

ABC - Alliance of Baltic Cities



Cities as Regional Engines
16-19.10.2003
Vaasa, Finland



Union of the Baltic-Cities Commission on Urban planning

Dear members
of the ABC project
and all other readers
of this report



Vaasa is the main regional centre of Ostrobothnia, located in the western central part of Finland. Therefore, it was natural for the City of Vaasa to accept the hosting of the second ABC seminar, on the theme “Cities as Regional Engines”. I was pleased to welcome to Vaasa as many as 46 urban planners of various professions from 23 cities in seven different countries during the days of the seminar. It gave us from Vaasa the opportunity to make the City of Vaasa and the Vaasa-region better known and to spread that knowledge among our fellow members in the Union of Baltic Cities. It also gave us the possibility to receive new professionally created ideas and new angles on solutions to some of our own urban planning questions in Vaasa. I hope the participants had a worthwhile and interesting time in Vaasa during the seminar and that they took many good memories and impressions of Vaasa back home with them, as well as some new experiences of best practice. I also believe that the seminar created a further development of contacts between all urban planning colleagues within the network, which was built and supported by the ABC-project.

I would like to thank all the members of the ABC project for your participation and for your contributions to finding new ways for the City of Vaasa to become an even better regional engine than it is already.

For those who did not participate, this report will give a short summary of the seminar.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Markku Lumio". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Markku Lumio
City Mayor of Vaasa

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The City of Vaasa, Urban Planning Department

Lars-Göran Boström, Ann Holm, Jukka Ritola, Georg Unna

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The ABC - project in Vaasa

- Urban Planning in Ostrobothnia

Within the international co-operation Union of the Baltic Cities, the UBC, there are a number of working commissions. One is the Commission on Urban Planning and Design. It has launched a project called Alliance of Baltic Cities, or the ABC-project.

ABC is an INTERREG III B-BSR project, running over the years 2003-2005. The participants are from 27 cities in seven different countries.

The ABC-project invites professional city planners to form a network and act as expert advisors on actual local urban development problems. The commission has found that urban planning processes are rather similar in different cities and countries. Planning problems and possibilities are of a similar character even if there are differences in size and location between the cities. Therefore, it is possible not only to discuss but also to solve planning questions together. This working method is used in the seminars of the ABC- project, a city network co-operation for local approaches to regional strategies.

The burning questions of the ABC-project are:

1. Developed urban management
2. Cities as regional engines
3. Renewal of city districts
And as a final central objective of the project
4. Common conclusions on local approaches to regional strategies in the Baltic Sea Area and also concrete small investment proposals.

The 27 member cities are formed into three "Work Package" groups that each works with one of the burning question themes.

The WP2-group that was responsible for preparing the Vaasa seminar contains the cities of Umeå (Sweden) (lead part), Vaasa (Finland), Tartu (Estonia), Gdynia (Poland) and Jurmala (Latvia).

The Vaasa seminar, which is presented in this report, was held in October 2003, focusing on the theme "Cities as Regional Engines". It was the second of six seminars within the ABC-project. The first seminar was held in April 2003 in Kolding, Denmark and the next seminar will be in Liepaja, Latvia in April 2004. After that there will be seminars in Viljandi, Estonia, by autumn 2004, Gdynia, Poland, by spring 2005, and a final seminar in Malmö, Sweden, by autumn 2005.



Georg Unna, Kolding, presenting results from the Kolding seminar.



The ABC Vaasa Seminar

16-19 October 2003



Lars-Göran Boström, Umeå, chairman of the seminar and WP2.



The participants of the Vaasa seminar outside Academill, an old mill converted into a university.

The Vaasa seminar was attended by 46 participants from seven countries. The main theme for the seminar was Cities as Regional Engines - Urban Design and Regional Development.

The first day began with a short review of earlier seminars. Most of the time, however, was given to a series of lectures presenting the participants with important background information on Vaasa and basic Finnish planning legislation. The main lecture of the day dealt with the current leading theories and research situation in the field of urban planning and regional development.

Later in the day, the participants were taken on a guided bus tour through the city of Vaasa in order to become acquainted with the city's structure and appearance. A dinner was then served in the evening at a restaurant called - Gustaf Wasa!

The second day was the day of the workshops. The participants were divided up into three groups which all had extremely fruitful discussions resulting in a number of proposals, as presented in this report. After a good day's work, the participants were invited to a reception by the City of Vaasa, hosted by City Mayor, Markku Lumio. The reception was held at the old



The plains of Söderfjärden, caused by a meteorite crater 500 milj. years ago.



New ways to use an old stone quarry at Järvikallio, Isokyrö.



Land and sun meets the sea of Kvarken at the west edge of Replot Island.

Governor's Residence, where Marshal C.G.E. Mannerheim had his headquarters for a short time during the civil war.

The third day began with presentations from the workshop groups. The participating architects and planners gave illustrated presentations as well as providing interesting comments and discussions concerning the results from the workshops. Summaries of these workshops and their results are presented in this report.

The second half of the day was spent on a guided bus tour visiting the surroundings of Vaasa, in the Ostrobothnian region. A very interesting bus tour in the beautiful autumn weather ended in the evening at one of the most westerly outposts of the Vaasa archipelago, Kalle's Inn on the edge of Replot



The stony landscape at Kalle's Inn.

Island. This was where the land met the sea in a beautiful sunset, which was later replaced by a sparkling aurora borealis. After the smoke sauna and a swim in the ice-cold water of the Kvarken, the dinner tasted absolutely delicious.

The last day of the seminar was spent summing up the events of the past few days. Naturally, some consideration was also given towards the upcoming seminars in Liepaja, Latvia; and in Viljandi, Estonia. Ugis Kaugurs warmly welcomed us all to Liepaja in April 2004.

Thank you for this time,
and let's all meet again in Liepaja!



Ugis Kaugurs, Liepaja, and Lars Brattberg, Malmö, in the old church in Isokyrö perhaps praying for good results at the next seminar in Liepaja.

Cities as Engines for Regional Development

Size matters and the positions within national and international city ranking systems are most important if cities are to be attractive enough and able to act as engines for the surrounding region. This is the view held by Associate Professor, **Lars Westin**, CERUM, Umeå University. A new city management should have income growth as a major goal for the city and also debate architecture, aesthetics, form, scale and structure with all actors in the city. The new city leadership has to develop a management for attractiveness.



The Swedish urban-rural spatial pattern during the last hundred years follows a development of urbanisation and metropolitan growth that has many properties in common with other Nordic countries. Overall, the regions around Stockholm, Malmö, Gothenburg and the two northern counties have increased their populations. Of those, the three metropolitan regions are quite stable while northern Sweden lacks the strength of a larger city.

This development confirms the fact that populations are seldom distributed uniformly over large areas. Instead, they are most commonly located in agglomerations of different sizes. Together those agglomerations constitute the city system. At each level, a city works as the engine for its hinterland, i.e. the surrounding region.

Forces of concentration are transportation costs, demand for security and increasing returns to scale. Housing, on the other hand, demands space. Hence, attractive locations generically become scarce. Forces of dispersion then act through various forms of congestion (land rents, traffic, emissions), while infrastructure investments and competition for natural resources make it possible to develop new areas.

In the emerging knowledge society, and through the mechanisation of mining, agriculture and forestry, natural resources have to a large extent lost their attraction as bases for work places. Instead, natural resource based environments with high visual and recreational properties are strong attractors for housing. Both work places and housing are moreover attracted to the markets. Hence, the combination of visual and strong market properties creates growing cities.

While comparing cities, an advantage is given to cities that may combine natural environments with manmade environments. Such environments should be created as stimulating urban areas with a high degree of variation, meeting places and possibilities for people to express themselves as individuals. The design of places then becomes a comparative advantage for the city with an impact on the property values. The emergence of a knowledge society has, together with an overall stagnation of population growth, resulted in strong tensions within the city system. Clearly, the new situation demands a new leadership in the cities, while the development of the core cities also becomes an important topic for the surrounding rural areas.

A new city management has to be based on two overall principles, both of which have been lost in the post-war development in Sweden and often also in the other Nordic countries. The first principle is a return to income growth as a major goal for the city. Currently, many city leaders are more concerned with the redistribution of incomes than with the development of incomes. Measures and indicators of both hard and soft values have to be developed, while the working and impacts of agglomerations and clusters in relation to congestion have to be understood by the leadership. Clearly this will force the city more into an active interest in the real estate market.

Secondly, but not independent of the first principle, the new leadership has to understand, have an interest in, and a skill to debate aesthetics, form, scale and structure with all actors in the city. In this respect, the new city leadership has to develop a management for attractiveness.

Entrepreneurship Education in Schools – Case Vaasa, Finland

The entrepreneurship education in the schools of Vaasa makes the young generation of today's Vaasa develop positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship. The effects of this change will be seen later on in society, says **Jouko Havunen**, head of the Levón Institute at the University of Vaasa.

Entrepreneurship education within schools in Vaasa started in the early 1990s when Finland was in a bad recession and unemployment situation. The idea was to make the coming generations more prepared to fight against similar situations, both on the attitude level and know-how level. New decentralised curricula planning in the education system has made it possible to introduce new ideas and classroom pedagogy on a local level.

The first steps in Vaasa included a common discussion about the role of entrepreneurship in society, entrepreneurship education courses for teachers, and preparing the entrepreneurship education curricula. The first integrated curriculum for entrepreneurship education in the City of Vaasa's schools was published in 1995. It included objectives, content and guidelines for implementation. This was made in co-operation with the University of Vaasa.

The main principles for implementing entrepreneurship education are:

- no special entrepreneurship subject
- both internal and external aspects should be included
- the whole education chain between grades 0-12 should be included

- at earlier education levels the focus is on internal entrepreneurship. That includes activities to strengthen enterprising attributes such as creativity, flexibility, courage, initiative, risk taking, co-operation skills and achievement motivation.

Many kinds of methods and projects have been developed within entrepreneurship education. In recent years the emphasis has been on strengthening school-industry co-operation. Especially from the school's point of view, the benefits can be seen in increasing positive publicity, in extra resources (both financial and human), in the form of a personal development forum for teachers, and in generally getting new partners for schools for different purposes. Schools, teachers and students in Vaasa have also been able to participate in many international entrepreneurship education projects. The most important thing, however, is that the learners change and develop positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship. The effects of this change will be seen later on in society.

The following critical success factors for implementing entrepreneurship education in schools in Vaasa can be named:

- business/community/school partnerships
- entrepreneurship education "champions" or leading teachers in every school
- wide involvement of teachers—enterprising school
- entrepreneurship education courses for teachers (University of Vaasa)
- research, databases and education support material (University of Vaasa)
- budget allocations for experiments and development



The Land Use Planning System

in Finland

The new Land Use and Building Act came into force at the beginning of the year 2000. Director **Helena Korhonen**, Ministry of the Environment, explains that there are three levels in the land use planning system: the regional land use plan, the local master plan and the local detailed plan. In addition, the Government can decide on national planning policy guidelines. According to this Act, the rights of the local authorities have been extended, which has led to more responsibilities for the municipalities. The planning system is also very open to public participation. The interactive approach includes participation with all individuals and institutions whose living and working conditions will be affected by the plan.

National land use guidelines

The Government may decide upon national land use guidelines, which could concern significant national interest regarding the quality of the environment, transport and other major infrastructures, ecological sustainability, natural resources and cultural heritage. According to the Land Use and Building Act, these guidelines would be implemented through regional plans. The Ministry of the Environment and the Regional Environmental Centres supervise implementation. International agreements and programmes can be implemented by national guidelines. On the other hand, Finland's national viewpoints may be integrated into such agreements through national guidelines. For instance, national land use guidelines may be used to apply the policy options included in the European Spatial Planning Perspective (ESDP).

The regional plan

The 19 regions in Finland have the right to prepare their own land use plans and create regional development strategies. The regional land use plan is prepared and approved by the regional council and ratified by the Ministry of the Environment. Particular attention is given to ensure an appropriate re-

gional and community structure, to preserve landscape values and ecological sustainability and to provide proper conditions for business and industry. The regional land use plan transfers national and regional land use goals to the local level.

The joint master plan

Municipalities are independent but not isolated. They are becoming increasingly interconnected as networks. Just like nature reserves, urban networks don't usually stop at municipal borders. The Land Use and Building Act includes the possibility of preparing joint master plans to promote inter-municipal spatial policies. Municipalities can also establish common development areas, which are eligible for public financing for housing and other measures to boost development. The joint master plan is prepared by the municipalities, approved by a joint municipal board and ratified by the Ministry of the Environment.

The local master plan

The master plan can be fine-tuned according to the municipal needs. The local council can decide to make either a more strategic or visionary master plan to coordinate the spatial needs of different sectors, or it can make a more specific one to guide building quite directly, in which case certain implications concerning compensation for decreases in land value are created. The local master plan is prepared and approved by the municipal council.

The local detailed plan

The local detailed plan is used in all municipalities, urban and rural, for regulating the location of functions, size and type of buildings as well as the formation of the urban landscape. Municipalities prepare their plans, to be approved by the council, either in their own planning offices or using consultants. The principle of detailed planning is that no significant deterioration in the quality of anybody's living environment will be caused by a local plan without due reason.



Regional Co-operation



The Vaasa regional co-operation presented here is voluntary co-operation. The organised form of this co-operation was started in 1991. The co-operation area includes part of the Ostrobothnian region as well as the municipality of Jurva from the South Ostrobothnian region. The Vaasa region consists of 11 municipalities, with approximately 110 400 inhabitants in total. The region is a bilingual area; some inhabitants speak Finnish as their mother tongue, others have Swedish. Although the cultural differences between the two language groups are small, when seen from a central European perspective for example, there still remain differences influencing regional co-operation. This can be seen in the cautious attitudes of the municipalities towards development thoughts and actions presented by municipalities from the other domestic language group. On the other hand, having two cultural backgrounds enriches the area and provides new inspiration, says **Seppo Ylimannila**, chief planner in the City of Vaasa.

The Vaasa region

Regional co-operation organisation takes place through a co-operation committee, usually meeting three times a year. The members of this committee are the municipal mayors and leading members of society holding positions of trust (35 members). There is also a sub-committee meeting approximately 11 times a year, consisting of municipal mayors. In addition, each development project has its own organisation. Other projects worth mentioning, in addition to the Vaasa regional co-operation project, include the Via Finlandia co-operation project, based on so-called corridor development thinking, and its expansion into Sweden, Norway, the Baltic States, Poland and Germany (Via Baltica Nordica Development Zone); and the West Wind Highway project between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

The strategy of Vaasa City stresses the importance of regional co-operation within the development of the business environment policy and activity of the region.

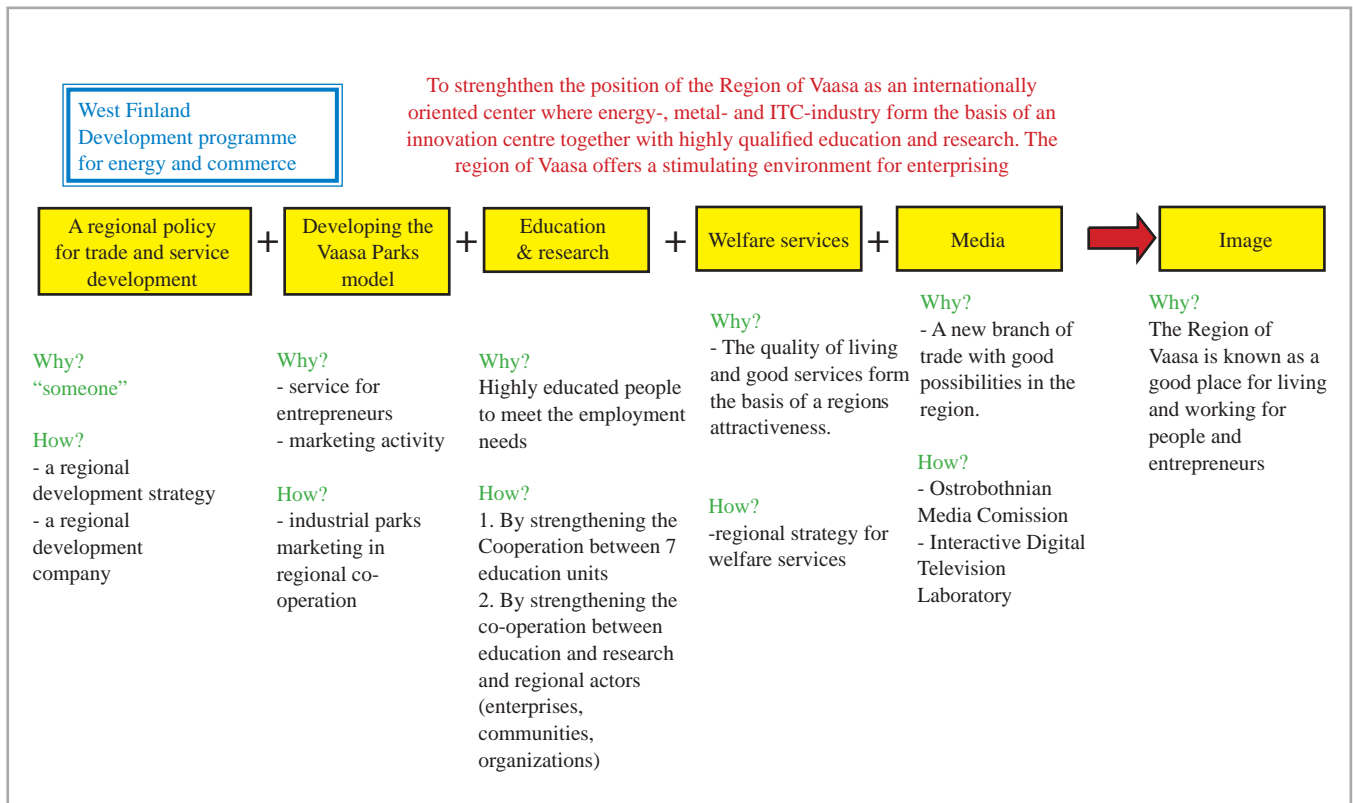
Regional development work has been done, based on various development plans and programmes. Three development programmes were made in the Vaasa region during the 1990s, as well as the Vaasa Regional Structure Plan 2030. This plan

contains an investigation into regional development using the scenario method, based on three alternative societal structure models: polarised, development zone, and scattered societal structures. Furthermore, the municipalities have jointly financed a number of development projects, e.g. the runway extension at Vaasa airport.

The Vaasa region traffic network plan (Vaseli) explains the development of the various traffic categories in each region and, among other issues, the formation of quality corridors for traffic.

The Centre of Expertise programme and the Regional Centre programme are voluntary national development plans. The Centre of Expertise programme for the Vaasa region is based on the development of energy technology and energy economics. This development programme is based on the co-operation between academic knowledge and the enterprise sector.

Regional centre programmes have been built up in Finland during the past two years. This building-up of the programmes and the projects included in them are financed so that half of the financing comes from the region and half from the state. The Vaasa regional programme contains six main areas: development of the regional enterprise sector, development



The task fields of the regional centre programme of the Vaasa region.

of the Vaasa Park model, education and research, welfare services, and media and image development. The programme will continue until 2006.

One main issue for the regional centre has been to form a regional development company. The Vaasa region development company has been founded and has started its work from the beginning of 2004. Six municipalities within the Vaasa region have joined this organisation as full members, and the other municipalities have joined as part-members. Representatives from municipalities, companies and universities are to be found within the management of the organization. The organisation's field of activities can be seen in the diagram. Among other areas, the organisation is responsible for implementing the regional centre programme.

The Vaasa regional strategy is being built up in the form of regional co-operation work and as part of the regional centre programme. During the work, the need to expand the regional co-operation within municipal services has meant that the "welfare services" issue has taken prominence as part of the regional centre programme. Since this has been a national developmental trend in Finland, it is obvious that co-operation, in terms of creating services, needs to occur within the development of the regional enterprise sector during the next few years.

Activities in the Ostrobothnian Council

The region belonging to the Ostrobothnian Council includes

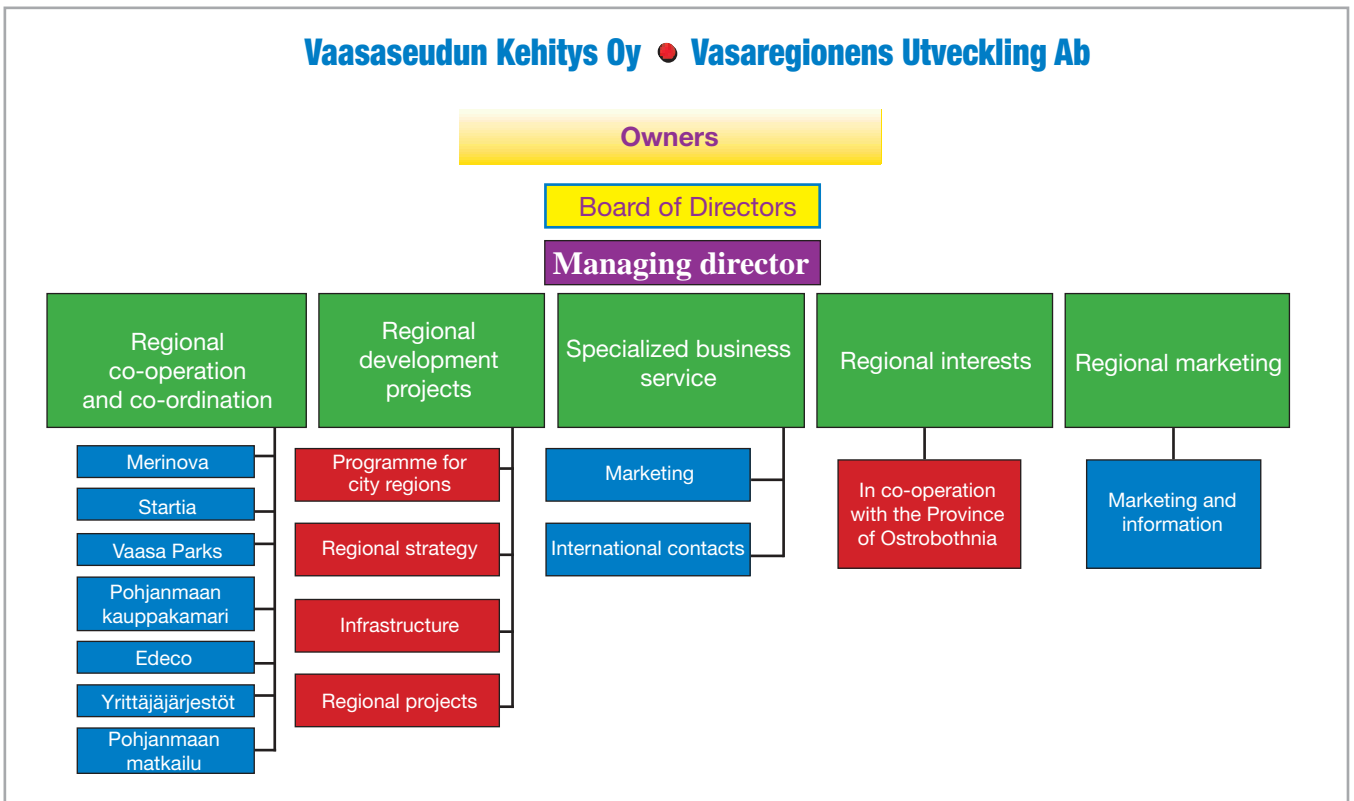
18 municipalities. The activities are based on the Regional Development Act and the Land Use and Building Act. The Council has an Assembly of members chosen from different municipalities, a Board, a Cultural Committee responsible for the Finnish cultural activities as well as a Regional Co-operation Group. Approximately 20 persons work in the office of the Ostrobothnian Council.

The activities of the Ostrobothnian Council can be monitored using the following planning systems and methods:

Regional development

- Regional Scheme 2020
A strategic plan in which the wish to develop the region is expressed. The plan is made in co-operation between regional authorities and important representatives of industry and commerce.
- Regional Strategic Programme 2003-2006
The most important regional development projects are chosen to take part in the programme for 5 years.
- Implementation Plan of the Regional Strategic Programme
A plan on the operative level for one year, where the most important regional projects are presented to the Ministry in question so that they can be included in the economic plan for the following year.
- Other projects
Regional EU projects, among others, and their financing as well as other projects and their financing that comes through the Ostrobothnian Council.

Vaasaseudun Kehitys Oy • Vasaregionens Utveckling Ab



Activities of the development company of the Vaasa region.

Spatial planning

Regional Plan 2030, a regional plan where development is put into a physical form. The planning is done as a wide co-operation with the authorities in the municipalities; also citizens have a right to participate. The plan combines local and regional interests. The plan contains various investigations concerning the infrastructure, environment and building. The plan is confirmed by the Ministry of the Environment.

Promoting of regional interests

Promoting of regional interests on the EU regional level. Common promoting of interests also through the West Finland Alliance (Co-operation organ for regional councils in Western Finland).

Promoting of cultural affairs

(The Finnish-speaking people)

The Finnish-speaking cultural committee where the members are chosen by the interest groups. The task is to promote the development of Finnish speaking culture. Activities together with the Swedish-speaking organisation. A cultural programme is made and implemented as well as small projects. Minor monetary support is also granted for cultural activities.



The Vaasa region.

The City of Vaasa

The City of Vaasa has developed from a small harbour and trading point to a modern regional centre, says Deputy Mayor, **Heikki Lonka**. Vaasa's history begins in the 14th century, when seafarers from the coastal region of central Sweden disembarked at the present Old Vaasa. In the middle of the century, Saint Mary's Church was built and in the 1370's the building of Korsholm Castle, Crysseborgh, was undertaken, which subsequently served as the administrative centre of the Vaasa province. Vaasa today represents the educational, cultural and tourist centre of Western Finland. The city is also a diverse industrial centre with good development prospects, especially for the international energy industry.



The history

The City of Vaasa was founded in 1606 by King Charles IX of Sweden at the oldest harbour and trading point of Ostrobothnia. Thanks to the sea connections, shipbuilding and trade (especially the tar trade) were flourishing from the 17th century. These were the industries in which most of the inhabitants earned their living at the time.

After the great fire in 1852, when the old densely built city with wooden houses was almost completely destroyed, it was decided to rebuild the new city at a more favourable location, on the seashore seven kilometres westwards. The harbour had already been moved earlier due to land uplift.

The provincial architect, C.A. Setterberg, drew up a city plan, which was approved in 1855. The baselines for the plan were inspired and influenced by the empire city planning style and fire security regulations. The grid street plan, market squares and underlined status of public buildings were typical for an empire city plan. The five wide esplanades, 36 metres in width, and fire alleys, which divide the blocks, were partly planned according to fire security regulations and partly from architectural reasoning. In spite of its formal principles, the city plan paid quite a lot of attention to the landscape structure.

Land uplift

The forces of the past Ice Age still have a strong effect on the coastal landscape and its character in the Vaasa region today. The land is believed to have risen 250 metres since the glaciers melted, and is expected to rise a further 180 metres

unless a new Ice Age occurs. The annual land uplift is about one centimetre, which means one metre every hundred years. The shoreline moves out quite considerably every year in the shallow waters of Vaasa.

Land uplift has usually been seen as a negative phenomenon, and it certainly does have its disadvantages. However, it can also be seen as a great challenge in urban planning. The landscape will change dynamically, but the functions of the city require the landscape to remain as it is.

Vaasa today

Today, the population of Vaasa is almost 57,000, of whom 72 % speak Finnish, 25 % Swedish and 3 % other languages as their mother tongue. Bilingualism is an advantage for the city and its development. The most important international enterprises are ABB, Wärtsilä, Vaasa Group, KWH Group, Scott Health & Safety and Kemira.

Vaasa has a centuries-old traditions as a school and educational city. The city's educational flagship of today is the University of Vaasa, with its four faculties. There are also two Swedish units of higher education, i.e. the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration and the University of Ostrobothnia. Besides these scientific educational institutions there are also two institutes of higher vocational education. The number of students exceeds 10,000.

Tourism and culture are both based to a large degree on local traditions and valuable art and museum collections, in addition to high-class theatre productions at the city's two theatres.



Finnish aviation monument "Sea-eagle". Sculptor Kalervo Kallio.

The municipalities in the Vaasa region should focus more on the regional aspects of their actions. More effort should be spent on developing the co-operation between the municipalities and internal local "disputes" and border problems that may occur should be put aside. The opportunities to create a stronger regional profile and attractiveness for the Vaasa region, in competition with Helsinki, Tampere and other parts of Finland, could be improved if a joint development strategy was outlined and local policy-making was implemented according to it.

The profile of Vaasa should be more accentuated. One way to do that could be to establish a significant landmark on Vaskiluoto Island - some type of unique and attractive high quality architecture that would attract visitors from all around the world, i.e. a "World Heritage Centre" to display the unique land uplift phenomenon perhaps, or a high-class congress-, opera and concert hall; or some other profiling landmark, yet to be invented. However, if this is to be done, it must be done with a very high level of ambition. Comparisons should be made with landmarks like the Sydney Opera House or other landmarks possessing the same level of attraction.

"Make the eagle of Vaasa fly"

Regional Attraction through Municipal Co-operation Workshop 1

These are two of the conclusions from the workshop held on the subject "Development of the Regional Attraction", under the supervision of Professor Lars Westin, from the University of Umeå.

The workshop started when Tor Wik from the City of Vaasa presented 12 indicators of welfare in Vaasa. The indicators are a part of a "Welfare Closure" for the city. Some examples of indicators are Health, Lifestyle, Social contacts and social capital, Housing situation, Economic resources, and Belief in the future. Difficulties concerning how the correct measurements could be made were raised by some of the participants. The conclusion from the group, however, was that interesting comparisons could be made even if there are difficulties in measurement.

Soon the workshop group started to discuss what the identity of Vaasa is? Does Vaasa have an attractive identity of its own?

One significant factor is that Vaasa is "two-sided", both linguistically and culturally. The bilingual dimension, where a large part of the population is both Swedish and Finnish speaking, also has an influence on the cultural and political situation. Another typical feature is that there is a strong sense of integrity among the Vaasa inhabitants- they often seem to have a distant attitude to unfamiliar contacts/people. More studies could be made in this area. One proposal was to make a study to evaluate both the city's and the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (a SWOT-analysis).



The skyline of Vaasa - could a significant landmark be established on Vaskiluoto Island in the background ?

The widespread bilingual situation was found by the group to have interesting advantages. Unlike in many other parts of Finland, it makes it possible to manage in Vaasa both for only Swedish-speaking and only Finnish speaking people. Bilingualism is therefore to be regarded as a positive factor for Vaasa, not as a problem. Vaasa could become an "international gateway" to Finland. Perhaps the city could even try to extend the bilingualism advantage to multilingualism! It was also suggested that contacts with other bilingual cities around the world could be made for the exchange of experiences and ideas, for example with cities in Belgium or Canada.

One of the most important issues for Vaasa in the coming years is the co-operation with other communities in the Vaasa region. The City of Vaasa and its close surroundings of separate communities could all benefit from a more developed and stronger co-operation than that which exists today.

On a national perspective, the Vaasa region has so far been doing quite well. However, the number of inhabitants is not growing at present; only the Finnish municipalities of Oulu, Tampere and Jyväskylä are growing at present. This is in contrast to most of the other Finnish communities that have problems with a decreasing population. Vaasa should try to avoid this trend and join the group of growing cities in Finland. The key to this is to become competitive and attractive, both as a city in itself and as a region. One proposal was to write a "Settlement strategy" - or "Why one should move to Vaasa instead of Tampere".

Attractive areas for housing, near the coastline, could also be a strong attraction factor for Vaasa. It could, for example, be worthwhile looking at the possibilities of creating new housing areas on Vaskiluoto Island. This should not be a solution to replace the landmark idea, however; it should be possible to find space for both. Although Mansikkasaari is perhaps small, it is nevertheless an interesting place for new housing.

The Vaasa Chief Planner, Seppo Ylimannila, described the differences between legislative planning and voluntarily planning in Vaasa.

This led the group into a discussion as to what could be the overall goal as well as local goals to set up for the Vaasa re-

Legislative	Voluntarily
National Land Use guidelines	Developing a Programme for the Vaasa Region The Community Structure Plan for the Vaasa Region
Regional Land Use Plan Regional Scheme	Programme for Developing City Regions (National)
Regional Strategic Programme Local Master plan	Joint Master Plan (Vaasa-Korsholm)
Local Detailed Plan	Developing Projects

gion and for the city. Some of the conclusions of the goals to be set up were as follows:

- 115,000 inhabitants by the year 2020.
- More urban life
- Take advantage of the potential that lies in the great number of well educated young people - it should be attractive to companies like ABB or others.
- Take advantage of the qualities of the surrounding nature.
- Take advantage of the rather broad spectra of cultural and leisure activities that exist. Theatre and opera - but there is a lack of a Concert hall!
- Create a positive regional image - a Vaasa-region brand mark.
- Improve the tourist profile. Make the beautiful archipelago more available for tourists. The meteorite crater of Söderfjärden is a unique geological landform that is worth seeing.

The co-operation and contacts between the municipalities and regions on both sides of Kvarken could also be intensified. One example is the idea to work in a common project to develop planning methods with an ESDP-perspective for the municipalities along the E12road in Sweden and Finland, as well as the Vaasa and Umeå regions. Contacts should also be made in other fields of trade and commerce or cultural activities. The Kvarken Council is playing an important role in this



Higher education - a part of the Vaasa brand mark. Tritonia, joint library of the universities.

field. Furthermore, there could be more exchanges of research and educational activities between the universities in Vaasa and Umeå.

Communications are always important. The air connections with Helsinki and Stockholm/Sweden are rather good. However, the east-west connections, both air and ferry, to Umeå/Northern Sweden are a weakness that must be improved. The two regions of Västerbotten in Sweden and Ostrobothnia in Finland should both benefit from better communications over Kvarken. These regions are, except for the border region high in the north, the closest ones between Finland and Sweden. Improved communications have a very high potential to significantly increase trade and enterprises in both countries.

The group closed the workshop by proposing to design some accents to the existing and very strict grid pattern of streets and building blocks in Vaasa city centre. The grid pattern does indeed have a high architectural quality and should be well taken care of, but it could also benefit from allowing some buildings or some building parts to add new elements to it.

Small-scale investments ideas

During the workshop some proposals of small-scale investments were made – e.g. investments, which are rather cheap and easy to realise, and which can be good examples of how to continue the renewal. The main investment proposal was to establish a significant landmark on Vaskiluoto Island - some type of unique and attractive high quality architecture that would attract visitors from all around the world. Another proposal was investments to develop attractive areas for housing, near the coastline



City architect Ole Östergaard, Aarhus, sketching a city accent.



Professor Lars Westin, Umeå, arguing in favour of regional attraction.

Vaasa Traffic Conditions

as Shown at the ABC Seminar

Workshop 2



Aila Virtanen, Juhani Hallasmaa and Matti Rantanen, all from Vaasa, and Ritva Nummiora from Turku.

As a main centre in the Ostrobothnia region, Vaasa generates 330 000 journeys per day, most of them by car. Due to geographic reasons most of the traffic, also the heavy traffic, goes into or through the city centre. The public transportation systems are sparsely developed. Good parking solutions are on the other hand supporting the city centre vitality. Some of the workshop group conclusions are to improve public transportation. The existing ideas of a new traffic centre close by the railway station and to extend and connect the pedestrian zone to the traffic centre are steps in the right direction. The group propose to take advantage of the rather short distances between the different city areas and build some strategic bicycle paths to increase the travel by bicycle. Another proposal is to use and expand the existing railway lines to develop a local train, connecting the city centre and nearby residential areas with the Vaasa knowledge parks, the airport, Academill and Vaskiluoto island, with its harbour and recreation facilities.

Travelling in the Vaasa region

Vaasa is the obvious administrative, cultural and commercial centre of the Ostrobothnian coastal region. This region contains 120,000 inhabitants, 57,000 of which live in Vaasa. The inhabitants of the region make a total of approximately 330,000 journeys per day. The Vaasa inhabitants make approximately 3.5 journeys per person, per day or almost 200,000 journeys per day.

Of all the journeys, 62 % are made by car, 33 % by bicycle or on foot, and 5 % by public transport. A total of 7 % of all journeys go outside the region, and of these 12 % go abroad. The number of passengers on ferries to Sweden dropped from almost one million/year to approximately 110,000 in the year 2002, due to the abolishment of tax free sales and a decrease in the amount of traffic. The number of travellers using the Vaasa railway station is approximately 450,000 per year. Half of all journeys go to Helsinki. The same numbers of passengers use coaches for their journeys. The number of passengers travelling by air is approximately 270,000 per year. A total of 75,000 journeys are made to Sweden.

Special factors concerning traffic

Due to its geographical location and topography, the city is the final stop for the railway and vehicles. The sea to the west of the city makes the traffic form a half crescent within the city. Since the harbour is located next to the sea, traffic to the harbour goes through the city centre. This creates a special problem, since heavy traffic also has to travel back and forth through the city centre to the shipping agencies concentrated within the harbour area. The railway to the harbour is also at the centre of the city's infrastructure and so obstructs other traffic.

Although the centre has a wide street plan, traffic travelling into and out of the city is concentrated to a few traffic lanes. The most important of these are Vaasanpuistikko and Kauppapuistikko. Public transportation is made more difficult because of the scattering of sparsely populated suburbs and the high amount of car ownership (approx. 450 cars/1 000 inhabitants), which in turn decreases the demand for public transportation.

SWOT

Strengths

- Clear city structure
- Wide traffic lanes in the centre making it possible to use the street space for various alternative uses, tree planting etc.
- Good parking solutions supporting the vitality of the centre, the underground car park beneath the market square
- Developmental potential
- Connections to parks and services

Weaknesses

- Traffic concentration in Vaasanpuistikko and Kauppapuistikko
- Heavy traffic through the centre to Vaskiluoto Island
- Public transportation and use thereof
- Lack of natural bicycle paths in the centre
- Consideration of bicycles in the city structure (storage)
- Market square concentration in services and activities

Opportunities

- a traffic centre based in the city centre will improve public transportation, the city centre and business
- development of railway for local traffic
- implementation of the extension of the street Konepajankatu will improve the function and safety of the current street network
- by improving the main traffic lane in the city, the so called Yhdystie, the traffic through the city will decrease.
- extension of the pedestrian zone from the railway station to the shore will expand the functions in the very centre and activate the city structure
- the building of a few bicycle paths will change the city into a bicycle city

Threats

- Direct and indirect effects on railway traffic and economy because the railway is not electrified
- Reservations for parking places will not be implemented
- Too much traffic on the streets makes it less attractive to live in the city
- Public transportation will fade away



Christian Ollus, Espoo, drawing a local train line.



Johan Emanuelson, Malmö and Martin Storm, Kalmar.



Johan Emanuelson, Malmö, chairman of workshop 2.



Sketch showing the main ideas discussed by the working group.

Small-scale investments ideas

- City-like and functional development of the traffic centre so it would become a part of the public transport and light transport network; the connection to the pedestrian zone in the centre is the most important point
- Creation of a walkway between the library and the pedestrian zone
- More flexible connection to the underground car park from the street Konepajankatu
- Development of the inner railway traffic and city structures that support it, such as land use plans by the airport, flight carriage terminal, Airport Park area, the Mustikkamaa residential area, Strömberg Park area, the surroundings of the travel centre, the surroundings of Academill and the Science Park, the inner harbour, the Niemeläntie residential area, Wasalandia and the harbour area.





Katarina Andersson, Vaasa, explaining the historical value of the Garrison area.

When New Ideas Go Marching in...

Renewal of the Former Garrison Area of Vaasa

Workshop 3

Together with the Orthodox Church, the former military garrison area forms some really precise and characteristic squares in the town centre. On the whole, the area is an example of outstanding art in terms of town planning. It must surely be an exciting and rewarding task to work with the renewal of such an area, and to be able to mix new uses with the existing town plan and architecture. The whole well organised composition of land and buildings appears able to withstand quite radical new uses. As function follows form, the renewal programme can start wherever it is wanted most, without the final results for the whole area being known in detail. The most important aspect is to choose new functions, which are well suited to existing buildings and their surroundings. It appears that the more southwards you walk in the former military garrison area, the bigger the changes in the environment you might be allowed to make.

The spirit of the area

The key issue is how to preserve “the military spirit” of the area, without any military activities. The former military garrison area has historical, urban and architectural value – value, which have to be respected. The most important axis in the town is the Kirkkokuistikko. Physically the axis ends at the Kasarminkatu but visually it continues “through” the Orthodox Church and over the Korsholmanpuistikko. The Working Group discussed whether the axis should be continued to the Tiilitehtaankatu, Hietalahdenkatu or even through the hospital area to the waterfront and the island that may be built in the future. Opinions were divided, but the most natural point to end the axis is at Tiilitehtaankatu

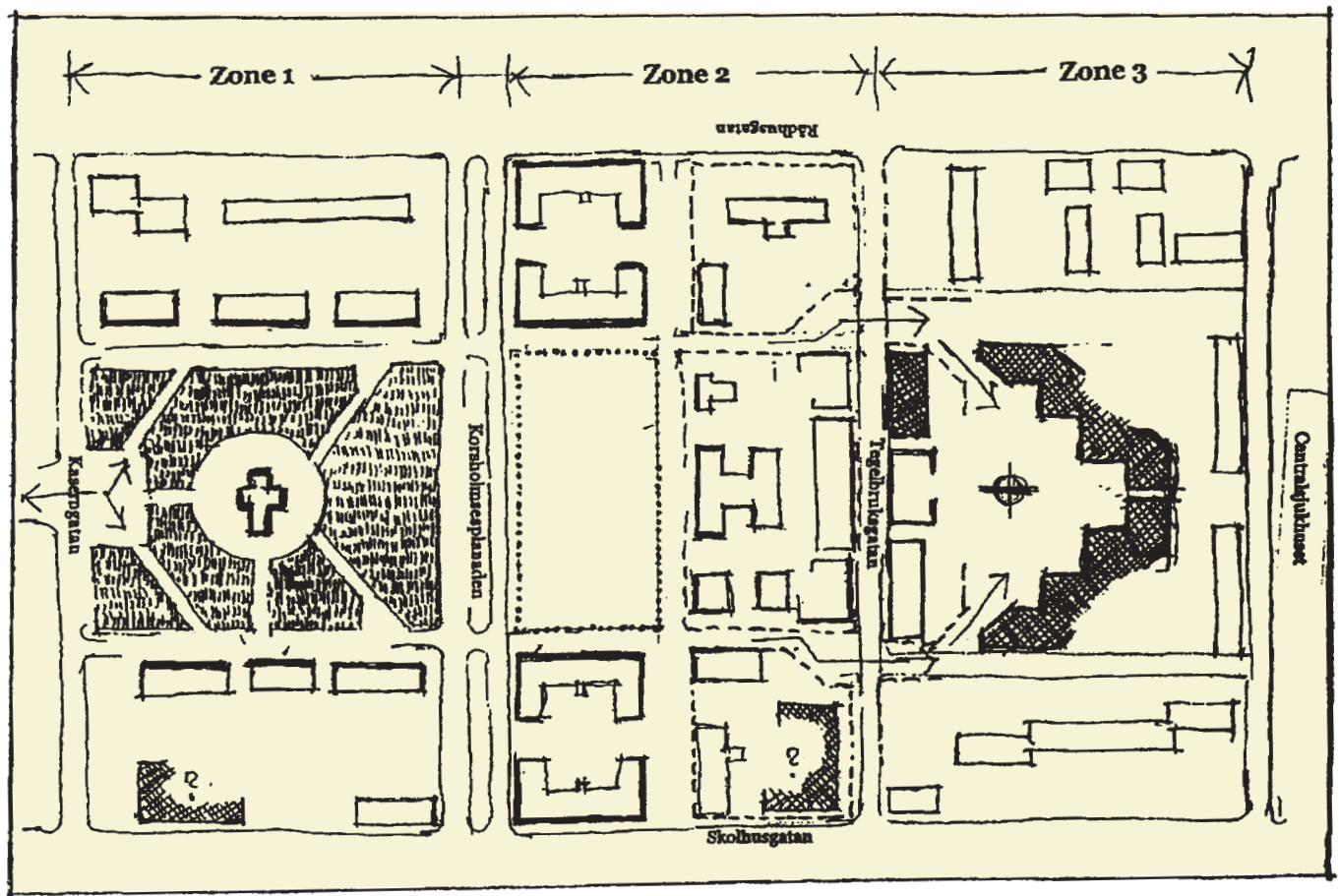
When moving from the city centre towards the former military garrison area, the feeling of being in a city grows weaker and weaker. When you reach the former military area the road splits into two. It would be an improvement to bring the two roads together into one at the end of the area and build something interesting there.

Three zones (see sketch)

Zone 1 is the northern part, between Kasarminkatu and Korsholmanpuistikko, with the Orthodox Church as the dominant

ing building in its centre and the former military buildings symmetrically along its sides. This area has to be preserved by all possible means. The park around the church plays an important role and should be well renovated, and the system of pedestrian walkways should be completed so that it corresponds with the routines of the inhabitants. The empty area in front of the church has to be kept as a playground for children.

Zone 2 is the central part between Korsholmanpuistikko and Tiilitehtaankatu. It might be possible to divide this zone into three local parts, the central parade ground including the small but monumental main buildings in the south, and the surrounding two very clearly defined quarters with the former barracks for the soldiers. In this zone there must be new uses of all three parts - uses which take care of the value of the buildings and their very typical architecture. These parts may be carefully completed on the south sides with new small buildings. The parade ground would remain open and kept as a sort of military monument. Therefore, nothing permanent should be placed there, although it could be used for parking, a playground for ball games, boules, etc. Some military themes could also be added. Why not install loudspeakers in the corners, sending out military marching orders a few minutes every second day on a designated hour.



Sketch showing the main ideas discussed by the working group concerning renewal of the former Military Quarters in Vaasa.

Zone 3 is situated in the south and limited by Tiilitehtaankatu and Hietalahdenkatu. The most eastern and western parts don't belong to the former military area and have a form and use of their own. Quite big changes may be allowed in the central part. The small buildings remaining from the Russian era may remain even in the future, but need to be kept in better condition than today. The probably functional but not very exciting garage building from the 1930's may remain. The magnificent symmetric city planning system of Vaasa ends in this southern zone. Further south the Central Hospital is situated. The central part of zone 3 can be renewed with totally new buildings. The area has to be a special place for the whole town a place where people want to live and visit. Optimal use of the area would be mixed use, including housing. We propose a quite comprehensive number of new apartments, which can be placed in a visible and maybe also rather dominating system of buildings, of course totally symmetrical. Between 8-10 storey buildings might be acceptable - overlooking and at the same time ending the magnificent north south axis of the City of Vaasa.

Communications

The work group does not recommend any changes of the road system in the former military garrison and surroundings or closing any streets or pointing out certain new pedestrian walkways. It is important to maintain a rather reduced and low level of car traffic on the main streets and

allow a combination of driving and walking on the local streets.

Other examples

The Working Group also discussed examples of renewal in other Baltic cities, which are perhaps worth visiting from Vaasa. A very good example is Karlskrona, Sweden, where a former military area – Stumholmen - was opened to civilian use and then carefully renewed, step by step. This method is perhaps worth studying.

Form-function-form

The basic rule in modern city planning and architecture has been: Form Follows Function. This means that if you have a logical well-chosen function for a plot of land or a building, then you can easily give it an adequate form. But in fact, as is very evidently shown in the former military garrison area, the opposite rule - Function follows Form - is the most valid. "Without control of the form of the town it is impossible to govern its use". The challenge here in Vaasa is to find adequate use for the existing buildings and land areas and to complete the magnificent Form with new buildings. The use of the new buildings and plots of land are of secondary importance.

Quotation above: ISBN 91-7197-380-x - Inger Bergström, Gothenburg, Sweden.



Lars Brattberg, leader of the ABC project.



Polish co-operation. Marek Karzynski, Gdynia, Ryszard Bialy, Gdansk, Maria Koprowska, Gdansk and Elzbieta Gerula, Szczecin are busy pinning up all sketches on how to renew the former Military Quarters in Vaasa.



Ryszard Bialy, chairman of workshop 3.

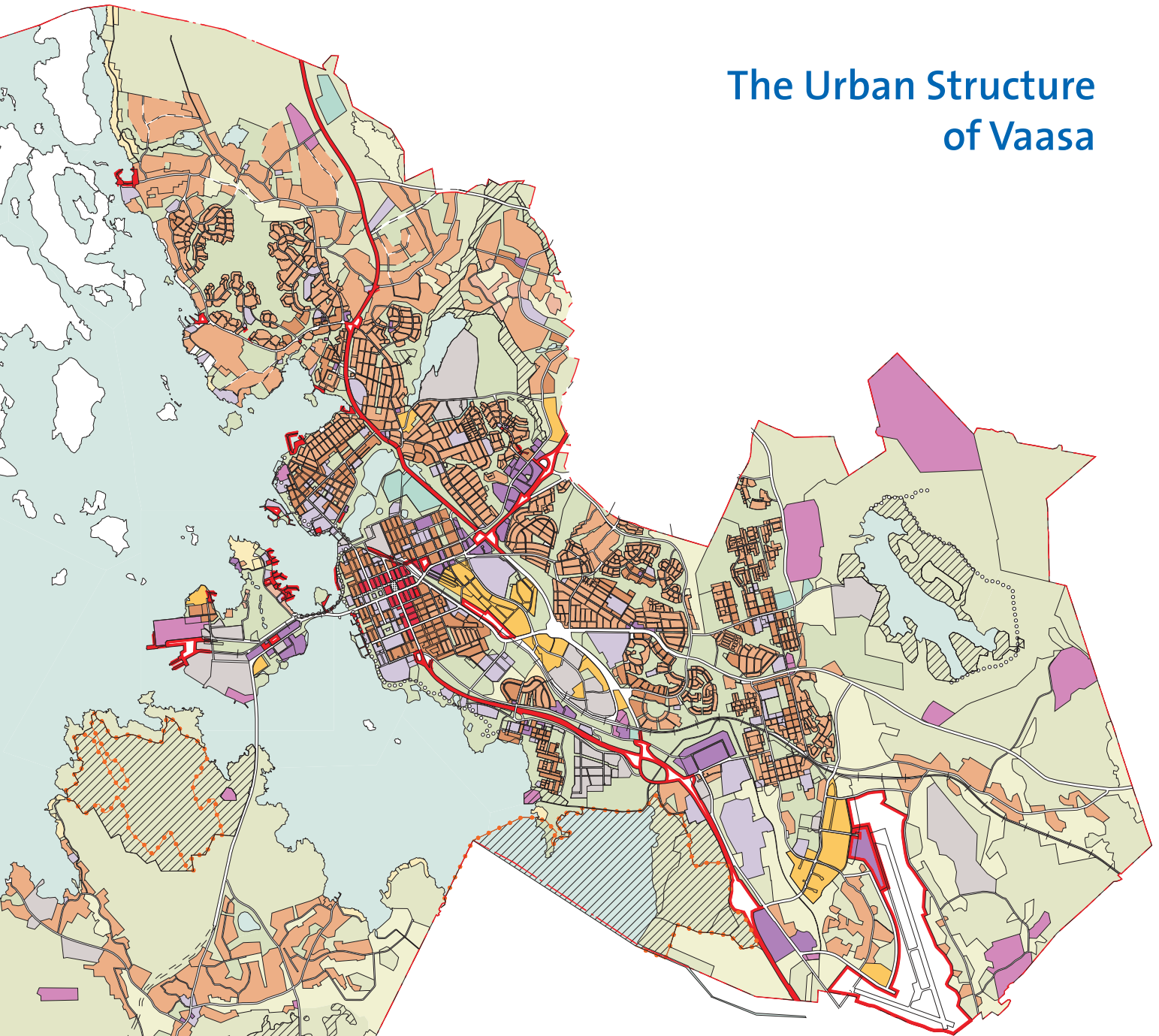
Small Scale Investments Ideas

As a special part of the investigation of the former military garrison area, the Working Group at the ABC-seminar proposes a couple of so-called Small Scale Investments – e.g. investments which are rather cheap and easy to realise and which can be good examples of how to continue the renewals.

The following examples were formulated:

- Renewal of the great park around the Orthodox Church – new trees and bushes, renewed pedestrian walkways.
- Restoration of one or both of the small yards inside the barrack buildings.
- Creation of new benches – e.g. formed with two benches put at 90 degrees to each other and protected from wind by light glass walls. Cover the benches on top with a roof with solar energy collectors, which produce heat for the benches so they can be used all year round when the weather is sunny and nice.
- Signs, informing about the history of the area.
- Build a beautiful gate, an entrance to the area.
- Illumination of the facades.
- Build monuments to commemorate the military era.
- Creation of a special flag for the area.

The Urban Structure of Vaasa



Vaasa Masterplan 2020

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AK 1 RESIDENTIAL AREA DOMINATED BY APARTMENT BLOCKS | RA HOLIDAY COTTAGE AREA
TOURIST AREA |
| AP 1 SMALL HOUSE AREA | C SPECIAL AREA
COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT AREA
AREA OF SOIL EXCAVATION
MOTOR SPORT AREA |
| AP 5 SMALL HOUSE AREA
OLD SMALL HOUSE AREA WITH SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE
VILLAGE SETTLEMENT | EH CEMETERY |
| C AREA OF CENTRAL ACTIVITIES | M FOREST AREA |
| PY AREA OF PUBLIC SERVICES AND ADMINISTRATION | MT AGRICULTURAL AREA |
| PK SHOPPING MALL AREA | W WATER AREA |
| TP WORKPLACE AREA | S SQUARE AND PEDESTRIAN AREA |
| TK INDUSTRIAL AND STORAGE AREA | L AREA OF LANDSCAPE IMPORTANCE |
| VL RECREATION AREA CLOSE TO THE CITY
AREA WITH SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES | NATURA |
| LM ROAD TRAFFIC AREA
RAIL TRAFFIC AREA
PORT AREA
AIR TRAFFIC AREA
WATER TRANSPORT AREA | |

Vaasa Needs a Landmark to Display the Land Uplift Phenomenon

- An international seminar has discussed current planning issues in Vaasa and the surrounding region.

Vaasa needs a landmark in the Vaskiluoto area. This could be a congress centre that would simultaneously function as a landmark for land uplift, as stated at the international Urban Design and Regional Development seminar in the City of Vaasa. The four-day seminar was attended by 50 urban planners from 27 cities in seven countries in the Baltic region.

The City of Vaasa is participating with 26 other Baltic cities in the three-year, Alliance of Baltic Cities project, aimed at creating a network for planners in Baltic region cities. A further aim of the project is to develop the skills and methods needed for urban and societal planning within the participating cities. This will be achieved through the exchange of experiences and practical solutions.

In practice, this means helping and learning from each other when discussing current issues, said Umeå City Chief Planner, Lars-Göran Boström, summarising the aims of the project. According to him, the inhabitants of Vaasa are also waiting to see what is being done and what is going to happen. If nothing happens, the patience of the inhabitants will soon be lost, says Boström.

Vaasa City Chief Planner, Seppo Ylimannila, explains that six seminars will be held every half-year within the project, and the Vaasa seminar was the second seminar. The first seminar was held in Kolding, Denmark, and the next seminar will be held in Liepaja, Latvia, in April.

The focus of each seminar is always current planning issues in the host city and surrounding region. The main theme for the Vaasa seminar was "The City as a regional engine". The participants stated that Vaasa is a relatively good city to live in, due to its good infrastructure and environment, as well as



Photo: Jukka Ritola

Vaasa City Chief Planner, Seppo Ylimannila, and Umeå City Chief Planner, Lars-Göran Boström, presented the conclusions of the international seminar held in Vaasa.

the fact that the city has good working practices and development opportunities.

During the Saturday seminar, the participants discussed their group work. The workshops focused on ways to improve the attraction of the city and the entire region, the importance of a well functioning traffic network, and the future of the former garrison area. In the discussions on the City's attractions, it was stated that Vaasa needs a landmark on Vaskiluoto Island in the form of a congress centre to display the land uplift phenomenon. When examining the traffic network, it was stated that bicycle paths and the proximity of rail and air connections are very important. Malmö City Chief Planner, Lars Brattberg, said that the former garrison area is a fantastic well-functioning area, divided into three zones. According to the work group, an investigation should be made to decide what to do with the buildings. The wishes of the inhabitants of the city should also be taken into consideration, said Brattberg. According to him, the zone around the Orthodox Church must be treated with respect. The other zone, i.e. the real garrison area, can perhaps be altered slightly. The third zone, i.e. the barrack area, can be used for new buildings.

Participation list

Denmark

Pernille Munk Laursen	Urban Planner	Nyköbing Falster	pml@nyk-f-kom.dk
Kirsten Bruun Plougmand	Planner	Kolding	kibp@Kolding.dk
Marianne Reinhardt	Architect	Nyköbing Falster	mre@nyk-f-kom.dk
Georg Unna	Planner	Kolding	geun@kolding.dk
Ole Østergaard	City Architect	Aarhus	ooe@sa.aarhus.dk

Estonia

Ilona Merzin	Head of Department	Viljandi	Ilona.merzin@lv.viljandimaa.ee
Indrek Ranniku	Head of Urban Planning Service	Tarto	indrek.ranniku@raad.tartu.ee
Karri Tiigisoos	Architect	Pärnu	karri@lv.parnu.ee

Finland

Katarina Andersson	Curator	Vaasa	katarina.andersson@vaasa.fi
Juhani Hallasmaa	Architect	Vaasa	Juhani.hallasmaa@vaasa.fi
Pia Hastio	Architect	Tampere	pia.hastio@tt.tampere.fi
Ann Holm	Project Planner	Vaasa	ann.holm@vaasa.fi
Mikko Järvi	City Planning Architect	Tampere	mikko.jarvi@tt.tampere.fi
Sirpa Kallio	Project Manager	Helsinki	sirpa.kallio@hel.fi
Eija Kangas	Planning Assistant	Vaasa	eija.kangas@vaasa.fi
Päivi Korkealaakso	Architect	Vaasa	paivi.korkealaakso@vaasa.fi
Marketta Kujala	Architect	Vaasa	marketta.kujala@vaasa.fi
Eija Muttonen-Mattila	Building Inspector	Vaasa	eija.muttonen-mattila@vaasa.fi
Ritva Nummiora	Landscape Architect	Turku	ritva.nummiora@turku.fi
Christian Ollus	Project Manager / Architect	Espoo	christian.ollus@espoo.fi
Matti Rantala	Senior Advisor	Vaasa	matti.rantala@ymparisto.fi
Theodora Rissanen	City Planning Architect	Lahti	theodora.rissanen@lahti.fi
Hannele Salmi	Planner	Vaasa	hannele.salmi@vaasa.fi
Veli-Pekka Saesma	Traffic Engineer	Vaasa	veli-pekka.saesma@vaasa.fi
Anita Sundman	Project assistant	Vaasa	anita.sundman@vaasa.fi
Aila Virtanen	Architect	Vaasa	aila.virtanen@vaasa.fi
Tor Wik	Senior Advisor	Vaasa	tor.wik@vaasa.fi
Seppo Ylimannila	Chief Planner	Vaasa	seppo.ylimannila@vaasa.fi
Anders Östergård	Planning Manager	Vaasa	anders.ostergard@tiehallinto.fi

Germany

Andreas Schubert	Senior Expert	Rostock	andreas.schubert@rostock.de
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Latvia

Ineta Buka	City Architect	Jekabpils	inetaarh@jdome.zednet.lv
Ugis Kaugurs	City Architect	Liepaja	ugis@dome.liepaja.lv
Gvido Princis	Head of the Detail Planning Div.	Riga	gvido.princis@atdep.rcc.lv

Poland

Ryszard Bialy	Architect	Gdansk	apro@apro.pl
Elzbieta Gerula	Architect	Szczecin	egerula@um.szczecin.pl
Marek Karzynski	Head of Urban Planning Dep.	Gdynia	wydz.urbanistyki@gdynia.pl
Maria Koprowska	Main designer	Gdansk	koprowskamaria@hotmail.com

Sweden

Anders Bolin	Architect	Sundsvall	anders.bolin@sundsvall.se
Lars-Göran Boström	Chief Planner	Umeå	lars-goran.bostrom@umea.se
Lars Brattberg	Chief Planner	Malmö	lars.brattberg@malmo.se
Johan Emanuelson	Traffic Planner	Malmö	johan.emanuelson@malmo.se
Magnus Ericsson	Urban Planner	Sundsvall	magnus.ericsson@sundsvall.se
Åke Hesselekrans	Architect	Malmö	ake.hesselekrans@malmo.se
Staffan Lindholm	City Architect	Kalmar	staffan.lindholm@kalmar.se
Martin Storm	Head of Spatial Planning Dep.	Kalmar	martin.storm@kalmar.se
Lars Westin	Professor	Umeå	lars.westin@econ.umu.se