infrastructure measures combined with local co-creation and feedback.

### Objectives of the pilot

The pilot aimed to encourage more residents to use bicycles for everyday trips by addressing three common barriers: a lack of safe cycling lanes, insufficient protection for parked bicycles, and limited bicycle parking opportunities in residential areas. Prior to the experiment, residents had frequently raised concerns about cycling safety in neighbourhood streets and the absence of covered bicycle parking, especially during the winter months.

- The specific objectives of the pilot were to:
- Test temporary cycling lanes from residential areas to the centre of Cēsis as a low-cost measure to connect existing lanes and improve perceived safety.
- Install roofed bicycle sheds to support year-round bicycle use and encourage cycling during all seasons.
- Involve residents in the planning and placement of cycling infrastructure through co-creation activities.
- Observe how the new measures were used and perceived by different user groups.
- Generate lessons for scaling up similar interventions in Cēsis and other small municipalities.

### Pilot activities

The small-scale experiment consisted of two main infrastructure measures: **temporary cycling lanes and roofed bicycle sheds**. Both were designed as test solutions, allowing the municipality to explore acceptance, usability and implementation challenges before committing to permanent changes.



**Figure 1. Temporary cycling lanes. Source: Cēsis Municipality**



**Figure 2. Roofed bicycle sheds. Source: Cēsis Municipality**

### **Temporary cycling lanes**

Three temporary cycling lanes were introduced on selected residential streets where space constraints and traffic conditions had previously made it difficult to allocate permanent cycling infrastructure. The lanes were marked using temporary materials and signage, clearly separating cycling space from motor traffic.

The selection of streets was based on local knowledge, traffic volumes and feedback from residents. The temporary nature of the lanes allowed the municipality to test different layouts and observe how drivers and cyclists adapted to the changes.

### **Installation of roofed bicycle sheds**

In parallel, six roofed bicycle sheds were installed at selected locations, including residential areas and places with regular bicycle demand. The sheds were designed to protect bicycles from weather conditions and improve comfort for users throughout the year.

Locations were chosen in consultation with residents and municipal staff, taking into account accessibility, visibility and safety. The sheds were installed as pilot elements, with the possibility of relocation or replication depending on feedback and usage.

### **Co-creation with residents**

Resident involvement was a central element of the pilot. The municipality organised meetings and discussions to gather input on where cycling lanes and sheds would be most useful. Residents were invited to share their daily mobility patterns, concerns and expectations.

This co-creation approach helped build trust and ensured that the pilot addressed real local needs. It also provided the municipality with valuable insight into how residents perceive cycling infrastructure and what factors influence acceptance.

### **Communication and awareness**

Information about the pilot was shared through municipal communication channels and local networks. The communication focused on explaining the purpose of the temporary measures and encouraging residents to try them out. Clear messaging helped manage expectations and reduce resistance to change.

### **Stakeholders and interaction activities**

The pilot involved several stakeholder groups, each playing a distinct role. Cēsis Municipality led the planning, coordination and implementation of the measures. Municipal departments responsible for transport, urban environment and maintenance worked together to install and monitor the infrastructure.

Residents of the selected neighbourhoods were key stakeholders, **both as users and as contributors to the planning process**. This included the residents of multi-storey apartment buildings, school children, as one of the primary users of bicycle storage infrastructure, as well as representatives of the buildings (elders of the house representing the residents of apartments). Their feedback influenced location choices and adjustments during the pilot. Local cycling advocates and community groups also provided informal input and helped spread information about the experiment.

Interaction activities included resident meetings, citizen co-creation sessions, informal discussions on site and follow-up communication through local channels. This continuous interaction supported transparency and helped address concerns as they emerged.

### **Evaluation and monitoring activities**

Evaluation focused on understanding how the pilot was implemented, how residents interacted with the new infrastructure and how co-creation influenced acceptance. The monitoring approach combined observation, feedback collection and internal reflection.

### **Observation of use**

Municipal staff carried out regular site visits to observe how the temporary cycling lanes and bicycle sheds were used. Observations focused on the number of cyclists, general traffic behaviour, conflicts between

road users and the condition of the infrastructure. For the bicycle sheds, staff noted occupancy levels at different times and seasons, providing insight into demand and patterns of use.

### **Feedback from residents**

Resident feedback was collected through meetings, informal conversations and written comments. Residents were encouraged to share their experiences, both positive and negative, and to suggest improvements. This qualitative feedback helped the municipality understand perceptions of safety, convenience and visual impact, which are not easily captured through quantitative indicators alone.

### **Internal reflection and triangulation**

The municipality reviewed observational findings and resident feedback in internal discussions. By comparing how the infrastructure was used with how it was perceived, staff identified areas where design or communication could be improved. This triangulation supported learning-oriented evaluation, helping the municipality assess whether temporary measures can realistically serve as a pathway towards permanent cycling infrastructure.

### **Success stories and best practice**

- + Temporary cycling lanes proved to be a flexible tool for testing street reallocation without major investment.
- + Roofed bicycle sheds addressed a practical barrier to everyday cycling, particularly in winter conditions, and offered relief near multi-storey apartment buildings where secure bike storage was previously lacking.
- + The sheds were designed below the height limit that requires building permits, making the process faster and easier.
- + Early and continuous resident involvement improved acceptance and reduced resistance.
- + Co-creation helped align infrastructure placement with real user needs.

### **Challenges and deviations**

- Some residents protested against the initial design of the bicycle racks (e.g. expressing concerns about visual appearance and reduced shared space), leading to coordinating the design individually with the residents.
- Challenges in finding an affordable manufacturer who could produce customised sheds in small quantities.
- Custom-designed solutions require more coordination time and involve more complex procurement processes.
- Challenges in finding the best routes for temporary cycling lanes, considering the existing cycling lane network, the potential to decrease usage of cars for short trips and the price of painting.
- Challenges in finding a company to paint the bike lines, whereas procurement delays led to implementation difficulties (temperatures too low to paint the lines).

## Results and impact of the pilot

The pilot contributed to a better understanding of how **small-scale infrastructure measures can support everyday cycling in a small-town context**. While the experiment did not aim to deliver immediate large-scale behaviour change, it created tangible examples that residents could experience directly.

Key **results and impacts** included:

- Increased visibility of cycling as a normal mode of transport in residential areas.
- Positive feedback on the comfort and usefulness of roofed bicycle sheds.
- Greater awareness among residents of the municipality's cycling ambitions.
- Better understanding of options for bicycle storage, considering the requirements for buildings (decreasing the cost and time of rack implementation).
- Practical insights into which street layouts are most suitable for cycling lanes.
- Understanding that safe cycling infrastructure and secure bicycle parking are very important to support the independent mobility of children and to encourage cycling for short everyday trips.

## Sustainability and scalability

The measures tested in the pilot were designed with **future scalability in mind**. Temporary cycling lanes provided a basis for evaluating potential permanent solutions, while roofed bicycle sheds can remain in place or be replicated elsewhere.

From a **sustainability** perspective:

- The sheds require limited maintenance and offer long-term benefits.
- Lessons from temporary lanes can inform permanent street redesigns.

In terms of **scalability**:

- Similar measures can be extended to other neighbourhoods in Cēsis and nearby villages.
- The co-creation approach can be reused for future mobility projects.
- The pilot provides a practical reference for other small municipalities with limited resources.

Both of the pilots are easily replicable, especially when considering the experiences of the pilot. Using or modifying the design of bike sheds hastens the process of implementing sheds remarkably. In case the shed design suits other target groups as well, even the price of the shed may decrease, making the pilot even more replicable.

## Lessons learned

The pilot highlighted the value of **starting with small, testable interventions** and involving residents from the outset. It showed that temporary measures can reduce risk and build support for change, while also revealing practical challenges early on.

Key **lessons** included:

- Co-creation is essential for the acceptance of cycling infrastructure in residential areas.

- Using and adapting off-the-shelf solutions as much as possible is recommended, as custom-designed solutions create several challenges.
- Temporary solutions are effective for testing ideas before permanent investment.
- Weather protection is an important factor in encouraging everyday cycling.
- Even small-scale infrastructure changes can cause strong reactions among residents.
- Clear communication helps manage expectations and reduce opposition, but is much more time-consuming than usually expected.

If repeated, the municipality would expand monitoring periods and specify indicators, involve a broader range of residents earlier, thereby allocating more time for stakeholder engagement, as well as clarify roles and responsibilities related to maintenance earlier on to avoid any uncertainty.

**For more information about this case study, you are welcome to contact Cēsis Municipality: Ilze Sestule, [Ilze.sestule\[at\]cesis.lv](mailto:Ilze.sestule@cesis.lv); [dome\[at\]cesunovads.lv](mailto:dome[at]cesunovads.lv).**