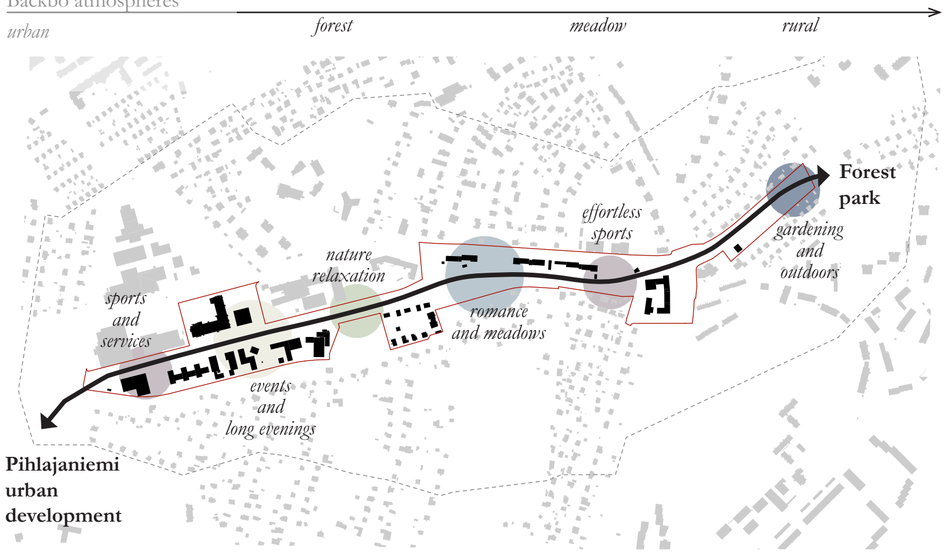
Bäckbo atmospheres



The Varsaoja strip is divided into distinct spaces. The entrance to each space is via a gate that invites the visitor in.
In the west, the connection to Pihlajaniemi park flows through a rough, industrial sports and services area with a basketball court, a lunch restaurant and a new garden center. By the Figura house, there is an onlook from the bridge towards the Event Square as well as the new public sauna by the student housing. Between the rocky hills, a forest space for rest and water play has placed beneath the existing trees. On the meadow, visitors and inhabitants can enjoy the sunset by sitting on the rocky benches and walking around the large pools. Sport is made effortless at the Generations' Park, where people of all ages can move in a way that suits them - and parents can watch their children play from the terrace of the canteen. In the west end of the site, an urban garden with meandering walkways invites the visitor in. Local adventurers can walk from the end of the park to the top of the hill, and come back to enjoy a moment by the bonfire.

Timeline and phasing

The development will be realized in three phases, with temporary uses playing a key role throughout the process. The step-by-step introduction of spaces and functions will both support the final design solutions and encourage the early emergence of local services. Temporary uses will create opportunities for experimentation and enable community-driven activities long before the area is fully completed. The goal is for the neighborhood to support the everyday life of diverse user groups from the very beginning of the planning and construction phases. This approach fosters early community engagement and allows new forms of social cohesion to develop organically during the building process.

People of Bäckbo

Esko, 75 years old

Esko has just moved into the senior housing block from a nearby single-family home area. His daughter and her family have moved into Esko's former house, and Esko's five-year-old grandchild now attends daycare in the neighborhood. Esko often picks the child up from daycare, and together they spend time by the stormwater ponds, exploring nature, and playing and moving around in the Generations Park. The park offers both Esko and his grandchild a safe environment for mobility and shared time.
In the mornings, Esko often visits the local grocery store and enjoys coffee or borrows books at the community house. At the Event Square in front of the community house, he frequently gets to enjoy concerts by amateur bands rehearsing at Figura and other cultural experiences.

"A good life for me is about safe and communal everyday living, where I can spend time with my child and grandchild."

Jonathan 34 years old

Jonathan lives in the center of Turku and regularly visits the area to play padel. After games, he occasionally joins his fellow players for an evening in the neighborhood sauna, relaxing and socializing. The area was previously unfamiliar to Jonathan, but his sauna visits have encouraged him to explore it more widely. He's now planning to bring his son to the Generations Park to ride his scooter. At the same time, Jonathan is considering using the outdoor gym himself.

"A good life means having opportunities for diverse physical activity and sports."

Daycare group

A children's group from Touhula Daycare go on weekly excursions to the stormwater park and the nearby rocky outcrops. The development of the area has brought new opportunities for nature-based education, as access to natural environments has improved and the green spaces have become more diverse. The children especially love the picnic and barbecue spots in the stormwater park and Porkanpuisto, where they often enjoy snack breaks. The circular economy block also offers various workshops and courses tailored for children.

"A good life is having a picnic in the park and building forts!"

Maria, 19 years old

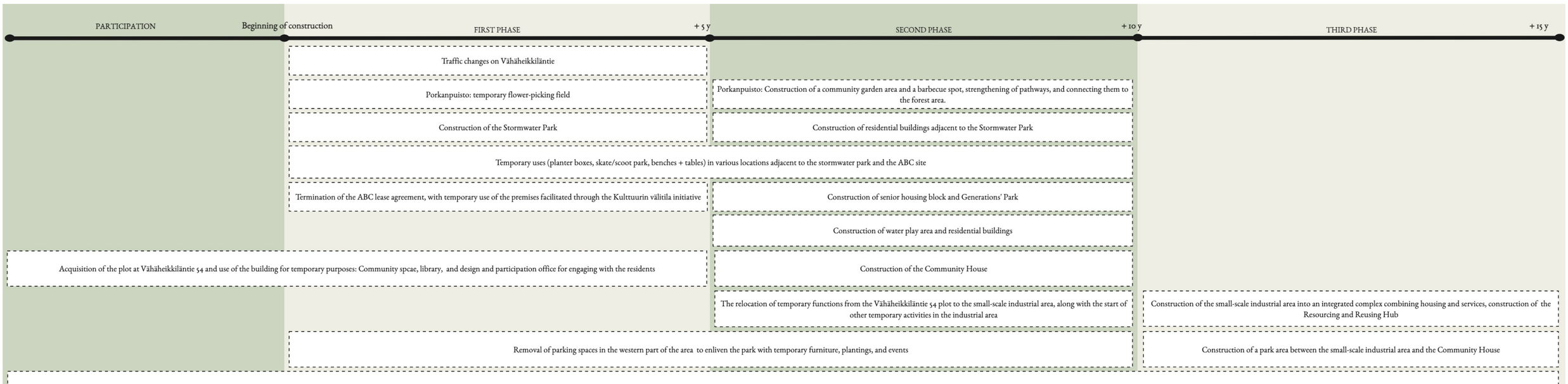
Maria has a mild disability and is studying to become a chef at Spesia. She has just moved into a student apartment next to the school—her very first home of her own. Maria enjoys the Bäckbo area because it allows her to move around safely and comfortably, without overwhelming sensory stimuli. She spends a lot of time in the green spaces and shares a community garden plot in Porkanpuisto with two fellow students. She is about to start an internship in the Resourcing and Reusing Hub.

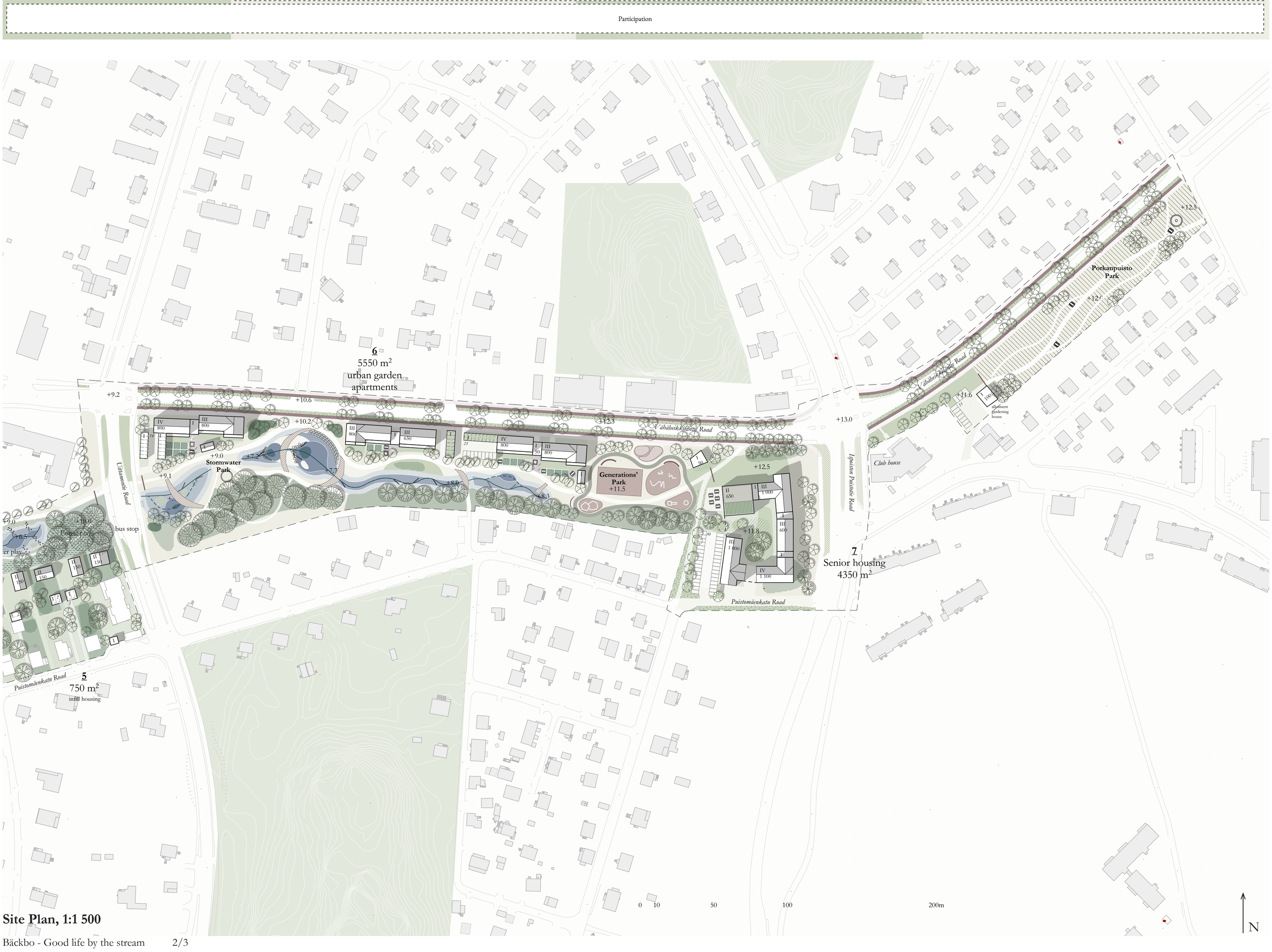
"A good life is the chance to live and move independently and spend time with friends."

Jenni, 42 years old

Jenni recently moved with her partner and daughter into her childhood home in Vähäheikkilä. Her father used to live in the house but has since relocated to a nearby senior residence. It's important to Jenni that her father lives close by and can help with childcare. Jenni passes through the Bäckbo area daily. She drops her child off at daycare, visits the garden center and grocery store, and enjoys the area's rich cultural offerings—films, exhibitions, and live music at the Event Square.

"A good life is the opportunity to live in a single-family home close to urban services and cultural experiences."





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