



# CREATING MOVEMENT

## YTIMESSÄ: RETHINKING THE HEART OF HELSINKI

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## INTRODUCTION

The proposal “Creating Movement” for the competition “Ytimessä: Rethinking the Heart of Helsinki” aims to redefine the center of Helsinki. It is a transformative initiative that focuses on upgrading the city center to create vibrant, welcoming, and sustainable spaces. This ambitious project aims to revolutionize the cityscape by focusing not only on aesthetics, but also on the overall experience of residents and visitors.

Helsinki has experienced continuous change throughout its centuries-long history. The city center has been influenced by a variety of factors, including global political events, epidemics, infectious diseases, trade-related requirements, population movements, and trends in urban planning. Therefore, one can conclude that change is the only constant in life. In this work, movement has been utilized as a concept to enhance the vitality and sustainability of Helsinki through embracing the dynamic aspects of movement across various dimensions.

The proposal aims to create a concept that helps enhancing Helsinki’s city center. The concept revolves around the idea that movement, in various forms, is essential. It encompasses dynamic changes in spaces, people’s mobility, flexibility, and trade movements. Historical spaces can be repurposed respectfully while embracing new uses, adapting to changing spatial needs. The city center attracts people seeking cultural events and social interactions, necessitating sustainable accessibility, and inviting spaces. Flexibility is crucial in a constantly evolving world, promoting adaptable structures for interim uses, particularly in transitional city spaces. Furthermore, acknowledging the evolving nature of trade, the concept emphasizes creating sustainable trade opportunities in Helsinki’s center, considering its historical significance as a trading hub.

Moreover, this proposal seeks to create environments that exude joy, intrigue, comfort, and safety, exerting an irresistible pull that entices people to explore and linger in these revitalized areas. We firmly believe that by introducing visually arresting elements, inviting seating, engaging events and subtle but impactful changes, we can entice people to visit restaurants, cafes, stores, and museums. This in turn will stimulate local market dynamics and encourage entrepreneurial aspirations, bringing a new life into Helsinki’s central spaces. However, our vision for urban regeneration goes beyond human-centered design. Recognizing the importance of coexistence with nature and other species, our approach to improving the quality of life considers the harmonious integration of green spaces, ecological considerations, and the well-being of all residents, regardless of species.

This project is not only about redesigning the landscape, but also about creating an inclusive, dynamic, and sustainable urban center that meets the diverse needs of the community, fosters economic growth, and creates a closer connection between people and their environment.

The proposal consists of three parts. First, we provide an analysis from three different perspectives: a landscape analysis, a quantitative analysis, and a qualitative analysis. Based on these analyses, the concept and principles have been formulated. This is followed by the measures, where improvement proposals are explained through five specific locations in Helsinki’s city center. These are then reflected through personas created in the analysis. Finally, ways to communicate and market the improvement proposals to the city’s residents are discussed.

# ANALYSIS

The assessment of the current state of Helsinki city center is based on landscape, quantitative and qualitative analyses. The diverse array of analytical methods, along with a comparison of our results with previously established findings, provide valuable insights necessary for developing recommendations for improvements.

## LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

A landscape analysis was carried out to form an overview of the landscape structure of the area. This type of analysis recognizes the characteristics of a place, its strengths and resources. It is a tool which can help to identify the development needs of a certain place or area.

Helsinki city center has developed into a place where many elements collide, forming a diverse landscape. The sea is present in all directions, and the wind conditions are accordingly strong. Helsinki city center is located on a peninsula, and provides short walking distances. Being carved from rocks, stone is a very visual element in the center, both as ground rocks but also as a building material. Nowadays Helsinki faces very different challenges than when being designed by Engel.

The city center has a lot of historic values and values related to the built environment, some of which are presented on the first map. The values and the history of Helsinki need to be considered and respected while bringing new alongside the old. Natural values are not as present as the built environment values in the center, as the second map demonstrates. The third map shows that Helsinki's green structure consists mainly of green areas within the urban structure, a mosaic of parks and esplanades. These are supplemented and partly connected to each other by street trees. Still, green connections as well as biodiversity and nature values could be further improved by human actions. By seeing the center in a new way, it is possible to bring natural values to the center as well.

The change of the scale of moving has largely shaped the city center. It has evolved from a walkable city to a city transformed by the speed of motorized vehicles – cars, buses, trains, trams, and the metro. The scale and size of urban areas have been shaped accordingly.

Helsinki was also primarily a center of trade, with the squares being important commercial meeting points. Since the upswing of online shopping, remote work and commercial centers being located in outer areas, people do not go to the center anymore mainly for commercial purposes. Major events which bring cultural value to the center alongside the museums, art galleries and food scene, such as Helsinki Pride, Helsinki Marathon, Helsinki Lux Festival and Flow Festival to name a few, bring great quantities of people to the city center. These people come mainly for the event, but use the center services secondarily, such as restaurants, shopping, and museums, thus, synergy effects are significant on other services. Helsinki has a clear need for diverse spaces for different sizes of outdoor and indoor events.

The center of Helsinki includes many pleasant surroundings, such as Esplanadi park. However, there are also areas, such as the ones around the main railway station, where the presence of grey infrastructure can make the space less comfortable. For more people to spend time in the city center, it needs pleasant places to stop and sit for a while. The center needs flexible, free spaces which people can make their own by using them in different ways.



Map of values related to the built environment



Map of natural values



Map of the green structure



# QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The quantitative analysis involved conducting an online map-based survey and analyzing the results. The Maptionnaire tool was used to create the survey, as this softGIS approach has been successfully applied before both in research and planning practice. The aim of this survey was to gather experience-based information about the city center from both residents and visitors. The questionnaire consisted of introductory information and 16 questions, with 9 of them focused on mapping places. The questionnaire was provided in English. However, it is acknowledged that offering the option to fill out the survey also in Finnish and Swedish could have been more optimal, potentially attracting a higher number of respondents and a more diverse range in terms of background.

The data was collected between October 19 and October 26, 2023. A total of 78 responses were received, with 56 of them suitable for further analysis. When asked about their primary place of residence, 19,7% of respondents reported that they live in Helsinki city center, while 37,5% stated they reside elsewhere in the Helsinki Metropolitan area. 8,9% of respondents said they live elsewhere in Finland, while 33,9% indicated that they reside elsewhere in the world. Not all respondents specified their gender and age, however, among those who did, 79,5% were women, and almost half of the respondents (48.7%) were between the ages of 18 and 24. 12.8% of respondents stated that they are between the ages of 45 to 54, while 20.5% said they are between the ages of 55 to 64. Overall, respondents tended to be younger in age and predominantly women.

The respondents were asked to mark various types of their everyday places in the city center on a map, including locations for work or study, shopping, socializing, recreation, personal matters, and other everyday activities. Additionally, they were asked to identify perceived negative and positive places. In total, respondents marked 351 places on the map. Of these, the most frequently marked were positive places (n=111), followed by places for shopping (n=58) and places for socializing (n=50).

Places for recreation (n=15) and unspecified other everyday places (n=14) were the least frequently marked on the map. The markings indicate that the most popular places for shopping include shopping centers Forum, Kamppi Helsinki, and Kämp Galleria, as well as Stockmann Helsinki Center. Additionally, a significant number of markings are located along Aleksanterinkatu Street. The marked places for study or work were rather dispersed. However, a notable cluster of markings related to the premises of the University of Helsinki was found. The marked places for socializing were also dispersed, but a cluster was identified within vicinity of Citycenter Mall Helsinki. The markings for positive places were predominantly concentrated in Esplanadi, the Töölönlahti bay area, Helsinki's central market near the shore, the Old Church Park, and in or near Helsinki Central Library Oodi. In contrast, markings for negative places were mostly centered in the area around Helsinki Central Railway Station.

Respondents were asked to characterize Helsinki using three words. The word cloud depicts respondents' perceptions of the city center, highlighting that the most frequently used words by respondents were 'modern', 'green', 'natural', and 'clean'.

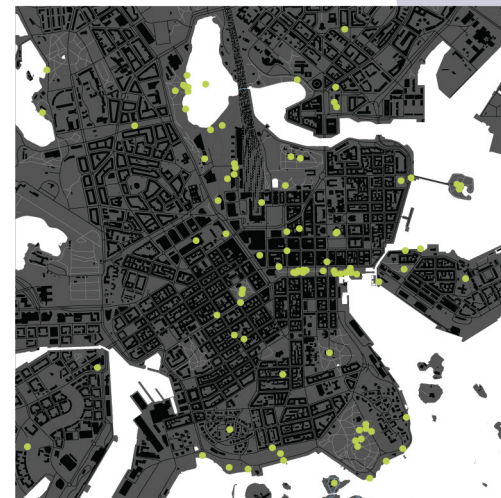


The number of respondents in our survey was relatively low compared to other studies and the survey's results may not necessarily represent the wider population. Consequently, proposed measures for the improvement of Helsinki city center were also influenced by findings from previous studies.

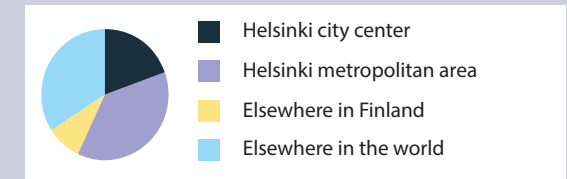
Map of places perceived in a negative way by the respondents



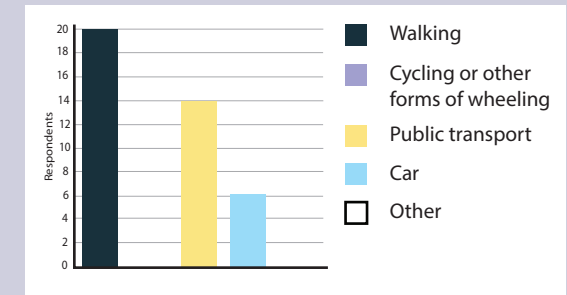
Map of places perceived in a positive way by the respondents



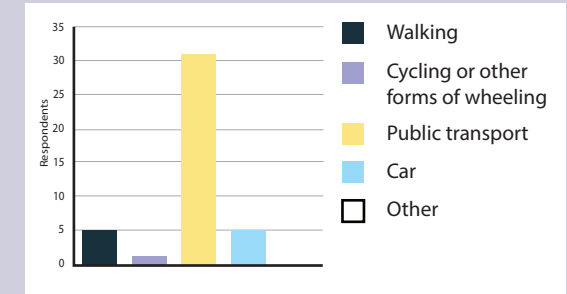
Respondents' primary place of residence



Respondents' preferred modes of transportation moving within the city center



Respondents' preferred modes of transportation for commuting to the city center



# QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The qualitative analysis included on-site interviews with six randomly selected individuals. As a part of the analysis, a qualitative study in the form of an interview was conducted. The interview consisted of a few brief open-ended questions, asking respondents to describe Helsinki in three words, explain their reason for visiting the city center, share their mode of transportation to and within the city center, and mention any positive or negative aspects of Helsinki today. These interviews were conducted on-site outside the Oodi library, near the Railway center, and along Aleksanterinkatu. The respondents were randomly selected from people passing by, with the intention of covering various characteristics. These interviews, in turn, formed the basis for creating six different personas. While these personas may not consider all the needs and interests surrounding the development of Helsinki city center, the idea is still that they represent a portion of the various viewpoints that exist and how these perspectives might respond to different types of plans in different ways. The personas are described by general demographics, their income status and social network.

## Tuula, 45

- Olari, Espoo
- Husband, two children
- Detached house
- Entrepreneur
- 
- 



Tuula is a passionate entrepreneur living outside the center of Helsinki in Olari, Espoo. Her business is expanding, and she is interested in both changing office spaces to a larger one, and organizing pop-up events to increase the visibility of her company. She invests a significant amount of time in her business, making it crucial for her to strike a balance between leisure, quality time with her family, and her professional life. To save time, she commutes by car to her office in Helsinki's center daily, benefiting from street parking outside her office. During her lunch break, she visits the restaurant below the office with her colleagues, and after work, she usually heads to the gym in the building next door. Values: Financial stability, innovation, freedom, healthy work-life balance, quality time with family.

## Olavi, 77

- Töölö, Helsinki
- The Labrador Sisu
- Apartment
- Pensioner
- 
- 



Olavi is a solitary pensioner living in Töölö, Helsinki. He finds joy in the company of his dog but seeks casual, minor social interactions with strangers. Every day, he takes walks in the neighborhood and by the Töölö Bay with his dog, requiring several sitting breaks due to his walking disabilities. Olavi enjoys moments of sitting on benches, observing people, and reflecting on life, which offer him a sense of connection to the world around him. Values: Enjoys nature, accessible and peaceful environments, daily routines with his dog.

## Ella and Amina, 16

- Itäkeskus and Lauttasaari, Helsinki
- Parents and siblings
- Apartments
- Students
- 
- 



Amina and Ella are two cheerful teenagers who enjoy hanging out together, especially at happenings and events. They meet up several times a week after school in the city center of Helsinki, since it's halfway between both of their homes. They often go to cafeterias, stroll around shops, or hang out together at the Oodi library. They don't have much money, which leads them to seek out places and activities that are inexpensive or free. Amina and Ella heavily rely on dependency, making public transportation essential for the young couple to travel and meet up. They also move around in areas with a high perceived safety, especially in the evenings. For instance, places with a lot of people and good lighting often feel safe for the young adults. Values: Free activities and events, social meeting points, public transport, safe environment.

Onni is a curious three-year-old who often is out on adventures in his stroller with his dad. He loves exploring his surroundings, from animals and trams to tall buildings and people passing by. His favorite moments involve stopping at the playground and finding new playmates to share swings or the slide with. However, he is quite sensitive to noise and gets stressed when there's too much happening around him. He can also sense if his dad is in a bad mood, such as when the stroller doesn't fit on the sidewalk, and unconsciously reacts to it. Values: Safe and playful environment, smooth stroller rides, happy parents.

## Onni, 3

- Kruununhaka, Helsinki
- Parents and sibling
- Apartment
- None
- 
- 



## Sandra, 27

- Berlin, Germany
- Parent and sister
- Apartment
- Teacher
- 
- 



Sandra is a tourist and is visiting Helsinki for the first time. She loves experiencing new countries and cultures. She has planned to spend just a few days in Finland, meaning she'll only have time to see the essentials in the city center. Sandra often travels on a budget and prefers activities and attractions that are inexpensive or free. She typically visits museums, explores beautiful architecture, and tries traditional food. This time, she would like to experience a traditional sauna, since she is in Finland. Values: Safe and interesting environment, nice sights and restaurants, accessible environments.

## Pekka, 4

- Kaisaniemenpuisto, Helsinki
- Siblings
- Tree
- Nesting and foraging
- 
- 



Pekka is a social and curious pigeon. He frequently visits the city center to search for tasty food scraps and observe people. Occasionally, he flies to Kaisaniemenpuisto to take a nap and rest. Pekka has learned to adapt to urban environments, but nature is still important for his health and behavior. For Pekka greenery and nature provide ideal spots for nesting, natural food sources, and opportunities to engage in behaviors like flying, perching, and foraging. Additionally, it improves his overall health and well-being. Values: Safe environment, nature, food.

# MEASURES

## CONCEPT

Built upon findings from the analysis phase, a comprehensive concept has been developed to enhance Helsinki's city center. The concept "Creating Movement" revolves around the dynamic nature of movement, recognizing it as the only constant in life and an integral part of urban life. Movement is not just physical, it extends to transforming spaces, human activities, flexibility, and commerce. The passage of time itself is a form of movement that impacts and transforms various aspects. Enhancing various types of movement within the city is both desirable and necessary.

In recent years, changes in people's behavior, coupled with shifts in the economy and mobility patterns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, have reduced movement in Helsinki city center. This holistic approach aims to revitalize and adapt the urban environment, attracting more visitors, enhancing various types of movement and contributing to the sustainable development of Helsinki's city center.

### THE DYNAMIC MOVEMENT OF THE CHANGE OF SPACES

How we use different scales and how we perceive the use of spaces has changed over time. Nowadays people have picnics in the Esplanadi park, where it would never have occurred to do so at the start of the 20th century. This proves that we can use historical spaces in new ways, but it needs to be done respectfully by considering the historical view while bringing new to its side. This way we can adapt to the dynamic change of spaces. New ways to house life can be found for buildings that have withstood the movement of time, like through converting offices into residential buildings.

### MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

People move to the Helsinki city center especially to experience things. Cultural and sports events, pleasant spaces, and the opportunity to spend time with other people bring people to the center. This is why it is important to ensure that people can move to the city center sustainably. The movement of people means also accessibility to sports and physical exercise. The opportunity to move the body is important for all people regardless of age. For people to linger in the center the need for pleasant spaces to stop by and sit for a while is crucial. This creates the opportunity to spend more time in the center than expected.

### MOVEMENT AS FLEXIBILITY

In a world which is constantly changing we need flexible solutions which support many ways of usage. We need to enable ways to use spaces while they are in-between different stages of construction and use. We can achieve this with movable and non-permanent structures which can be changed according to the needs of the user and the place. Especially the in-between spaces of the city can benefit from these, for example, brownfield sites and edge spaces between buildings and streets. Enabling temporary use of areas in the middle of planning and legislation-related processes, alongside self-organization, should be facilitated.

### MOVEMENT OF TRADE

The Helsinki city center has been an important place for trade in its history. People have not only come here to trade but also to meet other people and expand their social networks. Trade has been at a turning point for a while and in movement. This movement needs to be considered by creating new kinds of opportunities for sustainable trade. This includes both physical spaces for trade, as well as interactive spaces for business and work.



# CONCEPT PRINCIPLES

Four distinct planning principles have been formulated to ensure that the proposals aimed at enhancing the city center align with the concept and effectively achieve the goal of attracting more visitors and encouraging longer stays. The proposed measures should enhance perceived environmental quality, facilitate multi-functionality, contribute to urban resilience in the face of changes, and promote sustainability in both the environment and society. These principles entail an understanding that the physical environment influences people's behavior and health. Therefore, measures coherent with these principles are expected to attract people to engage in diverse activities while simultaneously supporting their well-being and making the city center more vibrant.



## PERCEIVED ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND ATTRACTIVENESS

Various features in public open spaces should add to the overall perceived quality from the perspective of both city dwellers and visitors. This is essential to motivate them to prolong their stay and make the most of these spaces. Urban spaces such as parks, squares, playgrounds, boulevards, and streetscapes should be designed to enhance the senses in alignment with their intended functions. Within the city center, residents and visitors should be able to find spaces that contribute to their enjoyment, promote restoration, provide physical comfort in various weather conditions, as well as provide visual appeal and stimulation. The preferences of various age groups might differ. Thus, the design of the places should take these various preferences into consideration to enhance the value they provide. Preferences are also shaped by individuals' values and views of the city's identity. Taking this into consideration, the spaces should be primarily designed for local residents and secondarily for visitors. A sense of hominess should be incorporated in public spaces to enhance the psychological comfort of all individuals using them. Additionally, factors such as walkability and the amount of seating available are important to encourage lingering. All of this will aid in the efforts to raise people's perception of the attractiveness of the city, facilitate place attachment and extend visits to the city center.

## ECOLOGICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

While there is an interest in making the city center of Helsinki more livable, it is crucial that no measure compromises ecological, social, or economic sustainability. For ecological sustainability, this means that the solutions should preserve and enhance natural environments within and around the city. This can include protection of green spaces, biodiversity, and water resources, as well as the promotion of energy efficiency and the reduction of pollution. For social sustainability, on the other hand, this means to foster an inclusive and equitable community to enhance quality of life, promote social cohesion and ensure access to essential services for all residents. This can include affordable housing and services, accessible environment, cultural amenities, and improving the sense of community. Finally, for economic sustainability, this means that the solutions should create a robust and diverse economy that can adapt to changes and provide opportunities for residents. This can include promoting local businesses, sustaining self-organizing culture, and establishing an environment with a low threshold for entrepreneurship and innovation.

## FUNCTIONALITY

As Helsinki continues to grow, it is more important than ever to uphold the principle of multifunctionality while planning in multiple ways. The presence and integration of multifunctional spaces into the urban landscape not only enhances the quality of the physical environment and makes the city livelier but also contributes to a higher quality of life for residents. It creates more opportunities for diverse activities, welcoming individuals of different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds, along with their children and pets. While designing these spaces, it is important to consider the preferences of the targeted groups, but inclusivity should not be overlooked. A range of free and low-cost activities in public spaces should be available to encourage longer stays in the city center. This would encourage individuals to meet at the center and socialize, transforming these spaces into 'third places' which play an important role in people's social and mental well-being. Temporary uses of indoor and outdoor spaces should be encouraged not only to promote multifunctionality but also to reduce the amount of unused space and directly engage citizens. Functionality of the spaces in different seasons and weather conditions must be considered.

## RESILIENCE

Helsinki and other cities around the world continually face new crises and trends. These can range from a viral pandemic shifting a significant portion of residents' lives online to the growing popularity of online shopping, leading to people gradually shifting away from physical stores. Not to mention the challenges posed by the climate crisis with its unique set of difficulties. These crises and trends are challenging, if not entirely impossible, to predict in advance. However, this is not a reason to neglect consideration of potential crises and trends. On the contrary, it is necessary for Helsinki to anticipate and adapt to these uncertainties, ensuring that the city can withstand and recover from shocks. Resilient thinking in planning Helsinki is essential for creating a city that can withstand and adapt to a dynamic and uncertain future while promoting sustainability, equity, and the well-being of the community.

# INTRODUCTION TO MEASURES

The proposed measures for Helsinki's key areas—such as the Central Railway Station with surroundings, Kauppatori, Kaisaniemenpuisto Park, and Kansalaistori Square—aim to transform spaces into vibrant, inviting hubs. They address prevailing negative perceptions, enhance economic activity, and leverage untapped potential, fostering inclusive, sustainable, and adaptable urban environments. These interventions align with creating thriving, socially engaging spaces resonating with diverse individuals, echoing urban thinkers like Jan Gehl and Jane Jacobs. It's important to note that while these proposals focus on these four areas, they serve as examples to showcase practical ideas that could be adapted and implemented across other similar cityscapes in Helsinki.

## HELSINKI CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION WITH SURROUNDINGS

The decision to propose various improvement interventions for the Helsinki Central Railway Station area stems from a combination of factors. The area has significant importance not only in the city center but also in the whole city context as a multi-modal transport hub. Residents often pass or cross the area on their way to the station, workplaces, shopping centers, or simply when spending their free time in the city center. For both international and domestic tourists, the station and its surroundings form the first impression of Helsinki. It has the potential to evolve into a place where people desire to stay and use the space to its full advantage, thereby making it more vibrant and attractive throughout all seasons.

The participatory mapping survey results indicated that residents and visitors perceive this area as a negative place. This aligns with prior research findings, which show that negative perceptions of places in the Helsinki metropolitan area are primarily associated with transportation settings, especially road and rail networks. The most prevalent reasons given for this include a negative atmosphere, appearance, and social safety. Moreover, research suggests that the development of places that are both frequently visited and negatively perceived should be prioritized (Kyttä et al. 2023). Therefore, interventions in the Helsinki Central Railway Station area are considered highly necessary and recommended.

## KAISANIEMENPUISTO PARK

The area of Kaisaniemenpuisto Park, located just behind the central station, presents an abundance of untapped potential, offering a remarkable opportunity to elevate the overall attractiveness of the city's heart. A vast majority of visitors and residents alike opt for the convenience and swiftness of arriving in the city center via train. The ongoing construction of a connecting tunnel to Kaisaniemenpuisto Park signifies a promising step towards enhancing connectivity. This development not only fosters ease of access but also lays the groundwork for a future where this area becomes even more seamlessly connected to the city's transportation network.

Central to this proposal is the recognition of key assets within this area, notably the Botanic Garden and the Kaisaniemenpuisto space itself. The Botanic Garden holds immense potential as a focal point, yet its offerings remain somewhat under-advertised. Simultaneously, the empty park area presents an opportunity for curated activities and events, serving as a magnet to draw increased foot traffic into the city center.

The idea of reshaping this area would not only redefine the city's landscape but would also signify a commitment to fostering community engagement and bolstering Helsinki's identity as a dynamic and inclusive destination. By embracing the potential of Kaisaniemenpuisto and leveraging its strategic location, this initiative seeks to create a vibrant urban hub that resonates with residents and visitors throughout the year.

## KANSALAISTORI SQUARE AND MAKASIINIPUISTO PARK

Kansalaistori Square and Makasiinipuisto Park was chosen as an example area for various reasons. The area functions as an exceptional public space surrounded by significant cultural and architectural structures such as the popular city library Oodi, Musiikkitalo, the National Museum, and Finlandia Hall. The square acts as a prominent focal point in the Helsinki skyline. The square is also connected to various transport networks such as the public transit lines, baana-bicycle network and the beautiful recreation path surrounding Töölö bay. From our interviews, we discovered that people visit the square and park for various reasons. Since the city library Oodi is a space open to everyone, we believe it is important to further develop the whole area into a place where people with diverse characteristics come together but also stay and socialize.

Our proposals include enhancing a self-organizing culture to lower the threshold for organizing various events, creating inclusive structures accessible to people of all ages, improving a pleasant environment for sitting and socializing and ecologically sustainable solutions for stormwater management. All of this while still preserving the flexibility and resilience of the space, as the use of spaces change over time.

## KAUPPATORI/ MARKET SQUARE

The main idea for Kauppatori is a transformative revitalization that will not only increase its own appeal, but also attract more movement to the heart of the city. This proposal aims to extend the market season, introduce versatile structures, and increase the overall convenience of the marketplace while encouraging the growth of businesses.

The proposed changes would focus on strengthening the local economy through trade. By promoting a vibrant marketplace, the project aims to boost economic growth. New structures and improved facilities would provide fertile ground for entrepreneurs, allowing small businesses to thrive and contribute to the expansion of the city's economic landscape. The focus on supporting the business landscape would be in line with the aim of increasing the overall attractiveness of the marketplace. In addition, Kauppatori in Helsinki would be taking an environmentally conscious approach by integrating more greenery and creating ample sitting opportunities, thereby fostering an inviting and sustainable urban oasis for all seasons.

By combining these elements - extending the market season, incorporating multifunctional and movable structures, promoting small business, and embracing an eco-conscious approach the redesign of Kauppatori would not just be a facelift, but a strategic realignment. It aims not only to improve the convenience and functionality of the market, but also to revitalize the city center and position it as a vibrant hub that attracts visitors and locals alike and promotes economic growth and social engagement.



# HELSINKI CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION WITH SURROUNDINGS

## REORGANIZATION OF SPACE

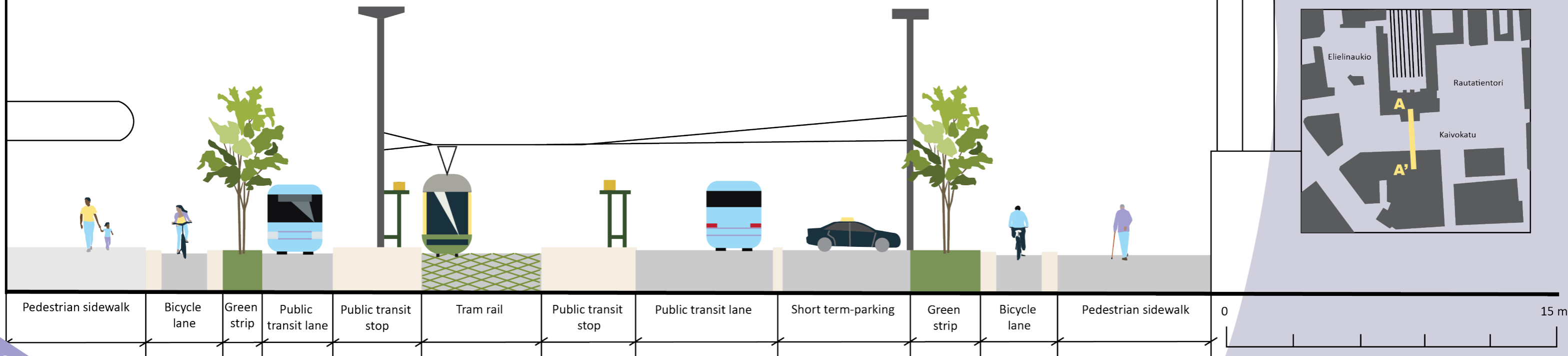
The area in front of the railway station received numerous negative perceptions in our analysis involving an unfavorable atmosphere, appearance, and a lack of social safety. During our own site visit, we also observed that the area is very busy, with a lot of noise and a lot happening, especially on Kaivokatu Street, which passes through the area. The area is a crucial transportation hub and also the core of the city center, where many people move through every day. However, the atmosphere and feel of the area makes us understand if people prefer to pass through the area rather than stop and enjoy the surroundings.

Jan Gehl suggests in his book *Cities for People*, that reducing reliance on cars and prioritizing alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, cycling and public transit, can contribute to more livable and sustainable cities. He believes in making human-scaled and people-friendly planning decisions, which in turn create vibrant and enjoyable places for both residents and visitors.

Our decision regarding the railway center is closely aligned with Gehl's perspective on vibrant and social cities. The decision involves reorganizing the space on Kaivokatu (see cross section A-A). The changes include reducing the traffic lanes from 2 to 1, where the one lane is dedicated for only public transport and service vehicles, where private cars are not allowed and directed to other streets in the city. An additional bike lane is added on the southern side of the street, as well as green infrastructure on both sides of the street, which serves both as an aesthetic enhancement and a barrier between the people and vehicles.

This would mean fewer cars on Kaivokatu, contributing to reduced air and noise pollution in the area, and improved aesthetics. The area would transition to a more people-centric space with improved connectivity for pedestrians resulting in a smoother, safer, and overall, more pleasant walking experience.

## CROSS SECTION 1:500 OF REORGANIZATION OF KAIVOKATU STREET



## AN AESTHETICALLY INTERESTING FIRST IMPRESSION

The area of the station is often passed by locals going about the city center, and also serves as the initial impression of Helsinki for foreign visitors. Introducing measures to Kaivokatu to reduce private car traffic would lead to a visual landscape with fewer cars, enhancing people's overall visual experience of the location. The area would transition to a more people-centric and inviting space, prioritizing pedestrians, bicycles, and public transportation in the transportation hierarchy. From a pedestrian standpoint, the station area would have improved connectivity to Keskuskatu, resulting in a smoother, safer and overall, more pleasant walking experience. More frequent maintenance and litter cleaning would enhance the perceived environmental quality in the space.

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE

To create a more resilient urban environment, our decision for the Railway Center is in line with the principles of green climate resilience. By transforming Kaivokatu Street into a pedestrian-friendly space, we would not only combat the negative perceptions associated with this area, but also introduce green infrastructure on both sides of the street. This strategic incorporation of vegetation would serve a dual purpose: it would increase the visual appeal of the space and act as a green barrier that would contribute to climate resilience. Such green elements have the potential to mitigate the urban heat island effect, absorb carbon dioxide and promote biodiversity, contributing to a healthier and more sustainable urban ecosystem. By prioritizing alternative modes of transport and integrating green solutions, our proposal aims to create a harmonious and climate-resilient city center that prioritizes the well-being of both residents and the environment.

## ALTERNATIVE ROUTES



The map illustrates how private car traffic may redistribute after the closure of Kaivokatu. Essential car traffic discovers new routes to use, while unnecessary car traffic decreases or shifts to alternative transportation modes.



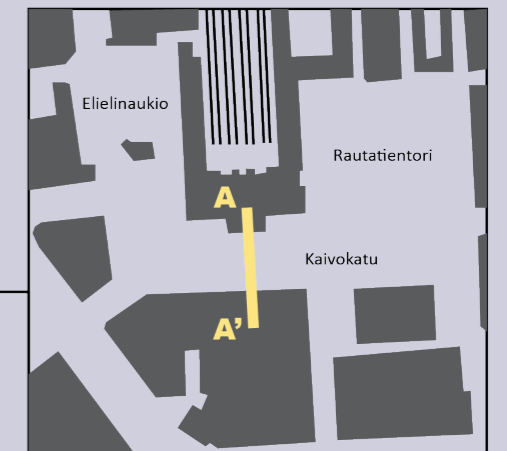
Initially annoyed by the new traffic arrangements on Kaivokatu, Tuula found her car commuting to and from work more challenging. However, after switching to public transportation, she realized she could save time by working during the metro ride, and Kaivokatu now seems a bit cozier to walk along.



Railway Square and Kaivokatu are the first things Sandra explores when arriving in Helsinki. Crossing Kaivokatu to explore the city more, her initial impression of Helsinki is that it feels very welcoming, calm, and safe.



Ella frequently passes through the Central railway station to meet her friends around the center of Helsinki. Previously she relied mainly on her parents' rides or public transportation, but since the cycling infrastructure improved during the reorganization of Kaivokatu, she feels secure enough to independently travel and cycle to the city center.





# HELSINKI CENTRAL RAILWAY STATION WITH SURROUNDINGS - KESKUSKATU STREET

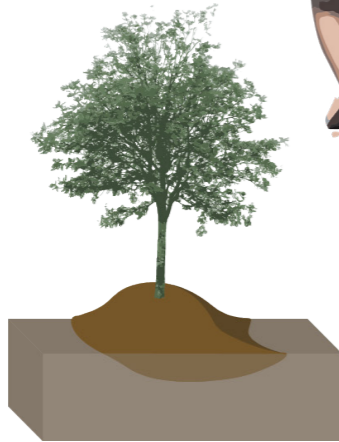
## ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO LINGER

Strategically introducing new multi-functional seating elements along the sides of Keskuskatu street could encourage people to linger, socialize, and provide resting opportunities, especially for the elderly. During the summer season, green structures behind the benches would not only provide visual enhancement but also a cooling effect and noise reduction, creating points for socializing. In the winter, the green back structures could be replaced by solid ones that would aid in reducing wind disturbance. The added seating elements along the existing cafe terraces and plants in pots would visually and psychologically divide the pedestrian street, creating the psychological effect of making the walking distances seem shorter (Gehl, 2011). Additionally, the protection of the walls behind the seating would provide a psychological sense of safety for people while sitting. The existing seating structures could be transferred to a different location within the city.

## WAYS TO IMPLEMENT URBAN GREENERY



A quick fix to introduce more greenery is adding plants in plant boxes, which can easily be moved to new locations. Climbing plants can be added to new vertical structures to enhance the sense of space and aesthetic values.

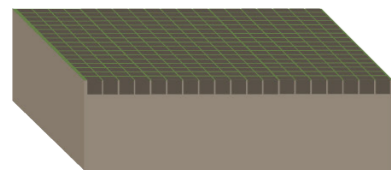


Longer term solutions include creating more space for the plants' roots by lifting the substrate and creating an emerging topography. This way bigger plants, like bushes or small trees, can be integrated into the streetscape.

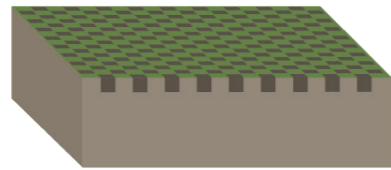


Another long term solution is carving down so that there is space for stormwater runoff and plants. The amount of stormwater can be reduced with nature-based solutions, like opting for rain gardens, vegetated walls and roofs, and retention ponds.

## THE REUSE OF PAVING STONES



The tram lines are implemented with permeable pavers, pavement that lets both water through and plants emerge. Permeable pavers are utilized for example on Mäkelänkatu street in Helsinki.



This change can be done by rearranging existing paving stones, and further the liberated stones can be reused as curbstones for new green areas.



The climate resilience of space is improved by decreasing stormwater runoff. The increased amount of green also gives an aesthetic lift to the area. Aiming to reduce the amount of impervious surfaces contributes to the climate resilience of the area.

## ENHANCING EVENT EXPERIENCES

During significant events, cafe and restaurant businesses could be encouraged to place temporary food stalls and trucks in the Helsinki Central Railway Station area, including a few on Keskuskatu street. This could create opportunities for businesses to attract more customers while making it easier for people to discover delicious drinks and snacks. During winter, hot beverages would help people, especially tourists, stay warm in the cold weather they may not be accustomed to.



*On a warm August day, Amina and Ella meet on Keskuskatu street. As they head in the direction of Helsinki Central Railway Station, they notice how lovely the green tramway looks along the station in the background. They are also pleasantly surprised that traffic sounds do not drown out their conversation. They decide to take a few photos to mark their reunion after a period of not seeing each other, capturing the beautiful scenery in the background. Afterward, they proceed to find a café on Kaivokatu street.*

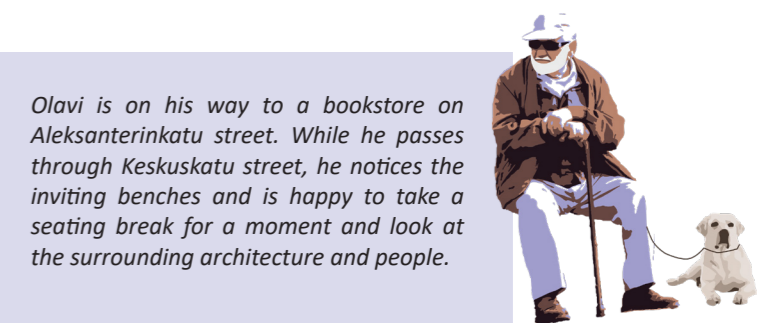


## MEASURE EXAMPLES

- 1 Modular seating options encourage people to rest, socialize, and explore. The flexible seating solutions can be easily rearranged and adapted to fit different kinds of contexts, events and group sizes. The different sitting heights accommodate people of different ages and abilities.
- 2 Plants integrated into the seating create an aesthetically interesting environment for multiple senses. A wall of climbing plants integrated into the back rest, enhance the feeling of safety and coziness. Additionally, structures of different heights and shapes along the street significantly decrease the wind tunnel effect.
- 3 A bit bigger, deeper and higher structures enable the integration of trees on the street. Trees both contribute to the sense of space, aesthetics, as well as biodiversity, temperature control and air pollution.
- 4 An extended amount of pop-up stores, food trucks and craft stands on the street contribute to the flexibility of trade. This allows for Keskuskatu street to be an interesting stop for visitors moving from the Central Railway station towards Aleksanterinkatu street and the Senaatintori square.
- 5 Favoring diverse and dynamic plant communities contributes both to the aesthetic values as well as to the biodiversity values, creating a good environment for different kinds of species.
- 6 An easily accessible, wooden movable structure to enable a participation wall for people to showcase event posters, answer questionnaires, or submit their wishes and ideas on the urban development of Helsinki. Being an addition to digital and online platforms, physical platforms enable a way to participate for people not familiar with digital platforms, like elders and children.
- 7 A significant part of the street is left open for both emergency and maintenance vehicles, as well as for keeping an open path for big quantities of people on busy days.



*Tuula, along with her husband and children, decided to spend their Saturday evening in Helsinki city centre to experience the Lux Helsinki light festival. They leisurely stroll around the center and make a well-deserved stop on Keskuskatu street. The parents purchase hot drinks from a coffee cart and happily settle onto the benches, taking a moment to escape from the wind. The kids rest their feet and observe the lively scene on the street.*



*Olavi is on his way to a bookstore on Aleksanterinkatu street. While he passes through Keskuskatu street, he notices the inviting benches and is happy to take a seating break for a moment and look at the surrounding architecture and people.*

Joy in movement

# KAISANIEMENPUISTO PARK

## UNVEILING THE POTENTIAL

By nurturing Kaisaniemenpuisto Park and its surroundings, this proposal seeks to unveil the latent potential of this area, fostering connectivity, promoting attractions, and introducing a dynamic events program. This initiative is dedicated to sculpting a city center that resonates with residents and visitors alike, showcasing Helsinki's vibrant cultural identity across the seasons.

Central to this proposal is the recognition of key assets within this area, notably the Botanic Garden and the Kaisaniemenpuisto space itself. The Botanic Garden holds immense potential as a focal point, yet its offerings remain somewhat under-advertised. Simultaneously, the empty park area presents an opportunity for curated activities and events, serving as a magnet to draw increased foot traffic into the city center.



## BIODIVERSITY HUB

In a concerted effort to enhance biodiversity within Kaisaniemenpuisto Park, initiatives fostering ecological sustainability might be implemented. Collaborative projects with local schools and universities could be established to engage students in biodiversity enhancement projects. These projects may include habitat restoration, native plant propagation, and educational programs focused on wildlife conservation. By involving educational institutions, this initiative would aim to not only enrich biodiversity but also nurture a sense of environmental stewardship among the city's future generations.

*As a pigeon residing in the city center, Pekka values a safe environment and the beauty of nature. This proposal means a safer and more inviting space for him to thrive in. The emphasis on improving biodiversity and potential food sources within the park aligns perfectly with my appreciation for nature and access to sustenance. A school project involved building a bird house, which Pekka is happy about.*



## MEASURE EXAMPLES



- 1 A pedestrian tunnel connecting Kansalaistori and Kaisaniemenpuisto with incorporated light and art elements. The addition of decorative elements would enhance people's experiences when passing through, as well as encourage them to linger and admire the sight.
- 2 An ice rink during the winter season would provide residents and visitors with an opportunity for ice skating without leaving the city center. It could stimulate spontaneous engagements in winter sports, as well as become a convenient meeting and socializing spot. Well-chosen festive decor and background music would enhance people's experiences and establish the place as important destination around Christmas time both for locals and tourists. Additionally, this could attract café businesses, leading to the establishment of a few food and drink stalls.
- 3 A site where distance skiing competitions for young children could be organized. The organization of these events would necessitate only temporary interventions, such as establishing the track route and temporary outdoor tents, as well as providing seating elements. The competitions would encourage active movement from a young age and foster socializing among both children and parents. Residents coming together to support and cheer for participants would create a positive and supportive community atmosphere, fostering positive memories and strengthening associations between winter activities and the city center. Other winter activity events to organize could include ice sculpture competitions, sledding events, snow man building, as well as ice skating on the nearby Kaisaniemenlahti bay when the ice cover is sufficiently thick. Rentals of winter activity equipment, as well as courses to learn the sports, could be established.
- 4 A biodiversity hub located within Kaisaniemenpuisto Park would serve as an educational and ecological focal point for children. By inviting local schools to engage in collaborative projects and activities, pupils would be involved here in learning more about ecology and sustainability through participating in outdoor learning sessions, drawing and painting on location, visiting the botanic garden, participating in practical works to improve the park's biodiversity and other educational activities.



*Amina and Ella are teenagers looking for free and fun activities in the city. This proposal excites them because it promises engaging events and a Winter Park that they can enjoy without spending lots of money. Plus, easy access via public transport from the central station makes it even more appealing for them to hang out in the city center.*



## A JOURNEY OF ART

Underground pedestrian tunnels could be more than rather dull structures with a single function of enabling movement. The addition of lighting and art elements in the pedestrian tunnel connecting the areas on both sides of the railway station could transform it into a multi-functional space, attracting a more diverse set of visitors and encouraging them to linger there for a while. This would create an additional space for local artists to exhibit their work, as well as create a new interest object both for local residents and tourists. Moreover, this change could potentially encourage people to visit the Kaisaniemi Botanic Garden more frequently. One potential theme for the art installations could be a journey from knowledge to botanics, with the Helsinki Central Library Oodi on one side of the rails and the botanical garden on the other.



*Onni loves to play and explore. He values a safe and playful environment where he can enjoy time with his parents. The proposal's focus on creating a safe and joyful park with smooth stroller rides would benefit him and his parents. Onni plans to participate in a children's snow man building event.*



## EMBRACING THE SEASONS

One compelling idea to invigorate the city center, especially during the winter season, is the introduction of a Winter Park in the expansive open space of Kaisaniemenpuisto, aiming to encourage more residents to frequent the city center during the colder months, amplifying its vibrancy and appeal. The Winter Park concept revolves around creating a versatile space that transcends seasonal limitations. Envisioned as a multi-functional hub, the park could feature an ice rink during the winter, providing an engaging environment for ice-skating enthusiasts and families alike. As the seasons shift, the space can seamlessly adapt, transforming into a floor hockey field or accommodating various summer activities, ensuring year-round utilization and enjoyment. By embracing the potential of Kaisaniemenpuisto and leveraging its strategic location, this initiative seeks to create a vibrant urban hub that resonates with residents and visitors throughout the year.

In addition to the envisioned Winter Park, this proposal advocates for the incorporation of seasonal events to further enrich the cultural tapestry of Helsinki's city center. Winter Sculpture Exhibitions could adorn the park, showcasing captivating art installations that interact harmoniously with the winter landscape, transforming the space into an immersive artistic haven.

Furthermore, embracing the warmth of summer, the park could be animated by vibrant Summer Concerts, spotlighting local talents, international artists, and diverse musical genres, fostering a convivial atmosphere where residents and visitors can revel in the city's cultural richness amidst nature's embraces.



*Sandra as a tourist is seeking a safe and fascinating environment in Helsinki. A safer environment and interesting events like a Winter Park or Summer Concerts would offer her reasons to visit Helsinki in different seasons. Sandra is eager to try out ice skating, and plans to rent some skates. Accessible pathways and improved connectivity to nearby sights and restaurants make her visit even more enjoyable and hassle-free.*

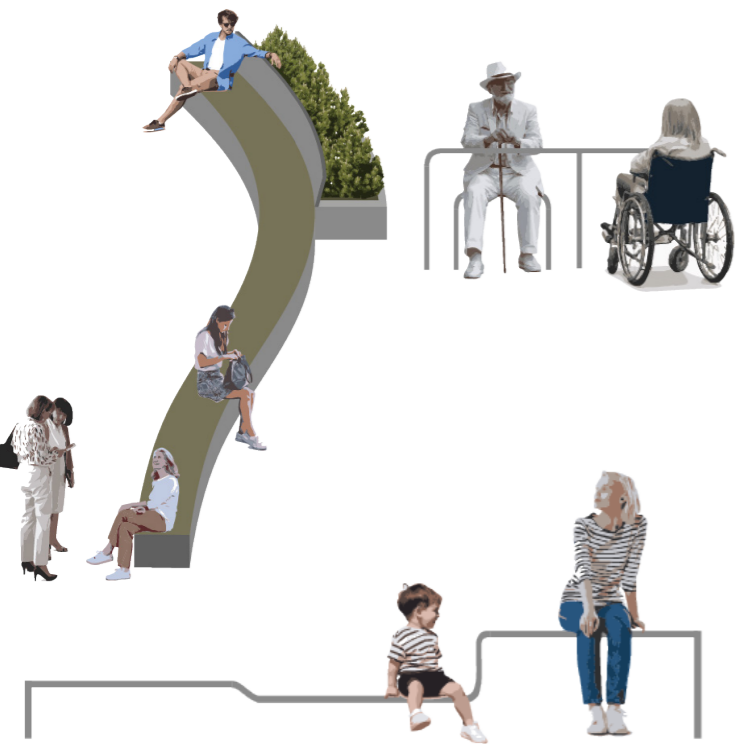
# KANSALAISTORI SQUARE AND MAKASIINIPUISTO PARK

## ALL-AGE PLAYGROUND

Expanding the existing children's playground in Kansalaistori by incorporating an all-ages playground would create additional opportunities for recreational activities, making it accessible to a broader range of people. This inclusive design would encourage movement and foster positive emotions, contributing to the formation of lasting memories. The extension would enhance community attachment and promote increased physical activity for individuals of all ages.

## OUTDOOR FURNITURE

Introducing movable seating structures in diverse shapes within the green zone would encourage people to spend more time resting and socializing while enjoying the view of the lake and the surrounding people. These elements would allow sitting and lying down, accommodating both the presence of white-fronted geese, and changing weather conditions. For elderly individuals, the structures would serve as support when rest is needed, as well as an encouragement for spending more time outdoors.



## MEASURE EXAMPLES

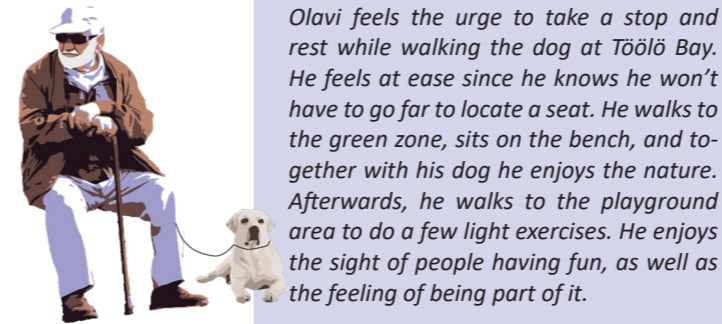


- 1 Expanding the area of dynamic plantings to increase biodiversity values and climate resilience. Any changes in this area of various architectural values are carefully designed, taking into account the existing architecture and landscape architecture, the artistic idiom of the area, historical and architectural values and special characteristics.
- 2 Encouraging movement of the body through extending the already existing playground to become an all-age playground. The new extension includes different kinds of outdoor gym and mobility training equipment. This allows for parents to watch their kids playing while doing a bit of workout themselves, as well as elders being able to train mobility on their customary walks. The location creates a natural stop for exercise between the Töölönlahti bay area and the Baana route. The grass area could also include panoramic swings for visitors to engage in movement while enjoying the beautiful views of both many significant architectural pieces as well as the vast views towards the Töölönlahti bay.
- 3 A low-lying vegetated area is integrated on part of the grass field to allow for natural stormwater retention, becoming a rain garden. The area is prone to flooding, and this could be one measure to reduce dependence on grey infrastructure and try out natural solutions for climate resilience in the city centre.

*I am looking for affordable activities during my trip to Helsinki. I like to walk around trying to find local gems!*

## NATURAL SOLUTIONS

Parts of the lawn area are changed to dynamic plantings. This means allowing an ongoing, natural change in both quantity, shape and space of the plantings in a controlled way. The plant species are chosen to have supporting characteristics for each other, and are allowed to mix and spread. Layered plantings are created to support biodiversity and to mimic natural plant communities. What differentiates a dynamic planting from spontaneous wild plants is that the plantings are planned to specifically fit the place, aesthetic aspects are taken into account, and the development of the plants is monitored and adjusted. However, maintenance is kept to a minimum and natural processes are embraced. The plantings have a great aesthetic value in the environment, as well as being contributors to the biodiversity and stormwater drainage.



*Olavi feels the urge to take a stop and rest while walking the dog at Töölö Bay. He feels at ease since he knows he won't have to go far to locate a seat. He walks to the green zone, sits on the bench, and together with his dog he enjoys the nature. Afterwards, he walks to the playground area to do a few light exercises. He enjoys the sight of people having fun, as well as the feeling of being part of it.*

- 4 Diverse movable seating structures are implemented for people to rest and enjoy. Plants are integrated into the seating to create different kinds of small, cozy spaces.
- 5 The process to organize events or implement non-permanent, short time structures is made easier. This encourages people to be active and organize sports and arts-related events on Kansalaistori Square, which both the location and the space is well suitable for. The possibility to easily participate in forming the urban environment creates a sense of ownership and community. Through recurring events, the place becomes a more significant node of movement in the city. The increased activity on the square creates synergic effects for many nearby businesses.

*I could benefit from enhanced biodiversity values.*

*I would like to organize a dance competition, but do not have the financial means for it.*

*How can I organize a floorball tournament on Kansalaistori square?*

*There is too much paperwork to host a pop-up shop.*

*I got this balloon as I took part in a children's workshop. I am looking forward to go again!*

*I would like to sell antique items at the market, but I do not know how to proceed. Who can I ask about it?*



Joy in movement



*Ella and Amina were pondering what to do over the weekend when they stumbled upon a social media post announcing a free event near Oodi organized by a youth non-profit organization. They decided to join a lively DIY music festival, where they spent quality time with other young adults and were inspired to express themselves creatively.*

## SELF ORGANIZATION

We believe that events and occasions are highly effective in attracting people to the city center, they give a reason for people to meet and enjoy the city. Jan Gehl articulates this idea very well in his book 'Cities for People,' stating: The city's greatest attraction: people. People visiting the city center through events and other happenings can then result in them supporting restaurants, cafeterias, or shops during their visit. This sets off a domino effect that indirectly influences other areas in the city. To ensure that events and occasions are organized and align with the interests of visitors, it is important to create an environment where residents themselves are active and take the initiative to organize and participate.

To enhance a self-organized culture in Helsinki, the city can consider a range of strategies to lower the barriers for organizing different types of events. This includes simplifying bureaucratic processes and regulations, making it easier for residents to organize events or projects without unnecessary obstacles. In practice, this could mean simplifying the application process with fewer forms to fill out, making the process more accessible. Workshops, training programs, and informational sessions can also be organized to empower residents with the skills and knowledge required for self-organization. Having a designated contact person from the city who can provide advice and assist residents in organizing both small and large events could also lower the threshold for taking initiatives and daring to arrange enjoyable gatherings and occasions.

The city can also develop and maintain digital platforms or apps that connect residents with shared interests. Providing financial support can further empower residents to take the lead in organizing events, projects, or community improvements. Additionally, establishing feedback mechanisms, such as regular surveys, town hall meetings, or online forums, can help the city stay attuned to the interests and concerns of residents.

# KAUPPATORI SQUARE

## A MULTI-FUNCTIONAL SQUARE

The proposal of Kauppatori aims to extend the market season, introduce versatile structures, and increase the overall convenience of the marketplace while encouraging the growth of businesses and embracing an eco-conscious approach.

With a flexible layout and adaptable infrastructure, Kauppatori can seamlessly adapt to changing demands and seasons, extending the season of the stands. The movable structures not only meet different needs, but also ensure a dynamic and appealing marketplace that attracts locals and tourists alike all year round. Furthermore, this reorganization would take into account the nature of small entrepreneurship. The multifunctional structures could accommodate a diversity of businesses by giving aspiring entrepreneurs the opportunity to showcase their offerings and promote a culture of innovation. The focus on supporting the business landscape is in line with the aim of increasing the overall attractiveness of the marketplace.

## YEAR-ROUND WORKSHOPS AND FAIRS

A key aspect of this possible revitalization is the inclusion of pop-up fairs. These events, held at regular intervals, would create a sense of excitement and novelty, drawing crowds and adding to the charm of the marketplace. These fairs would provide a platform for up-and-coming businesses to get noticed and offer visitors a unique and ever-changing experience.

## CONNECTING KAUPPATORI SQUARE WITH THE GREEN AXIS OF ESPLANADI

Recognizing the importance of green spaces, the proposal includes strategic placements of lush foliage and green elements. The addition of smart greenery elements would not only enhance the aesthetics but would also contribute to a healthier environment and promoting biodiversity.

By infusing Kauppatori with greenery and diverse seating opportunities, the project not only amplifies the aesthetic charm but also nurtures an environment that encourages visitors to linger, fostering a deeper connection with the market's offerings and the surrounding natural beauty. This commitment to sustainability and creating inviting spaces aligns with the goal of transforming Kauppatori into a year-round destination that beckons individuals to experience its unique blend of commerce, nature, and community.

## IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY AND COMFORT

To complement this green landscape, the proposal also places an emphasis on creating comfortable seating areas. These spaces would provide an inviting break for visitors to relax, socialize and enjoy the vibrant atmosphere. The seating options could meet different preferences, ranging from traditional benches to more modern and versatile seating that would enhance the overall comfort and appeal of the marketplace.

*Olavi cherishes nature and peaceful environments. The proposal's inclusion of greenery and comfortable seating areas provides Olavi with a serene spot to enjoy daily routines with his dog, fostering a deeper connection with nature and the sea in a tranquil setting. Olavi also likes to purchase berries from the summer markets on the Kauppatori square. He looks forward to casual encounters with neighbors.*



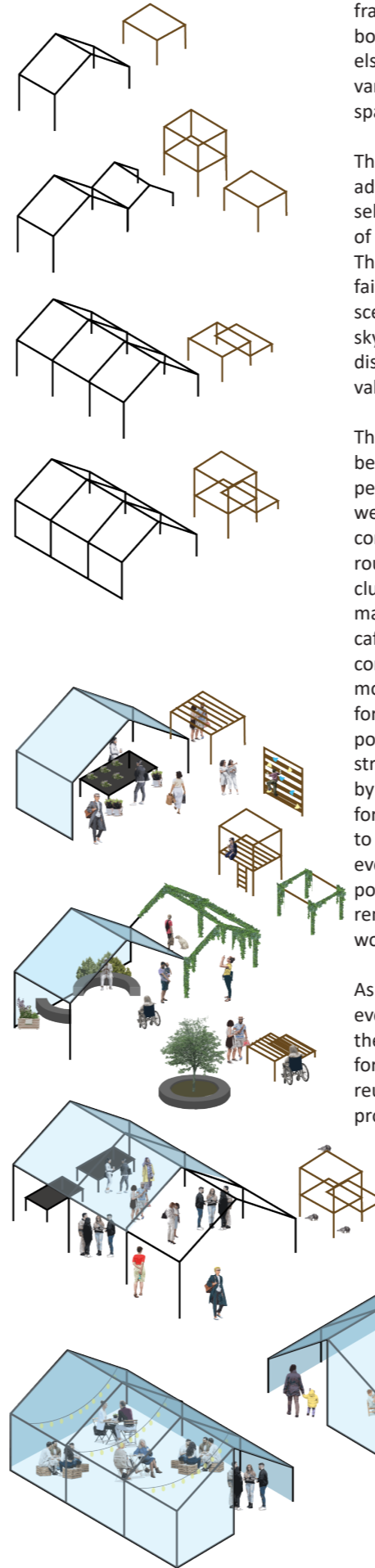
*Tuula, an entrepreneur seeking financial stability and innovation, finds the Kauppatori proposal appealing. The focus on versatile structures and extended market seasons aligns with her ambitions, allowing her to balance work and family life while fostering a thriving marketplace. Tuula prefers to purchase local and sustainable goods, and frequents the markets.*

## MEASURE EXAMPLES



- 1** The reimagining of market stands involves a structural overhaul to introduce movable elements, ensuring a visually enticing marketplace. These adaptable structures not only enhance the market's appeal but also extend its season by providing benefits such as protection from wind and rain.
- 2** Expanding the market stands not only provides additional opportunities for businesses to showcase and sell their goods but also fosters a more diverse and vibrant marketplace, contributing to the economic vitality of the area.
- 3** Introducing more seating options at Kauppatori creates an inviting environment for people to gather, relax, and savor the scenic beauty of the market next to the sea. This addition enhances the overall experience, encouraging social interaction and making Kauppatori a destination for both locals and visitors alike.
- 4** Establishing a connection between Kauppatori and the green axis of Esplanadi harmoniously blends the urban and natural elements. This integration not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the area but also promotes a seamless transition from the bustling marketplace to the serene green spaces, creating a well-rounded and balanced urban experience.

## FLEXIBLE STRUCTURES



The modular, adaptable structures consist of frames made out of recycled wood and steel. Between these frames, either wooden boarding or clear cast panels can be installed, to create various kinds of structures, spaces, shelters and pergolas.

These structures may be adapted by the users themselves, to fit different kinds of contexts and purposes. The see-through panels and fairly light structure allow for scenic views to the sea and skyline, as well as a reduced disruption to the historically valuable landscape.

The flexible structures can be adapted to accommodate people in different kinds of weather and temperature conditions. This allows year-round use of the square, including an extension of the market season, workshops, cafés, business meetings and conferences, sports events, modifiable waiting areas for the ferry transport and pop-up shops. Some of the structures could be rented by businesses and individuals for short amounts of time, to host private and public events, business meetings, pop-up shops, engage in remote work or host craft workshops.

As the structures lifecycles eventually come to an end, the simple structure allows for the materials to be easily reused, for example in school projects or craft workshops.



*As a tourist, Sandra values safety and interesting environments. The Kauppatori proposal, with its emphasis on safety measures, pop-up fairs, and green spaces, offers Sandra an enticing reason to explore the marketplace, ensuring a memorable and accessible experience. After a long day, Sandra sits down on the new seating structures, enjoys an ice cream and takes in the beautiful views towards the sea.*



Joy in movement

# COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

The transformation of Helsinki's city center presents an opportunity to create a vibrant, inclusive space that truly reflects the desires and needs of its residents, businesses, and stakeholders. To achieve this, we propose a comprehensive community engagement plan aimed at gathering diverse perspectives and fostering active participation throughout the redesign process.

## PARTICIPATION: PROPOSAL FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN HELSINKI'S CITY CENTER REDESIGN

Objectives: The primary goal is to ensure that the redevelopment of Helsinki's city center is a collaborative endeavor, driven by the collective wisdom of its inhabitants. The key objectives of this proposal include:

- Actively involving the residents in decision-making processes.
- Establishing inclusive platforms for virtual and physical participation.
- Engaging citizens, urban planners, architects, and stakeholders in collaborative workshops.
- Highlighting Helsinki's unique identity and gathering opinions through innovative means.



## STRATEGIES

- 1** Public Meetings, Workshops, and Forums: Regularly scheduled meetings, interactive workshops, and forums could be conducted to provide opportunities for direct engagement. These gatherings will serve as spaces for individuals to share feedback, ideas, and concerns regarding the city center's redesign.
- 2** Online Engagement Platforms: Digital platforms and interactive websites could be developed to encourage virtual participation. Utilizing social media channels, surveys, polls, and discussions will ensure inclusivity and facilitate the exchange of ideas among a diverse audience.
- 3** Collaborative Workshops with Experts: Organizing workshops involving urban planners, architects, and citizens are pivotal. These sessions could provide a platform to collectively brainstorm and refine concepts for the city center's transformation, fostering a sense of ownership and pride among community members.
- 4** Helsinki-Specific Engagement Initiatives: Participation Online: Specific hashtags and storytelling via social media can be utilized to gather opinions and narratives about Helsinki's city center plans, fostering a sense of belonging and community involvement.

# MARKETING AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The success of Helsinki's city center rethinking project heavily relies on effective marketing strategies that engage and inform the public about the endeavor. This proposal outlines a multi-faceted approach to marketing and public engagement, combining traditional media, digital platforms, influencer collaborations, and interactive public events.

Objectives: Our primary objectives for marketing and public engagement in the city center reshaping project are:

- Disseminating comprehensive information about the project through various media channels.
- Generating public interest, awareness, and understanding of the project's scope and benefits.
- Leveraging influential figures and interactive events to foster excitement and community involvement.



# STRATEGIES

- 1** Traditional Media Partnerships: Forge strategic partnerships with prominent newspapers like Helsingin Sanomat, Iltalehti, Iltasanomat, and the internationally read Helsinki Times. Collaborate on feature articles, interviews, and documentaries to provide in-depth coverage and inform the public about the city center's reshaping project.
- 2** Digital Marketing Campaigns: Leverage online platforms such as social media, blogs, and dedicated project websites to provide regular updates, share visuals, and present progress reports. Implement targeted online advertising to reach specific demographics and create interest among a wider online audience on current trend platforms like YouTube, Instagram or TikTok.
- 3** Collaborations with Influencers: Partner with local influencers, bloggers, and social media personalities whose endorsements can significantly impact public perception. Their engagement and advocacy will be pivotal in generating excitement and interest among their followers regarding the city center's transformation.
- 4** Public Events and Exhibitions: Organize public events and exhibitions showcasing the future vision of the city center. These events will serve as interactive platforms to directly engage with the community, address concerns, and generate enthusiasm by demonstrating the benefits and reasons behind the proposed changes.
- 5** Pop-Up Store for Engaging Discussions: Establish a physical presence, like a pop-up office, in Forum or the City Centre for example. This space will allow residents and stakeholders to view detailed plans, visuals, and models of the proposed changes. Additionally, it will serve as an avenue to articulate the benefits for residents and stakeholders, encouraging informed discussions and feedback.

# SLOGAN

The concept behind these slogan proposals for Helsinki revolves around portraying the city as a dynamic, evolving, and vibrant urban hub that embraces movement, progress, and growth. Each slogan aims to encapsulate the essence of Helsinki's transformation and the energy of its new city center design.

## 1 "Dynamic Helsinki: Forward in Every Step"

This slogan emphasizes Helsinki's progressive nature and its commitment to constant advancement. It speaks to the residents, conveying the idea that the city is moving forward with every stride towards a more innovative and modernized city center design. It resonates with the community, encouraging them to be part of this forward momentum.

## 2 "Feel the Flow: Helsinki's Vibrant Movement"

This slogan evokes a sense of movement and liveliness, emphasizing the vibrant energy within Helsinki's new city center design. It speaks to the residents, inviting them to feel the pulse of the city's evolution and the interconnectedness of its spaces. It conveys the idea of a dynamic urban environment where people and ideas flow freely.

## 3 "Helsinki Thrives: Join the Movement"

This slogan invites residents to become active participants in Helsinki's growth and development. It encourages a sense of community involvement in shaping the city's future, emphasizing that the new city center design is not just a physical transformation but a collective movement driving Helsinki towards excellence.

These slogans aim to inspire and engage residents by connecting them emotionally to the concept of movement, progress, and the evolving design of Helsinki's city center. They convey a message that Helsinki is a city on the move, evolving to meet the needs and aspirations of its residents, and beckoning them to embrace and be a part of this exciting transformation.

The future of Helsinki



for



different ages



better user experience



different species



# CONCLUSION

The project “Creating Movement” endeavors to overhaul Helsinki’s city center into an inclusive, sustainable, and vibrant space, emphasizing community needs and enriching resident and visitor experiences. By embracing movement as a central concept, this project aims to revitalize the city center, recognizing the city’s historical evolution, the necessity for adaptation, and the vitality of change.

Through extensive analyses encompassing landscape, quantitative, and qualitative perspectives, this initiative identified diverse dynamics and evolving needs within the community. The proposed measures, spanning from enhancing public transport to fostering inclusive spaces for social interactions and events, aspire to create an adaptable and inviting city center accommodating various activities.

The concept focuses on movement across multiple dimensions: repurposing historical spaces respectfully, encouraging longer stays through inviting spaces, promoting flexibility in design to accommodate diverse needs, and adapting to the evolving patterns in trade and social networks. The intent is to revitalize the city center, fostering sustainability and ensuring a vibrant, adaptable, and inviting space.

Furthermore, the proposed measures targeting the key areas of the Central Railway Station, Keskuskatu, Kansaniemenpuisto, Kansalaistori Square and Makasiinipuisto and Kauppatori embrace a holistic approach, aligning with urban visionaries’ philosophies to create socially engaging environments. They serve as exemplars for revitalizing similar cityscapes while honoring Helsinki’s identity and heritage.

In terms of marketing and communication, the proposal emphasizes community engagement through workshops, online platforms, and expert collaborations. Additionally, it aims to captivate residents’ interest through traditional and digital media, influencer collaborations, public events, and engaging

slogans like “Dynamic Helsinki: Forward in Every Step.” These strategies aim to instill a sense of community ownership and inspire active participation in shaping Helsinki’s vibrant and evolving city center.

Our proposals embody a commitment to originality and inventiveness, bringing innovative ideas to Helsinki that, while less common, have proven successful in various other cities, including Nordic counterparts. We meticulously considered the city’s characteristics and urban values, conducting thorough analyses to tailor solutions to the unique environment of the city center. By developing solutions that cater to a wide range of user groups through the creation of personas, we aim to make the city center more inclusive and accommodating. The year-round availability of our proposals, designed with consideration for Nordic weather conditions, ensures a dynamic and engaging urban experience in both winter and summer.

Moreover, our solutions prioritize social, financial, and ecological sustainability. Financially, we seek to create low-cost activities and generate business opportunities, fostering a spillover effect that encourages more people to visit the city center. Socially, our proposals aim to facilitate interactions, promote active travel and public transportation, and accommodate the evolving lifestyle trends of the population. Ecologically, we address environmental aspects such as animal welfare and the integration of greenery. Lastly, the feasibility of our suggestions is underpinned by the successful implementation of similar ideas in other cities, reinforcing the viability and potential for positive development and implementation in Helsinki.

In summary, the project seeks to transform Helsinki’s city center into a dynamic and sustainable hub by integrating diverse perspectives, fostering community engagement, and embracing movement as a guiding concept for revitalization.

*“A good city is like a good party – people stay longer than really necessary because they are enjoying themselves.”*

*“Something happens because something happens because something happens”*

*“If you make more roads, you will have more traffic.”*

*“Life happens on foot. Man was created to walk, and all of life’s events large and small develop when we walk among other people”*

Gehl, J. (2010). Cities for People. Island Press.

*“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”*

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