



HELSINKI CITY PLAN

The city plan draft

Urban Plan

Helsinki city plan draft

Helsinki plans 2015:1



City of Helsinki
City Planning Department

Contents of the city plan draft in a nutshell

A new City Plan for Helsinki is being prepared. The aim is to have the proposed plan submitted to Helsinki City Council for discussion in 2016. The draft of the plan was completed at the end of 2014. This brochure outlines the contents of the draft. The plan is more strategic than previous plans. With this city plan, Helsinki is preparing for a significant population growth. The new city plan is based on an estimate which predicts there will be 860,000 inhabitants and 560,000 jobs in Helsinki in 2050. In order to cope with more people the city has to have a more urban, denser city structure. Densification of the urban structure supports the development of an ecologically efficient urban structure.

City plan key themes:

1. Densifying city centre

The city plan will allow a denser urban structure as well as new investments in the city centre. New business premises can be implemented below the street level in courtyards.

2. The Inner City extends northwards and will create more jobs

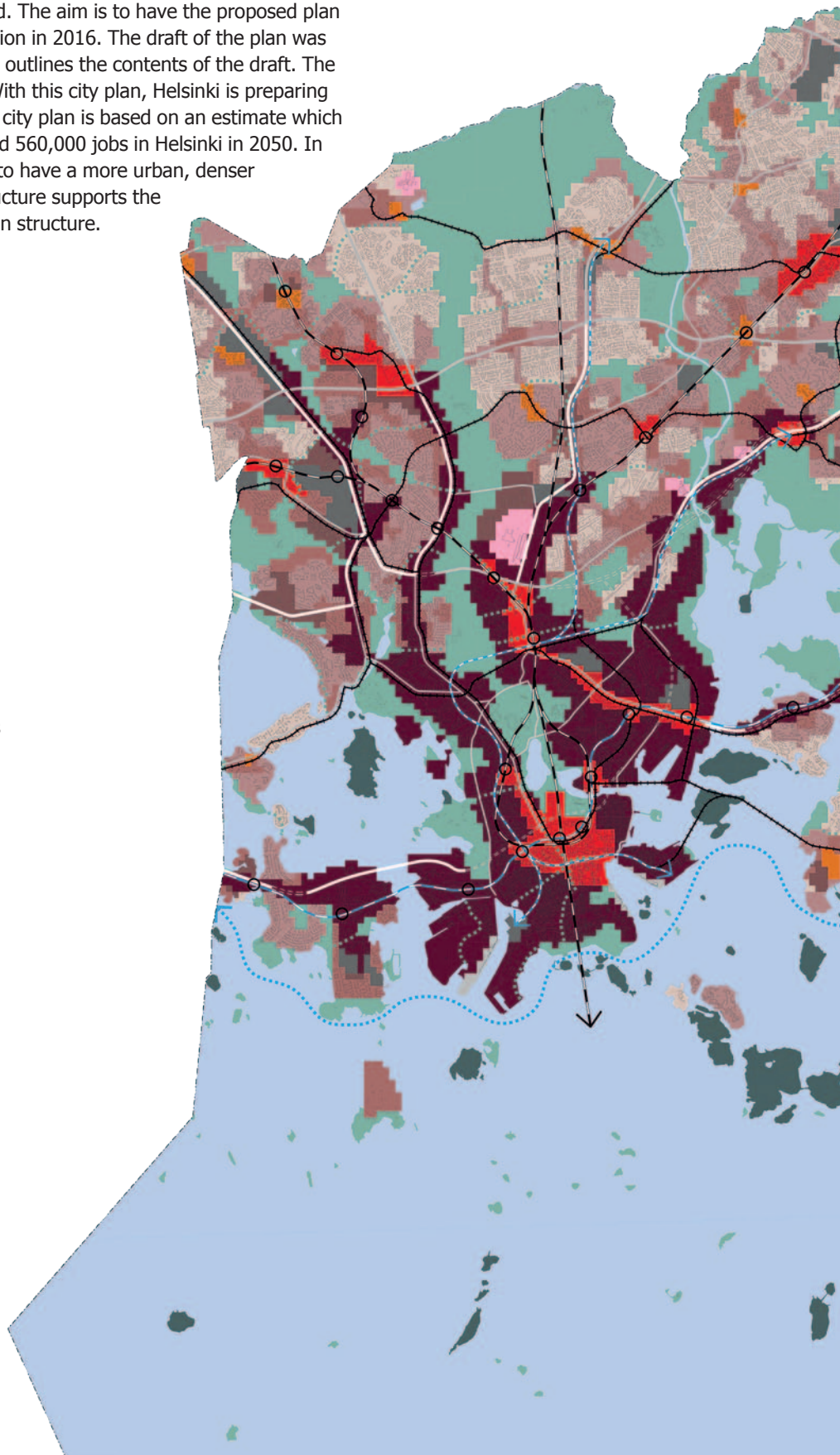
The city centre will be extended towards Central Pasila, some 3 kilometres to the north of the downtown. A new economic axis along the Pasila–Vallila–Kälsatama areas will become a significant business centre.

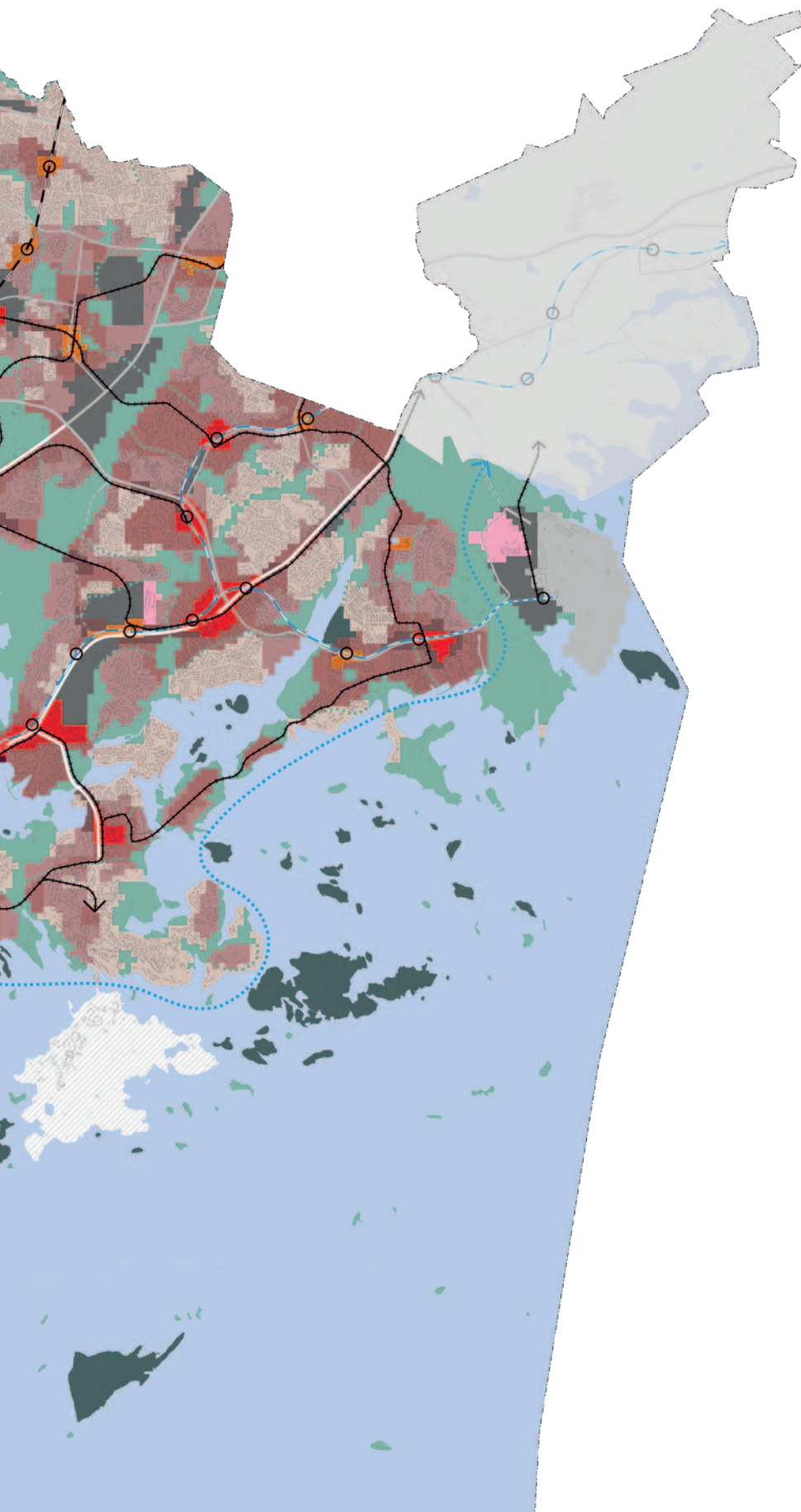
3. New housing development in central Helsinki

According to the city plan draft, there is a building potential for about 45,000 new inhabitants in central Helsinki. Hakaniemenranta is one example of the densifying seaside neighbourhoods.

4. New transverse rail connections

Helsinki has a good radial public transport system of trams, metro, commuter trains and busses. The City Plan aims to invest in more rail transport. The traffic network in the city plan draft is based on a light rail network. Transverse lines connect the radial lines into a traffic network.





5. City boulevards

The city plan draft proposes that existing motorway-like traffic routes be turned into urban city boulevards with new mixed neighborhoods of housing and workplaces built around these city boulevards.

6. Network of green areas

Recreational and green areas form an interconnected network. Transverse green corridors link the main green areas, the 'green fingers'.

7. Suburban centres

The aim is to create lively suburban centres. Important suburban centres include Malmi, Itäkeskus, Herttoniemi and Kannelmäki.

8. A City by the sea

The city plan aims to emphasise the seaside image of Helsinki. The City by the sea offers top-flight recreational areas that are easier to reach than currently. The city's extensive seaside trail ties all the seaside recreational areas together. New islands opened up for recreational use offer inhabitants and visitors the chance to get to know the Helsinki archipelago.

9. Malmi airport area to be developed

One of the most important future housing development areas is the Malmi airport area. It may one day be a neighbourhood of up to 25,000 people.

10. Areas reserved for industrial and office use

Commercial activities will always be welcome in Helsinki. Even though a mixed urban structure is ideal, areas reserved for industrial and office use are still needed. Examples of important commercial estates include Herttoniemi and Pitäjänmäki.

Densifying city centre

Helsinki city centre is the most important commercial centre in Finland. It is comprised of multiple historical layers and is highly accessible. With the new city plan, Helsinki wishes to ensure the strong position of the city centre also in the future. Measured by productivity, the city centre is one of the top areas in the country, important for the entire Finnish economy.

The economies of agglomeration is an important concept for urban productivity. As firms in related fields of business cluster together, they will have greater specialisation and division of labour, resulting in higher productivity.

The city planners of Helsinki have been aiming to strengthen the city centre for a long time. For years, the city centre has been growing inwards. New business premises have been built in courtyards and below street level. This has enabled an expansion of the existing business centre so as to retain its commercial attraction. Such a development, along with investments in the city centre, is desirable in the future as well.

In the city plan draft, the city centre is developed as a functionally mixed area of housing, commercial and public services, offices, administration, parks, recreational and outdoor services and urban culture. Ground floor premises and premises that open into the street should be preferably designated as retail or office space. Sustainable modes of transport, particularly pedestrian and bicycle traffic, will be favoured.



The Inner City extends northwards and will create more jobs

In addition to the old centre, another strong business centre is evolving in eastern central Helsinki. The city plan draft supports its development. The Pasila–Vallila–Kalasatama axis, which roughly follows the Teollisuuskatu street, may become a significant business agglomeration comparable to the current city centre.

Teollisuuskatu is planned to become the main street of eastern central Helsinki, connecting the new centres of Pasila and Kalasatama. Teollisuuskatu has been assigned a new rail connection. Along the axis there lie the business districts of Vallila and Tukkutori, Sörnäinen Metro station, the Konepaja area, which is undergoing profound changes, and Suvilahti cultural centre, surrounded by densely-built residential neighbourhoods.

The major supplementary construction projects in eastern central city are located in Kalasatama, Pasila and Hakaniemi and along the Teollisuuskatu street. The densely built city centre expands to the north and further in the direction of Käpylä.



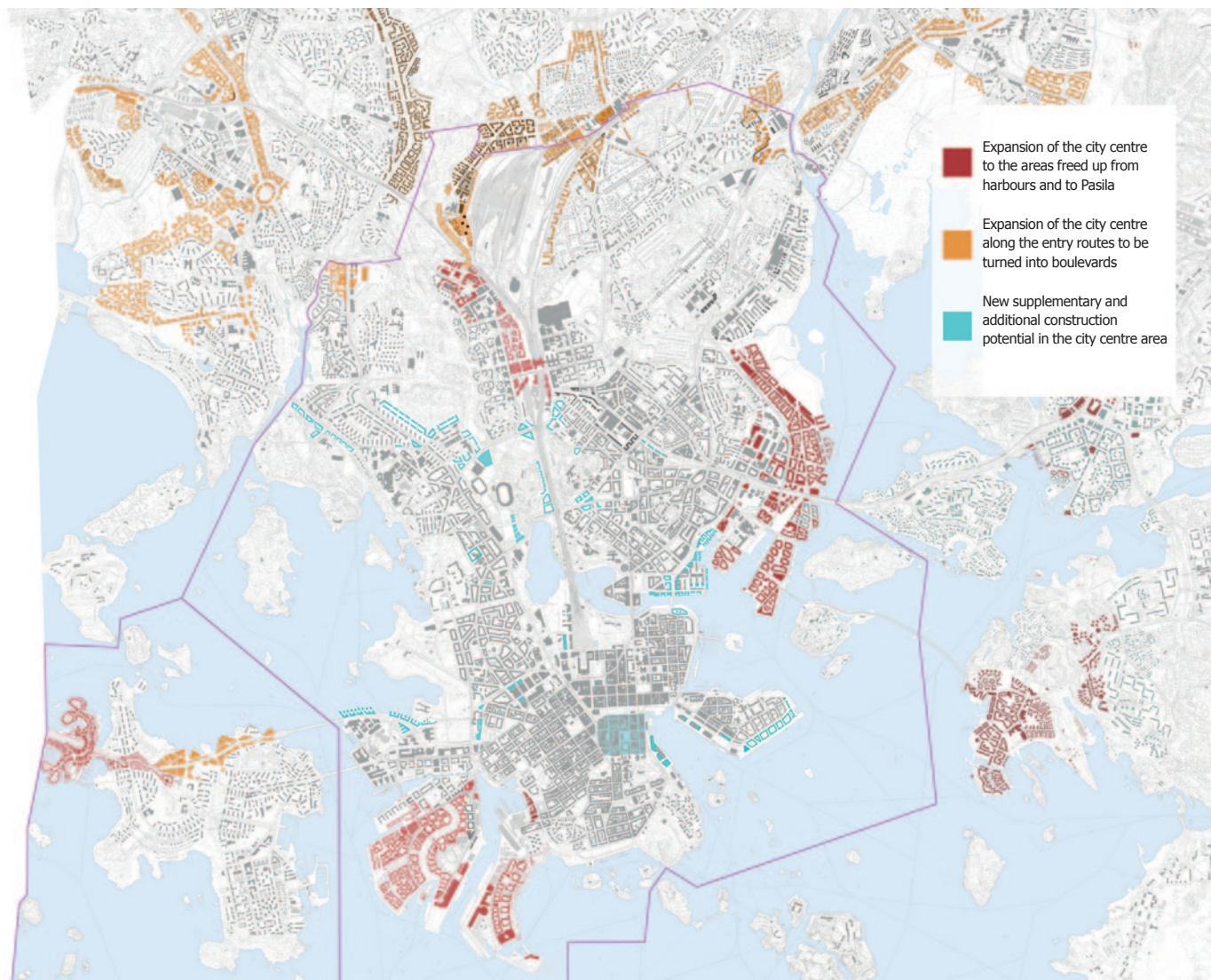
New housing development in central Helsinki

According to the city plan draft, there is a building potential for about 45,000 new inhabitants and 65,000 new jobs in central Helsinki. This includes the areas in Länsisatama, Kalasatama and Pasila, which are already under construction.

The city plan draft enables supplementary construction in areas such as Hakaniemenranta and the south-eastern shoreline of Katajanokka. At Katajanokka it is possible to obtain new residential space for a little over 2,000 inhabitants at the seaside by rearranging the existing thoroughfares and parking lots in the harbour.

Hakaniemi will become an important traffic junction once the Pissaranta rail line and Laajasalo public transport connection are completed. The overhaul of Hakaniemi Bridge will facilitate additional construction and enable the development of shoreline areas. More detailed plans for the area are being prepared.

Potential areas for in-block supplementary construction include the business and service centres, particularly along the Pasila–Vallila–Kalasatama axis and in Kaartinkaupunki.



New transverse rail connections

A densely built city requires an efficient transport system. As the population grows, so does the number of journeys made. Helsinki wants to make sustainable modes of transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport, genuinely competitive alternatives to private cars. The traffic network in the city plan draft is based on a light rail network. Preparations are also made for the expansion of the Metro and railway system.

The light rail lines will extend radially from the city centre to at least Ring I, primarily along boulevard corridors. Some of the lines will go on as far as the town border. Transverse lines connect the radial lines into a traffic network. Lines Jokeri 1 and 2 will be transferred onto rails, significantly improving transverse connections. A new archipelago tram route via Laajasalo to Vartiosaari and thence via Ramsinniemi towards Meri-Rastila would render the seaside areas of the city better accessible by public transport.

A new one-kilometre transverse street connection linking Mäkeläncatu and Hämeentie streets is to be opened solely for public transport in Vallilanlaakso. The new public transport street enables more efficient use of the existing public transport lines and the setting up of new connections. The new connection will be utilised by the so-called science tram line which links Meilahti and Otaniemi (in Espoo) with Kumpula and possibly Myllypuro.





City boulevards

The city plan draft proposes that existing motorway-like traffic routes be turned into urban city boulevards. This would be a major change in the city's infrastructure, as the areas around the thoroughfares could then be shaped into urban neighbourhoods. Currently, areas around thoroughfares with heavy traffic are defined as being subject to noise and air pollution. Locating residential buildings in these areas is extremely challenging and requires thorough planning and design in order to achieve a healthy living environment.

The city boulevards are an urban land-use solution and an important traffic solution. All entry routes to Helsinki inside Ring I would be gradually turned into city boulevards. The nature of the current motorway-like thoroughfares would undergo a profound change. They would change from routes conveying fast automobile traffic into traffic corridors serving multiple transport modes. A city boulevard would serve motorists, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. Mannerheimintie and Mäkeläkatu are examples of existing streets in Helsinki that resemble the city boulevards envisaged in the city plan draft.

Speed limits on the city boulevards would be lower than on the existing entry routes. Some of the interchanges would be replaced by level intersections. For a smooth traffic flow, it is important, however, to be able to utilise compact urban-style grade separated intersections at certain points where the traffic is particularly heavy. Likewise, smooth crossings and grade separation, if necessary, must be implemented at points where bicycle paths or light rail lines intersect with city boulevards.

The road network in the vicinity of city boulevards will be improved so that it covers more areas. Care will be taken that traffic will not significantly increase in the lower-level road network as the capacity of the entry routes decreases. Transportation demand in excess of the conveyance capacity will be effectively directed to public transport, pedestrian routes and bicycle paths.

According to the city plan draft, all entry routes to Helsinki inside Ring I can be turned into city boulevards in the future. Vihdintie and Itäväylä city boulevards will extend to the town border, for they are already now quite city-street-like in the area between Ring I and the town border. In addition to the entry routes, Laajasalontie is designated a city boulevard in the city plan draft.

Due to current land use and the vicinity of Malmi cemetery, the development possibilities for Lahdenväylä city boulevard between Viikki junction and Ring I are more limited than for the other city boulevards. On Länsiväylä and Itäväylä, the city boulevard design solutions may include covered sections. The lengths of the covered sections and tunnels on the city boulevards will be specified in detailed plans.



Network of green areas

In the city plan draft, the recreational and green areas form an interconnected network. It comprises the 'green fingers' extending into the larger metropolitan region, other park areas and transverse green corridors. The areas are diverse. They include many scenic and historic entities, large recreational areas, such as outdoor exercise parks and neighbourhood parks, as well as protected areas, such as Natura areas.

The city plan draft also includes transverse green corridors between the larger green and recreational areas. It is important that the separate green areas can be interconnected in a natural way. The interconnecting corridors may vary from man-made structures to natural wooded areas. Where necessary, green overpasses or underpasses will be built.

The green and recreational network as well as the urban nature network along with the related objectives are presented in the city plan theme maps. The 'recreational network' theme map presents the objectives for developing a recreational entity comprised of large continuous recreational areas, transverse green corridors between neighbourhood parks, river banks, city centre green areas, the seaside trail and landlocked bays.

The 'urban nature' theme map presents nature conservation areas, Natura areas, the areas currently included in Helsinki's nature conservation programme, the woodland network, the meadowland network and the core areas of urban nature. A new nature conservation programme is also being prepared for Helsinki, which includes an urban woodland network.



Suburban centres

An objective of the city plan draft is to create lively population centres in the suburbs of Helsinki. This requires that each centre has a population base large enough. In this way, there could be specialty retail stores, diverse services and a greater number of jobs in the suburban centres. The suburban centres would have a mixed urban structure with streetside businesses. Important suburban centres include Malmi, Itäkeskus, Herttoniemi and Kannelmäki.

Itäkeskus has been growing continuously and is already now a very lively hub. The city plan draft assigns a fair amount of new construction potential to Itäkeskus. According to a reference scenario prepared for the area, the supplementary construction potential for both residential and business premises in Itäkeskus amounts to one million square metres of floor area.

Malmi is the suburban centre of north-eastern Helsinki and an important hub in the urban rail network. Malmi has a great growth potential and may become a major business and administration centre as rail connections gain importance and the area becomes more accessible with the arrival of Jokeri 2. The development of the Malmi airport area would expand the population base of the area.

Kannelmäki is an important centre in western Helsinki. The city plan proposes to strengthen the position of the neighbourhood around the Kannelmäki station, giving it the status of a large business and service centre. In this way, the consumer goods retail services away from the centre can be better tied to the old station centre.

Plans have already been prepared for the centre of Herttoniemi, where the business and residential building base will expand significantly. Herttoniemi is the centre of the south-eastern suburbs. Some 100,000 people live in its impact area. The centre of Herttoniemi can be extended towards the city centre by covering portions of Itäväylä and Metro.

The main objectives for the development of suburban centres include creating more lively urban space as well as better pathways, attracting new inhabitants and jobs into the centres, close to the stations. The city plan supports this development.



A City by the sea

The city plan draft and its theme map 'maritime Helsinki' take a look at maritime land use from the point of view of recreation, housing, business, harbour operations, traffic, maintenance and safety. The theme map shows the beaches and islands allocated for recreational use, for instance. It also shows the seaside trail which significantly improves the accessibility of the shoreline to pedestrians and cyclists. Novel maritime housing solutions include floating houses, houseboats and a permanent year-round island dwelling.

New opportunities for utilising the archipelago arise as islands which had been reserved for the defence administration are being opened up for civilian use. Their use will be re-evaluated. Such islands include Vallisaari, Kuninkaansaari, Kuivasaari and Isosaari.

The aim is to open up the islands for recreational use. Vallisaari and Kuninkaansaari islands are located only a few kilometres from the city centre of Helsinki and from the new Jätkäsaari, Kalasatama and Kruunuvuorenranta areas under construction.

The development of Vallisaari, Kuninkaansaari, Kuivasaari and Isosaari will be carried out in a manner that will respect the islands' cultural and military history as well as their wild nature. In Isosaari, the existing infrastructure – roads, harbours, power lines, sanitation and a wastewater treatment plant – makes possible the implementation of other facilities, such as an oil spill response centre, on the island.

The city's location by the sea opens many development opportunities for Helsinki: from general tourism, wilderness safaris and recreational fishing to improving the maritime infrastructure and accessibility of the archipelago. All in all, a versatile development of the maritime Helsinki is an important objective of the city plan.



Malmi airport area to be developed

One of the most important housing development areas in the city plan draft is the Malmi airport area. It may one day be a neighbourhood of up to 25,000 people. Once this area is developed, it will have a significant impact on Malmi and the entire north-eastern Helsinki. The aim is to create a new district with a strong local centre of its own. The development of the airport area is possible as the Government is planning to close down the airport.

Plans for the airport area will take into consideration its links with the surrounding districts. The block structure will be varied. The old airport will be visible in the form of green axes in the new cityscape and urban structure. The airport area will be easily distinguishable from the existing urban fabric. The building base will be diverse, consisting of blocks of flats and urban detached houses.

Malmi airport area could be turned into small town which would diversify the housing supply in north-eastern Helsinki. Parks and listed historic buildings are important aspects of the identity of the new area. Another important thing is to ensure good rail transport services to the airport area.



Areas reserved for industrial and office use

There are many enterprises in Helsinki which cannot be located in the middle of residential areas because of the nature of their operations or their logistical needs. Such enterprises include ones that cannot be situated in a mixed urban structure because of accessibility requirements or because their production processes would cause great inconvenience to people. Even though a mixed urban structure is ideal, areas reserved for industrial and office use are still needed.

The question is, where to locate these trading estates. Enterprises benefit from being near other enterprises, so the office parks need to be large enough and allow for growth of the companies. In Helsinki, there are two large-scale trading estates outside the city core which are easily accessible by public transport. These are Pitäjänmäki and Herttoniemi–Roihupelto.

In addition to Herttoniemi and Pitäjänmäki, areas reserved for light industrial and office use can be found in Tattarisuo, Tattariharju, Konala (close to the Vihdintie road), Vallila, Tukutori neighbourhood, Reimarla, Suutarila, Malmi, Tapanila, Heikinlaakso, Viikki, Kivikko and Kurkimäki. Another important area is located in Metsälä. It will grow in importance if the Tuusulanväylä road is rerouted there from Käpylä in connection with the implementation of the Tuusulanväylä city boulevard.



How to read the city plan draft

The city plan draft does not define clear borders between areas. The city plan is a plan for planning, enabling certain things. It provides the basis for more detailed planning of the urban area. From the point of view of land use, the city plan draft only deals with the most important issues.

The city plan draft map consists of squares with each square equalling an area of one hectare, i.e. 100 x 100 metres. Each square is marked according to its primary use. Areas that are primarily residential are coloured brown. In addition to housing, these areas contain parks, businesses, services, recreational areas and streets.

The land use of adjacent squares may also be planned by taking into consideration the primary uses of both adjoining squares. Any demarcation issues will be resolved in detailed planning. Areas marked 'city centre' (Kantakaupunki) include important recreational areas, such as Lapinlahti Hospital campus, Kesäranta and Mäntyniemi. These areas are to remain unaffected.

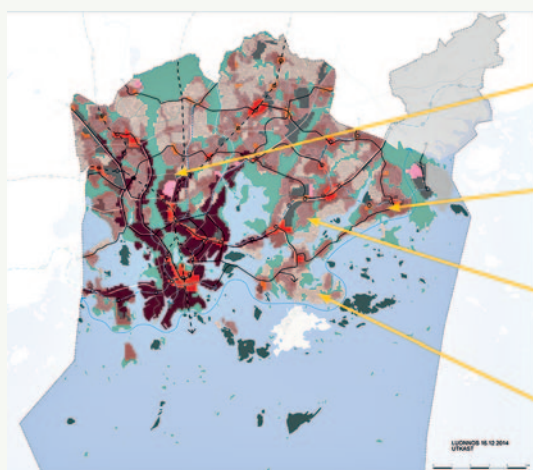
The green and recreational areas include conservation areas, such as nature reserves and Natura areas. Their detailed borders are not displayed in the city plan draft but they, along with other protected areas, must be carefully observed in detailed urban planning.



The density of primarily residential areas as an example

Primarily residential areas are marked in four different shades of brown: the darker the brown, the greater the amount of construction in the area.

The volume of construction is expressed as block density, which is the relationship between the floor area of buildings in the block and the block's overall area.



BLOCK DENSITY OVER 1.8

The current dense residential areas are, among others, Kallio, Ruoholahti and Töölö.



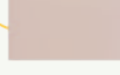
BLOCK DENSITY OVER 1.0

For example, Katajanokka, Vallila, Arabianranta and Herttoniemi.



BLOCK DENSITY OVER 0.4

At the moment, density is achieved in many primarily apartment block areas from the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, such as Lauttasaari, Ruskeasuvi and Haaga as well as track-side city district centres.



BLOCK DENSITY UNDER 0.4

The areas are, for example, Pakila and Oulunkylä's, Mellunmäki's and Tuomarinkylä's areas dominated by detached houses.



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