

Espoo & Closed Plastic Circle— from Pilots into Practice

Image: zhairguns

Making the Deal:



City of Espoo

The Sustainable Espoo program is a City of Espoo initiative running from 2021 to 2025. It is a key part of implementing Espoo's strategy, the Espoo Story. The program focuses on solving major challenges and goals set by the City Council, working across different city departments. To achieve its aims, the program includes a series of coordinated projects and actions, involving city sectors, units, residents, partners, and other stakeholders. It also sets the stage for new initiatives like Local Green Deals to be more widely used in the future.

The Closed Plastic Circle project focuses on helping plastic industry professionals develop effective recycling business models and improve their knowledge of materials. It is part of the Closed Plastic Circle initiative, which builds on work started by the Smart & Clean Foundation from 2018 to 2021.



When the foundation ceased operations, the City of Espoo took over coordination of the project, integrating it into the city's broader plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. This initiative involves partnerships with various stakeholders, including businesses, researchers, and community organizations (Uusimaa/ Päijät-Häme/ Vtt Technical Research Centre Of Finland Ltd./ Hsy Helsinki Region Environmental Services Authority/ Metropolia University Of Applied Sciences/ Lab University Of Applied Sciences/ Salpakierto Ltd./ Muovipoli Ltd./ Finnish Plastics Association), to ensure comprehensive and sustainable progress.

The Commitments:

- The project focuses on supporting plastic professionals in finding functional recycling business models and developing material know-how. It is part of the Closed Plastic Circle scheme, continuing the work started by the Smart & Clean Foundation in 2018–2021. This initiative aims to create a circular economy for plastics by promoting innovative recycling methods and sustainable material management.
- After the foundation ceased operations, the responsibility for coordinating the project was transferred to the City of Espoo. This transition integrates the project into Espoo's broader sustainability efforts and aligns it with the city's ambitious goal of reaching carbon neutrality by 2030. By fostering collaboration between businesses, researchers, and community organizations, the project not only advances plastic recycling practices but also contributes significantly to Espoo's environmental objectives. Through these efforts, the City of Espoo aims to set a global example for sustainable urban development and circular economy practices.



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Espoo & Kera Area Land Use Agreement

Making the Deal:



City of Espoo

The **Espoo City Board** unanimously approved a development commitment for the Kera area in August 2021, as part of the land use agreement included in the town plan for Kera's center. This unique document guides the area's development to align with Espoo's carbon neutrality and sustainable development goals, marking the first time such a commitment has been included in a land use agreement in a Finnish municipality (see the attachment: Keran alueen kehittämissitoumus). The goals were defined through extensive collaboration with local stakeholders and have been signed by both the City of Espoo and the local landowners.

Kera aims to be a pioneering district in sustainable development, circular economy, and digital transformation. This leadership is evident in resource-efficient construction, innovative low-emission energy solutions, and cutting-edge digital services and applications. Kera's strong brand and sustainable solutions will attract individuals and companies committed to a meaningful, sustainable lifestyle and participation in a vibrant community centered around the circular and sharing economy. The city actively supports projects and development activities in Kera, ensuring alignment with sustainable urban solutions and the goals outlined in the commitment.

The Commitments:

This commitment is integral to the land use agreement for the Kera area. By signing this agreement, all parties agree to the development objectives. If the land ownership changes, the ownership for the commitment also moves over to the new landowner.

Participants in the Kera development must create a plan detailing how they will implement the set goals before applying for a building permit. The objectives include developing Kera through close cooperation, achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 using low-carbon and carbon-binding solutions, creating significant circular economy solutions, and establishing Kera as a national and international benchmark for a sustainable city district.

Projects should promote smart, clean urban solutions by fostering open, long-term collaboration to share best practices and innovative methods. They should also implement carbon-neutral heating solutions, energy-saving technologies, and support for future two-way energy solutions.

