

SUWON City
South Korea
1-30 September

EcoMobility World Festival 2013

ONE NEIGHBORHOOD
ONE MONTH
NO CARS



EcoMobility World Festival 2013

1 - 30 September 2013 | Suwon, South Korea

Presented by



Hosted by



Can we imagine what a car-free life looks like?

Many Mayors, city councilors, and urban planners cannot. They can only imagine what they know from the past. How can we open their minds to the future? - by creating images of the future!

At EcoMobility World Festival 2013, the residents of a neighborhood in Suwon, South Korea, acted out an ecomobile future: real citizens, in a real city, in real time.

Mayor Yeom, Tae-young, worked with residents to turn Haenggung-dong neighborhood car-free and demonstrate livable streets for a full month - the world's first project of its kind.

"Mayor Yeom's constituency trusted him and supported the project wholeheartedly. This is the fabric needed in making cities for the people, by the people and of the people - a democracy in our urban world."

Mary-Jane Ortega
ICLEI Vice President

"The time has come to showcase practical initiatives which counter the challenges of climate change and the excessive dependence of cities on cars using fossil fuels. We congratulate Suwon for taking the lead in showcasing an ecomobile lifestyle in action."

Joan Clos
United Nations, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat

Acknowledgements

ICLEI wishes to thank all those whose efforts helped turn Haenggung-dong into a model ecomobile neighborhood for the first EcoMobility World Festival, held in Suwon, South Korea in September 2013.

We thank Mayor Yeom for his visionary leadership, Suwon City Council for its political support, Haenggung-dong residents for their courage to embark on this unique experiment, the 2,700 volunteers who gave freely of their time to the success of the Festival, the Suwon City administration and Festival Team as well as the World Secretariat EcoMobility World Festival Team for bringing the Festival concept to life, the ICLEI Congress Team for organizing the EcoMobility 2013 Suwon Congress, and the ICLEI Korea Office for supporting the preparations with tremendous dedication. We thank also the companies who have provided EcoMobility vehicles and sponsorship support.

"This international experiment was only possible because of the dedication of city officials to the project. I would like to especially thank the residents for their mature civic awareness and commitment to the Festival. Despite the inconvenience of the Festival changes, they continued to support us with kindness and courage. For this I am truly grateful."

Yeom, Tae-young, Mayor of Suwon City

"Together with Suwon City and Haenggung-dong residents, ICLEI has once again shown that local governments are the agents of change. The Festival has provided an international example of a city neighborhood turning its back on the car and switching to more sustainable transport options to fulfill everyday mobility needs."

"EcoMobility World Festival helped visualize the future with a showcase neighborhood demonstrating what a car-free, ecomobile future will look like. Mayor Yeom has demonstrated his ability to 'move mountains' and can be expected to solve the city's problems with foresight and strong leadership."

Yeonhee Park
Director, ICLEI Korea Office

Konrad Otto-Zimmermann
Initiator and Creative Director,
EcoMobility World Festival 2013 /
The Urban Idea GmbH



'One neighborhood, one month, no cars'

EcoMobility World Festival 2013 was the world's first month-long presentation of an innovative and forward thinking urban transportation culture. Instead of using private automobiles, 4,343 residents in Suwon City used a combination of walking, cycling, public transport and various other ecomobile modes for the entire month of September. The four day EcoMobility 2013 Suwon Congress underscored EcoMobility as an active concept - something to be developed, applied, and shared.



“ The Festival set an international precedent: that with the support of strong local government leadership and engaged community participation, any city in the world can transform an existing inner-city neighborhood into an area where pedestrian and cyclist activity flourishes, in a bold departure from car-centric urban design. ”

Monika Zimmermann,
ICLEI Deputy Secretary General

A global showcase of future urban mobility

Born from the synergies between ICLEI, host city Suwon and UN-Habitat, the Festival presented a *mise-en-scène* of an ecomobile neighborhood - a model approach to be locally adapted and replicated in cities worldwide.

Alongside conferences, vehicle exhibitions and cultural events, the Festival targeted an audience of local and national governments, transport experts, NGOs, businesses, academics, cyclist and pedestrian associations, and media around the world.

The Festival marked a new departure for transport planning in Suwon. It illustrated the benefits of human-scaled transport systems and streets on the world stage, and its results will be reflected in the future urban policy making of Suwon.

Suwon sets the wheels of change in motion

Following a residents' survey in 2012, environmental activist Mayor Yeom embarked on an extensive neighborhood regeneration program, committing to transform Haenggyung-dong neighborhood into one prioritizing environmental sustainability and universal accessibility. ICLEI signed a memorandum of understanding with Mayor Yeom of Suwon in 2012, together with co-organizers UN-Habitat, undertaking to host the first EcoMobility World Festival for one month in September 2013.





A neighborhood earmarked for change

The Festival idea was met with a mixture of enthusiasm, curiosity, concern, and opposition from residents' groups. While over 1,000 supporters joined Haenggung-dong Residents' Group, protests were voiced within the business community, fearing the negative impact a car-free month could pose for their livelihoods, and a car-dependent clientele.

On 31 August 2013, cars occupy every available space along the streets of the pre-Festival neighborhood

Preparing residents to make the switch

A series of workshops, consultations and EcoMobility training was provided to involve residents in the planning of the month-long event. Thanks to a city-subsidized program through Suwon-based social enterprise, Yellow Bikes, all citizens had the opportunity to avail of a 20 hour bicycle training program for 10,000 KRW (around 7 euro) per person. The program trained the participants in bike safety and cycle etiquette, providing a much needed service for many residents who had very little experience of cycling. Two preparatory car-free days were held to provide a trial run for residents who wondered how their streets would work in September. In addition, 240 city officials visited door-to-door in the neighborhood to address concerns and explain the Festival plans. With two days to go until the Festival launch, around 70% of opponents had changed their opinion on the event, opting to support the Festival and their community.

“ We live in a car culture. The car is so convenient, because there are not many regulations for using the car. You can drive and park wherever you want. People think that they are free while using a car. No one wants to give up their rights and freedom.”

Hee Jin Jung, Owner of neighborhood snack bar



Haenggung-dong Residents' Group mark Korean Independence Day 2013 with a celebration of their upcoming independence from cars.

In a local workshop in March 2013, Suwon, ICLEI and Haenggung-dong residents group came together to discuss the planning of the car-free Festival.



Residents voice their opposition to the Festival in a public consultation meeting in February 2013.

Street changes in Haenggung-dong

Physical improvements played a key role in the Festival transformation, with changes at the street level reflecting changing residents' mindsets towards the month without cars in Haenggung-dong.

Based on residents needs identified in a 2012 survey, Suwon city committed to create livable streets in the neighborhood. Façade improvements were funded and a suite of alley refurbishments were undertaken through a program of public works. Local artists painted a series of decorative murals injecting color and character into the network of local alleyways.

Sewerage infrastructure was upgraded and overhead cabling was buried. Extensive leveling and re-paving of the street surface was completed throughout the neighborhood. During the first week of the Festival, Jeongjo-ro, one of the main traffic arteries in Suwon, was converted into the "Suwon EcoMobility Street". Two lanes were allocated for buses and taxis, and two lanes for non-motorized and light electric vehicles. Hwaseomun Street (image 2, below) was transformed into a fully pedestrianized street, animated with cultural and community events.

Residents' Survey - 2012

- 34.4% report narrow sidewalks are problematic
- 20% report streets are unsafe for pedestrians
- >50% of households have no car
- 18.7% of residents have a disability
- 37% of disabled are mobility impaired

Investment Package

- €4.7 million in street improvements
- €2.0 million for 'City Renaissance Housing Improvements'
- €1.8 million for façade improvements

The rest of the neighborhood was car-free, giving free reign to the residents to explore the ecomobile vehicles on offer through the rental stations. Hwaseomun Street sidewalks were widened to three meters on each side improving walkability. In addition, EcoMobility-themed street furniture was installed in green pocket parks which appeared in the newly reclaimed public spaces.

1. Infrastructure works underway on Hwaseomun Street in April 2013



2. Paving of Hwaseomun Street nearing completion in June, 2013



3. Removal of overhead utility poles to prepare for burying of cabling in August 2013



4. Repaved alleys decorated with street art August 2013



5. Residents enjoy a new pocket park created in their neighborhood, in September 2013

6. Jeongjo-ro turns ecomobile with new lane allocations restricting cars in September 2013



Removal of cars

On the eve of the Festival opening, onlookers questioned if the 'Suwon EcoMobility Village' would indeed be free of cars the next day. During the Festival, more than 98% of the registered cars left the designated area. This achievement was only possible because of residents' support and cooperation in removing cars from the neighborhood streets. The consultation process surrounding the car-removal began one year before the Festival in 2012.



Cars leaving the neighborhood for the temporary parking lot the day before the Festival



City official affixes notice reminding owner to remove the vehicle leading up to the Festival

“ Before, the traffic was really heavy here, and there were always problems with the cars. Now it is nice, I am really satisfied. I hope this condition will continue. ”

Jung Sam Lee, 70 years old, retired lives in an adjacent neighborhood and visits Haenggung-day every day

City officials conducted door-to-door visits explaining the Festival objectives and recording the needs of each household. Eager to avoid implementing any legal instruments to remove cars, Suwon City opted instead to implement the changes through interactive discussion and voluntary resident cooperation.

Following extensive consultation and explanation, the city developed plans for how the residents would live car-free for one month, addressing the full spectrum of neighborhood mobility needs.



'Best driver' volunteers guide car drivers to parking lots outside of Festival area

A strategy for a neighborhood without cars

- Every 15 minutes, 6 shuttle buses moved residents between the neighborhood and 4 temporary parking lots
- A 24-hour support service carried residents with urgent or special needs via electric shuttles upon request
- 400 vehicles (bicycles, electric scooters, electric bikes, and kids' trailers) were rented out free of charge to residents for the entire month
- Mail and parcels were delivered by electric vehicles
- Police used light electric vehicles to patrol the neighborhood

Suwon City enlisted the help of a team of residents and taxi drivers with a clean safety record to serve as traffic controllers, manning each entrance to the Festival area.

To prepare for the added influx of visitors unfamiliar with the car-free policy during Korean Thanksgiving (the biggest national holiday in South Korea), the city conceded flexibility for visiting family members. Limited traffic entered the neighborhood during the three holiday days, but was guided to a designated parking lot to minimize disruption to the ecomobile environment.

All eyes on the Festival – the world is watching

Suwon attracted widespread attention from international media outlets and experts, as the world looked on to see how an inner city neighborhood would live without cars for a month. International interest was generated through publicity and through a network of endorsing partners, including a UN-Habitat EcoMobility blogging competition, which awarded three prizes of an expenses paid trip to the Festival. In addition, an ICLEI organized Festival video contest attracted almost 30 entries, capturing diverse interpretations of the meaning of EcoMobility to disseminate through social media.



© Kristen Klug 2013

A 5,000 strong crowd gathered on Haenggung Plaza to witness the joint opening ceremony of the Festival and the EcoMobility 2013 Suwon Congress.



© ICLEI e.V. 2013



© ICLEI e.V. 2013

A JIBS film crew shoots scenes in the ecomobile neighborhood. A Festival documentary aired by KBS on 15 October saw Haenggung-dong shoot to the top of national search engine rankings.

172 speakers from 6 continents gathered in the Congress pavilion to share best practice in EcoMobility

“EcoMobility World Festival set a global precedent of how a car-dependent city can transform itself to an ecomobile city of the future, where eco-friendly transport innovations and technologies combine with people's livelihoods and optimize the use of urban and natural resources.”

Gino Van Begin, ICLEI Secretary General

EcoMobility 2013 Suwon Congress: A melting pot of ideas and inspiration for ecomobile cities

The second edition of the ICLEI EcoMobility Congress series attracted 600 local and international actors from the sustainable mobility field to study and explore the ecomobile neighborhood. Over 20 sessions framed EcoMobility from a myriad of perspectives, including urban regeneration, local leadership, social inclusion, public health, and financial and institutional frameworks. The 50 local governments in attendance affirmed the Suwon 2013 EcoMobility Impulse, acting as a guiding document for local governments to review existing transport developments and steer planned investments towards EcoMobility.



International participants explore the ecomobile neighborhood between congress sessions.

International youth activists connected with the Suwon Citizen's Bike School, drawing inspiration and lessons to take home to Indonesia.

Visitors and vehicles

EcoMobility World Festival attracted more than 1 million visits to the renowned 'EcoMobility Neighborhood' of Haenggung-dong. To ensure that the local economy received a boost from the Festival activities, a coupon scheme totaling €200,000 in value was introduced and adopted by 85% of neighborhood shops. A variety of programs attracted tourists to the Festival neighborhood, including a vehicle exhibition, test-tracks and vehicle tours. Cultural activities and weekend markets added a festive mood to the month-long event. More than 20,000 visits were recorded on various tour programs, designed to provide participants with a thorough introduction to the neighborhood, and an in-depth understanding of applied EcoMobility. With universal access as a key consideration of the Festival works, an impaired mobility tour drew partakers through the streets in wheelchairs or with blindfolds, highlighting the experience of navigating the urban realm for disabled persons.



© ICLEI e.V. 2013

The exhibition hall displayed 35 different types of unique ecomobile vehicles

The broad range of ecomobile vehicles from 10 different countries attracted great attention from visitors, who drew inspiration from the images of future transport modes. 35 types of ecomobile vehicles were displayed at the vehicle exhibition, alongside a state-of-the-art bi-modal tram. More than 176,000 visitors tried out the electric scooters, e-bikes, and various bicycles available at the rental station and test-track in a real-life setting, exploring everyday alternatives to their cars.



© Suwon City 2013

Led by volunteer guides, visitors took part in various tours including a wheelchair tour



© Suwon City 2013

Numerous cultural programs added a festive mood to the EcoMobility neighborhood in September

“Due to the Festival, the culture of cycling is spreading, because there are no cars in this area. And that is exactly what we want, because we like to ride bicycles.”

Son Kon Kim, 44 years,
business man from Suwon

“878 vehicles were on show in the neighborhood including electric bikes, electric carts, velotaxis, electric scooters, LEVs, kids' and cargo trailers, multi-purpose tricycles and numerous unique prototypes”



A bicycle bus handmade by Citizens Bike School was a big hit at the Festival

© ICLEI e.V. 2013

Daily life in an ecomobile neighborhood



A passing cyclist looks on as residents occupy a new public space, formerly a parking lot

Children are brought to school with electric carts

Away from the tourists, the media attention and the transport experts, the Festival's main focus was the everyday experience of the residents adapting to the new lifestyle in their redesigned neighborhood.

Imagine if all the cars in your neighborhood were taken away and replaced with green alternatives.

Instead of driving, residents of all ages from all walks of life made their commute to work, to school, their trips to the shops and to leisure activities on foot, with pedal power, or with some LEV assistance.

A neighborhood redesigned for people, not cars

Haenggung-dong residents discovered that in a neighborhood without cars, the space between buildings transforms from car parks and conduits to safe and green places to gather, to enjoy leisure activities, to linger in, and to enjoy.

“ Consider that the car-free event in Suwon is not for a day, not for a week, but for an entire month. That means that people—over 4,000 of them—coordinate school and work schedules, entertainment, socializing and shopping, without cars. ”

Cat Johnson,
Shareable.net, 23 September 2013

A resident shops for groceries at a local neighborhood store



© Santhosh Kodukula 2013



© ICLEI e.V. 2013

Police with light electric vehicles patrol the Festival neighborhood



© ICLEI Korea 2013

“ The Festival journey has not always been easy. Understandably, we had opposition along the way. What inspired me was seeing not just how the physical neighborhood was altered, but how the residents' mindsets changed and they came on board. As well as supporting each other during the month, the residents developed new imaginative ideas for public space and a strong social structure which will benefit their community long after the Festival has ended. ”

Kyeong-ah Ko, Community Director, Suwon City

An elderly resident transports bulky goods using a moving cart



© ICLEI e.V. 2013

Suwon City Community Director riding atop an LEV converses with a resident



© ICLEI e.V. 2013

The Festival legacy

A joint closing ceremony for EcoMobility World Festival 2013 and the 50th Hwaseong Cultural Festival on 1 October signaled the end of the car-free month, but a new beginning for Suwon. Residents reflected on their achievement and celebrated with a closing party, a parade and street celebrations.

Suwon City, together with residents, has begun the decision making process arrangements for the future of the Festival neighborhood. Over 60% of the ICLEI recruited vehicles were donated to Suwon for the continued support of EcoMobility in the city. Building on the changing mentalities of citizens towards EcoMobility, Suwon hopes the Festival will act as a catalyst for sweeping changes in the transportation system, both at home and in other cities around the world.

“ When we decided to attend, I admit I had no expectations of finding a new market. But after visiting Korea with an open mind, experiencing the culture and seeing the genuine interest of our product I immediately changed my perception. Thanks again to ICLEI for giving us this opportunity.”

Erik Nyborg, Congress participant and CEO of Nordicabs



A large crowd gather to mark the end of the Festival in a joint closing ceremony

Post-Festival plans for Haenggung-dong neighborhood

- No parking on Hwaseomun Street and Sinpung Street
- Speed restricted to 30km per hour
- Car-free weekends going forward
- Free parking arrangements for residents in Festival parking lots continued until end of October
- Residents allowed to have their free parking rights in these parking lots renewed permanently, with free rental of bikes
- Further street improvements to be continued

A citizens' round table was hosted by Suwon City on 13 November, feeding in to the future transport policy-making of Haenggung-dong. Around 300 participants outlined speed restrictions, parking controls and one-way systems as the way forward, calling also for the project area to be extended to include the entirety of Haenggung-dong.



Planting pots were redistributed and yellow parking lines were painted in the neighborhood following the Festival

Electronic voting was used in the round-table to record the residents' wishes for the future of Haenggung-dong



Festival Creative Director Konrad Otto-Zimmermann presents confirmation of the vehicle donation to Mayor Yeom of Suwon



A model tram carriage was displayed at the Festival, introducing the mayor's plans for the city down the pipeline



@roadcc “A city in South Korea went a month without cars. How do you think something like this would go down in the UK?”

@bikes_vs_cars “Suwon’s car-free month should be an inspiration to cities around the world.”

@FeyHag “Can we do this? South Korean city of Suwon goes car-free for thirty days”

@dotmakertours “How about it, London? Locals applaud car-free month in Korean city.”

@IsabelShirin “#Car-free month in #Suwon, South Korea. Why doesn’t @ICLEI also support this in the #US? #DC definitely needs a facelift too.”

@Sustaincities “Suwon’s month-long car-free experiment was a big hit - which city is next?”

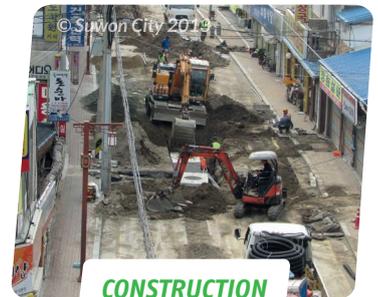
Could your city be the next to take on the car-free challenge?

Hosting the inaugural EcoMobility World Festival provided Suwon with a launching pad for an expanded sustainable transport plan in the entire metropolitan area. Encouraged by the 2013 Festival, a series of annual EcoMobility World Festivals is envisaged, organized in another city on a different continent every year.

- Is your city leader committed to prioritize citizens over cars?
- Do you want to show that taking away cars increases economic value?
- Do you want to show your citizens that there is more than one way to commute to work?

“With this Festival, the City of Suwon has become a leader in advancing environmental and sustainability solutions.”

Park Won Soon, Mayor of Seoul City

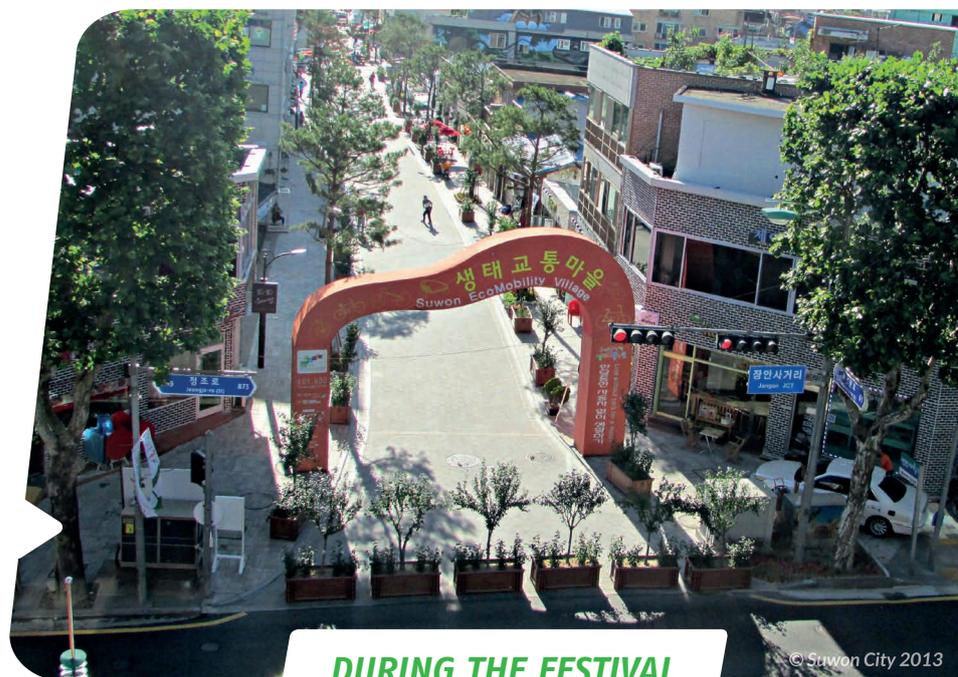


We have the tools to transform your city; all we need is your leadership and commitment

Get in touch with ICLEI EcoMobility team to design your own EcoMobility Festival and see where your city’s aspirations could lead.

 ecomobility@iclei.org

Suwon residents saw Haenggung-dong neighborhood transform through the first month-long car-free neighborhood challenge. See how your city will measure up with tailor-made EcoMobility Festival of your own.



Partners

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Author

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

ICLEI Editors

Santhosh Kodukula, EcoMobility Global Coordinator; Sophie Isabel Verstraelen, EcoMobility World Festival Project Administrator; Eilish O'Loughlin, EcoMobility World Festival Project Assistant; Jiwon Lee, EcoMobility World Festival Assistant

Design & Layout

Angelo Becker, Visual Designer, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

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