

# Feedback from the area's residents and other citizens

A web discussion was opened in conjunction with the preparation of the competition programme with the aim of gathering requests and views from the area's residents as well as other messages for the competitors so that they would have a better idea of local conditions and the wishes of the residents. The discussion produced 89 comments that can be read here: <https://kerrokantasi.hel.fi/hearing/laajasalonbulevardi>. The following is a summary of the main themes that arose in the discussion.

## THE COMPETITION TASK AND ASSESSMENT

According to one person, the competition should be used to find a feasible plan for Laajasalo, as well as new ideas for realising boulevard areas in general. These could be taken into consideration separately in the assessment. According to another note, the competition should not talk about boulevardisation, but "urbanisation"; i.e. how the societal structure of Laajasalo can be developed to be functional so that there would be room for more people, much better services than now with well-designed road, square and park environments, as well as better public transport.

There were also suggestions to delineate the competition area so that a direct means of communication to Herttoniemenranta could be investigated, possibly through Killingholma.

## TRAFFIC FLOW AND SAFETY

One of the liveliest topics in the web discussion was maintaining a decent traffic flow on Laajasalontie in the future as a consequence of the changes to be made and the increase in the number of inhabitants. Many people thought that this combination would be difficult, if not impossible to achieve. Many people demanded a solution that would enable a fluid traffic flow on the island's only main thoroughfare. One proposed solution was a tunnel or canopy under which cars would travel.

These days, Laajasalontie is crossed on foot or by bicycle using overpasses and this is considered a safe option, particularly for children. In the future, level crossings for pedestrians and cyclists were considered bad for road safety and it was thought they would disrupt the traffic flow.

## BUILDING AND THE CITYSCAPE

Residents hoped the competitors would come up with stylish, well-lit and original ideas that would go well with the island's maritime image. There were wishes for imaginative facades on both sides of the boulevard. It was further hoped that durable and modifiable materials would be used. Wooden structures were thought to be well suited for the area's maritime and historically villa-based identity.

The potential height of new buildings split opinions. Many residents thought that the scale of the detached houses in the northern part of the planning area should also be taken into account in new houses and that new buildings should keep to the height of the present buildings on the island. Very tall buildings were rejected. On the other hand, some comments indicated

a wish for effective and tall building in order to attain greater numbers of inhabitants as well as to make services profitable and also so that there would be no need to build in nature areas.

According to one person, the competitors' attention should be focussed on producing high-quality public spaces. Studies of the nature of the road should be made available and so should new perspectives on roads as frameworks of residential areas.

## GREEN AREAS, NATURE AND ROUTES

Many people emphasised the importance of the island's natural and green areas, in particular that of the seashore. Built parks and beaches were not seen as an adequate substitute for areas in their natural state. The opinion of many can be summarised in the following: "As an islander, I value the forests, nature paths, greenery, beaches, space and peaceful residential areas of Laajasalo. I want these to be preserved in the future, too."

In particular, the coastal forests surrounding Tengströminpuisto and the marina were mentioned often. On the other hand, wishes were also expressed that the areas around the arena would be more suitable for recreational use and the path running through Tengströminpuisto was considered one of the most pleasant footpaths on the island. It was thought that the break in the footpath between Tengströminpuisto and Laajasalo bridge was unpleasant and also the connection to the park from the Yliskylä side was considered bad. The marina was considered to be an important part of the identity of the islanders and residents clearly wanted its activities to be safeguarded, including the winter storage of boats.

One person proposed that extra points should be given in the assessment for solutions that preserved the parks of the vicinity and also filled in the gaps in the green and footpath networks.

## SERVICES

More public and commercial services as well as jobs are clearly desired in Laajasalo. In addition to those to be located on the sides of the city boulevard, a restaurant and café were desired in the marina area. There was also one hope of being able to go swimming from the jetties at the marina. According to more critical commentators, the long, dark and cold autumn and winter make it impossible to have enjoyable café terraces in Helsinki except for a few sunny days in summer.

## ENVIRONMENTAL HARM

One hot topic of discussion was the negative effects of the traffic on Laajasalontie such as noise and air pollution. It was thought that these would increase as the amount of traffic and the number of inhabitants increased thus making it challenging, if not impossible, to build a good living environment. The idea of a densely built up urban structure which was at the same time pleasant and healthy was thought to be unrealistic. It was suggested that in the assessment such ideas and solutions be given weight that succeed in combining the objectives of an efficient thoroughfare and pleasant and healthy residential construction.