Piazza Cascade

Multi-Level Event Platform

Topographic Resonance and Spatial Framework

The proposal features a terraced public platform segmented into three distinct piazzas, each thoughtfully designed to accommodate a variety of year-round events. The stepped topography echoes the natural contours of the Salpausselkä ridge, forging a strong connection between the architectural form and the unique geological landscape. This approach not only enhances the site's inherent spatial drama but also firmly anchors the intervention within its natural context.

Spatial Hierarchy and Adjacency

Each piazza anchors a specific relationship to nearby landmarks:

• The Lower Piazza, adjacent to the multi-purpose arena and exhibition hall complex, serves as both a civic square and a welcoming public space.

• The Central Piazza, connected to the stadium, supports sports programming and overflow for major events.

• The Upper Piazza, adjacent to the forest and ski jumps, is the most vegetated and tranquil - creating a sensory transition into the Salpausselkä landscape.

Although each terrace has its own unique character, they can effortlessly be unified into a single, expansive event space whenever required.

Social Inclusivity and Everyday Use

Each terrace is spatially programmed to accommodate both programmed events and spontaneous, everyday use. A diverse range of amenities including play areas, open-air fitness zones, flexible seating, and intimate gathering spaces activates the landscape and supports intergenerational engagement. Integrated universal access routes ensure full spatial permeability and promote inclusivity across all terrace levels.

Programmatic Integration

Terrace edges are activated by cafes and restaurants that evoke the sociability and vibrancy of Mediterranean piazzas, cultivating a resilient, year-round micro-economy. These hospitality anchors are complemented by essential everyday amenities including public conveniences and stroller parking that encourage extended dwell time and broaden the appeal for diverse user groups.

Connectivity and Movement

The proposal strengthens and highlights key pedestrian corridors, particularly the Veikko Kankkonen Raitti and Satamaradanpolku axis, establishing intuitive and seamless routes into the Sports Centre. Parking is strategically relocated closer to Isku Arena and the proposed sports hotel, prioritizing spaces near busy roads. This shift significantly reduces traffic along Teivaankatu, creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Additionally, public transport accessibility is enhanced with the introduction of a new bus stop on Svinhufvudinkatu and next to the Multi-Purpose Arena.

Operational Logic

Elevated public platforms are designed to spatially separate pedestrian circulation from service logistics, ensuring uninterrupted and safe public movement. Back-of-house operations, such as deliveries and maintenance access, are efficiently routed to sub-terrace levels to preserve the quality of user experience during high-occupancy events.

Hotel and Activation of Lakefront

Situated on the shores of Lake Vesijärvi, the hotel enjoys direct access to lakeside recreational amenities while seamlessly connecting to the Arena, Expo Hall, and Suurhalli. Its elongated form is thoughtfully oriented to maximize solar exposure and natural daylight. More than just accommodation, the hotel serves as a dynamic hub for year-round engagement, featuring coworking spaces, wellness facilities, and specialized services designed to support winter tourism.

Active Frontage and Urban Continuity

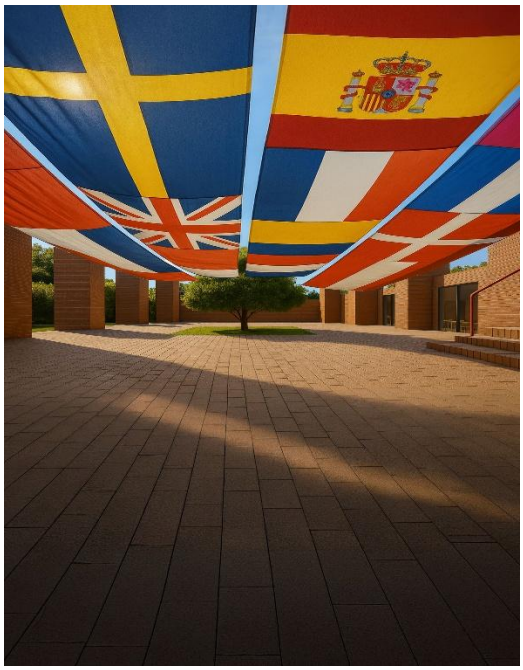
The proposal reactivates the Teivaankatu frontage through a carefully choreographed sequence of active ground-floor uses and a pedestrian-friendly, boulevard-style streetscape. This renewed urban edge reintroduces fine-grain structure and civic character, seamlessly weaving the Arena, Expo Hall, and Suurhalli into the broader city fabric.

Ecological Performance and Nature-Positive Design

The project promotes biodiversity and green infrastructure through the integration of native vegetation and pollinator-friendly plantings at every level. The upper terrace is thoughtfully designed to reinforce surrounding ecological corridors. Permeable, low-albedo paving materials are chosen to support Lahti’s nature-positive vision and climate-adaptive objectives.

Climate Responsiveness

Columns strategically distributed across the platform support a modular canopy system that provides solar shading as well as rain protection. This column structure allows for year-round activities such as summer concerts and winter markets while preserving a sense of visual openness.



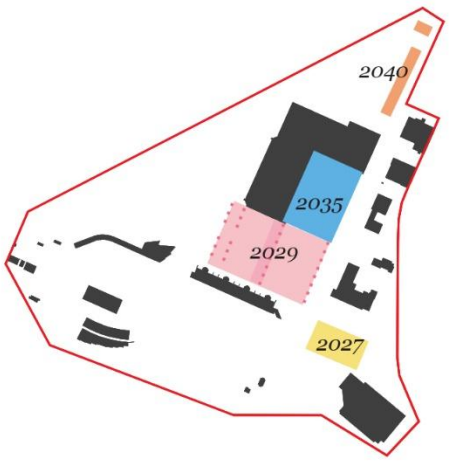
Flexibility and Modularity

Modular paving, integrated lighting, and accessible utility points facilitate swift and seamless space transformations for festivals, sporting events, exhibitions, or seasonal activities. The architectural language is intentionally minimal, promoting adaptability while minimizing material use.

Phased Development Strategy and Early-Stage Actions for 2029 Milestones

In anticipation of the 2029 Nordic World Ski Championships, the proposal outlines strategic early-phase interventions aimed at enhancing the functionality and spatial quality of the Lahti Sports Centre:

• Relocating the main surface parking to a peripheral location to facilitate the development of pedestrian-friendly piazzas and enhance the public realm. New parking facilities are planned adjacent to Isku Arena by 2027.

• Introducing prototype canopy structures to provide seasonal microclimatic comfort and spatial identity.

• Integrating ecologically responsive planting strategies within the piazza terracing to support urban biodiversity, enhance microclimatic regulation, and contribute to the site’s overall environmental resilience.