

Transport vision 2040 for the Bothnian Arc corridor

Project update

February 2023



PROJECT BACKGROUND

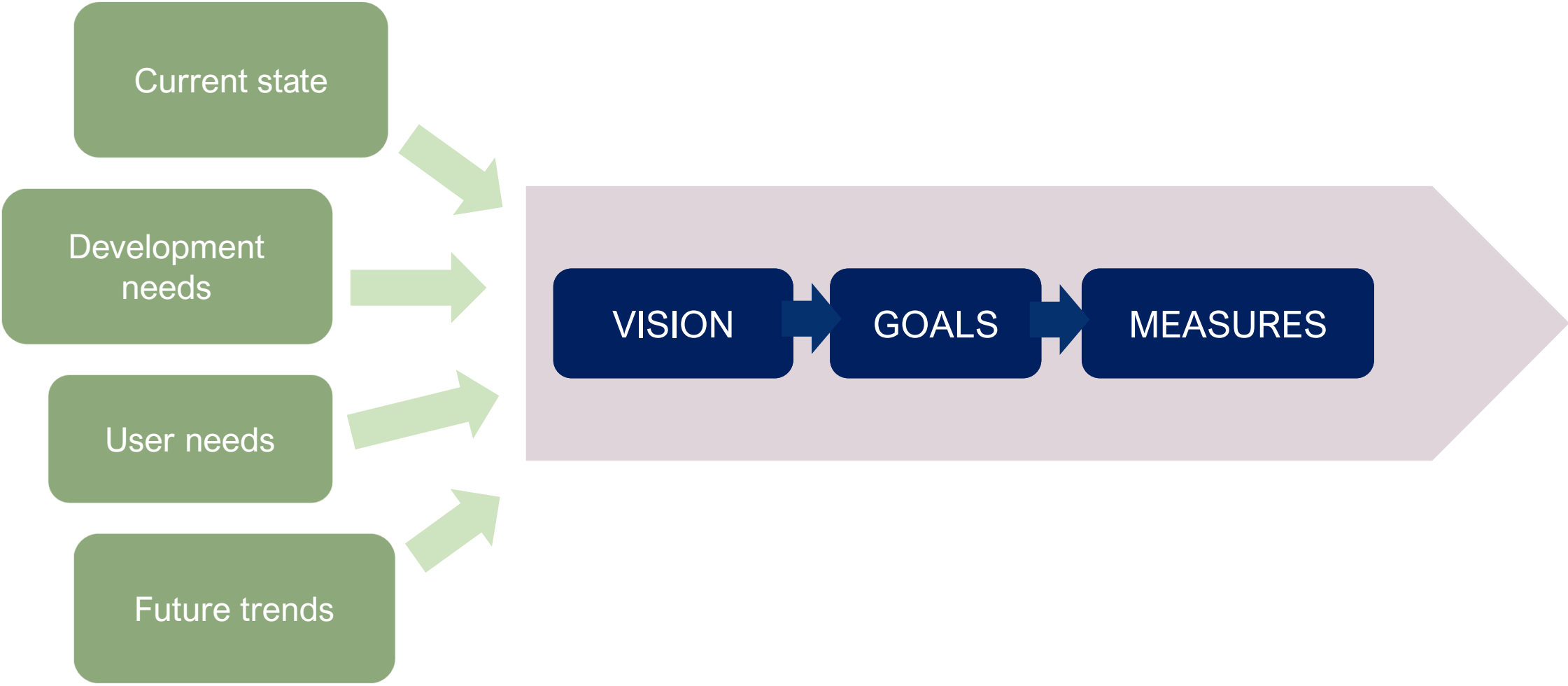
What we are working upon

- Creating a common vision and strategy for the future of the Bothnian Arc transport system
- Interactive process spring 2022 -> spring 2023: Series of workshop
- Both passenger and freight traffic; all modes considered
- Main focus in transport along the corridor, but taking into account last mile & long distance connections
- There are lots of existing initiatives, projects and reports -> building on them, but looking into the future

What we also wish to achieve

- Common understanding -> laying grounds for future partnerships and cooperation
- Strategy formation between two countries - together we are stronger, e.g. when communicating our common goals in national and EU contexts

THE VISION PROCESS



PROJECT ACTIVITIES SO FAR

Workshop 1: Current state and development needs

- 3 June 2022, Tornio (Finland)
- The current state of the Bothnian Arc transport system was discussed
- Stakeholders identified the most important development needs

Workshop 2: User needs and future trends

- 21 September 2022, Oulu (Finland)
- We worked upon the needs of various user groups
- We identified the most important future trends having an impact on The Bothnian Arc area

Workshop 3: Vision, goals and future co-operation

- 3 November 2022, Luleå (Sweden)
- A vision draft was discussed
- We also discussed how to organise future cross-border co-operation on transport issues

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

- Common, cross-border discussion on transport issues has been warmly welcomed – there is a need to continue the co-operation after the project
- The current geopolitical situation has changed the operating environment greatly, e.g. stressing the importance of security of supply and changing freight routes -> role of the Bothnian Arc corridor important
- Green investments and green energy supply are strongly intertwined with sustainable transport systems
- There are many practical issues to be solved to enable fluent cross-border passenger transport (bus, train) -> next steps for co-operation need to be identified

Results of Workshop 2

USER NEEDS: PASSENGER TRAFFIC

User needs

- Co-operation between borders, e.g. discussion about public transport timetables between Finland and Sweden
- Commuting buses between area cross border
- Ease of travel
 - Flexibility
 - One ticket for both sides of the border
 - Easier park & ride with good parking
 - Information collected to one place would also ease the planning of travel chains

Ideal situation of the transport system

- Cross border trains / commuting busses
- Local trains
- City buses in bigger places
- Information and tickets from one source
- Easy and safe parking places for cars and bikes
- Continuous timetables → travel chains
- Possibility to take bike into public transport for first/last mile
- Ticket containing rental bicycle from train station to destination
- Season ticket etc., valid for many different modes of transport and journeys

Results of Workshop 2

USER NEEDS: FREIGHT TRANSPORT

User needs / Ideal situation of the transport system

- Good connections to core network important, also lower road network critical for example in transporting wood
- Easiness to change from one mode to another → investments to terminals and connections to terminals are needed
- Same track width in Sweden and Finland not realistic but can be compensated by investing in terminals and loading areas
- Increase in the cost of road transport can lead to an increase in the need for rail transport → good service level and capacity on rails important, e.g. double tracks are needed. Lack of capacity and double tracks affect also passenger traffic.
- Importance of maintenance especially in rails since the volumes are likely to increase
- Currently no collected information about the volumes of transport to/from factories etc. → Need for better data collection
- A comprehensive network for gas stations/other stations as fuels develop (electric, hydrogen, biofuel etc.)
- More cooperation between transport companies needed → fewer empty trucks on roads, more efficient utilization of the transport system. Cooperation could be facilitated by for example a common digital marketplace.

Results of Workshop 2

FUTURE TRENDS & TRANSPORT

Trends that are most likely to affect the area with big impacts

1. Work and commuting
2. Demographic changes
3. Global economy, green transition and energy issues
4. Climate change and climate policy
5. Geopolitical changes
6. Data and digitalization

1. **Remote work** will somewhat lose its Covid-time popularity; however, it will still have an impact on the transport system (e.g., public transport planning). Bothnian Arc region is soon threatened with a **shortage of workers** because of the many investments planned in the area.
2. Transport system users will increasingly be seniors, and **accessibility** becomes key part of transport system as well. Growing population of **immigrants** will increase the need for clear and accessible traffic information in various languages.
3. In the future, the **energy sector and the transport sector are more and more intertwined** in various ways. Global economy, green transition and energy crisis are linked together and changes in one factor will affect all. The war in Ukraine has accelerated the global transition to greener energy. The war has on the other hand created a possibility and need for a fast shift away from fossil fuels. However self-sufficiency is important (e.g., windmills).
4. **Climate change** will have a big impact in the Bothnian Arc area. EU climate policy will strengthen even more, setting the climate goals for member countries at a very high level. Climate change also includes many different sub-trends, like energy issues, green investments, climate policy in different levels, people's values (trend against flying etc.).
5. New iron curtain is emerging and relations with Russia have become non-existent due to the war in Ukraine. Recent crises highlight the need for a **resilient and adaptive transport system**. Dialogue around military and infra becomes more needed and joining NATO may bring new kind of use and new development needs to the infrastructure networks in the area.
6. **Digitalization** transforms profoundly the methods of distribution, manufacturing and logistics, as well as the business models.

NEXT STEPS

Workshop 4: Action plan and measures

- 16 March, Raahе (Finland)
- We'll formulate the measures that enable us to reach the vision and goals

Interim seminar

- 10 May, Haparanda (Sweden)

Final seminar

- TBA (September/October 2023)