

Clean Air for the German City of Rüsselsheim:

Drees & Sommer Develops a Green City Masterplan

Nitrogen oxide emissions, mainly from road traffic, often lead to air pollution in cities. Many cities and municipalities in Germany are not yet able to comply with the EU threshold values for nitrogen, so they are rethinking their approach to air quality. Rüsselsheim on the River Main has only slightly exceeded the pollution thresholds in the past, but the city nevertheless cooperated with Drees & Sommer to develop the Green City Masterplan *Clean Air 2017-2020*, which focuses on sustainable new forms of mobility and the digital infrastructure and is subsidized by the German government.

The central emphasis of the masterplan which was agreed by the Rüsselsheim city parliament on September 6, 2018, is a sustainable and low-emission mobility concept for Rüsselsheim with the aim of reducing air pollution permanently in the city. A location analysis formed the basis for the creation of a viable mobility concept for the future. The measures adopted in the Green City Masterplan include a major extension of the public electric vehicle recharging infrastructure and the conversion of the municipal car pool to electric vehicles. In addition, e-car and e-bike sharing concepts and intelligent traffic light controls linked to the environment system also aimed to improve air quality. If there is a risk of exceeding the nitrogen threshold values, the traffic in specific road sections can be directly controlled to reduce its volume or enable it to flow more smoothly. In addition, the main urban roads which are already barred for heavy vehicles are digitally monitored. This aims to prevent undesirable truck through-traffic, which is a major cause of increased nitrogen values.

An inter-disciplinary team is working on better quality of life and the functionality of the city

‘Concepts and measures for traffic within the urban area must become more intelligent to cater for the increased demand for mobility and at the same time to improve the air quality. A change in mobility could be encouraged, for example, by creating completely traffic-free urban districts, cycle highways and e-mobility,’ says Dr. Burkhard Seizer, the senior project partner at Drees & Sommer SE. To enable cities like Rüsselsheim to retain a high quality of life in the future, Drees & Sommer offers advice on all-round solutions for the traffic and infrastructure sector.

In the last few months, the inter-disciplinary team, consisting of infrastructure consultants and mobility experts from Drees & Sommer and the transport planners from the Darmstadt office of R+T, have developed an implementation strategy to adopt measures which will improve air quality. 'The quality of life and the functionality of our city are the prime concern for Rüsselsheim. With the Green City Masterplan and the support of experts we want to implement these goals by 2020,' says Marianne Flörsheimer, the head of the mobility, traffic development, noise abatement and climate protection department of the city of Rüsselsheim am Main.

German government offers an immediate action program to support cities and municipalities

Measures to improve the air quality in cities and municipalities are subsidized by the Federal Ministry of Transport in its *Immediate Action Program for Clean Air 2017-2020*. Under this scheme, Rüsselsheim receives a subsidy of EUR 98,000 for the preparation of the Green City masterplan. This plan also enables the city to apply for additional subsidies from the sustainable mobility fund for the implementation of specific measures. In this area, the national government and the automotive industry provide money which will enable municipalities to refinance the necessary investments in the urban infrastructure. The overall goals are measures to direct the flow of traffic, support for e-mobility and the recharging infrastructure and the expansion of cycle and pedestrian traffic facilities.



Caption: For more quality of life through better air, the German City of Rüsselsheim relies on the Green City Masterplan ©Stadt Rüsselsheim am Main Mario Andreyra (www.vonganzoben.de)

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