

## UOMA

*The built environment is defined by post-war residential areas of traditional “rintamamiestalo” houses, a somewhat dilapidated light industrial zone, and newly completed sports-supporting developments on the outskirts of the area. At the heart of this urban fabric stands the Figura building. A large portion of the central area is comprised of underutilized land with depleted soil, where the absolute highlights are the pristine rocky outcrops that rise on both sides of the site.*

The planning area forms a long cross-section interacting with various zones of the city, alternating between natural and built environments, private and public spaces. A guiding principle of the proposal is the seamless merging of different urban languages into a coherent dialogue. Water acts as a unifying theme across the entire area, transforming in form and character—ranging from organic to more urban—as it responds to the specific nature of each subzone, while also addressing stormwater management and control challenges.

At key traffic intersections, the subareas are linked by permeable paving, green structures, and vegetation that not only naturally slow down vehicular traffic but also ensure an uninterrupted green corridor—especially crucial for small fauna.

The Proposal Is Divided Into Three Phases and Zones:

- A central recreational area celebrating biodiversity
- A residential zone respecting historical identity while embracing modern living
- A hybrid area centered around the Figura building, serving as a meeting point between old and new, natural and urban, public and private

Each zone is underpinned by shared pillars of identity, natural values, and well-being.

Distinct qualities of each part of the area allow for quick stops for services or activities as well as longer retreats, offering experiences particularly appealing to residents and urban dwellers, but also attracting visitors seeking nature and wellness-based tourism.

### Recreational Oasis

Located centrally, the recreational zone is designed with accessibility, inclusivity, and openness as key principles, becoming an urban nature retreat for all residents. The goal is to create open, inviting and accessible natural landscapes.

The area accommodates both structured and spontaneous activities that adapt to the seasons and weather, serving schoolchildren marveling at the ever-changing nature, fitness enthusiasts, and birdwatchers alike.

Central to this phase is enhancing biodiversity in the urban environment and providing diverse stormwater management solutions, while supporting community activities and promoting the health benefits of outdoor exercise and immersion in nature—contributing to mental health, rehabilitation, and general well-being.

The design highlights plant types typical of Turku's natural identity through various miniature landscapes—such as meadows, wetlands, and coastal vegetation—enhancing biodiversity and enabling the presence of various biomes. These miniature landscapes also support education and tourism by encouraging exploration and learning about nature.

Existing trees are preserved wherever possible, and new trees are planted throughout the site.

A noise barrier rising on the northern edge of the recreational area shields it from the busy Vähäheikkiläntie road, offers a habitat for sunny meadow species, and creates interesting year-round exploration and play opportunities. Terraced green spaces protect pedestrians and children from traffic, while blocking views to the busy road. This transforms Vähäheikkilä into a unique urban green oasis.




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## Residential Area

Located on the eastern side of the area, the new residential zone connects with the existing neighborhood of traditional "rintamamiestalo" homes, respectfully reflecting their historic identity through a contemporary and innovative lens.

The housing concept is built around three-story townhouses whose scale and form echo traditional housing types, with materials and colors drawn from nature and history. These modern townhouses blend smoothly into the small-scale existing fabric while enhancing residential density and responding to contemporary needs.

Courtyards reflect traditional Finnish "pihapiiri" yard design and are formed by units of varying apartment sizes. These are connected by shared green roof terraces and saunas, adaptable in layout to meet different needs. The courtyards are designed to offer both communal and private outdoor spaces, while green roofs help structure activity zones, provide habitats for plants and insects, reduce the urban heat island effect, and improve air quality.



The courtyards are linked by shared space streets, prioritizing pedestrians and micromobility within the neighborhood and fostering interaction among residents.

Stormwater is collected under permeable street paving and reused in irrigation systems for green roofs. Water is then directed to retention basins and rain gardens, boosting the area's ecological resilience and sustainability.

Solar panels replace conventional roofing, designed in tones and forms similar to traditional sheet metal roofs to blend in while meeting modern energy demands.

Building structures and surfaces are made entirely from eco-friendly, bio-based, and natural materials, with CLT (cross-laminated timber) frames, cork, clay, and natural wax-based insulation and finishes. These materials are suited for Finland's demanding coastal climate, offering healthy indoor air and natural living environments. Due to clay soil native to the area, the houses have ventilated ground floors and elevated living levels.

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## Urban Hybrid Area

The western portion of the planning area draws inspiration from Turku's maritime identity, the industrial past of the site, and the patina of its aging built environment. The hybrid area's atmosphere emerges from the contrasting interplay of history and contemporary, as well as the fusion of nature and urban fabric.

A stormwater canal running through the area provides hydrological control while acting as a linear, stitching together the urbanized southern promenade and the organically contoured northern parklands and event grounds. The southern edge features a linear, pedestrian-prioritized street with its courtyard blocks, while the north culminates in an organic-shaped gate building area, expressing the tension and synthesis between structured and naturalistic form languages.

Where possible, existing buildings and materials are reused, promoting circular economy principles, resource efficiency, and the preservation of cultural heritage and identity.

Old industrial buildings are integrated into new structures, forming building masses where historical layers meet new design, reviving an underutilized part of the city. Their design language is aligned with the proposed residential structures and are built using natural materials and ecological construction methods.



Inner courtyards in the industrial zone are reoriented to face the stormwater canal through massing and vegetation, providing calm zones for the adjacent residential area. These courtyards offer space for a variety of urban activities, fostering community life and wellness. The commercial units are suitable for cafés, boutiques, and events—such as pop-up markets, educational workshops, rehabilitation services, and recreational sports—expanding the offer of nearby sports facilities.

The area's diversity and element of surprise invite residents and visitors to explore what lies just around the next corner.

Some infill development in the renewed industrial zone is dedicated to housing, continuing the typologies of the proposed residential area. These housing units are integrated into old industrial building frameworks, providing practical spaces for parking and storage.

Housing density is further increased by converting the top three floors of the Figura building into short-term rental apartments and apartment hotel units, while the ground floor serves as community and hobby spaces. This new Figura enhances the housing offering and introduces fresh options for communal and alternative living.

New balconies are added and connect to the gate building and the bridge on the opposite bank. They improve comfort for residents and create a contemporary layer and contrast to the historic Figura façade.