



2

QUALITY IN DENSE CITIES

The ambition is to simultaneously achieve urban density and high environmental quality. Functionally, socially and aesthetically mixed structures are a recurring solution. Realisation of this ambition currently meets economic and legal obstacles.

In-fill construction at different scales, combined with a systematic utilisation of specific urban building and built environment types, is a logical approach. Opening completely new greenfield sites hardly is the most sustainable option. In lower density areas, a focussed effort is suggested to create socially central 'third places' outside work and home.



2. QUALITY IN DENSE CITIES

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2.1

Densifying and adding new qualities to the built environment

Entry *Holistic Uniqueness* proposes **urban forms and types of landscape to be sharpened and strongly differentiated**. In this way, the areas are made spatially distinguishable. Sprawl and mergence can be avoided and existing areas intensified by spatial and programmatic densification. Urban forms and landscape patterns are seen as catalysts.

Shaping the urban structure means **shaping relationships between places, people and activities**. The densification involves reprogramming and converting outdated building typologies (e.g. industry hall), multiplying the usages of existing buildings and adding functions to monofunctional areas.

The **surface of built-up areas will be minimized**

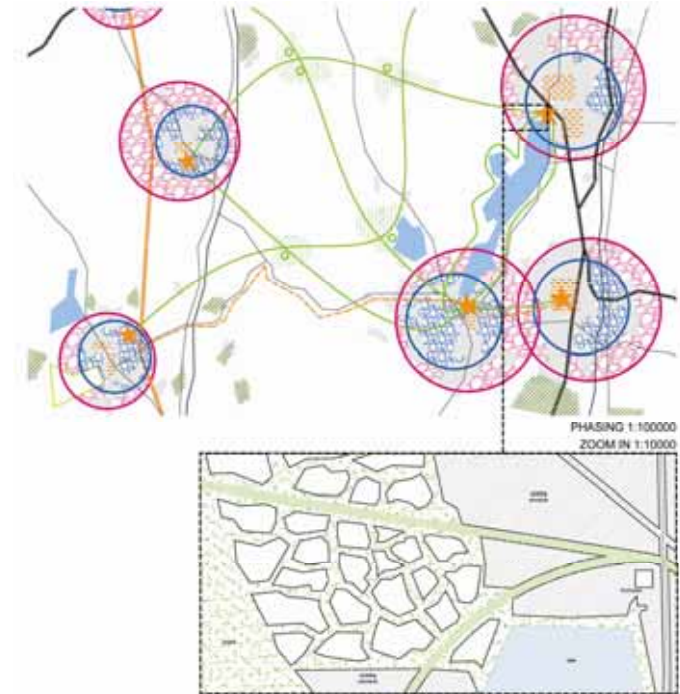
- to get more open space for natural circle systems (e.g. drainage, cooling) and enhancing biodiversity;
- to get more public realm for social interaction; and
- to get multifunctional areas enabling short-distance-living and enriching everyday life.



2.2 Human-mobility-sized towns

The entry *Holistic Uniqueness* proposes that the Helsinki metropolitan region will be developed as a configuration of **eight larger urban areas**, each developing a characteristic profile based on programmatic and spatial specialties.

One of these proposed areas, so-called “Finlegacy”, consists of eight medium-sized urban cores. These urban cores will be densified and enlarged, but only to a maximum size of a diameter of 6 km (= human-mobility-size). The relatively small size fosters biking and pedestrian movement.



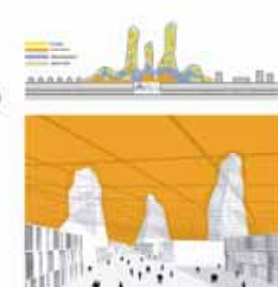
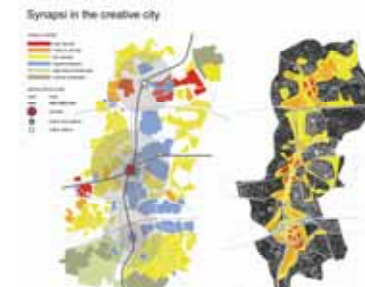
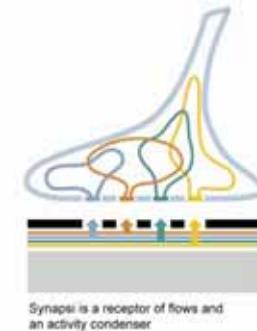
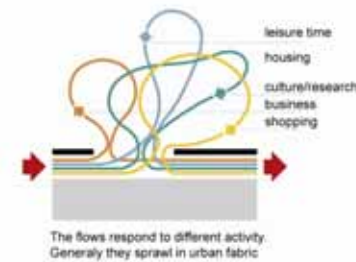
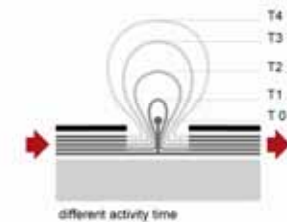
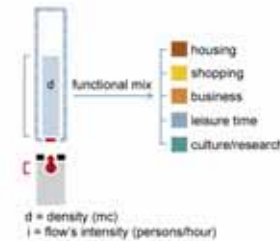
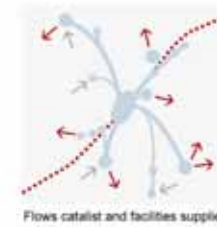
2.3 Synapsi

The entry *Orlando* proposes a fast main railroad “spine” for the region, called “The Hook”, and 7 differently profiled areas along the line. (See idea cards 1.5 and 7.2.)

On main stations of the Hook are located **the most important densification projects, called “Synapses”**. They contain functional mix (office, research, commerce, houses and spare time activities) and can be described as “micro cities”, “receptors of flows” and “activity condensers”.

In Synapses, **functions are near to one another (within 200 - 500 m) and they are connected to the station**. At least 10 % of the total new floor area of the region is planned to be built in the Synapses. The series of Synapses can be called the Warm-City; a linear warm indoor city, bridged together with effective public transport lines. The aim is to maximize connectivity, speed and functional mix.

Synapsi

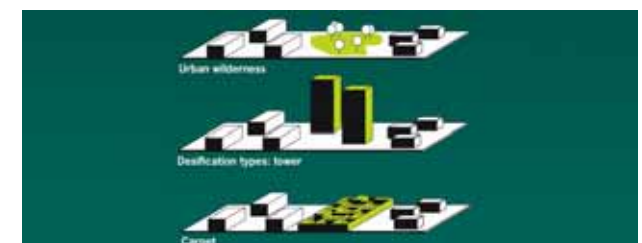
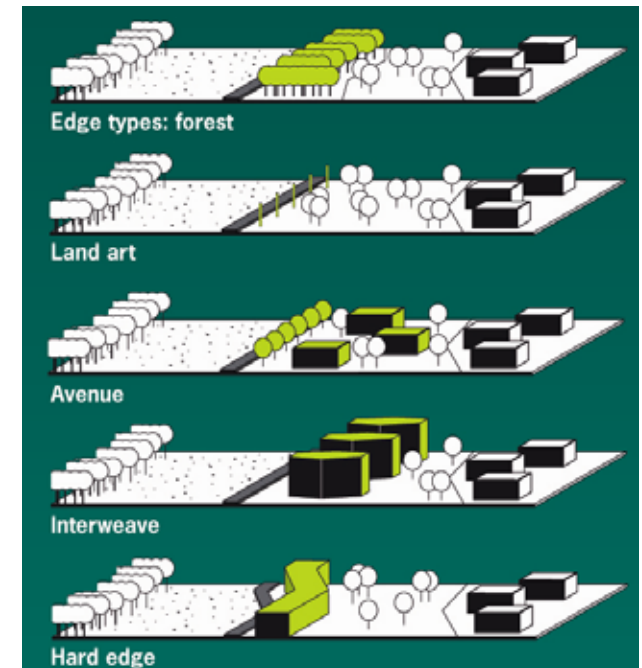


2.4 Densified “Cores”

Metroscape model intends to manage growth with two types of settlements: “**Cores**” and “**Microcores**”. Around every Core there is landscape ring called “Field” (See e.g. idea cards 3.2, 3.3 & 8.2.)

Every community in the region has to identify **one or more urban cores (settlements with over 30 inh./ha)**. **These urban cores are upgraded to urban centres with a specific identity**. The cores will be densified starting from the existing state. This creates greater spatial and functional significance. The cores carry metropolitan functions such as business, political and administrative institutions, education, culture.

The main criteria for the inner additions to the Cores are **mixture and diversity**. The recent Aurinkolahti housing development is a benchmark in terms of density and built quality. Densification and completion of urban structures is to follow a catalogue of urban typologies that are pointed out as typical prototypes in the Helsinki metropolitan region.



2.5

Polycentric structure & mixture of housing, jobs and services

The entry *Emerald* states that there is a **need to direct Greater Helsinki into a more mixed and polycentric structure**. Diversified mixture of housing, jobs and services everywhere decreases commuting both out and inside the metropolis. **Accessibility is a critical factor** in the success of stronger sub-centres.

The **mixture of housing, jobs and services** balances the metropolitan structure and strengthens local services and urban life. This in turn **decreases commuting and encourages new attractive but affordable housing** inside the metropolis.

POLYCENTRIC GREATER HELSINKI

Polycentric Greater Helsinki
Greater Helsinki is a web of various lifestyles, cultures, business opportunities and environments. Centres of diverse character form a network of accessible nodes in the region.



2.6

Mixing hub

To create collaboration between different groups of people on a new level, entry *Towards City 2.0* proposes a new type of public space. **“The Mixing hub” is a public-private space for business, social entrepreneurs, children and leisure.** The hubs offer plug and play facilities where individuals and communities can work, share and link to other communities. In densely built areas they remain open for users 24/7.

To build hubs, city council starts an international corporate responsibility and Pro-Am*) -innovation program. Corporations and hubs work in a basic mutual benefit principle. To remain resourceful, **large organisations must attract activities and innovation outside their core business.** The hubs indicate social change and they feed innovative uses of technologies back to companies that support them.

The hubs have rooms for meeting and reading, sound systems, screening rooms, edits, kitchens, dining areas, gyms, saunas etc., as well as peer-guided social production tools like citizen-wiki's, funding advice, personal development and community building -workshops.

*) professional/amateur

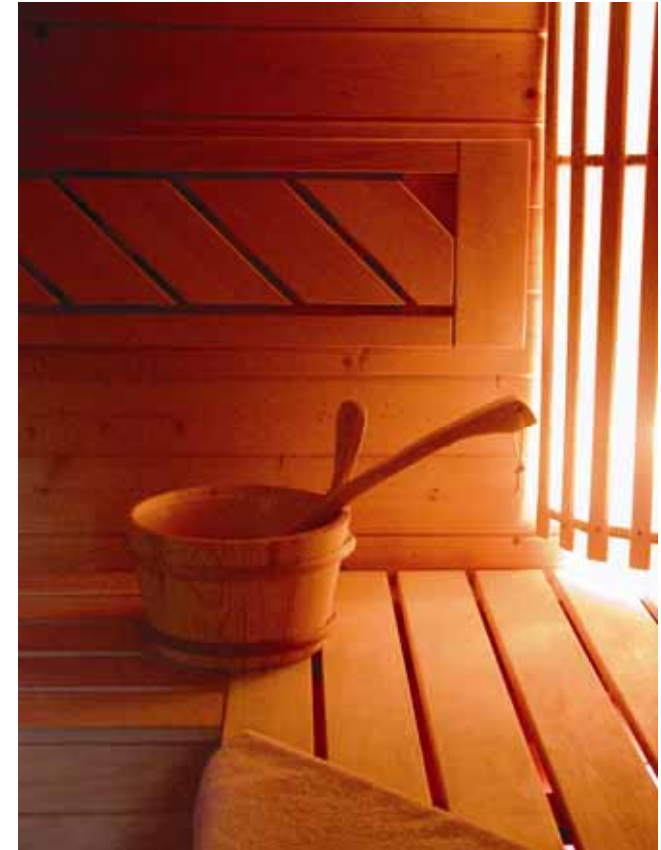


2.7

Distributed home

Public sector by itself innovates only a minor part of the steps required for improving the society. Yet **public authorities have significant means to stimulate mass innovation from the public**. Different forms of resources offer citizens tools that can release slumbering potential.

One of the tools, proposed in entry *Towards City 2.0*, is “**distributed home**”. It **extends the private realm into public spaces**. In the entry, examples of Distributed Home Services available within 15 minutes radius are sauna, one cinema and bar, spa, cold storage, and warm storage.



2.8

Edge articulation & Infrastructural buffer intensification

Instead of a definite model for desired land-use, the entry *(R)evolver* proposes **strategies and tactics**, with which planning can operate in different actual settings in existing built environment. (See also e.g. idea cards 1.7 & 2.9.)

Edge articulation is a tactic to reach beyond administrative boundaries that have created spatial practices of their own. Often **border zones**, whether being ones of regions, municipalities, districts, land tenant or landscape, have the highest level of **potential for multiple usage**.

Infrastructural buffer intensification: The specialized production and maintenance of urban infrastructure has currently a tendency to allocate superfluous spatial buffers to ensure their imaginable future needs. “Infrastructural buffer intensification” is a **recall for diverse actors to negotiate acceptable solution and backup plans**. Typically this happens in traffic arteries, but is in fact more related to single-minded land holding issues and also found in waterworks and ecological corridors.



2.9

Connectivity increasing & Relaxation of functional separation

The entry *(R)evolver* proposes strategies and tactics, with which planning can operate in different actual settings in existing built environment. (See also e.g. idea cards 1.7 & 2.8.)

Connectivity increasing is a technique to open up a new potential in local neighborhoods to allow evolution of land to fill the economic needs of essential supporting activities that are otherwise sought from outside. Typical implementations are in areas where a pioneer single function usage

dominates land use and creates unbearable externalities to immediate surroundings, for example in terms of overwhelming car usage.

Relaxation of functional separation: The zoning laws have created an illusion of an absolute space where aerial labels and land parcels have one to one correspondence. “Relaxation of functional separation” is a tactic to explore the spatial potential from inwards.



2.10 Third places

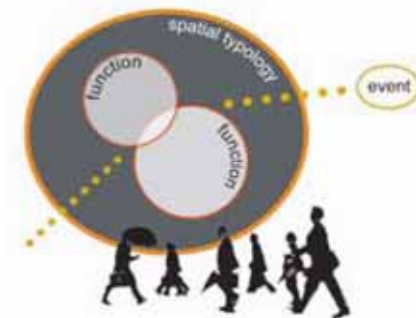
Third places are places outside home and work. They attract people and activity. In the entry *Thirdlife*, third places are meaningful places which promote local identity and improve social contact through informal meetings. They also provide economic crossover and cultural enrichment.

Third places exist in nodes of all levels from downtown to country nodes. They can be **sailing clubs, convention centres, squares, hotels, bars, shopping malls or educational centres**, for example.

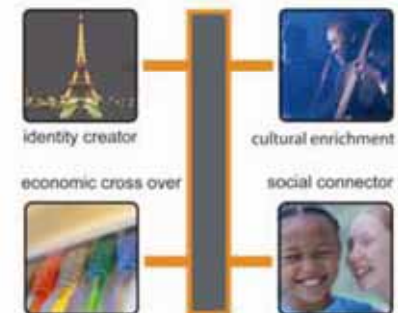
Third places are one of the main priorities of planning an attractive, competitive, and sustainable metropolitan region. The combination of **indoor and outdoor places, programmes and events** contributes to the identity of municipalities.

toolbox third places

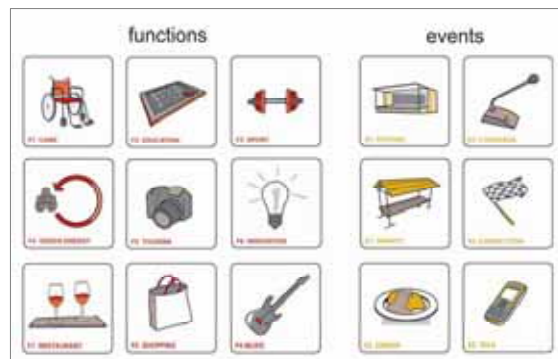
composition of third places



connecting people



function of third places



2.11 Public promotion as a planning instrument

Due to the longevity of the development process several methods are needed. One is to use **public events as instruments of development**. Public events like **exhibitions, reviews or consultations** can foster public attention and involvement.

To strengthen the identification of people and places, entry *Holistic Uniqueness* proposes promotion of local projects or the **implementation of temporary usages of buildings** to be reprogrammed. On the other hand, through open urban and architectural competitions **international input and critique** can be gained. A virtual documentation of the development process (e.g. www.2050.fi) can keep a mass audience informed and involved.

