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for Smart Cities

SMART CITY CHALLENGE 2025

City Challenge

Max 3 pages

send to smartcity@taltech.ee by Sept 30, 2025

Challenge Title – City Dog Passport

City/county and country Liepāja, Latvia

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Which category your challenge is primarily in? Happy City

1. What is the future urban challenge that would need a solution to?

The challenge is related to responsible dog ownership and equal contribution to the city's well-being. In Liepāja, dog owners are required to pay a dog tax, which should be used to improve dog walking areas by installing waste bins, providing bags, erecting fences, and creating training obstacles. However, only around 3% of dog owners currently pay this fee. This creates inequality between those who contribute and those who do not, and at the same time limits investments in infrastructure.

Currently, the dog tax is determined by the binding regulations of the city council, but paid voluntarily in reality. One of the reasons could be that it is inconvenient to pay. Some owners are unaware of the fee, others forget to pay, and the payment process requires finding information and making a manual bank transfer.

When payments are received, they often lack essential details (e.g., dog microchip number or owner data), making it difficult for the municipality to process them. The police also face challenges in verifying compliance, as there is no centralised system like the one used for property taxes.

Meanwhile, Liepāja has an advanced mobile application called Liepāja City. We see an opportunity to connect dog ownership management to this digital tool.

It is important to ensure equality among citizens, improve infrastructure, and strengthen Liepāja's reputation as a dog-friendly and tourist-friendly city. Responsible dog ownership is also crucial for a clean and safe environment, especially in public spaces. Solving this challenge would directly increase citizen satisfaction and quality of life.

This is not unique to Liepāja. Many Latvian cities face the same issue: some have introduced one-time payments, while others have cancelled the tax altogether because of administrative difficulties. The



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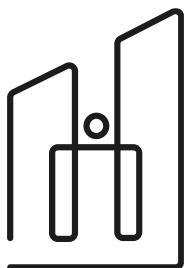


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state-level system for managing such payments is not advanced. Therefore, a digital and user-friendly solution could be replicated across Latvia and beyond.

2. Innovation.

So far, the system has been manual and inconvenient for both owners and the municipality. That is why compliance is extremely low.

We propose creating a City Dog Passport integrated into the Liepāja City app.

Key features would include:

- Connection to the national dog registry for real-time data.
- Easy payment through the app by scanning the dog passport barcode or entering the ID.
- Automatic creation of a digital 'Dog Passport' showing proof of payment.
- Notifications for upcoming payments and vaccination dates.
- Option to show the digital passport to the police when required.
- Access to fenced and equipped dog parks (e.g., opening gates or receiving free dog waste bags).
- Possibility to use the passport as an entry ticket to dog-related events or for receiving discounts.

This solution supports Liepāja's smart city ambitions and strengthens its position as a climate neutral and innovative and smart city.

3. Expected impact of your pilot solution.

- To the city environment: Cleaner and better-maintained public spaces, improved dog-friendly infrastructure.
- To citizens: Greater satisfaction, equality between dog owners, improved knowledge of responsible dog ownership, compliance with welfare rules, and incentives for training.
- To city governance: Simplified administration, higher compliance rates, additional income (up to €70,000 per year from 7,000 registered dogs), and better data availability for enforcement.

4. Piloting

Liepāja would like to pilot this solution because citizens clearly demand more dog walking areas – five new ones were already proposed in a participatory budget project. However, with limited municipal funding, cooperation with dog owners is essential.

The city has the technical capacity to develop this project:

- The existing Liepāja City app developers are available for cooperation.
- The Environmental Department and IT Department are ready to be involved.



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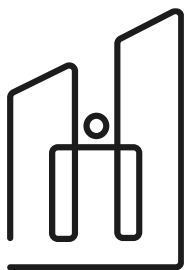


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- Liepāja is actively working towards becoming a Climate Neutral and Smart City.

We believe this challenge is a good opportunity to demonstrate how digital innovation can improve daily life and citizen - dog owners -satisfaction.



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