

A public-private partnership for the transportation concept of Potsdam's Federal Gardening Exhibition BUGA 2001

Tilman Bracher, Branch Manager, IVU Traffic Technologies AG
Bundesallee 88, 12161 Berlin, Germany
tb@ivu.de

Summary

How can public-private partnerships support bicycling schemes when public budgets are short of money?

Leisure mobility in developed countries is becoming the dominant task for transport planning.

Potsdam, one of UNESCO's world cultural heritages with palaces and famous parks, will host Germany's Federal Gardening Exhibition (Bundesgartenschau, in short: BUGA) in 2001. Several areas within a cycling distance of 4 km will be designed to host the program. On busy Sundays, more than 35,000 visitors will be expected in addition to Potsdam's usual guests.

The present transportation demand exceeds the available road space for parking and driving. Consequently, the transportation concept for Bundesgartenschau 2001 is focused on limiting private car use. For getting around in Potsdam, more than 6,000 people (out of 35,000 per day) shall be encouraged to use bicycles by BUGA's marketing as well as by special services and facilities.

However, the city's financial contribution of 4 million EURO was restricted to co-finance infrastructure development ("hard measures"), while "soft measures" should be provided by private operators.

The individual schemes shall be implemented by various public and private sources: sponsoring, tourism, public budgets, park entrance fees and self-financing private business.

At the time being, only in some cases, private and public partnerships have been successful in offering services and funds. Obstacles and incentives will be shown. It has become clear that PPP-models may support public involvement but may not replace it.

1 Issue

Transportation problems are increasingly dominated by tourism and leisure traffic, and car use is becoming more and more self-evident.

Transportation concepts are key issues for major public events like the Olympic Games, international world expositions (EXPO) or the Love Parade.

To provide easy access and to relieve Potsdam, a town of 130.000 inhabitants, from an intolerable increase in car traffic for the Federal Gardening exhibition in Potsdam in 2001, this transport concept was based on the need to limit private car use for access to Potsdam, but moreover for the time of stay.

Potsdam is one of UNESCO's world cultural heritages with palaces and famous parks and visitors from all over the world. It is situated next to Berlin, Germany's capital, and will host Germany's Federal Gardening Exhibition (Bundesgartenschau) in 2001.

A former military campus, the "Bornstedter Feld", used by Sovjet troops during the years of the cold war, has recently been returned to Potsdam's local authorities. For the BUGA, it will be converted into a public park, and three additional areas within distance of 4 km will host special programs. On busy spring and summer Sundays, according to revised cautious estimates, more than 35,000 visitors will be expected in addition to Potsdam's usual guests. First calculations estimated some 50.000 extra visitors, coming to Potsdam, inducing at least 150,000 daily trips.

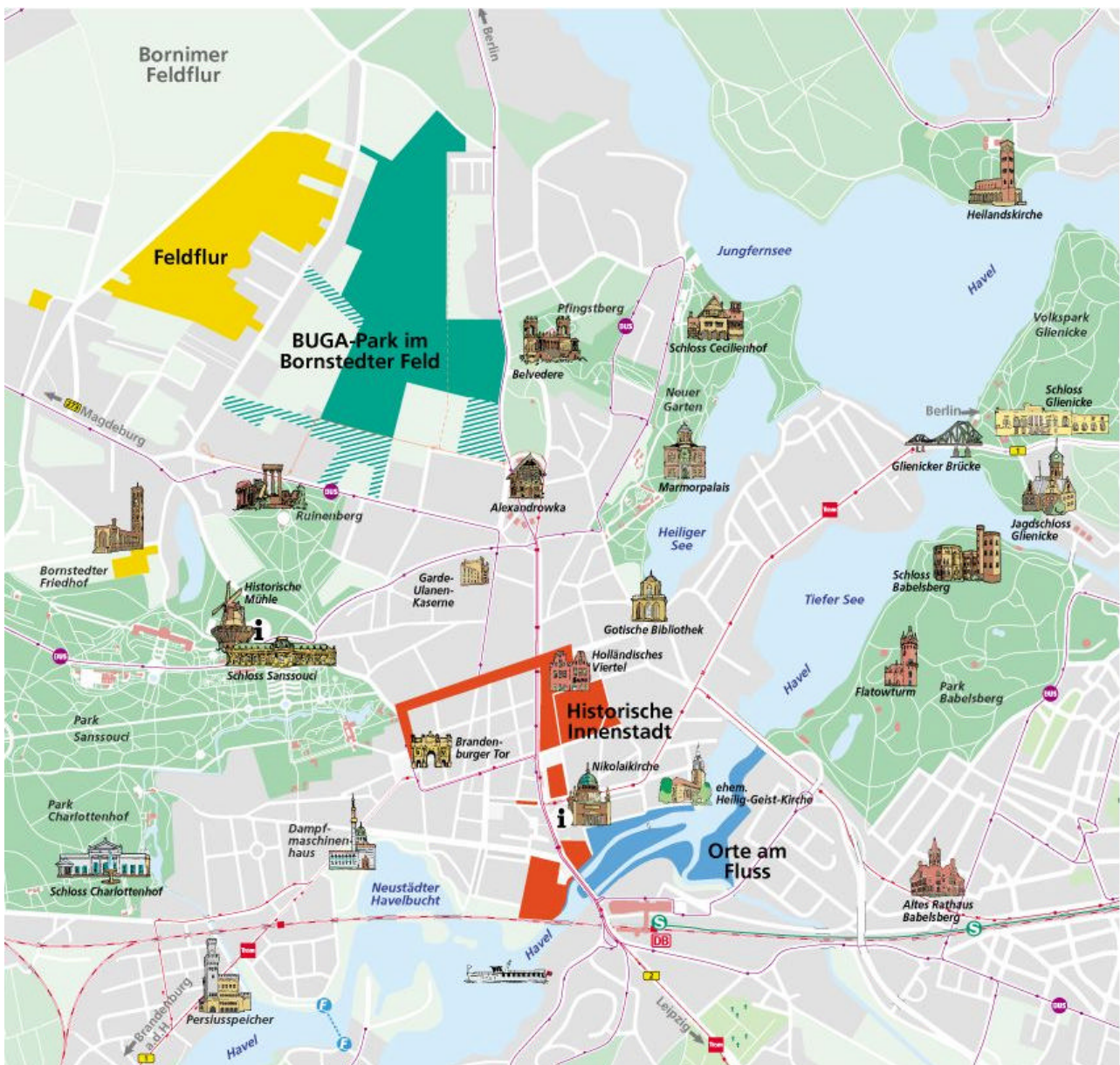


Figure 1 Potsdam + BUGA map

As present transportation demand already exceeds the available road space for parking and driving,

the transportation concept for Bundesgartenschau 2001 is focused on the limitation of private car use. At similar events in Germany, usually 60% of all visitors come by private car.

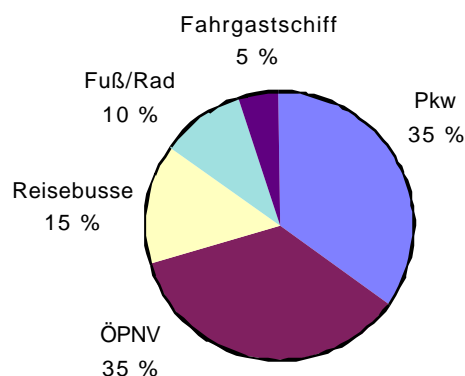
For Bundesgartenschau, a range of measures shall encourage 70% of its visitors to use coaches, rail, ships or non-motorised modes for access to Potsdam. For getting around in Potsdam, more than 6,000 persons (out of 35.000 per day) shall be encouraged to use bicycles.



Radverkehrsanzbindung BUGA 2001

Annahmen zur Fahrradnutzung der BUGA-Besucher 2001 bei unterschiedlichen Anreiseverkehrsmitteln

Anreise- Verkehrsmittel	Kommentar	Mietrad	Eigenrad	Summe
Pkw	Mietrad / mitgebrachtes Rad	2 %	1 %	3 %
ÖPNV	v. a. Fahrradmitnahme S- / RE-Bahn (Größenordnung BMV-Gutachten)	2 %	12 %	14 %
Reisebusse	Gruppenreisen sind nicht fahrradaffin	1 %	0 %	1 %
Fuß / Rad	Fußweg zu weit	2 %	60 %	62 %
Fahrgastschiff	Fahrradmitnahme	2 %	13 %	15 %



Für die An- und Abreise
zur BUGA benutzte Verkehrsmittel
nach dem BUGA-Verkehrskonzept

Figure 2 Diagram of BUGA modal split target

2 Shared responsibilities in transport planning and provision

In the years after German reunification, municipal bodies were not prepared for additional tasks like the redevelopment of large former military sites.

Therefore, a city-owned private company (ETBF) was created to organise redevelopment of the former military area, and another city-owned private company was set up to organise and run the Bundesgartenschau (BUGA 2001 GmbH).

The transportation plan for the new development area includes two new tramway lines, the reconstruction of main roads and several new access roads to housing and school areas. All road schemes include appropriate facilities for bicyclists. The work is being carried out privately, with

public support. One of the tasks of both companies is to minimise the burden on the municipal budget by acquiring state, federal and EU funds, and by sponsorships from private companies.

For BUGA 2001 e.g., more than 100 applications for public funding were put, and most of them were successful. One of the first projects in 1996 was a - rejected - 3.8 Million EURO application to the regional funds for bicycling services. It included guarded parking services (0.9 m), hire bicycles (0.9 m), guidance and orientation system (0.7 m), a bicycle taxi system (1.1 m) and money for know-how-transfer (0.2 m).

3 The approved plan for bicycling

Potsdam's bicycle development plan which was approved in 1991 has only been partially implemented. At present, bicycle use in Potsdam is about 11%, which is German average. Potsdam has not been famous for using bicycles. According to the plan, bicycle use should be encouraged by Bundesgartenschau's marketing as well as by special services and facilities.

To encourage cycling, among the measures proposed were

- increased capacity and safety on bicycle routes and facilities (e.g. at junctions)
- safe, flexible convenient parking places at ten sites in Potsdam, with guarding services and locker-boxes
- free or cheap rental bicycles for getting around in the surrounding area and downtown, and for getting from the landing to the BUGA-site
- a rickshaw service for sightseeing
- 500 route signs for cyclists, those toward the BUGA sites with its logo
- increases capacity for carrying bicycles on ships and trains.

Based on a detailed market study, a 4 million EURO bicycling program, initiated by BUGA, has been accepted by local authorities and the local parliament. According to the study, the train system shall allow more than 2,000 visitors to bring their own bicycles to and from Potsdam, and 900 rental bicycles shall be available at the main station and at major car and coach parking sites. In addition, 1,500 bicycle parking facilities shall be installed, some guarded or with locker-boxes. 500 route signs shall equip most of Potsdam with a full guidance system for cyclists, and traffic problems at 55 locations shall be tackled to make way for the expected amount of cyclists while keeping in mind bicycle comfort and safety. At the main site of the exhibition, a rickshaw service will be available for carrying visitors.

The plan, which was approved by municipal authorities and local parliament, included

- a realistic traffic demand and bicycle use target
- the analysis of present supply (quality of roads and cycle paths, bike and ride capacities)
- the development of the relevant network and bike and ride services, based on demand and present supply data
- the guidance and orientation system
- a parking and service concept.

The concepts will be illustrated by the following figures.

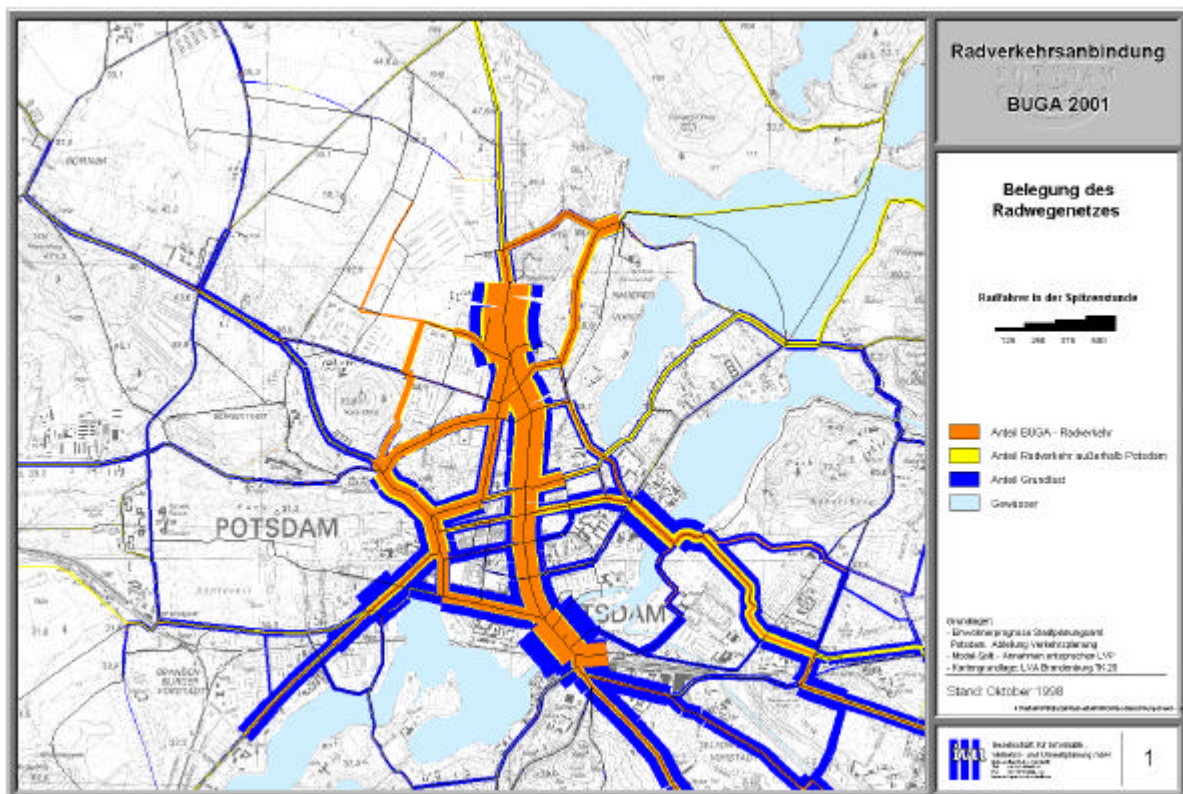


Figure 3 Demand estimate

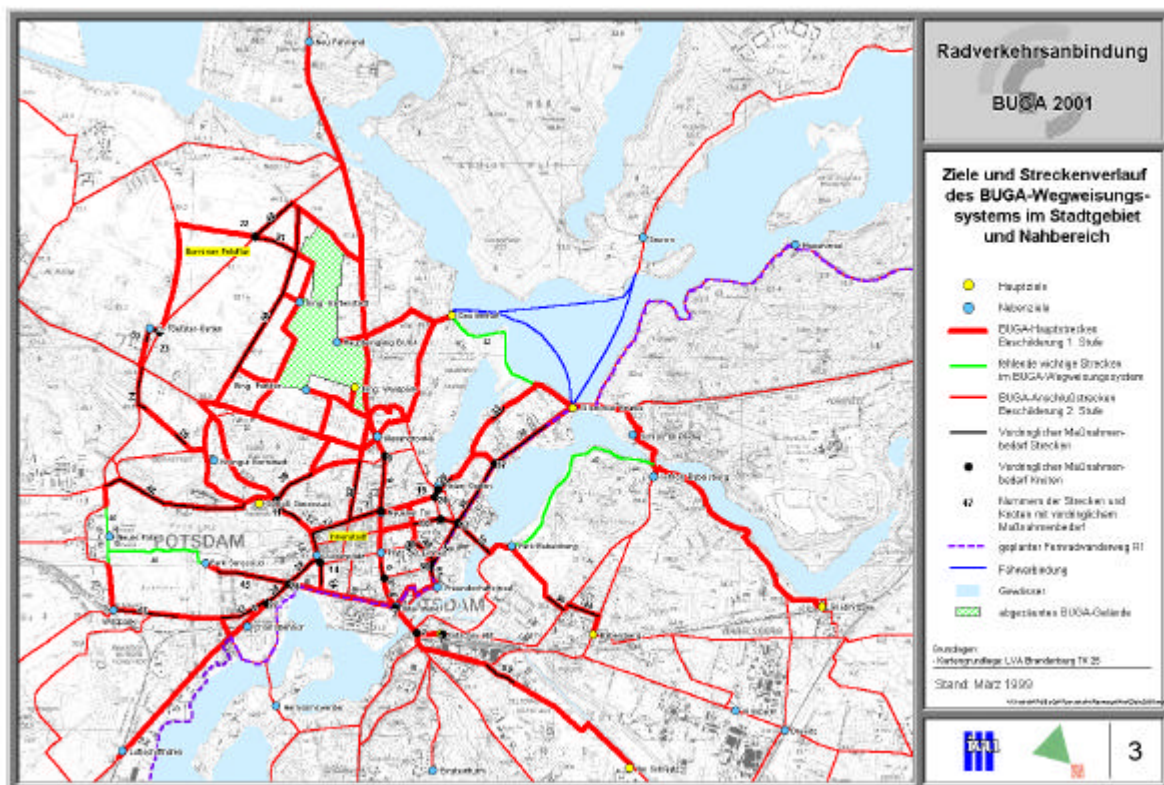


Figure 4 Network analysis / Bicycle Route Network

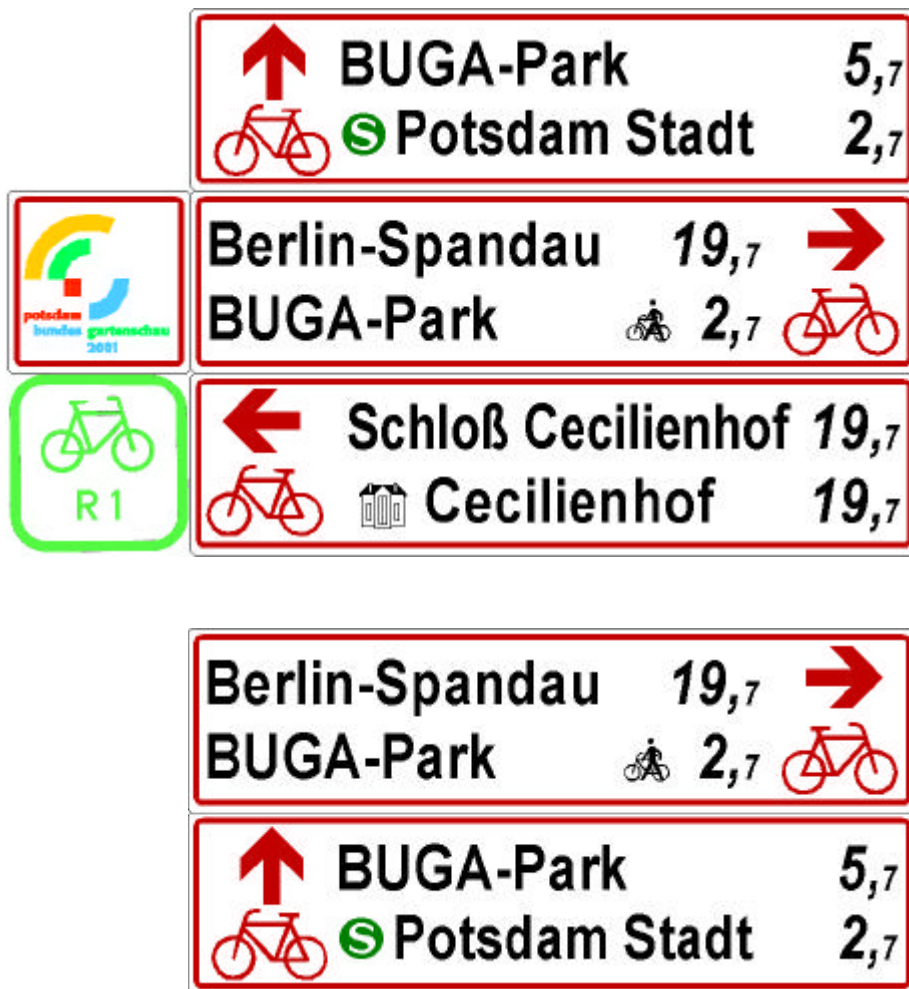


Figure 5 Signposting plan

According to the financial plan, various public and private sources for funding were mentioned: sponsoring, tourism, public budgets, parking fees for bicycles and self-financing private businesses should participate in offering services and funds.

4 Surprises and Obstacles

Private institutions would have an interest in public private partnerships if they could expect

- appropriate return for costs or
- excellent conditions for advertisement.

Bicycle use levels in leisure traffic depend mainly on "soft strategies" like marketing, information and prices. Therefore, it is not easy to convince private partners, calculating their own risk, to believe in the projected demand figures. In this process, it was not possible to show the prominent role of bicycle use promotion in the overall marketing and transport strategy of the event. Although BUGA's marketing manager personally showed this conviction, the media available and the main activities by BUGA concentrate on public transport. The local public transport companies had been successful in participating in ticket sales. Thus all BUGA tickets will offer free public transport, but will not include any bicycling services.

Talks with a number of partners about offering services for cyclists made clear that paid and guarded parking services could not be offered by private risk, but instead need a source of subsidy. It would not be possible to restrict cyclists' parking to paid parking as bicycles can usually park for free anywhere on sidewalks, roads or public space.

In the state of Brandenburg, there are state and municipal schemes and budgets available to pay for a permanent investment for tourism. Therefore, it will be possible to fund bicycle routes, permanent parking facilities and route signs if the municipal budget allows for some additional contribution. In the case of Potsdam, it became clear, that several projects formerly planned could be modified to allow for this contribution, since it was not possible to increase the municipal budget available for cycling.

However, not all the partners who had to be convinced supported the scheme. Some of the route network may not become official, as 50% of Potsdam belongs to the former Prussian castles and gardens company, and many preservationists do not want to allow cyclists in, as they were not in 100 years ago, when Germany's royal family was in charge. This may be well beyond democratic demand, particularly since more than 10.000 cyclists illegally cycle through the park grounds, despite the fact that permanent surveillance personnel pursue cyclists.

The railway company and ship companies are not prepared to provide much additional capacity for carrying bicycles on regular services, e.g. by modifying the seating capacity or establishing a proposed ferry shuttle service. It was not clear whether they really calculated the cost, or just neglected the customer potential.

The aim to establish a system of free bicycles in Potsdam that would be available at numerous depots with a collateral offering was given up. The plan to fund this system by sponsors from a bank and by money from an unemployment scheme had to be cancelled, because another bank, one of the other sponsoring partners of BUGA 2001, had been granted exclusivity.

Whether the plans for guideposts will be realised or not is not clear yet. Some private sponsoring has been offered to the BUGA company. It will come, in addition, to state subsidies for three tourism routes through Potsdam, from BUGA's marketing budget. In many cases the city of Potsdam's preservation department has not stated their position well. There are plans to install 200 new guide posts in various locations if the owners have given their consent.

Since there is no other public transport service available on the main BUGA campus and since other sponsoring partners were not offered, a rickshaw service with VELOTAXIS will be provided on the BUGA grounds.

5 Results and lessons

Public authorities are fully capable of providing administrative support activities. However, they are often plagued by bureaucratic practices burdens. Private partners, on the other hand, tend to operate cost effectively. Furthermore, private companies could be sponsors for public (effective) projects.

From the present experience: If the public side wants to gain private partners, a number of requisites have to be fulfilled:

Private partnership cannot succeed if public commitment is too low. If private partners realise that the public side has no sound interest, private involvement will recognise a risk. The public side must provide a certain budget for co-financing private initiatives, with personnel and authoritative support, to give support to the cycling interest towards other organisations.

Private partners will do their own "planning". They will take economic risk if they can expect to make good business and if they are convinced that public partners will do what they propose to do (e.g. in providing facilities and transport policies towards other modes) when the project will be calculated.

In case of negotiations, bicycling has no powerful backing institution as a negotiating partner. Although public transport companies regularly commit themselves to belonging to the "green modes", if it comes to money, they restrict themselves to their own company interest.

Therefore, if bicycling shall be promoted in a wider context, private partnerships may be acquired if bicycling also gets full public support. Planning engineers must develop an understanding for the needs of their potential partners if they want to acquire additional funds and institutions for bicycling schemes.