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PRESS RELEASE

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Dutch plan for improving Oslo's cycling infrastructure honoured with prize

Engineering consultancy Witteveen+Bos, OKRA Landscape Architects and the Norwegian firm Grindaker Landscape Architects have drawn up a proposal entitled 'Oslo – Cycling City For All', with the aim of making the Norwegian capital more attractive to cyclists. The proposal was submitted as part of an ideas competition organized by FutureBuilt and the Norwegian Cyclists' Association. The winners were announced on Wednesday 27 November. According to the jury, the plan is a valuable contribution to the debate on creating better facilities for cyclists in Oslo.

Proposal

The brief was to produce a proposal to make the city centre more attractive to cyclists, including solutions for intersections and interactions between cyclists and motorized vehicles. The proposal of Witteveen+Bos, OKRA and Grindaker calls for integrated planning of all traffic modalities in Oslo. In order to create safer conditions for cyclists, the plan proposes a number of solutions, including restricting on-street parking in the city centre and a reduction of car traffic. The plan also calls for bundling public transportation routes, enlarging the 30-kilometre speed limit zone in the city centre, constructing bicycle routes that cut across the city centre, and diverting motorists away from an enlarged pedestrian city centre with car parks on the perimeter. The designers also propose the construction of more bicycle parking facilities. The overarching aim of the proposal is to improve the quality of public spaces and therefore the vitality of the city centre. In the new situation, cyclists and pedestrians should be given more room and their needs assigned greater priority. The role of motorists will be reduced.

Ideas competition

The ideas competition was an initiative of several organisations including FutureBuilt and the Norwegian Cyclists' Association. FutureBuilt is a programme in which eleven partners collaborate on the realisation of sustainable projects in the region. Entries for the competition could be submitted in five categories. The proposal of Witteveen+Bos, OKRA and Grindaker was the only project to win a prize in the category 'Cycling in the city centre of Oslo'. Under the motto 'Get a bike. Break free!', the competition aims to create a cycling-friendly culture similar to that of the Netherlands and Denmark. Only 7 to 8 percent of employees in Oslo currently take the bicycle to work. In the Netherlands, 25 percent of all employees cycle to work, and half of all short-distance commutes (of less than 5 km) are by bicycle. The aim of the ideas competition is to offer practical proposals for the physical environment and changes in policy, in order to make cycling a realistic alternative to taking the car. Although no contract has been awarded to put the plans into practice, the organisers of the ideas

competition have expressed a wish to develop the proposals. FutureBuilt and the Norwegian Cyclists' Association will examine the plans to determine if they are concrete enough to implement.

Witteveen+Bos exports cycling expertise

In addition to the prize-winning idea for the layout of Oslo's city centre, Witteveen+Bos is also helping to develop cycling infrastructure in other countries. The company recently organised a course on bicycle-friendly traffic planning in the Peruvian capital of Lima, to support the development of a 600-km-long local network of cycling routes. Witteveen+Bos is also carrying out a pilot project to introduce cycling infrastructure to Almaty, the largest city in Kazakhstan. Witteveen+Bos will support the city government by conducting a design study for the pilot route, and by contributing expertise relating to cycling infrastructure.

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Note to editors (not for publication)

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About Witteveen+Bos

Witteveen+Bos provides consulting and engineering services in the fields of water, infrastructure, spatial development, the environment and construction. With some 900 employees, the firm focuses primarily on complex projects requiring advanced knowledge and an integrated approach. The multi-disciplinary approach, which involves intensive co-operation between specialists in different disciplines, is a key element of the way we work. Witteveen+Bos is characterised by its expertise, reliability and commitment. Witteveen+Bos has a unique ownership structure, with the shares wholly owned by its staff. Our clients are government agencies, private companies and alliances. They are served from the head office in Deventer, eight Dutch offices, and foreign offices in Belgium, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Russia and Vietnam. Further information on Witteveen+Bos can be found at www.witteveenbos.com.

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