

MAKE THE BACKS FRONTS (AGAIN)

Human capital, far more than physical infrastructure, explains why cities succeed. Edward Glaeser. The human, but also the living, are at the centre of our city making again. Renewed awareness of social perspectives and of holistic urban ecosystems have identified and inspired the need for more caring cities, landscapes for living cities. Make The Backs Fronts (Again) adheres to this vision.

More specifically, the ongoing development of our societies' lifestyle prompts new strategies for sustainable neighbourhood planning. Working habits, shifting productive economies, living patterns, health and well-being, leisure and socialization are interconnected and call for greater integration at all scales. This is well captured by the

UN-Habitat 5 planning principles that address current neighbourhood urbanization challenges: adequate space for streets, high density, mixed land use in any neighbourhood (80% of floor space for economic use), social mix (different price ranges and types), and limit single function blocks.

Embracing the vision above, and in light of the brief, Make The Backs Fronts (Again) aims at a gentle, human scale densification, a smarter urbanization. Trädgårdsöden is the epicentre of this action, a high street of newest generation, one that can satisfy the physical, mental and social health of the neighbourhood. Concrete for smarter mobility complement the proposal, shifting more traffic routes into living environments for everyone.

GREEN AND WATER

The park along Trädgårdsöden is the fundamental spine hosting civic green and water. It connects to the intersecting green systems.

MOBILITY

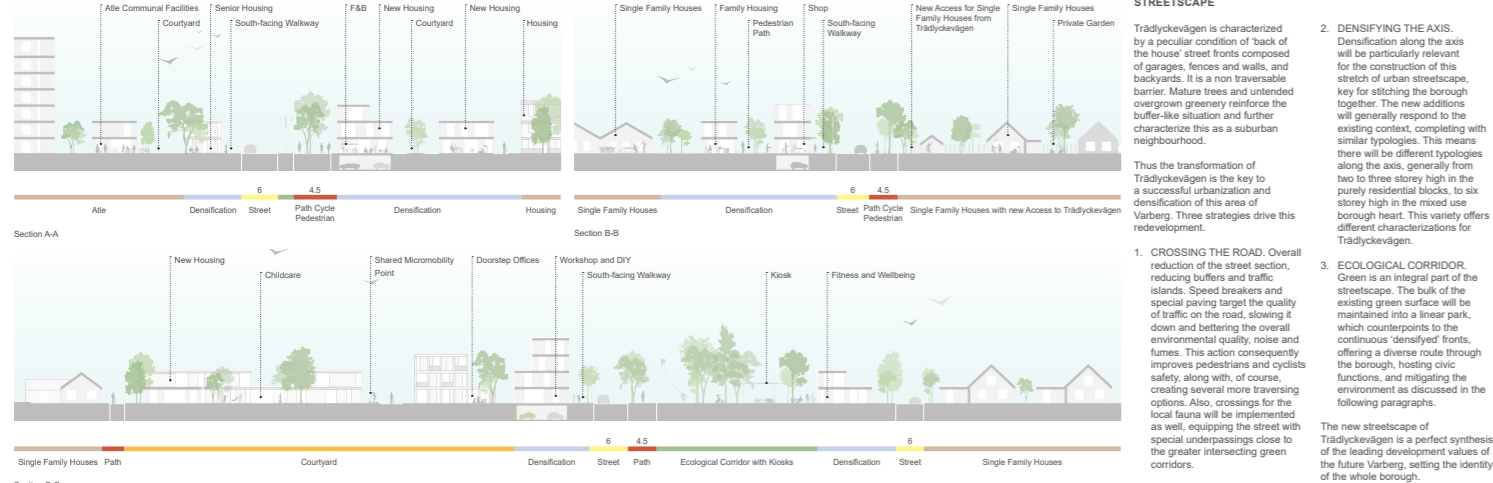
Smart mobility implementation is gradually achieved, as density increases. Several hubs for shared vehicles will capillary address the demand.

DENSIFICATION

Densification stems from the area where the mixed use and economic spaces will be mainly concentrated and further radiates to the periphery.



Siteplan

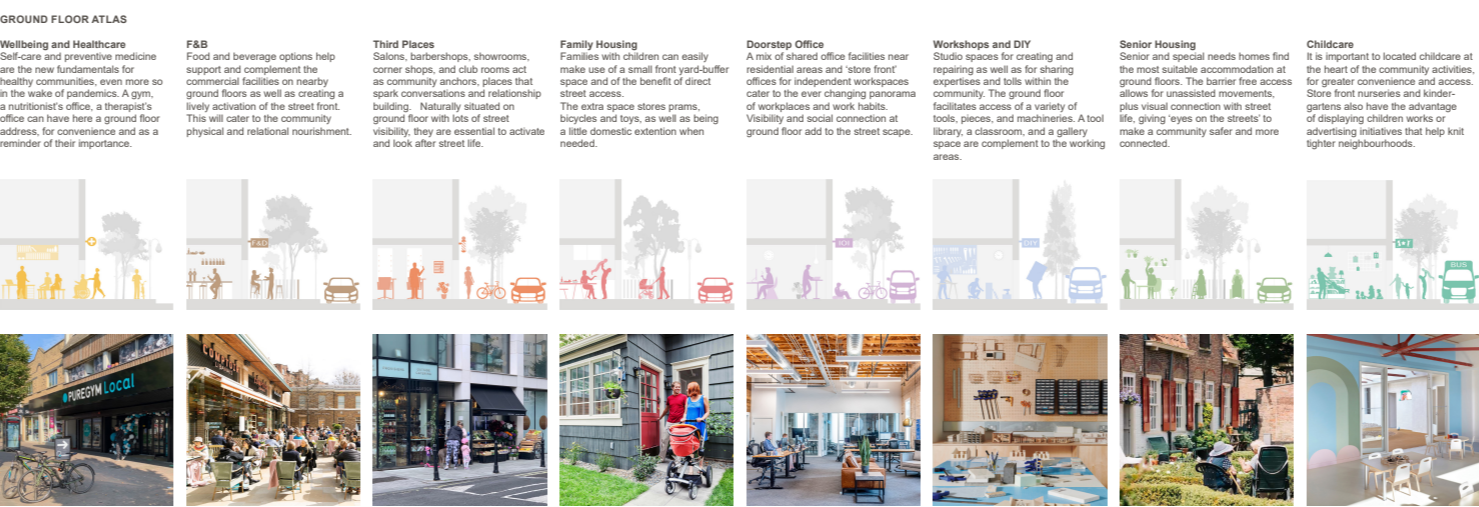
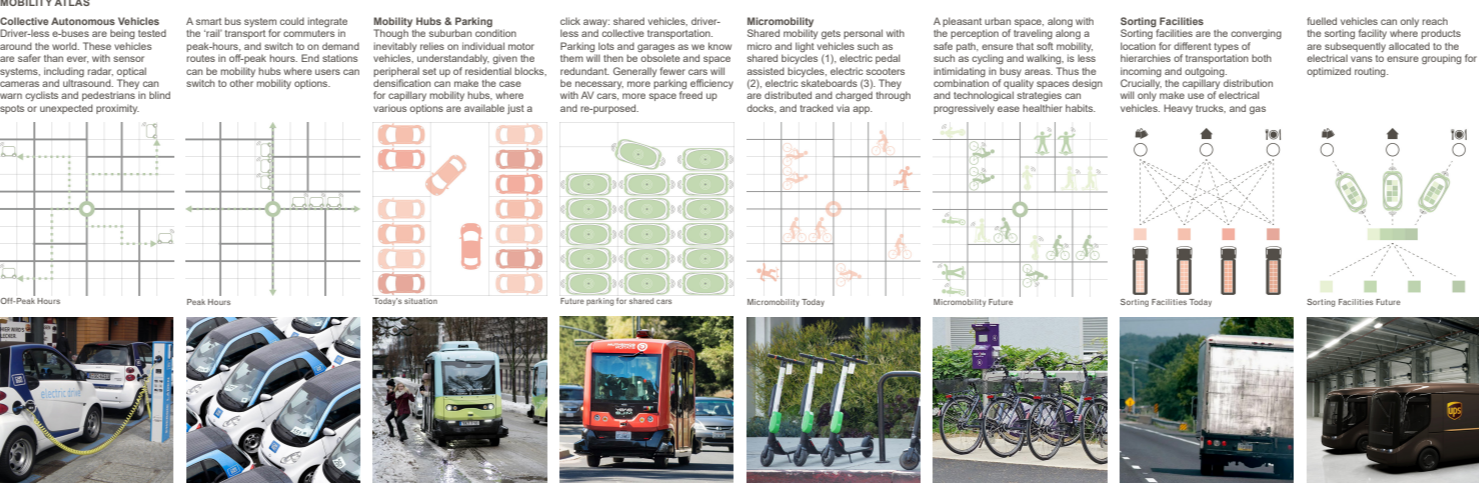


Water management and storming system through the Ponds in the Ecological Corridor

1 VARBERG



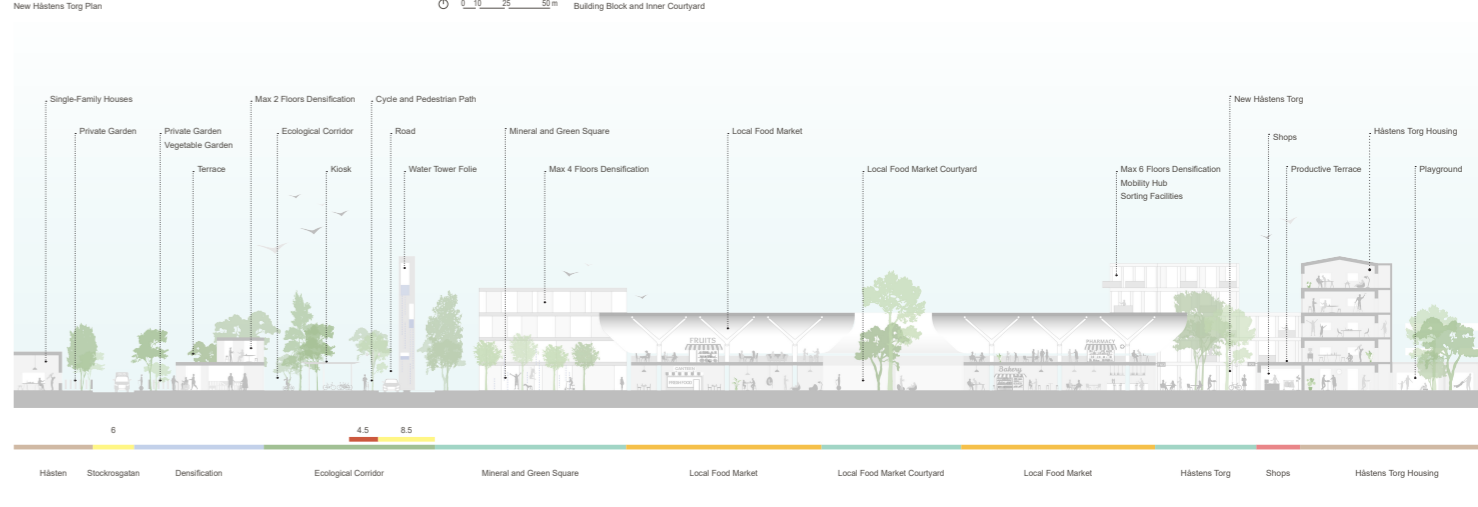
View of New Trädgårdsöden Streetscape



2 VARBERG



New Håstens Torg View



Longitudinal Section through New Håstens Torg

3 VARBERG

MOBILITY ATLAS

**Collective Autonomous Vehicles**  
Driver-less e-buses are being tested around the world. These vehicles are safer than ever, with sensor systems, including radar, optical cameras and lidar. They can warn cyclists and pedestrians in blind spots or unexpected proximity.

**Micromobility**  
Though the suburban condition inevitably relies on individual motor vehicles, understanding, given the peripheral set up of residential blocks, densification can make the case for capillary mobility hubs, where various options are available just a click away: shared vehicles, driver-less and collective transportation. Parking lots and garages as we know them will then be obsolete and space redundant. Generally fewer cars will be necessary, more parking efficiency with AV cars, more space freed up and re-purposed.

**Shared Mobility**  
Shared mobility gets personal with micro and light vehicles such as shared bicycles (1), electric pedal assisted bicycles, electric scooters (2), electric skateboards (3). They are distributed and charged through docks, and tracked via app.

**Sorting Facilities**  
Sorting facilities are the converging location for different types of hierarchies of transportation both incoming and outgoing. Crucially, the capillary distribution will only make use of electrical vehicles. Heavy trucks, and gas fuelled vehicles can only reach the sorting facility where products are subsequently allocated to the electrical vans to ensure growing up optimized routing.

GROUND FLOOR ATLAS

**F&B**  
Food and beverage options help support and complement the commercial facilities on nearby ground floors as well as creating a lively activation of the street front. This will cater to the community physical and relational nourishment, and look after street life.

**Third Places**  
Salons, barbershops, showrooms, corner shops, and club rooms act as community anchors, places that spark conversations and relationship building. Naturally situated on ground floor with lots of street visibility, they are essential to activate and look after street life.

**Family Housing**  
Families with children can easily make use of a small front yard-buffer space and of the benefit of direct street access. The extra space stores prams, bicycles and toys, as well as being a little domestic extension when needed.

**Doorstep Office**  
A mix of shared office facilities near residential areas and 'store front' offices for independent workspaces cater to the ever changing panorama of workplaces and work habits. Visibility and social connection at ground floor add to the street space.

**Workshops and DIY**  
Studio spaces for creating and repairing as well as for sharing expertise and tools within the community. The ground floor facilitates access of a variety of tools, pieces, and machines. A tool library, a classroom, and a gallery space are complementary to the working areas.

**Senior Housing**  
Senior and special needs homes find the most suitable accommodation at ground floors. The barrier free access allows for unassisted movements, plus visual connection with street life, giving 'eyes on the streets' that make a community safer and more connected.

**Childcare**  
It is important to locate childcare at the heart of the community activities, for greater convenience and access. Store front nurseries and kindergartens also have the advantage of displaying children works or advertising initiatives that help knit tighter neighbourhoods.

STREETSCAPE

Trädgårdsöden is characterized by a peculiar condition of back of the houses' street fronts composed of garages, fences and walls, and backyards. It is a non-traversable barrier. Mature trees and untended overgrown greenery reinforce the buffer-like situation and further characterize this as a suburban neighbourhood.

Thus the transformation of Trädgårdsöden is the key to a successful urbanization and densification of the area of Varberg. Three strategies drive this redensification.

**1. CROSSING THE ROAD**  
Overall reduction of the street section, reducing buffers and traffic islands. Speed breakers and special paving target the quality of traffic on the road, slowing it down and bettering the overall environmental quality, noise and fumes. This action consequently improves pedestrians and cyclists safety, along with, of course, creating several more traversing options. Also, crossings for the local fauna will be implemented as well, equipping the street with special underpassings close to the greater intersecting green corridors.

**2. DENSIFYING THE AXIS**  
Densification along the axis will be particularly relevant for the construction of this street of urban streetscape, key for stitching the borough together. The new additions will generally respond to the existing context, competing with similar typologies. This means there will be different typologies along the axis, generally from two to three storey high in the purely residential blocks, to six storey high in the mixed use borough heart. This variety offers different characterizations for Trädgårdsöden.

**3. ECOLOGICAL CORRIDOR**  
Green is an integral part of the streetscape. The bulk of the existing green surface will be maintained into a linear park which counterpoints to the continuous 'identified' front offering a diverse route through the borough, hosting civic functions, and mitigating the environment as discussed in the following paragraphs.

The new streetscape of Trädgårdsöden is a perfect synthesis of the leading development values of the future Varberg, setting the identity of the whole borough.

WATER MANAGEMENT

The linear park along Trädgårdsöden not only creates a high-quality open space, but it is also vital to manage flooding risks associated with cloud bursts. Its permeable surface mitigates the effects of flooding retaining the run-off on site in underground gravel pits. In addition to that, a series of natural looking ponds connected to the wetlands convey the drained water to a filtering pond, crossing ponds, treatment marshlands and polishing ponds. At its end a pumping house, designed as a folly, pumps the clean water back into the system for irrigation.

Beyond its environmental role, the water management systems eventually provides diverse temporal experiences of the landscape.

365 DAYS SQUARES

The impression upon arrival at Håstens Torg is one of a suburban commercial development. The fragmented landscape and the services interspersed with parking lots reinforces the notion of 'back of the house' spaces.

Completely reversing this existing scenario, Make The Backs Fronts (Again) identifies Håstens Torg as the heart of the community, increasing its potential as a civic square connected to and complementing Trädgårdsöden with different scales and heights.

The proposal recreates a complete neighbourhood, where 'work, live, and play' can happen in close proximity, giving the possibility of walkable accessibility to every city essential, convenience of a wider set of services, and the possibility of community building through third spaces. Complete neighbourhoods are also known as 15 or 20 minutes neighbourhoods, referring to the walking distance radius functions the periphery to its centre. Today, these are unequivocally considered the essential infrastructure of healthy and caring cities, where no member of the community is left behind, and physical, mental, and social health is satisfied.

FOOD-SCAPE FOCUS

As seen above, healthy communities require a balanced mix of ingredients: infrastructures, densities, proximities, activities. However, it is the holistic and finer reading of community everyday life that brings the project to the next level. Foodscapes are just a potential reading, one where a tiny design choice can make huge behavioural changes.

The profound impact of nourishment on human health and on the environment and climate has reached new levels of awareness in the last decades. Food production, origin, and safety, are at the centre of every day nourishing choices rather than being gourmet riches.

Urban design has now been recognized as a fundamental component of food culture, hence the design of 'foodscapes', spaces related to foods, are now priorities in the community's agenda.

As noted in a recent study by Gehl Architects, better design for foodscapes and public life also helps shift youth diets, notoriously prone to unhealthy but accessible options. Following these findings, the proposal suggests the provision of the new civic and market areas with playful, warm, and heated seating for youth to gather where they can access better food options.