

## **The Tram in Lefkosia**

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In 2006, the Ministry of Communication and Works, realizing that the car-centric transport policy, followed up to then, was not sustainable in the long-term, initiated a Programme for the Enhancement of Public Transport, the first action of which was the development of an Integrated Mobility Master Plan for the capital city, Lefkosia.

In August 2010, the Master Plan was completed by Consultants hired by the Ministry and was accepted by the project's Steering Committee, comprising of all major stakeholders. The plan proposed complete and integrated networks for general traffic, public transport, cycling and pedestrians for the year 2020, as well as proposals for a parking policy, based on the concept of controlled parking, and the establishment of a Transport Authority at the metropolitan level. A pre-feasibility study for a tramway system in the city was also carried out, based on a network of three lines of a total length of approximately 18km. This preliminary assessment indicated that a tramway system in Lefkosia is economically feasible and that there would provide significant benefits for the city, both in terms of mobility management and of economic development. It concluded that a full feasibility study should be pursued.

The worsening economic crisis, from 2011 onwards, impacted the implementation of the Integrated Mobility Master Plan, with funds not being made available for any of the projects stipulated. The Mayor of Lefkosia was, in the meantime, becoming increasingly more worried as a result the accelerating decline of the city as a business centre and realized that the implementation of the mobility master plan could potentially arrest this decline. He placed the execution of the feasibility study for the tramway system as his top priority, a view that was fully supported by all ten Mayors of the Greater Lefkosia Urban conurbation. As the government of Cyprus entered into an austerity programme and had its development programme curtailed, he offered to provide the funds for the feasibility study, which the Ministry gladly accepted.

On the 3rd of December 2013 the contract for the feasibility study was signed between the Public Works Department of the Ministry of Communications and Works and the consortium of the firms NAMA Consulting Engineers S.A. and LDK Consultants S.A. with a duration of 12 months. The scope of the Contract consists of six work packages, ranging from the critical review of the existing situation and consultations, to the development of alternative scenarios and their evaluation, the full economic and environmental assessment of the selected solution and finally a recommendation on a procurement strategy and the preparation of a Procurement Plan.