

**Vaskiluoto - living city
meets the sea**

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Team representative: architect, andscape architect, urbanist
Location: Northern part of the Island of Vaskiluoto
Population: Vaskiluoto 340 inhabitants, City of Vaasa 68,000 inhabitants
Reflection site: 33 ha
Project site: 11,4 ha
Site proposed by: City of Vaasa

Actors involved: City of Vaasa;
Owner of the site: City of Vaasa
Commission after competition: Further studies on the level of urban design



INHABITED MILIEU'S CHALLENGES

The island of Vaskiluoto, where the competition site is located, is situated to the west of the Vaasa city centre. The island is connected to the mainland by an embankment in the east and a bridge in the south. The activities on Vaskiluoto today are very diverse: one third of the area is in the use of industrial and port activities, though in the process of change; one third is in residential and other accommodational use, including a camping site; and one third consists of nature and recreational areas for locals and other Vaasa residents, as well as tourists.

The central location calls for developing Vaskiluoto as a unified part of the Vaasa urban area. The versatile functions in the area, including both current and new housing, should be secured at the same time as considering the development needs as the land use evolves. The prerequisites for a Vaskiluoto district centre with services for local inhabitants also need to be created, and the identity of the island needs to be identified and strengthened. According to the new Vaskiluoto master plan, one area assigned for housing is the competition project site located at the tip of the northern peninsula of the island.

Vaskiluoto's greatest values, in addition to its central location, is the proximity of the sea and its versatile nature, and these values should be cherished. Water traffic is the characteristic mode of transportation, and the harbour and marina functions play a central role in the area's identity. Vaskiluoto is partly heavily shaped by human action, and partly preserved in a near natural state. The connection with nature and the shorelines is apparent but not necessarily of a high quality.

HOW TO FIGURE OUT A VISION FOR A FUTURE, SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE FOR NEW RESIDENTS? HOW TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY OF THE NEW RESIDENTIAL AREA FROM THE VERY BEGINNING?



HOW TO TURN INTO AN ADVANTAGE THE LOCATION'S NATURAL CONDITIONS: DARK, SNOWY WINTERS? SPRINGS AND SUMMERS WITH A LOT OF SUNSHINE AND DAYLIGHT? EVER-INCREASING HEAVY RAINS AND STORMWATERS?



QUESTIONS TO THE COMPETITORS

The re-use of the sites of the camping area and demolished hotel for a new housing area set amidst green and blue nature will offer unique opportunities for the creation of an attractive living environment, where a rich urban fabric meets the surrounding nature and the sea. The competition calls for insightful urban design proposals for these residential areas and shoreline development in the project area, where the environment should be holistic and promote the benevolent co-existence of all beings. The new living environment should take into consideration the needs of different lifestyles, age groups and cultural backgrounds in society: it should be encompassing and inclusive, and foster a community spirit from the very beginning. Possibilities for hands-on activities and self-expression should be created. The residents' own sustainable and ecological choices should be supported and facilitated. Also, a resilience towards society's changing needs should be considered. Cultural sustainability requires urban and architectural solutions of a high quality, in line with the cultural heritage of Vaasa and Vaskiluoto, and be able to withstand the test of time.

The amount of greenery should be maximised, stormwater managed effectively and the biodiversity of the environment should be promoted in all forms. These goals should be reflected and enhanced in the urban, architectural and landscape architectural design solutions.

The option of placing services and also some housing on the former Coast Guard area by the shoreline can be studied. The project area will be developed in three major stages, as the third phase will be implemented only if/when a new location for the camping site is found. The other seashores and the southern forest area will be retained as common recreation and service areas, but strategic and social connections between the project site and the Vaasa City Centre should be enhanced.

