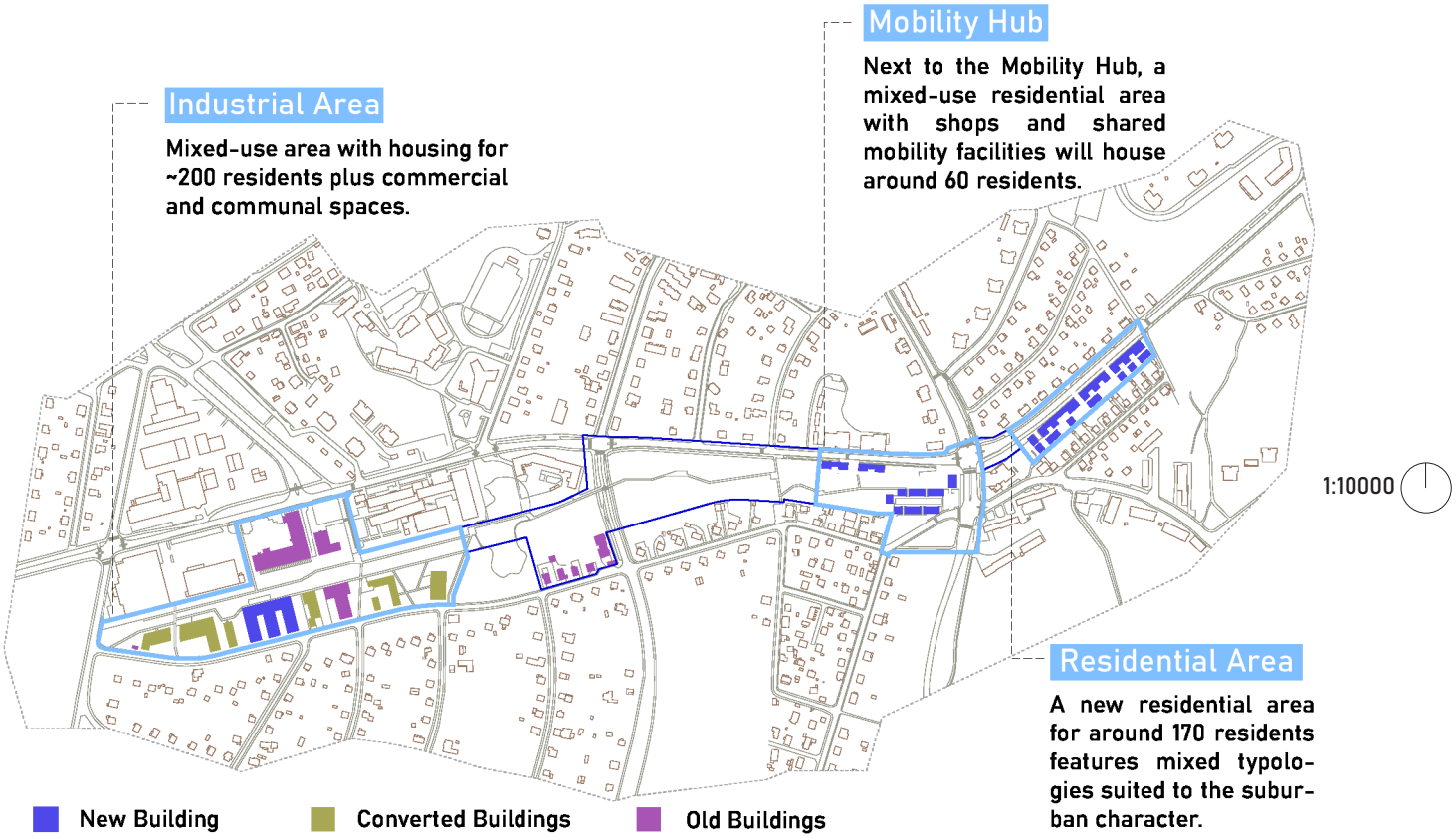
Reuse, Infill, and Renewal



The housing strategy in our proposal is guided by three core principles: sensitive reuse of existing structures, contextual new development, and a strong emphasis on ecological and social sustainability. Across the entire site, we carefully balanced the need for new housing with the goal of enhancing green space and strengthening community infrastructure.

Western Insutrial Area

Wherever possible, we preserved and adapted existing industrial buildings to reduce the ecological footprint of the development. Buildings already partially functioning as housing, or those structurally suitable for residential adaptation, are retained. Meanwhile, low-quality, shed-like structures were removed to open space for new public areas and green corridors. In cases where industrial buildings were not suitable for reuse, we introduced new residential structures on their footprints, ensuring a more efficient and livable housing stock. This zone follows a mixed-use concept, combining housing with communal or commercial programs to activate the area and encourage interaction. The western district is designed to accommodate approximately 200 new residents.

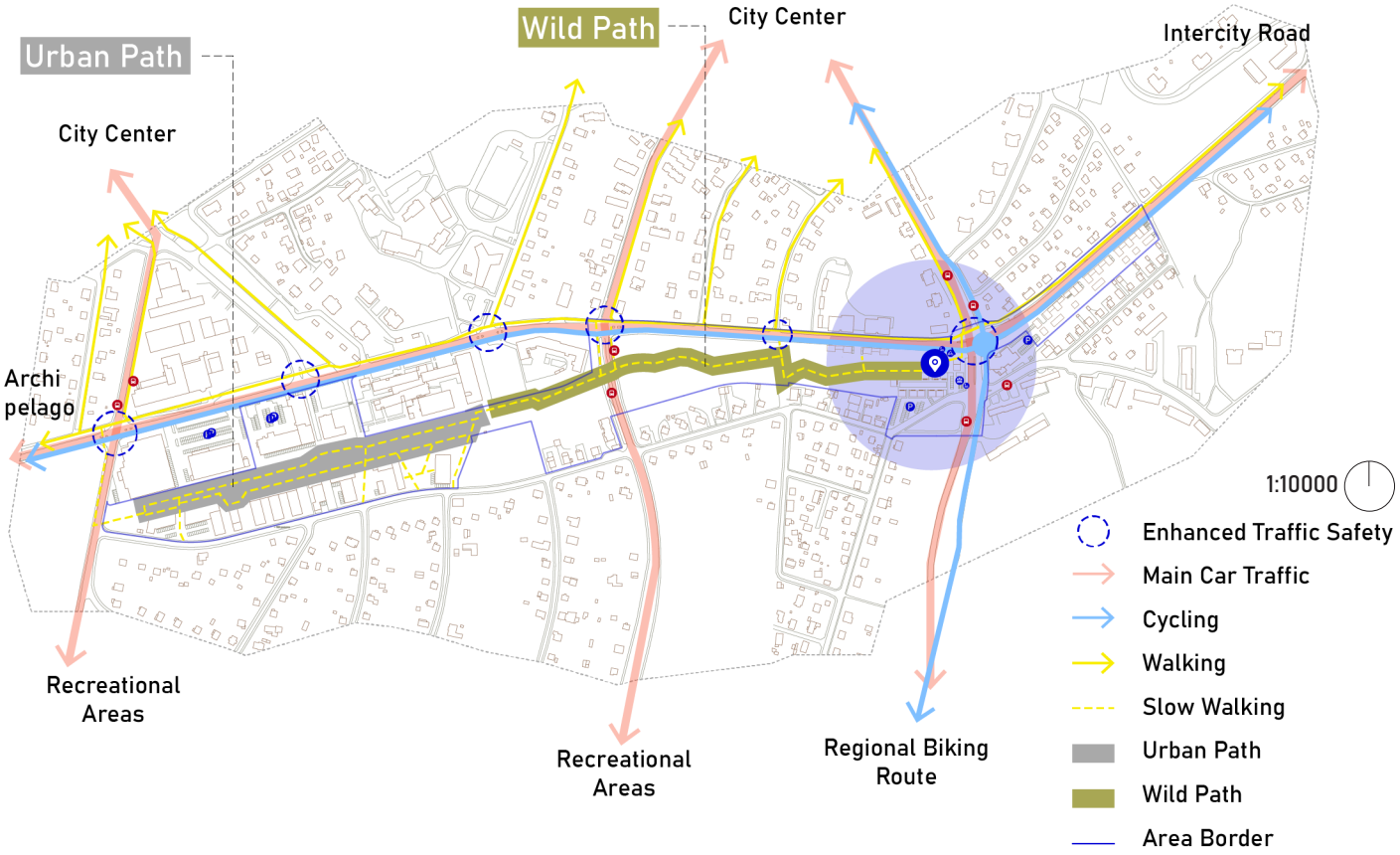
Mobility Hub Housing

The central part of the site is shaped by a desire to preserve and showcase the surrounding natural landscape while supporting the Mobility Hub at its core. Two residential buildings are proposed along Vähäheikkiläntie, placed to form a visual dialogue with the two nearby high-rise buildings and to define the edge of the public realm. New commercial and residential buildings are arranged around the Mobility Hub to help establish a new urban identity while maintaining a low-rise, low-density character that fits with the adjacent neighborhood. This part of the site provides housing for approximately 60 new residents.

Eastern New Resdential Area

On the eastern edge of the site, we propose a new residential quarter with diverse housing typologies, transitioning from compact apartment buildings along the street to smaller, detached-style housing toward the green buffer. The aim is to introduce a new typology of three-story apartment buildings (50–80 m² units) featuring shared two-story connecting spaces that include communal amenities such as saunas, workshops, study areas, rentable guest rooms, and social lounges. These connecting volumes are narrower, creating a semi-enclosed courtyard atmosphere in front of the shared spaces, while also improving daylight access to the deeper residential units.

Buildings along the street are slightly taller and denser to buffer traffic noise, while the scale decreases toward existing detached housing. A tree-lined green buffer ensures a smooth transition. Parking (approx. 30 spaces) is shared with a nearby clubhouse (16 spaces), with a 40% car use reduction target thanks to the Mobility Hub and bike-friendly design. Additional infrastructure includes bike storage near the northern trail and designated drop-off and accessibility parking. This eastern zone is expected to house around 170 new residents.



The RE:wild project envisions new modes of mobility that prioritize sustainability and flexibility. With its proximity to Turku's city center, the area offers a strong foundation to shift away from private car dependency toward cycling, walking, and shared mobility options, reflecting the principles of the 15-minute city.

New Bike Lanes

We propose new two-way bike lanes that separate cyclists from pedestrians, improving safety and comfort for both groups. Along Vähäheikkiläntie street, the bike lane is placed on the side with industrial buildings, where fewer crossings allow for smoother cycling. These routes connect seamlessly to regional networks and promote active mobility as the primary mode of daily transport.

Mobility Hub

A new Mobility Hub, located on the north side of Vähäheikkiläntie, connects local and regional bike routes while forming a vibrant public square. The hub offers essential infrastructure: secure bike/e-bike parking, repair stations, seating areas, and car-sharing spots. It also serves as the gateway to the RE:wild landscape, inviting residents and visitors to park their bikes or shared vehicles and explore the natural environment by foot. This hub is a key tool in rebranding the area as a model for sustainable suburban living.

Adventure Path

Both entrances to the Adventure Path are framed by public squares with distinct architectural and social identities. Ground floor activities at these entrances activate the spaces and encourage pedestrian flow into the project area. The Adventure Path is conceived as a slow, immersive walking route through rewilded landscapes—separated from faster bike traffic—to highlight the beauty and accessibility of urban nature.

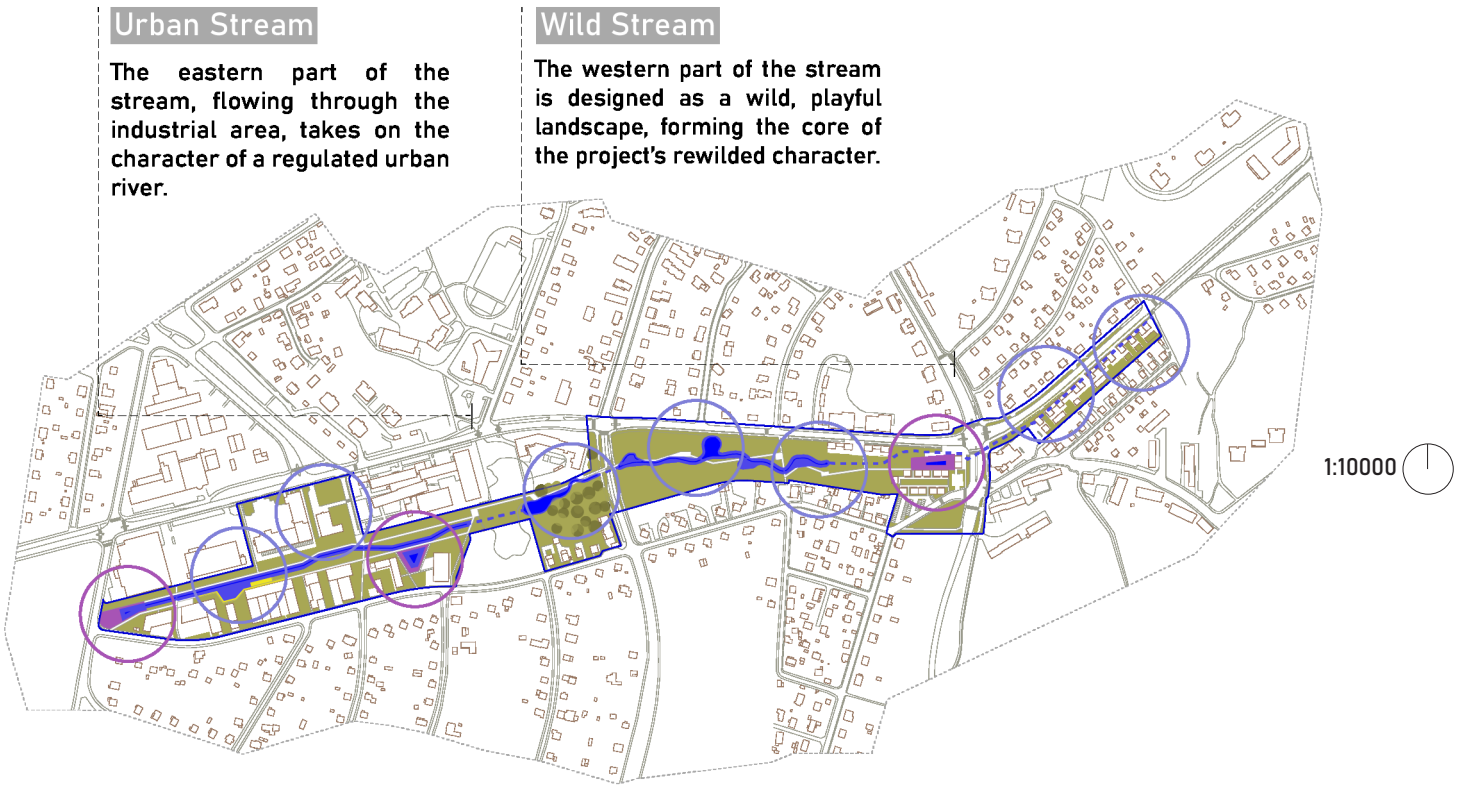
Parking

To further reduce car dependency, the plan includes two centralized parking lots—one extending an existing facility, and one near the Mobility Hub. These provide parking for both new housing and recreational area visitors. Together with the mobility hub, this arrangement reduces the need for scattered parking, keeping the site more walkable and green. The eastern old industrial area features additional parking spaces for the new residents, while blocking those visually from the central public spaces.

Parking in Shifts

Our parking concept is grounded in flexibility and data-driven design. Based on Urban Land Institute research, shared car systems can reduce private parking demand by 40–60%. We propose a total of 93 residential parking spaces and 11 car-sharing spots. With car-sharing in place, we estimate only 50 private spaces will be needed long-term, allowing the rest to remain flexible for new residents or visitors. A parking-in-shifts model—reserving spaces for residents at night and visitors during the day—helps optimize usage and prevent congestion, aligning with our broader mobility and sustainability goals.

Stormwater Management



One of the key challenges of this site lies in the effective management of stormwater. The area collects runoff from up to 600 hectares of surrounding land—from both the north and south—and channels it through our site toward the Baltic Sea. Rather than relying on conventional drainage systems, our project embraces a highly ecological and sustainable approach to stormwater treatment. Inspired by Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), our strategy prioritizes natural processes and multifunctional design.

Managing Stormwater at the Source

The first principle of our approach is to minimize stormwater generation on-site. To achieve this, we incorporate: Green roofs on both existing and new infill buildings, bioswales and rain gardens that slow and filter runoff, a large wet meadow that retains and naturally infiltrates water, permeable pavements that allow rainfall to seep into the ground and newly planted trees that absorb rainwater directly. These measures collectively reduce the volume and speed of runoff, making the site more resilient to heavy rainfall events.

Reusing Stormwater On-Site

Where possible, remaining stormwater is put to beneficial use on-site. Applications include: Cooling urban spaces to mitigate the urban heat island effect, irrigating green roofs and gardens, urban gardening initiatives and as greywater for use within buildings. Any excess water is safely conveyed to the urban sewer system in a controlled and gradual manner, reducing pressure on municipal infrastructure. We've divided the stormwater journey through the site into two distinct landscape experiences:

Urban Stream

Running alongside denser industrial buildings, the urban stream resembles a regulated small river. Its banks remain unpaved to allow for overflow. The adjacent urban squares feature terraced designs with permeable surfaces. Central water basins connected to the stream respond dynamically to changing water levels, making the presence of water an interactive, visible element of everyday urban life.

Wild Stream

In contrast, the wild stream adopts a more natural character, dedicated primarily to biodiversity.
Visitors can explore this natural habitat via an adventure path, with educational signage explaining the ecosystems and stormwater strategies in place. This zone is a place of exploration, learning, and quiet retreat, highlighting how stormwater can support nature and well-being simultaneously.

Social and Environmental Benefits

By bringing stormwater above ground, the project transforms it into a visible, tangible, and engaging part of the public realm. The stream corridors offer not only ecological functions, but also provide recreational, educational, and health benefits to the community.

Green Spaces and Biodiversity

RE:wild is a vision to transform a neglected urban strip into a self-sustaining, biodiverse ecosystem. At the heart of this transformation is the daylighting of the Varsoja stream, redefining the identiy of the site. By restoring ecological processes and creating a rich mosaic of habitats, we reintroduce wildness into the city. This is an active rewilding effort that shapes a resilient landscape where both nature and community can thrive.

The Green Corridor: A Living Network

Vähäheikkilä's green spaces are currently fragmented—small, disconnected patches that limit biodiversity. By planting native trees and cultivating dense undergrowth, we close canopy gaps to form a unified green corridor, essential for species like the protected Siberian flying squirrel. It also supports animals such as the Eurasian badger and various birds, shielding them from roads and human activity. For residents, this corridor provides a beautiful, shaded path system that enhances daily life while restoring vital ecosystems.

The Stream and Bioswales

Replacing the lifeless underground stormwater pipe, a newly daylighted stream and a network of green spaces form the ecological core of the project. Designed with natural materials and native planting, the bioswales, raingardens and wet meadows create microhabitats for a wide range of species. Amphibians such as the Common Frog, Common Toad, and Smooth Newt benefit from this restored hydrology, which transforms a former flood risk into a vibrant ecological asset.

The Riparian Zone: A Thriving Edge of Life

Along the edge where water meets land, a new riparian zone takes shape. This dynamic and vegetated transition zone becomes a refuge for aquatic and terrestrial species alike. Birds such as the Thrush Nightingale and Common Kingfisher find both food and shelter here, while the natural buffer helps filter runoff and stabilize the surrounding ecosystem.

Meadowlands and Restored Habitats

Complementing the wooded areas, sunlit meadowlands are restored with native wildflowers and grasses, supporting essential pollinators and ground-dwelling species. Nesting sites, diverse vegetation layers, and restored undergrowth create habitat for the Tawny Owl (Strix aluco), European Robin (Erithacus rubecula), and many others—establishing a resilient, biodiverse environment.

A Classroom Without Walls

The entire RE:wild site is designed as an immersive, educational landscape. The Adventure Path and linked bird-watching pathways connect directly to the adjacent school, transforming the area into a living classroom. Here, students and residents alike engage in hands-on learning about ecology, biodiversity, and water systems. By reconnecting people with nature in a tangible, the project fosters environmental awareness for generations to come.