

NORDICUM

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**Reinventing
the Waterfront:
Helsinki 2.0**

**ImagiNation:
Exploring
Finnish
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The Design Footprint

Architecture and design are presently experiencing a renaissance of sorts. In Finland, of course, this trend is highlighted by Helsinki's designation as the World Design Capital 2012, but the phenomenon is really a global one – and it keeps intensifying.

A good example of the changing attitudes is the massive Ground Zero project in New York. As the twin towers of World Trade Center were struck down by terrorists, America vowed to build new towers in their place. Suddenly, everybody in the country had an opinion about architecture – what should the new buildings look like?

A high-profile competition was arranged in search of the answers, and Daniel Libeskind emerged as the architect who best connected with the site and the emotions of the people. His work resonated with an aura that honoured those lost that day – but, instead of turning inwards, chose to stand up and stand out.

The centrepiece of Libeskind's design is One World Trade Center, formerly known as the Freedom Tower. In true Libeskind fashion, this is architecture that sends a message: counting the antenna, the building will rise to 1,776 feet (541 m). The significance is, of course, that the USA declared its independence in 1776.

Libeskind's original designs have been changed considerably along the way, and other architects have been brought in to shoulder some of the workload. In the NORDICUM interview, the maestro admitted that there is a lot of controversy surrounding the project – and a lot of statements flying around which are simply false. However, instead of getting bogged down by the criticism, Libeskind wanted to look forward, and talk about how the neighbourhood will be completely transformed – in a way that is radical, symbolic and aesthetic.

According to Libeskind, the whole Ground Zero experience gives out a signal that can hardly be characterised as weak: the democratisation of design. Citizens all over are realising that they have the right to participate in the discussion about these issues, and they feel empowered in doing so. The next step is to engage the people by presenting fierce visions, and for these ideas to be debated out in the open.

Integrating the visual approach with a variety of other elements was also in the mind of "Dr. Aerotropolis" John D. Kasarda who was interviewed for this issue as well. Probably the planet's leading authority on Airport Cities, Kasarda commented that airport design is no trivial matter as both the first and last impressions usually hinge on such things. Even fleeing aesthetic impact can make an enduring mark.

Sami J. Anteroine
Editor-in-Chief

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West is the Best? The western metro extension to Espoo (the nation's biggest infrastructure project) is advancing full steam ahead – and the citizens should be able to ride the shining new rails by 2015. **Pages 34–39.**



Photo: Skanska

Going for Platinum. Built by Skanska, the ultra-green Lintulah-ti office building in Helsinki recently got a Platinum Level LEED certificate – the first ever in Europe in its class. Skanska, however, is just getting started. **Pages 42–43.**

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Culture Kings. Turku is the co-reigning Capital of Culture this year – but in addition to throwing one big party, the former capital is seriously upgrading its infrastructure and making a mark in the field of logistics. **Pages 52–55.**

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Decision Time for Europe

by Paavo Lipponen

The writer is former Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament of Finland.



It was a refreshing experience to observe world events from Asia during a two-week vacation in Thailand. This Asian Tiger is booming, while trying to keep internal pressures under the lid. India is rising and catching up with China. Although Japan is stagnant, Asia is the engine of world economy.

China is spreading its influence to its neighbors, building up its navy. A naval dimension has been added to the China-Myanmar axis, creating suspicions not only in Bangkok but also in Delhi. A naval rearmament is starting in the Indian Ocean. How far will China extend the perimeter of its sphere of influence is the question asked from Washington to Tokyo and Moscow, from Hanoi to Jedda.

The economy, however, is the main concern. Signs of rising inflation are not only an Asian but a global concern, too. The recovery in the world economy is seriously threatened by rising commodity prices – not only of oil and other energy essentials, but also of food. The expansion of cultivated area for products of grain, keeping livestock and producing palm oil for energy is putting an ever bigger strain on the environment.

China is the case in point in the efforts to curb inflation. China is systematically trying to secure access to natural resources everywhere in the world where possible. Growth in the Chinese economy might

suffer because of the necessity to curb inflation. Interest rates are going up, but it is not enough. China will be forced to re-value its currency. This, in turn, would re-balance world trade flows.

Unemployment stays high in the United States, because it is to a great extent structural. The housing sector must recover to employ the construction workers who lost their jobs when the bubble burst. An equally big structural problem is below-standard education. American schools must become better for greater competitiveness of the country. The Finnish lesson has not been understood: you must educate the whole nation, not just the elite.

Europe is bracing for decisions to get the crisis of the euro under control. Much better financial discipline is necessary, but it is not enough. Structural reforms and a policy for growth are needed to create confidence in the euro.

The euro was the right choice for Finland. No difference due to currency system has been detected in the overall economic development of Sweden and Finland. The difference is political: Finland keeps its European commitment, while Sweden, the bigger and stronger economy, still wants to keep one foot outside the EU. And why did Sweden not try to create a Nordic caucus to secure a seat at the G20 table when Sweden had the EU presidency? ●

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Is there a Finn on board?

Finland wants to be the problem-solving superhero for the world

Lincoln Steffens, an American journalist returning from the Soviet Union in 1921, remarked “I’ve seen the future and it works.” The Soviet Union is long gone, but a certain neighbouring country of the former communist giant is now laying claim to the future.

Nation-branding has been on everybody’s mind in Finland lately. In November, the national branding team presented its final report to a country eager to find out what it is exactly that makes us tick – and whether that is the right kind of tick.

Set up two years ago by Foreign Minister Alexander Stubb, the branding team has been in public’s eye quite a bit – largely due to the fact that the person heading the effort was Jorma Ollila, Chairman of both Nokia and Shell. Furthermore, the 20+ team included people from all walks of life, throwing in CEOs, artists and soccer players to talk about the essence of Finland and its people.

From the very beginning, it seemed clear that this committee would not draw

up a report simply for librarian purposes – the idea was to involve the citizens in the process as well. As a result, there have been websites, TV shows and books dedicated to the business of branding Finland. As the branding team laboured under taskmaster Ollila’s direction, also outside consultants were used, the most notable of which being Simon Anholt, the father of nation branding.

Targeting 2030

Everybody involved in the process recognised that this is a long-term effort. What took two years in planning, will take two decades to materialise – if you’re lucky.

Still, in ancient Seneca’s words: When a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is the right wind. The branding team wanted to set up a target image for the Finns to aim for.

And quite an image it is. The branding team challenges Finland to become the planet’s problem-solver by 2030. Using practical and forthright approach in matters both great and small, Finns must charge out into the world, resolving dilemmas associated with international conflicts, water shortage and education.

Upon presenting this vision to the public for the first time, it was noteworthy that Jorma Ollila was not donning a cape – but he might as well have. The same high-flying visions were echoed by Minister Stubb who soon took to the stage. Poor self-esteem – often described to be a national ailment – was clearly not a problem for this dynamic duo.

Finns Do It Better

Granted, some of the hype was due to the recent Newsweek study which declared Finland the best country in the world. On the other hand, some parts in the presentation simply did not ring true, such as Ollila's insistence that in Finland we don't really care for putting out memos and reports; the Finns want to get busy with the task at hand instead. (There are those who would argue that producing various reports and other lukewarm documentation is, in fact, a core industry.) Nevertheless, Ollila's team has clearly taken its task seriously and the report deserves a closer look.

Over all, the branding team defines three central areas that can be used to strengthen the image of Finland: functionality, nature and education. The branding team is the first one to admit that this trio will hardly topple citizenry with amazement. But, then again, nation-branding must be rooted on something real and familiar – something that the people recognise and can rally around.

Still, while no Finn in their right mind would contest the notion that Finland possesses wonderful nature, not many of the natives here realise the true relevance of Mother Nature's treasures. Pure Finnish water and agricultural produce are wonders to behold, and in the Age of Climate Change, such sanctuaries may become very scarce indeed. The branding team pushes Finns

to take the next step, to conquer the world with organic superfoods and superior water expertise.

Teacher's Pets

In addition to natural riches, the report places a lot of emphasis on nurturing young minds. Finland is the star of PISA and boasts the best education system in the world – and is finally starting to look around to see if there's any way to capitalise on the success.

Finns have been hesitant to do this, because it is difficult to see one's own education system as the best there is. Even Ollila admits to being sceptical of the PISA results as they first came in. Then, the engineer training took over, and Ollila decided to get to the bottom of it. Now, Ollila admits that he's a true believer, claiming that Finland possesses "a real diamond" which is all the more precious because its value is anchored down by equality.

The branding team envisions fast-reaction education squads that dive into global trouble spots to bring reading, writing and arithmetic to areas where the best known letters of the alphabet are those from the AK-47. If these "teaching commandos" sound militant to somebody's ears, it just might be because of Finland's long tradition of sending peacekeepers around the world under a United Nations' flag.

Ollila also noted that the Nobel Peace Prize winner President Martti Ahtisaari is, in fact, a teacher by background. The branding team has obviously been playing with the notion that educators are the best peace-makers.

Finnish 101

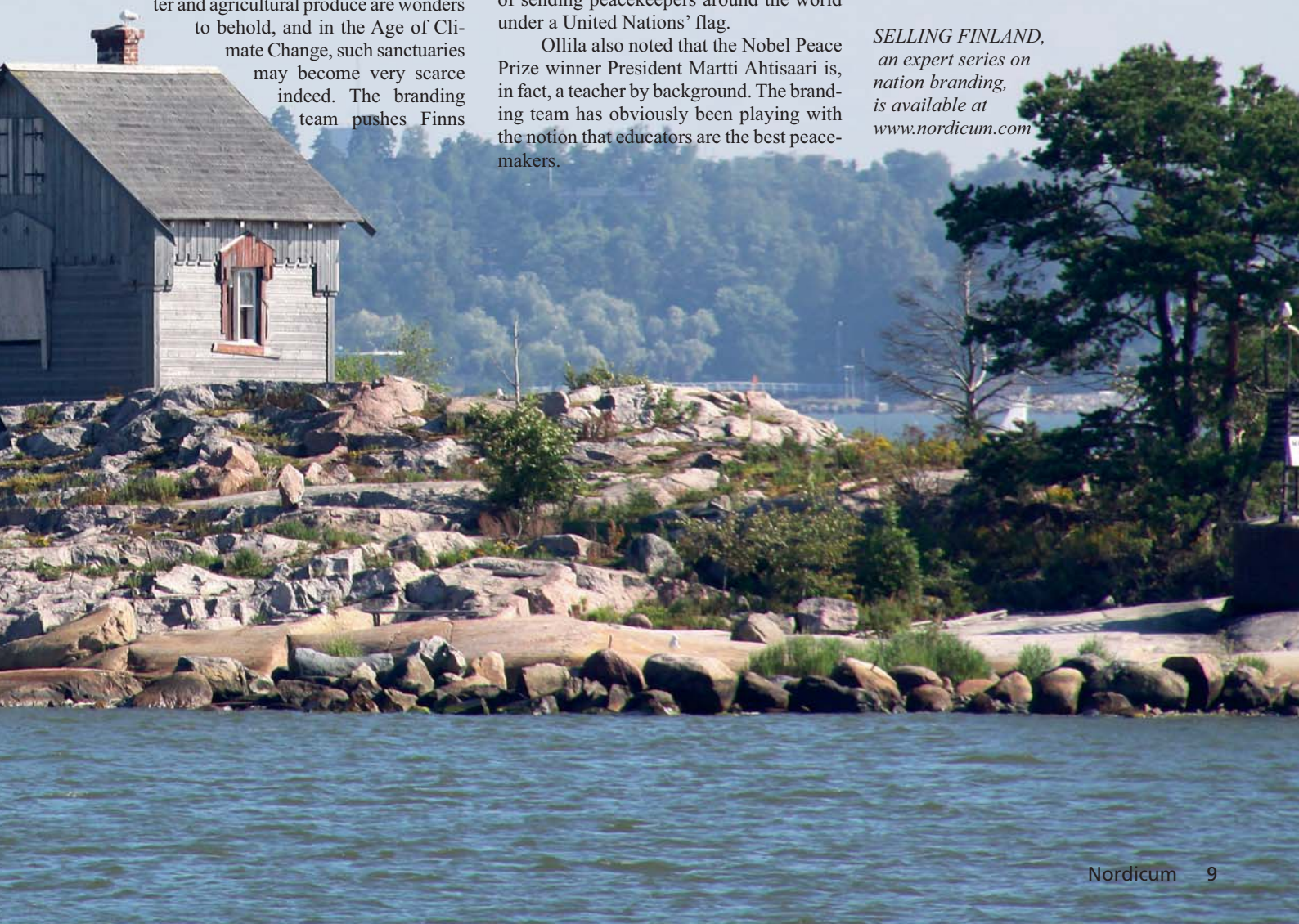
None of this can be achieved, of course, without evoking the magic of the two core words in Finnish vocabulary: namely, *sisu* and *talkoot*. *Sisu* constitutes a never-say-die attitude, or some kind of arctic *cojones*, if you will. *Talkoot* means simply doing something together on voluntary basis – sometimes it's about building a sauna, sometimes something bigger (a welfare state comes to mind).

According to Ollila, *sisu* and *talkoot* will provide sufficient fuel for the coming two decades, as Finland starts to tackle such monsters as Climate Change and global poverty. According to the branding team, it is in fact Finland's duty to get out there and try to change things for the better. The report goes as far as to claim that if Finland didn't exist, you'd have to invent it.

At this point, it is clear that Finns have learned to pat themselves on the back with the best of them. Still, if one is to tune down the hype a bit, there is a lot there that sounds about right: Finland is a country where things work quite well from day to day. According to the branding team, this functionality springs, in part, from a sense of trust which penetrates all layers of society.

The question is, then, can you export it? ●

SELLING FINLAND, an expert series on nation branding, is available at www.nordicum.com



Air Apparent

Global airport cities are teaching the rest of the world to fly

Seaports pushed business in the 18th century, railroads did it in the 19th century and highways in the 20th century. In the 21st century, one must turn to airports for a lift.

Globalisation has contributed to a much smaller world where people and goods are transported quickly without boundaries. In this context, major airports have become key to global enterprise, offering speed, agility, and connectivity to the corporate world. Airports are also powerful engines of local economic development, attracting aviation-linked companies of all types.

Professor Dr. John D. Kasarda from North Carolina's Kenan-Flagler Business School has formulated a concept which explains spatial aspects of this new airborne

Vapor Trails

During the last ten years or so, Dr. Kasarda has tracked the development of such airport-linked urban clusters as Amsterdam Zuidas, Las Colinas, Texas, and South Korea's Songdo International Business District – all of which have become globally significant airport edge cities.

According to Kasarda, another good example of the "Age of Aerotropolis" is Aviapolis, born around the Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport in Finland.

"Aviapolis was among the earliest and most ambitious efforts to form a part-

Earn Your Wings

Kasarda observes that many of these companies are high-value generating, high-paying businesses that contribute immensely to the competitiveness of the entire country. He feels that there are three keys to Aviapolis' continued success: keep recruiting A-list companies, offer them the best possible business environment and infrastructure,

world. Kasarda argues that as more and more aviation-oriented businesses are being drawn to airport areas (and along transportation corridors radiating from them), a new urban form is emerging – the Aerotropolis – stretching up to 30 kilometres outward in some cases.

Analogous in shape to the traditional metropolis made up of a central city and its rings of commuter-heavy suburbs, the Aerotropolis consists of an airport city core and outlying corridors and clusters of aviation-linked businesses and associated residential development.

"Planned airport cities are a relatively new phenomenon, only emerging in the past dozen years or so," says Dr. Kasarda. He started developing the concept while working in Asia during the 1990s on airport-driven urban growth. His research eventually led to the Aerotropolis model. In 2000, Kasarda published a set of articles on the Aerotropolis as an emerging urban form.

nership among airport area land owners, real estate developers, the City of Vantaa and Finavia to leverage Helsinki Airport for efficient and sustainable commercial development on the airport's periphery," Kasarda says, adding that Aviapolis is clearly counted among those airport city pioneers that blazed the pathway for the current wave of similar developments throughout the world.

Kasarda has studied the evolution of Aviapolis with a keen eye over the years. By attracting essentially the full range of aviation-intensive commercial facilities to its 42 square kilometre area, Aviapolis has become the fastest growing business concentration in the Helsinki region. Its commercial facilities include retail, hospitality and entertainment complexes, office parks, high tech assembly, and logistics and distribution centers, all of which combined employ over 38,000 workers.

and increase the air connectivity of Helsinki-Vantaa Airport.

Regarding the third factor, Kasarda notes: "Expanded air routes will serve as the primary engine that drives future commercial development by improving the accessibility of Aviapolis' tenants and users to their suppliers, customers, and enterprise partners around the globe."

In his work, Kasarda argues that Aerotropolis development and sustainable smart growth should go hand-in-hand. He feels that the Finns are on the right track with their version of an Aerotropolis:

"I believe that Aviapolis nicely represents 'smart' growth in that it is economically efficient, attractive, and environmentally sustainable."

Likewise, Amsterdam Schiphol and New Songdo City (which is being developed near South Korea's Incheon International Airport) fit the bill. The professor is quick to challenge the notion that aviation and airports are losing their power and appeal in these carbon-conscious times:

"Contrary to conventional wisdom, air transport contributes only 2 % of the world's CO₂ emissions," he counters, pointing out that aircraft manufacturers and airlines have

made a "powerful commitment" to lower that percentage further in the decades ahead. The emissions should come down through improvements in aircraft design, more fuel efficient engines, and the use of biofuels.

"Advances in avionics and next generation air traffic control systems are expected to lower aircraft carbon emissions, as well."

The Art of First Impression

Helsinki is the World Design Capital 2012 and Vantaa is one of its partners in the venture – therefore, it is very much the desire of the Finns to grab the attention of the international visitors the moment they land. The aesthetic side is quite relevant in the Aerotropolis model as well:

"Aesthetics and design of the airport and its surrounding areas are becoming increasingly important in projecting a favorable image of the broader region," Kasarda says, noting that airports and their nearby areas often establish the "first and last impressions" of the region on their visitors.

"Visual impacts can shape longer-term decisions of these travelers to work, live, invest in, or make return visits to the Helsinki area."

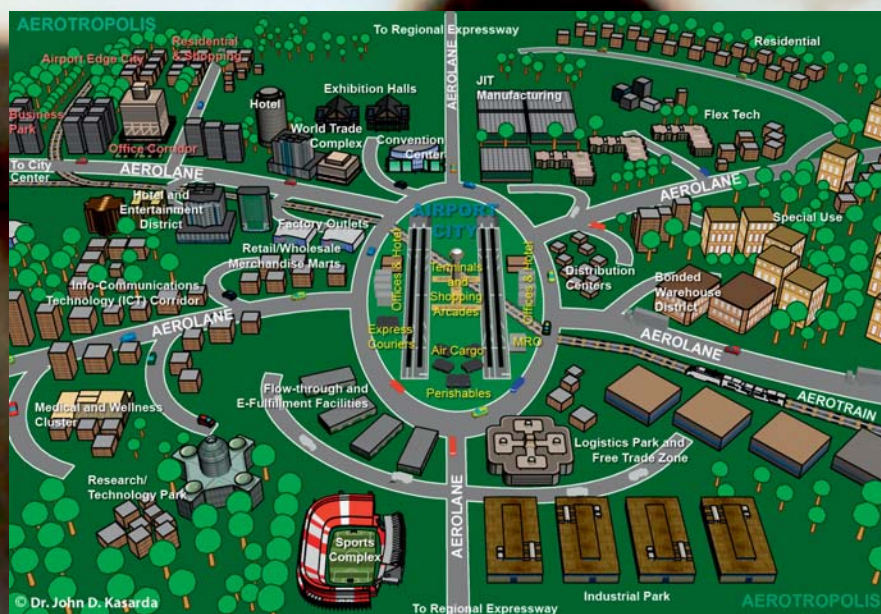
Off the Ground

While discussing hub ideology and multimodality – which are strong trends in Finland right now – Kasarda points out that all airports are actually multimodal in one way or another, since people and goods arrive and depart from them by surface transport. According to Kasarda, the quality and convenience of surface transport connections often shapes the value of the airport to its region.

"We have learned, for example, that the battle for air cargo is frequently won on the ground and not in the air, with the time and cost of moving goods to and from the airport being critical to business profitability."

He goes on to add that, similarly, well-connected highways and rail lines that move passengers to and from the airport quickly and conveniently make for more satisfied travelers – and enhance the efficiency of outlying cities they serve at the same time.

"Sea transport links are less important, since sea-air intermodal transfers tend to be relatively small in volume. Yet, multimodal hub status will become an increasingly important Aerotropolis asset in the future." ●



Eye on Elevation: John D. Kasarda

John D. Kasarda is the Kenan Distinguished Professor of Strategy and Entrepreneurship and Director of the Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise at the University of North Carolina's Kenan-Flagler Business School. Dr. Kasarda also heads the Institute's Center for Air Commerce.

Dr. Kasarda is considered the leading developer of the Aerotropolis concept which defines the roles of aviation and airports in shaping 21st century business location and urban growth. He has published more than 100 articles and nine books on airport cities, aviation infrastructure, economic development, and competitiveness. His latest book titled *Aerotropolis: The Way We'll Live Next* (co-authored with Greg Lindsay) will be published in March 2011. ●

Call of the Wild

Daniel Libeskind discusses past, present and future architecture in Finland

Superstar architect Daniel Libeskind is crazy about Finland – and doesn't care who knows it.

"I admire Finland very deeply; it has such incredible culture to go with the remarkable social aspect. In many regards, Finland is the model for the rest of the world."

According to Libeskind, the story of Finland is an inspiring one – a small, backwoods country that embraces industrialisation and education, eventually hits pay dirt with Nokia and charges onto the new millennium among the leading information societies in the world.

"Finland has gone through a great transformation to get where it is today."

The master architect and Finland go back a long time, too. Libeskind first visited the country in 1970 and has been coming back ever since.

"I've lost count, how many times I've been to Finland," he laughs. He observes that to get to the core of a nation, you have

to visit again and again. "I've been fortunate enough to make many good friends in Finland and this has helped me to get into the depths of the country."

Saarinen's Shadow

It seems that Libeskind has not been able to get away from Finland even when he is back home in the USA. Case in point: he served as Dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the legendary Cranbrook Academy of Art for almost two decades (1978–1995) and the academy buildings were, of course, designed by Finnish master Eliel Saarinen. Saarinen also ran the school for a time.



Photo: Michael Klinkhamer Photography

“Saarinen had great ideas and he understood human scale remarkably well,” Libeskind marvels. He is well-versed with Saarinen’s work in Finland, too, and has dug deep into the roots of Finnish urban design, citing such Saarinen efforts as Munkkiniemi-Haaga plan from 1915.

Another bright star on Libeskind’s sky is Alvar Aalto, who recently had a “second coming” of sorts as a new university was launched bearing his name. Dubbed as the “innovation university,” the school combines design edge with technology and business savvy. Against this background, it is no wonder that Libeskind was invited to give a speech at the school in spring of 2010.

Aalto’s Legacy

Libeskind believes that the university is off to a good start and will truly blossom in the years to come. He is also glad to see the core of the university located at the Otanienmi campus which was designed by Aalto himself.

The original vision of Aalto featured red-brick buildings in a green Finnish forest, but Libeskind says that the new university should not feel bound by the old designs to such a degree that natural evolution of the campus comes to a halt.

“Alvar Aalto was a genius, but I’m sure he wouldn’t mind if someone were to introduce new buildings into the area as well. In fact, if the work is creative enough, it can actually help highlight Aalto’s designs.”

North Star Calling

But what is it about Finland that keeps producing superior architects and design? Libeskind admits that the answer to the question appears to be shrouded by mystery, but he takes a stab at the answer.

Libeskind observes that the Finnish national psyche is a rare one; standing alone in the north, a small country surrounded by great powers. Even after having won its independence, the country had to struggle for its survival.

“In such an atmosphere, it is easy enough to believe that some of her citizens would come to develop a strong sense of independence on the individual level, a spiritual kind of independence, even.”

Of course, armed with this kind of mindset, creative people would be able to hold on to their vision no matter what – they could not be turned around by opinions of others.

“You see this already in the old rural villages, in the traditions of craftsmen and artisans who had their own ways of working,” Libeskind says, commenting that the emergence of Finnish architects on the world scene can be seen as continuation of the same arc. And, of course, there is something about the “spirit of the North” that stirs

Libeskind: Strategic Dreamer

Daniel Libeskind is perhaps the world’s most notable authority on architectural practice and urban design. He is well known for introducing a new critical discourse into architecture and also for his multidisciplinary approach. Libeskind’s projects extend from building museums and concert halls to convention centres, universities and hotels.

Born in post-war Poland in 1946, Libeskind became an American citizen in 1965. His first love was for music and he became a virtuoso accordion player. Having “exhausted the instrument,” he left music to study architecture, receiving his professional architectural degree in 1970.

Libeskind’s career really took off in 1989, as he won the competition for the Jewish Museum in Berlin. Son of two Holocaust survivors, Libeskind designed a museum which opened in September 2001 to wide public acclaim.

While Berlin made Libeskind well-known in the professional circuit, he didn’t become internationally famous until February 2003 when he won the World Trade Center design competition. Libeskind was appointed as the master plan architect for the site in New York City.

The Ground Zero project has special significance for Libeskind also in the sense that he grew up in New York, watching the original twin towers being built. The new area, called Memory Foundations, is currently under construction.

At present, Studio Daniel Libeskind has over 40 active projects around the world. ●

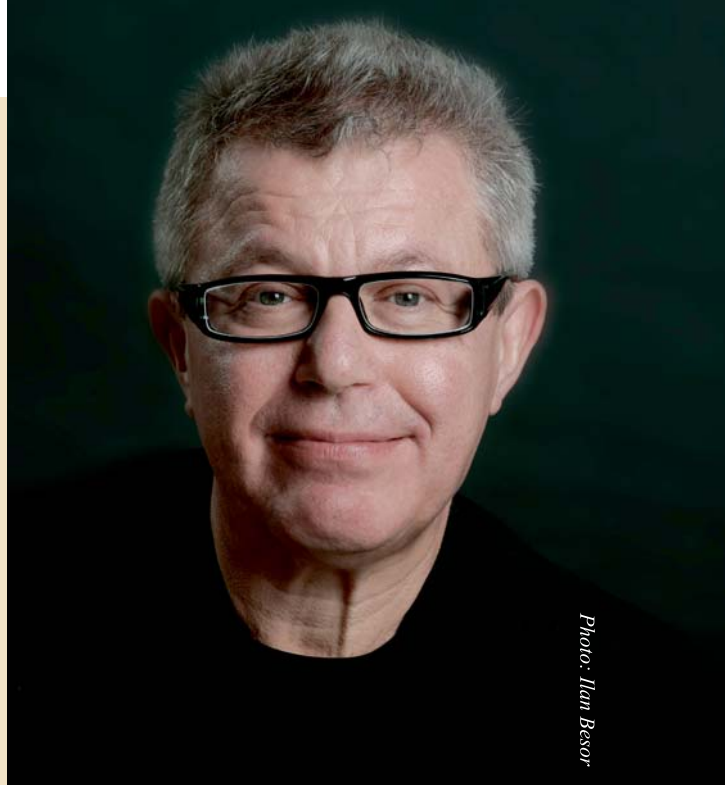


Photo: Ian Besor

creative passions to produce often unexpected results.

Helsinki WDC 2012

With forty years of history between them, Libeskind was thrilled to see Helsinki grab World Design Capital 2012 honours.

“It is one of the few cities who truly deserve it,” he says. For Libeskind, the “Pearl of the Baltic” is in the league of its own – and for this reason, the architect has taken a special interest in its development.

One of the latest issues to catch his eye was the controversy over the proposed downtown hotel, with Swiss architecture agency Herzog & de Meuron calling the shots. According to the plan, the “design hotel” was supposed to be located at the waterfront a stone’s throw away from Presidential Palace, but the heated feedback from various authorities, associations and citizens has derailed the project.

Libeskind is of the opinion that the de-

velopment of the waterfront would benefit from a more grassroots perspective – one should ask what the citizens want from their waterfront, instead of how to best benefit the hotel business.

“Helsinki needs to see new activity in the waterfront, something which takes into account the changing needs of the people. It should be a place for families.”

Water Dance

Libeskind would like to see the vacant lot and the neighbouring areas as a kind of floating pavilion which would help introduce a new kind of waterfront ideology, one that is very much rooted on “the pedestrian experience”.

He observes that all the makings of a success story are already in place: the beautiful market square, the seats of government, the Esplanade...

“All one needs to do now is to bring out the magic of the waterfront.” ●

Mission: Tampere

Daniel Libeskind is leading the design of the new Central Arena in the city of Tampere, Finland. The effort involves redefining the original concept as well as designing the major buildings and the multi-use arena. The arena will be realised on a deck which covers a railway network below.

NCC Property Development brought in Studio Daniel Libeskind in search of a more refined architectural concept. The design will maximise external views, which will add value to both the users of the facilities and the people in the surrounding areas. The city plan is slated to go forward in spring 2011.

Libeskind feels that the project is a fantastic opportunity to work in Tampere on an urban scale. He is quite taken with the city itself, saying that it is a historical city which has a strong ambition to make its mark in the 21st century as well.

"Here we have a concept which combines sports and leisure with logistics and urban planning. It really should be something spectacular," Libeskind says, adding that he is very excited about the undertaking and feels that the project is rolling along rather nicely.

"The project has been received very well and we are cooperating with City committees, architects and planners to build something great here." ●

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Shapes and Sizes

Finland is the unruly superpower of design

In December, a joyous ceremony was held in Seoul, South Korea, as the reigning World Design Capital 2010 passed its title on to Helsinki. As a symbol of assuming the WDC duties, Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Kauniainen and Lahti received a World Design Capital plaque that the cities will later display publicly. The Mayor of Helsinki, Jussi Pajunen, and the Mayor of Lahti, Jyrki Myllyvirta, were present to accept the plaque.

The changing of the guard is taking place prematurely – if one considers that Helsinki's WDC year won't kick off until 2012. Still, as Helsinki and her partner cities are already hard at work preparing for the special year, the ceremony provides an extra motivational boost: the countdown is on!

The international media is already



flocking to Helsinki, eager to get a sneak peak at the coming year. For instance, The Guardian claimed that there's good design everywhere in Helsinki, and even the natives (with their high cheek bones) have a statuesque quality. Trend bible Monocle picked Helsinki on its list of the world's best cities to live in (at number five), and launched an entire special edition on Finland.

Nature & Nurture

The roots of Finnish design, of course, run deep and wide. There is the spectacular father and son combo (Eliel and Eero Saarinen) and the sheer genius of Alvar Aalto; nicely complemented by Tapio Wirkkala's romantic stylings and the sculptural forms of Timo Sarpaneva (to name but a few).

Throughout the decades, designers have been inspired by the forces of nature,

the changing seasons, and the delicate play of Northern light. Standing between East and West, Finnish design has always been in a unique position to do something a little bit different. The present-day designers – such as Paola Suhonen and Stefan Lindfors – are continuing this tradition of “Finnovation”.

Tero Vähäkylä, Chairman of the International Design Foundation which is in charge of WDC2012 Helsinki, observes that in the aftermath of the Second World War, Finland was in a search of a more modern identity. Together with the industry, designers took on the challenge of the changing times and came up with a blueprint for new, urban life. During 1950-1960, many design classics were created products which even today, fifty years later, are still in production and very much in demand.

“Design was one of the key building

blocks of the national identity in post-war Finland. Designers such as Alvar Aalto and Kaj Franck won international acclaim and the whole nation was rooting for them,” says Vähäkylä, former CEO of design powerhouse Iittala Group.

Practically Beautiful

At the same time, the link between design and everyday Finnish lifestyle was very strong. Ordinary Finnish households would feature Iittala, Arabia or some other (soon to be world-famous) brand. The practical approach was always evident in the works of the era, and the aesthetic appeal was felt well outside the so-called design-lovers' circuit.

“In a sense, a certain democratisation of design was taking place in Finland. Under this ideology, design belonged to everyone,” Vähäkylä states.

Today, design is still a strong force in society, but many of its manifestations – such as Nokia’s mobile phones – could not have been even imagined 50 years ago. In Helsinki alone, design offers employment to 10,000 people and there are ten times that number of people working in industries which are intimately linked with design in one way or another.

Promoting the creative industries has been a strong focus point for the city of Helsinki for some time now, says City Business Director Eero Holstila.

“I believe that the most enduring value of the WDC 2012 designation is that Finnish companies utilise design even more.” Holstila sees a lot of potential in, for instance, renewing public sector services through innovative service design. He believes that the rich tradition offers a good platform to keep pushing forward:

“In Finland, good design is recognised and appreciated. Now it’s up to us to take the next step, get away from the traditional definition of design and move onwards to new design solutions.”

Rebirth of Helsinki

Deputy Mayor Hannu Penttilä observes that the timing for the World Design Capital year is an interesting one:

“The WDC year coincides with the greatest change that the Helsinki city structure has seen since the city became the capital in 1812,” says Penttilä who is in charge of the City Planning and Real Estate.

In fact, Helsinki is entering the biggest construction boom in the city’s histo-

ry, following the move of former cargo port operations away from downtown to a new harbour in Vuosaari (located in eastern Helsinki). The move has vacated large areas of prime real estate for redevelopment for residential use, new services and commerce.

The new seaside communities are sup-

posed to feature cutting-edge architecture and other design solutions, featuring from low-carbon neighbourhoods to imaginative city parks.

“Due to this transition, the message of good design will be carried on for years – and decades – to come,” believes Penttilä. ●



Photo: City of Helsinki / Munshi Ahmed

Aalto – Making Waves



Photo: Iittala Group

Design is very much a force to be reckoned with in the Finnish academic world as well. Launched one year ago, the new Aalto University (named after Alvar Aalto, of course) combines design with business and technology in an unprecedented way. The three-way marriage of Helsinki School of Economics, University of Art and Design Helsinki and Helsinki University of Technology has been making headlines around the world.

In fact, many people feel that it was largely due to Aalto that Helsinki managed to grab the WDC 2012 honours – among them, Helsinki Mayor Jussi Pajunen. Aalto is clearly looking to take design into a whole new level.

Jukka Mäkelä, the new Mayor of Espoo, agrees with his colleague’s assessment.

“Aalto University has such a strong foundation and a wealth of design tradition to draw from, that there’s no telling what it will achieve in the future,” he says. The university has its own Design Factory unit which is already creating the cross-disciplinary success stories of the future.

Looking at the first year of Aalto, Mäkelä assesses that Finland truly needs such high-level learning environments, as the race for the best corporate talent intensifies around the globe.

“We must make sure that the focus is on the things that really matter: improving the quality of research and education,” Mäkelä says. He notes that the challenge lies in taking the administrations of three universities and replacing them with just one – and one that works optimally, at that. Aalto strives to be an “innovation university”, and excessive bureaucracy tends to get in the way of such goals.

With the majority of the Aalto students going to the Espoo campus in Otaniemi, the area seems to be the strongest candidate for the main campus as well. Mäkelä comments that Aalto will surely take full advantage of the emerging metro line which will make a stop there. Rooted on the metro rails, a new type of sustainable campus concept could be developed.

“Bold new architecture would fit well into such scenario.” ●

EXPO REAL 2010:

Back on Track and Ready for Business

EXPO REAL 2010 was brimming with good vibrations. For the first time since 2008, EXPO REAL was clearly signalling the recovery of the industry: around 37,000 participants attended the 13th International Trade Fair for Commercial Property and Investment. The number of industry professionals (21,000) matched the total of the previous year, but the number of representatives of exhibiting companies (16,000) showed an increase of 1,000 companies in comparison to 2009. In terms of exhibitors, EXPO REAL 2010 achieved an increase of four percent, with a total of 1,645 companies.

Eugen Egetenmeir, Managing Director of Messe München, was quite pleased with the turnout, commenting that EXPO REAL is the only trade fair in the industry that has been able to achieve a slight growth in 2010.

"The industry is starting to breathe again," Egetenmeir summed up the fair which fully

met the organisers' expectations.

Andreas Quint, CEO of Jones Lang Lasalle, stated that the significant improvement in the market environment and the feeling of making a "new start" were tangible in Munich.

"EXPO REAL has seized on this optimism and once again proven its unique nature as a business trade fair."

Stefan Brendgen, CEO of Allianz Real Estate Germany, reinforced this, saying EXPO REAL came at just the right time for launching negotiations and finding out about potential new properties.

"Our discussions at the trade fair have been extremely successful and have involved contacts from all around the world."

Better Days Ahead

The rising confidence level of the industry players was also reflected in the EXPO REAL visitor survey: according to Gelszus Messe-Marktforschung, over 60 percent of visitors were of the opinion that the economic situation in the industry will improve in the future.

Based on the number of visitors, the top ten countries visiting the exposition after Germany were the UK, Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Russia, the USA and Luxembourg.

Poland in particular had a notable presence; it increased its number of exhibitors by 60 percent compared to 2009. Austria, Russia, Serbia and the Czech Republic also increased their number of exhibitors.

This year, the prefix 'RE' was the central theme of the

conference programme; it stood not only for real estate, but also for a new start in many areas of the industry. Bernd-Uwe Willer, Head of Germany at Savills, stated that once again, the focus was on finding solutions, not problems.

"A significant amount of dynamism has returned to the markets," he assessed, claiming that 2011 will be even better than 2010.

Green Comeback

Sustainability was another important theme of the fair. According to the organisers, this topic was now stronger than ever on the agenda of the real estate industry: especially the economic advantages of green planning and building were intensely discussed at the show.

Sustainable buildings are always the result of a team effort, requiring cooperation from a wide range of disciplines within the real estate industry, observed Dr. Reinhard Kutscher, Chairman of the Management Board of Union Investment Real Estate GmbH.

"EXPO REAL brings together the most important European players and thus provides a forum in which new solution concepts for sustainable real estate investments are born." ●



Photo: AlexSchelbert.de

WHY INVEST IN FINNISH REAL ESTATE – LEGAL ASPECTS



After a few difficult years, the Finnish economy is recovering mainly due to the rapidly improving export demand. Before long, this will also stimulate the Finnish real estate market and present opportunities again for foreign investors as well.

As a whole, the Finnish legal framework can be regarded as investor friendly and this article purports to highlight some of these favorable conditions.

Since 2000, there have been no legal restrictions on the ownership of real estate by foreigners. Finland has a reliable central land register and the information is also electronically available online. For example, a bona fide purchaser of real estate has, according to the law, the right to rely on the land registry entries regarding the seller's ownership of the real estate and its encumbrances.

Finland has a rather modern Land Code (1995) which governs, inter alia, real estate transactions, pledges of real estate and registrations of title. Even if the disposal of real estate requires that the transaction document fulfills formal requirements and is certified by a notary public, these requirements are limited only to certain basic provisions of the transaction, such as the names of the parties, specifications of the real estate, purchase price and the parties' intention to transfer the ownership. All other terms and

conditions can be agreed upon by the parties without formal requirements and a notary certification. This flexible system also means that the transaction costs relating to documentation remain reasonable.

The Finnish Ministry of Justice is currently preparing a proposal for amending the Land Code in respect of electronic real estate transactions. The purpose of the amendment is to enable electronic documents and handling of real estate transactions by the authorities. The reform would also allow the integration of electronic payment of the purchase price and transfer tax as well as transfer of real estate pledges into the system. Information on the real estate transfer would automatically transfer to relevant authorities e.g. for registration of title.

Lease agreements are one of the main documents in a real estate transaction. In Finland, commercial leases are regulated by the Act on Lease of Business Premises (1995). According to the Act, the landlord and the tenant mainly have freedom of contract in respect of the terms and conditions of the lease agreement. Finnish lease agreements concerning commercial premises

are in practice fairly standardised even if this is not required by any regulation. Finnish law allows indexation of rent, provided that the lease term is until further notice or at least three years.

The ownership of many Finnish real estates is structured through real estate companies, most of which are limited liability companies owning only one real estate. A local particularity is a mutual real estate company where the shareholders are entitled to possess premises in the building located on the real estate as specified in the articles of association of the company. In this structure, the shareholders may lease the premises in their possession and the rent income flows directly to the shareholders, not through the company. The real estate company structure is also beneficial with respect to transfer tax. Currently, the tax on transfer of shares in a real estate company is 1.6 per cent of the purchase price, while the transfer tax on direct transfer of real estate is 4 per cent. ●

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World Design Capital HELSINKI is undergoing unparalleled changes

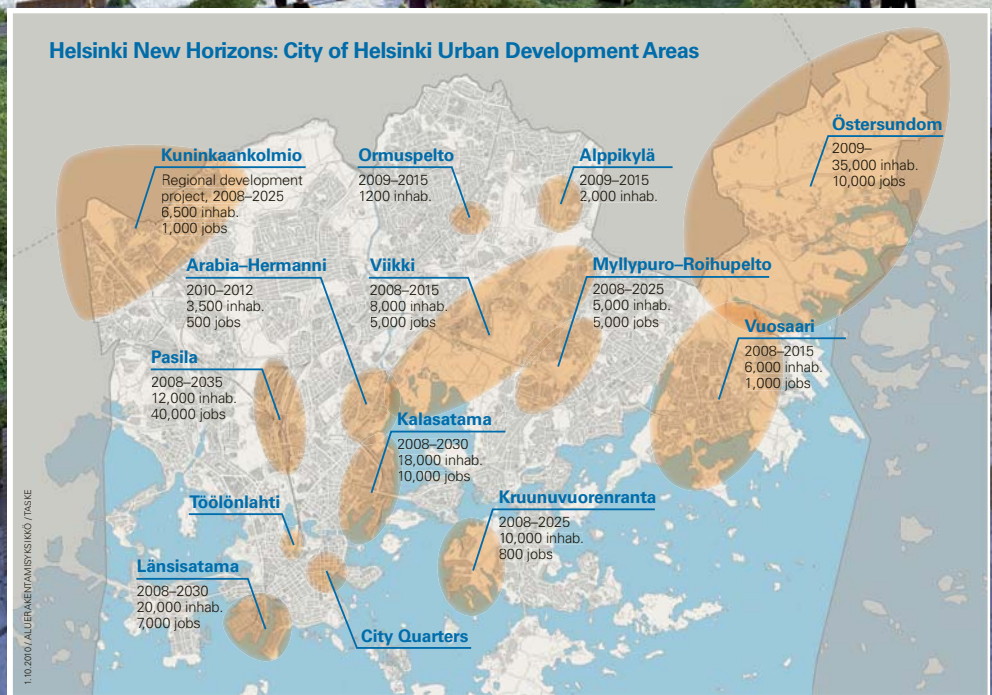
Helsinki will be the World Design Capital 2012. Urban planning and architectural design have played an important part in the selection. Design also will play a remarkable role in all future developments.

During the next ten years the Helsinki area will under-

go more changes than probably any other large city region in Europe. In particular, the development of shores, ports and railway yards will radically alter the city. 250 hectares of waterfront area have already been vacated by the transfer of two cargo ports out of the city centre.

This, together with the city's other major development projects, will create 4.5 million m² of new residential floor area and almost 2.5 million m² of business floor area by 2040, representing new homes for 100,000 people and jobs for tens of thousands. ●

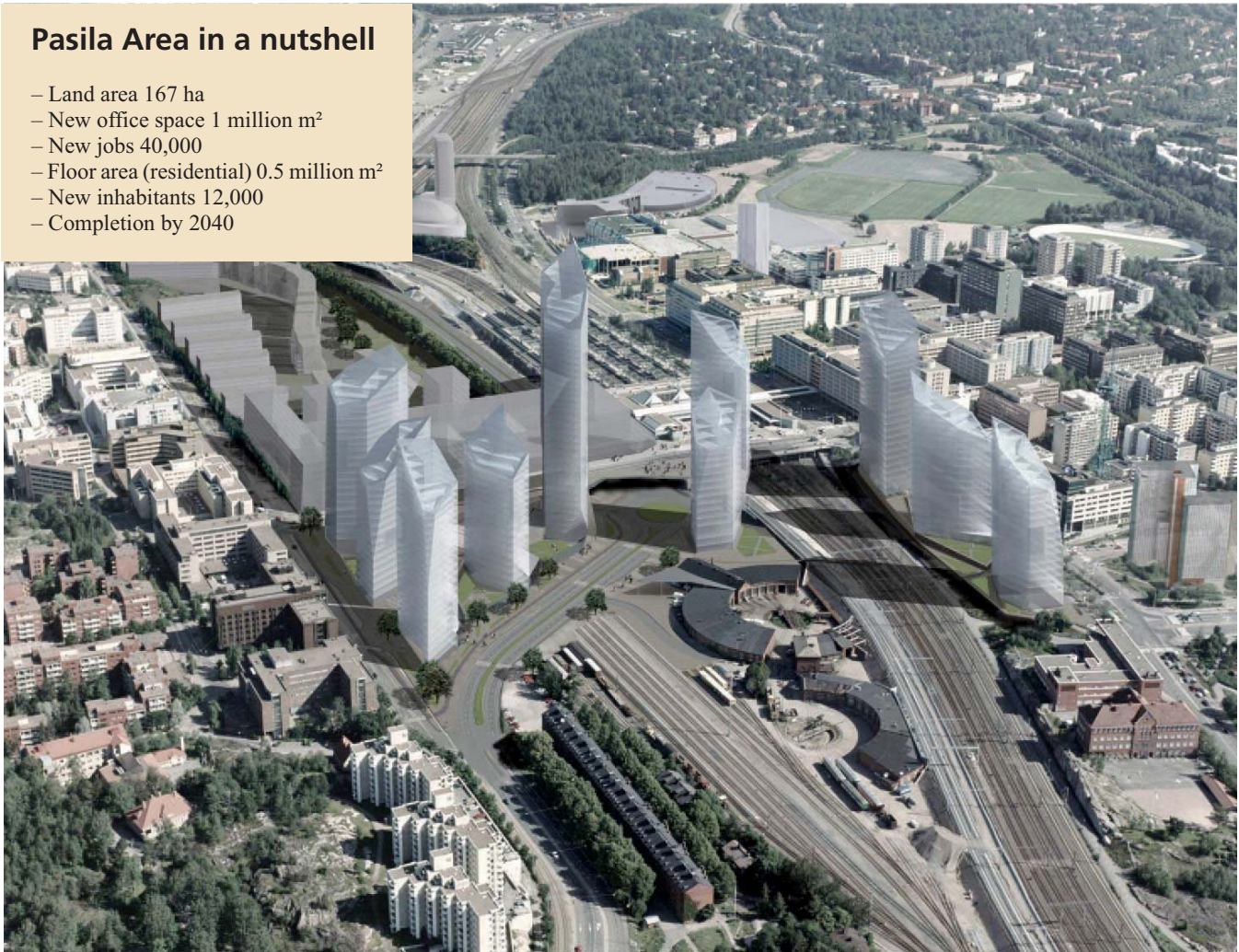
Read more about urban development projects from Internet-pages: <http://en.uuttahelsinki.fi/>



Pasila Area in a nutshell

- Land area 167 ha
- New office space 1 million m²
- New jobs 40,000
- Floor area (residential) 0.5 million m²
- New inhabitants 12,000
- Completion by 2040

Image: Cino Zucchi Architeti



Pasila – Life and leisure in Helsinki Business and Media Hub

Pasila will form a new urban centre for business, services and housing just five minutes or 3.5 km from the city centre. Pasila is the main intersection of public transportation in the metropolitan area.

At present, the Pasila area provides a large number of jobs at Finnish companies, international corporations, the media companies and the State and City agencies.

In future, more than 1 million m² of new office and busi-

ness premises will be built in the seven sections of Pasila, with the area expanding to offer work for more than 40,000 people.

Pasila is also the centre of Finnish digital media. The expansion of The Helsinki Exhibition and Convention Centre, together with Finland's biggest sport and events arena Hartwall Arena, increases Pasila's significance.

Central Blocks with Commercial Services – the Heart of Pasila

Along with new office and business premises, apartments, a

metro service and underground parking will be constructed.

Starting in 2011, the City of Helsinki and Senate Properties representing the State will arrange a "Design-Build-Own" competition for the central blocks. Construction will commence in 2015.

The construction plans cover more than 100,000 m², of which at least 15% will be reserved for housing, and the rest for office and commercial spaces.

Pasila High-Rise Area

Ten impressive mixed-use high-rise buildings are planned. The

tallest building boasts 40 stories, the lowest some 20 stories. The first floors will be reserved for shops and businesses and the next few floors will be utilised as office space. Approximately 100,000 m² and 3,000–4,000 jobs are planned for these buildings.

The top floors will offer elegant penthouses with terraces. All together the area will offer lodgings for up to 1,200 residents.

The mixed-use buildings will exemplify modern architecture, with construction of the high-rise area commencing approximately in 2014. ●



Kalasatama – Residential and business district on the waterfront

The beautiful maritime milieu is the perfect place to enjoy life, with effective public transport and a location near the city centre. The completion of construction is estimated to occur in the 2030s.

Effective public transport is one of the greatest benefits of Kalasatama. Also, the light traffic network will be extensive, with numerous bicycle paths and pedestrian zones leading directly to the city centre and to the other parts of Helsinki.

The area's maritime aspect will be enhanced by a 5 km public shoreline route.

Commercial Services

In future, Kalasatama will provide a large number of commercial services for businesses and residents. 535,000 m² of office premises will be built, and the district will provide a workplace for 10,000 people.

The building developer of the 110,000 m² Kalasatama Centre will plan and construct the future premises, the shopping centre, streets, bridges, the extension to the metro sta-

tion and the social and health clinic. Apartments will also be constructed. Kalasatama Centre will be implemented as a partnership project between a private developer and the City of Helsinki.

Premises and Lots

Kalasatama offers numerous lots for business premises, with ecological solutions, transformability and services along historical industrial buildings and modern architecture. The transformation of a former gasometer in Suvilahti into a large cultural centre adds further value to the area.

Smart Energy and Waste Solutions

The carbon-neutral future of energy services is being built in Kalasatama. The goal is a model neighborhood with a smart grid of global significance, where the latest technological innovations in energy, information and telecommunications are combined.

The logistics of Kalasatama will be eased with an automated vacuum waste collection system. Covering the whole area, the piping connects to the Kalasatama waste collection point in the centre of the area. ●



Kalasatama in a nutshell:

- Land area 175 hectares
- Business premises floor area 535,000 m²
- Services floor area 45,000 m²
- Jobs 10,000
- Housing floor area 720,000 m² (5,000–7,000 units)
- Residents 18,000
- Travel time to the city centre by metro 6 minutes
- Construction time 2009–2030s

Jätkäsaari – City Life by The Open Sea

The new urban district, a mere 10-minute tram ride from Helsinki city centre, has a metro station nearby, a highway connection to the west and a newly designed pedestrian and cycle route Baana to the city centre. The shoreline is to be developed to provide public recreational areas with seafront promenades, cafés and marinas.

In Jätkäsaari, people will live and work in an urban environment in which they will enjoy easy access to a wide selection of services. Whether walking along the shoreline and enjoying the panorama of the open sea, or strolling through the large parkland winding through the area, residents will have space to relax and enjoy their surrounds.

Passenger Boat Harbor

Serving predominantly the route between Helsinki and Tallinn, Estonia, the existing passenger boat harbor will remain in Jätkäsaari. Today, approximately 3–4 million passengers pass through it every year.

Commercial Services and Business Premises

The vicinity to the city centre along with the demand for various kinds of services makes Jätkäsaari an attractive location for entrepreneurs. In addition to its 16,000 residents, services will be utilised by people travelling through the passenger harbor, staying in hotels, using the sports centre or working in the area.

A commercial centre and three hotels will be constructed in Jätkäsaari. Ground floors of residential buildings along the main streets will be utilised for business use, and the largest commercial premises will

be situated in the central blocks (70,000 m²), with additional office spaces to be built near the harbour. A competition to select the developer is to be organised in the next few years.

The central blocks of Jätkäsaari will offer a range of services, shops, offices and apartments. Both the general concept and the detailed plan of the central blocks are still in the planning stage, and no developer has been chosen yet. The local plan of Jätkäsaari permits the construction of office space in the passenger harbor areas.

On the west side of Jätkäsaari, a private cancer hospital and research facility has already been built, with a number of hotels also to be constructed. A number of office building lots, along with a hotel lot on the waterfront have not yet been acquired. ●



Jätkäsaari in a nutshell:

- Land area 100 hectares
- Parks 19,8 hectares
- Business and services floor area 300,000 m²
- Jobs 6,000
- Residential buildings floor area 600,000 m²
- Residents 16,000
- Travel time to Helsinki centre 5–10 minutes
- Construction period 2009–2025

Kruunuvuorenranta – City life and wilderness

Kruunuvuorenranta is a diverse land area of 143 ha, situated a mere 3 km away from the centre as the crow flies. The area boasts unique views to a beautiful archipelago and to the Suomenlinna sea fortress, a Unesco World Heritage site. The area is also marked by both the estate tradition of the 19th Century and the activities that took place at the former oil docks from the 1920s.

The shore is turning into both a cozy residential area and an attractive recreational area for all. The area has six kilometers of shoreline. Sports facilities, beaches and marinas will be constructed.

The construction will begin in 2012. By the mid-2020s, a city district of 10,000 people will have been established here. In the future, the city centre may be as little as a 15-minute tram ride away, as plans have been made to build a series of bridges connecting the city centre and

the area. An international design competition will be designed.

Housing

Construction of the residential blocks will begin in the rocky hills, with both apartment buildings and smaller dwellings. The area will be compactly built. Despite the urban look, smaller buildings ranging from terraced houses to floating houses will make up one third of the housing units constructed. There are also plans to use the Finnish wooden town as inspiration.

Services and Business

The majority of services in Kruunuvuorenranta will be concentrated in what will become the centre of the area, Haakoninlahti. A sports hall and the commercial centre, amongst other things will be located in there.

There will about 1,000 jobs created in Kruunuvuorenranta. In addition to basic services provided by the public and private sectors, an abundance of recreation and tourism-related services will be needed in the area.

Kruunuvuorenranta in a nutshell:

- Land area 143 hectares
- Water area 117 hectares
- Business and services floor area 50,000 m²
- Jobs 1,000
- Residential floor area 500,000 m² (5,000–6,000 units)
- Inhabitants 10,000
- Construction period: 2011–2020s



Targeting Talent

Creative communities add to the appeal of major cities worldwide – and Finland is determined to do well in the race

New creative communities are in the works all around Finland. Cities of various sizes are re-evaluating their residential strategies and placing an extra emphasis on the built environments. In the new concepts, parks and pedestrian areas join forces with urban living lab solutions, culture and entertainment. Architecture and design are used as a strategic tool to attract members of the creative class into these new neighbourhoods, which feature – more often than not – some kind of water element.

Spearheading the creative revolution is Helsinki which is determined to seize the opportunity presented by the exit of the downtown harbour operations. The first waterfront areas to dive into full-blown development are Jätkäsaari and Kalasatama, both located only

minutes away from the centre of Helsinki.

Jätkäsaari is currently under construction on a southern peninsula recently vacated by a cargo port. Jätkäsaari could house as many as 16,000 residents and offer jobs for 6,000 people. The area will also fea-

ture a pioneering low energy block (Low2No).

Kalasatama is known for its beautiful maritime milieu as well. Furthermore, the transformation of a former gasometer in Suvilahti into a cultural centre should attract more members of the creative class into the area.

Construction time is slated for 2009-2030s, and the area is expected to feature 18,000 residents and 10,000 jobs once it is fully realised.

Reach for the Sky

The waves of construction are felt inland as well. Pasila is the busiest public transportation intersection in the metropolitan area, and also the most accessible place in Finland. At present, it is already the centre of Finnish digital media and will keep on developing into a world-class business and media hub.

In the future, the imaginations of young talent are captured by the construction of up to 40 stories high, mixed-use skyscrapers which will transform the Helsinki skyline.

Currently housing some 8,600 residents and over 25,000 jobs, Pasila will experience a construction boom continuing until the 2040s when its population is predicted to hit 20,000. By then, there will be new premises constituting together more than one million square meters of floor space, with Pasila providing work for over 50,000 professionals.

Pasila wants to be recognised for its leisure activities, as well, with major events held almost daily at Hartwall Areena and the Helsinki Exhibition and Convention Centre, for instance. According to the plans, a north-south metro line should eventually make its way to Pasila, too.



Imagine All the People

Development of creative neighbourhoods – or entire creative cities, even – is a trend which has really taken off in Western countries. Such cities as Sydney, Toronto and Barcelona have invested a lot of resources in their quest for a more imaginative community. In Toronto, for instance, the plan revolves around zoning and infrastructure which allows for e.g. more pedestrian areas.

‘Imagine a Toronto’ strategy seems to be working, too – even Richard Florida, the father of Creative Class, has chosen the Canadian city as his home. In a 2007 NORDICUM interview, Professor Florida found many similarities between Toronto and Helsinki, applauding the Finnish capital for a number of things – ranging from the nightlife to the safe streets. Florida also credited Finnish architecture and design for their extremely high quality – which goes a long way in creating a stimulating environment for the bourgeois bohemian.

High-profile architect and master strategist Daniel Libeskind echoed the same sentiments in this issue’s interview. But while Florida had no knowl-

edge of the plan to turn former harbour and industrial areas for creative class havens, Libeskind has been following the waterfront renaissance with growing interest.

According to Libeskind, architecture does have a very big role in the making of new type of creative communities. He also recognises that the seaside sites have a certain tradition and legacy to uphold. Yet, he warned against relying on nostalgia alone – he would like to see bold architectural concepts and solutions which introduce totally new kind of energy to the mix.

Keeping It Real

According to one of Florida’s mantras, the Creative Class requires authenticity from its environment. The creative types shun copycat construction and standard solutions. Massive office complexes or conference centres are often conceived to lack personality, and the talent flock to neighbourhoods that have a certain type of vibe or aura.

In Helsinki, there is a lot of untapped potential in loft construction. Taking former industrial buildings and turning them into spacious loft apartments is,

of course, reminiscent of New York’s SoHo or the Meatpacking District. In Helsinki, such areas as Vattuniemi, Pitäjämäki, Herttoniemi and Vallila offer intriguing possibilities in this arena.

Of these four, Vallila occupies the strongest position – taking into consideration that the intense development phase of the neighbouring Pasila is likely to push also Vallila into higher gear.

Helsinki is not the only metropolitan area player attempting to lure in legions of creative people through inspiring environments. Espoo is trying its hand in seaside high-rise residential apartments and also building an ambitious “Community 2.0” in Suurpelto. Vantaa woos bobos with green-edge construction in Marja-Vantaa.

Florida’s theories are well-read also outside the capital region, with such cities as Tampere and Turku honing their own concepts for ideal living. Both cities have a strong waterfront identity and a proud industrial past which offer plenty of imaginative building blocks for ambitious planners.

Culture Culture Rising

Internationally, one of the lat-

est trends in this arena is cultural construction which has been spearheaded by such American cities as Boston and Baltimore. This type of a “culture oasis” can feature boardwalks or pedestrian boulevards, cultural centres, night clubs and other concert venues and all-around rich event offering. However, this concept has been criticised for benefiting constructors more than the actual culture producers – and, eventually, pleasing tourists more than natives.

In Europe, it has been noted that even a single operator can transform the profile of the area – Bilbao’s Guggenheim Museum is probably the most cited example of this. Also London’s Southwark has benefited a great deal from Tate Modern art museum, and Dublin has an entire “bohemian quarter” in Temple Bar.

What is the next step in the evolution of the creative community? Another Toronto-based guru, Mark Kuznicki, is guessing that Open Creative Community is the way of the future. These hybrids of physical and virtual space combine both global and local aspects.

There is a message there, too: even the most fervent social media user can not actually live in Facebook. ●

Photo: City of Helsinki





Photo: City of Helsinki / Matti Tirri

The Making of the Creative Class

HYY Real Estate celebrates its proud legacy and looks for new challenges

While Helsinki enjoys a reputation of being one of the hippest places around, its urban roots are surprisingly short. One major chapter in the development of the future capital was the migration of the university from Turku to Helsinki in 1817 – as a consequence, Helsinki became an academic town and an intellectual centre.

Finland remained tugged in the lap of the Russian Empire, but the sprouts of nationalism were already evident in the young students. Originally, university students would meet at their professors' homes, for they had no other place to go. The student body dreamed of having a place of their own, and after decades of trying in vain, Vanha Ylioppilastalo (Old Student House) was raised in 1870. Finland was still under Russian rule also 40 years later, as Uusi Ylioppilastalo (New Student House) opened its doors in 1910.

In the opening ceremony at Uusi Ylioppilastalo, architect Armas Lindgren pointed out that he had designed the building to be the students' home away from home. A few years later, those university students who

had been present at the festivities had all graduated and were hard at work building a nation which finally won its independence in 1917. The brave ideas that would sustain the young nation through the tough decades ahead were hatched, in part, at the students' twin lair.

Urban Seeds Growing

In November 2010, the 100th anniversary of Uusi Ylioppilastalo was celebrated with all appropriate zeal. It was also a good time to look back and assess the meaning of the student houses – both old and new.

“In a sense, the students provided the spark for the creative city that was to emerge,” says Marketing Manager Maarit Saloniemi from the Real Estate Division of the HYY Group.

The HYY Group is owned by the Student Union of the University of Helsinki and is the caretaker of a legacy that spans more than a century.

“As Uusi Ylioppilastalo turned 100 years old, it was a good opportunity for us to reminisce a bit and appreciate the rich history of these places – and what they have meant for the development of Helsinki, and the entire country.” In relation to the festivities, a book was published that takes stock of the 100 years of Uusi Ylioppilastalo.

While the city around both student houses has grown and prospered, also the Student Union has expanded its reach and acquired more real estate. All the while, Uusi and Vanha have remained in the core of downtown – the very heart of downtown is often defined as the tri-

angle limited by the Main Railway Station in the north, Stockmann in the east and Kamppi Center in the west.

There are, for example, more restaurants in the area than anywhere else in the land. In addition, there are several metro entrances in the vicinity that bring a steady flow of people here. According to pedestrian monitoring studies, there are over 40,000 daily pedestrians in Kaivopihä area (230,000 people/week).

Guarding National Treasure

Saloniemi says that the organisation takes its responsibility very seriously – the culturally invaluable buildings are taken care of according to the principles of sustainable development.

“We’ve had these houses in our possession for generations and we want to make sure that the student houses will be there in the future as well. We recognise fully the social impact that they carry.”

Nevertheless, today HYY Real Estate is doing much more than simply looking after the national treasures under its wing. Two years ago, a new education powerhouse Domus Gaudium opened its doors just off Kamppi. HYY owns 60 % of the building which is used by Aalto University Executive Education and Helsinki University student associations and clubs.

Still, the HYY Group is not solely a service provider for the academic world – the Real Estate division also serves commercial and office customers. The key properties of the Group are primarily located in the centre of Helsinki around the Ylioppilaskatu and Kaivopihä squares. Kaivopihä Ltd is the name of the company that manages, rents and maintains the properties of the Student Union.

Sing When You’re Winning

The new millennium has been good for the HYY Real Estate which has enjoyed record-breaking customer satisfaction levels for the past decade. In

2010, it grabbed the top spot in the KTI customer satisfaction survey for the 11th consecutive time. What’s more, the survey has been organised only eleven times which means that HYY has won every single time.

The KTI study focuses on tenant satisfaction with regards to the premises themselves, the landlord and the quality of services. In 2010, there were 13 large property owners (and 1,785 interviews) included in the survey.

Yrjö Herva, Business Director for the HYY Real Estate, says that organisation has been able to do well in the race since it provides instant service – problems are decisively dealt with immediately as they surface.

“Also, a contributing factor is the excellent location in the heart of the city at Kaivopihä square – we’re always right in the thick of things. And finally, we’ve always had great relationships with the tenant companies and their personnel.”

With such a total service package, HYY had only slight trouble filling the premises during the recession. For 2010, the set target was 95 % occupancy rate and the organisation was able to hold onto this goal.

Downtown Dynamite

Both Saloniemi and Herva feel that the appeal of the downtown area has only increased of late. Department store icon Stockmann just put the finishing touches on its ambitious renovation project and Sponda is developing the City Center complex – exciting things are happening all around the HYY properties.

“We want to be a part of this development, and do our share of the upgrades to make sure that the downtown success story continues,” Saloniemi comments.

In addition to taking good care of its crown jewels, HYY would not mind adding some solid properties to its portfolio – when the time is right.

“We’re always interesting in exploring various options in the neighbourhood in order to keep moving forward,” says Herva. ●

Photo: City of Helsinki / Harald Raebiger



HYY Group: Key Real Estate Assets

City Centre Property, Helsinki city centre, leasable floor-area 32,741 m²

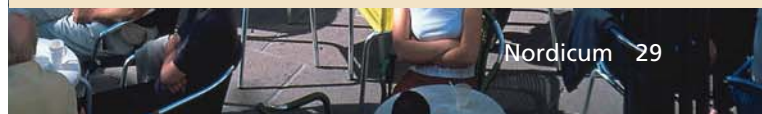
Kaivotalo building Kaivokatu 10, Helsinki 10
Citytalo building Mannerheimintie 3, Helsinki 10
Hansatalo building Mannerheimintie 5, Helsinki 10
The New Student House Mannerheimintie 5, Helsinki 10
The Old Student House Mannerheimintie 3, Helsinki 10

Leppäsuu Property, Etu-Töölö, leasable floor-area 14,278 m²

Building B Leppäsuonkatu 9, Helsinki 10
Building C Hietaniemenkatu 14, Helsinki 10
Building D Hietaniemenkatu 14, Helsinki 10
Helecon information centre Leppäsuonkatu 9 E, Helsinki 10

Others

Aleksis Kivi's cottage Rantatie, Tuusula
Domus Gaudium (60 %), Leppäsuonkatu 11, Helsinki 10
Ida Aalbergin tie 1 (25 %), Ida Aalbergin tie 1, Helsinki 39
Villa Kuunari Kuunarintie 2, Helsinki 85



Stay Solid

SRV is championing the cause of compact city structure

Real estate development is changing into a more carbon-friendly mode as cohesive urban structure and good public transportation are the new watchwords of the industry. SRV is among the first companies to really go after the opportunities presented by the new era.

Photos: SRV



Project Development Director Jouko Pöyhönen says that SRV's new focus is quite evident, if one looks at the two large-scale public transportation projects under way in the Greater Helsinki Area: the western metro expansion to Espoo and the northbound Ring Rail Line which connects the airport with the core Helsinki network.

Both of these projects bring about new stations along the tracks which will serve as "ground zero" for community construction. For instance, the City of Vantaa has ambitious plans for Marja-Vantaa, the green community which is to be located around Kivistö sta-

tion. Pöyhönen says that SRV is very much interested in developing Marja-Vantaa and other stations of the Ring Rail Line.

"We already have projects underway in that department."

Towering Presence

SRV's involvement in the western metro project is even more formidable. The company has plenty of plans for the 14-kilometre metro line, starting with the actual point where the metro surfaces from under the sea in Keilaniemi. Simultaneously, metro passengers coming from Helsinki will be welcomed to Espoo by a proud display of cor-

porate towers. High-profile giants such as Nokia, Kone and Fortum have their nests here – but SRV is looking to introduce something extra into the mix.

According to the master plan, SRV will realise residential construction along the shoreline. The entity known as Keilaniemi Towers is to feature four housing towers which will not be dwarfed by the corporate neighbours: with 30–40 storeys each, the buildings will reach 100 metres.

The area under development includes almost 80,000 square metres of residential building volume. Project Manager Tuomo Poutiainen says that

the residential development plan should go hand in hand with the construction of the metro line.

"We are looking to open the first tower around the same time as the Keilaniemi station starts operations."

See the Sea

Realising the significance of the venture, SRV wanted to place extra emphasis on the visual experience of the residential quartet: the towers will be round, making the buildings highly presentable from any direction. Furthermore, the round shape enables space to be used in very creative ways.

Of course, the view to the neighbouring Tapiola and Otaniemi should be something to see – but they still pale in comparison to the sea view.

Pöyhönen and Poutiainen comment that the towers will provide seaside views which are unprecedented in the country – and just about anywhere in Scandinavia, as well.

After years of working with the concept, the zoning plan will become public in the spring. The City of Espoo is backing the venture, believing that it will help bring some new action into the neighbourhood. Technical Deputy Mayor Olavi Louko comments that residential seaside living of such high standards is a clear asset to the area – and the entire City, as well.

“The metro station and the residential buildings will introduce a new level of diversity into the area.”

Make the Connection

The plan also includes a deck that will span over Ring I, connecting the residential site to Tapiola. The deck will be transformed into a green, garden-like environment – quite in tune with Tapiola, the original Garden City. Due to the deck solution, Tapiola residents will enjoy convenient access to the shoreline – and shoreline dwellers can go over to the Tapiola side with equal ease.

After Keilaniemi, the next two metro stations are Otaniemi and Tapiola. Tuomo Poutiainen observes that the deck construction will help in bringing these three areas together:

“We want to realise new type of urban structure that combines living with work life and also research activities,” he says, pointing out to the launch of Aalto University in Otaniemi one year ago.

“By eliminating some of the existing boundaries, we can help in developing a genuine innovation platform. Our aim is to develop a new, integrated living and working concept – a creative built environment.” SRV’s vision is also very much in line with the City’s ideology (3T) which seeks to combine culture with business and hi-tech.

Big Plans for Niittykumpu

Beyond the high-powered triangle of Keilaniemi-Otaniemi-Tapiola, one finds Niittykumpu area which will also house a metro station in the years to come. Originally, Niittykumpu received only an option for construction, but in the end it was deemed wiser to realise the station together with the others.

There are presently automobile retail operations in the area, but they will be relocated to new, suitable premises. Together with its partners Varna and Sato, SRV wants to plan and raise new residential buildings in the vacant area. The initial plan calls for a construction of 150,000 square metres.

“We’re talking about 2,000 apartments in the area,” says Poutiainen, adding that construction could conceivably start in 2013, if everything goes well.

According to Poutiainen, also the street infrastructure will be improved in the development process:

“The street network is really a crucial part of the project.”

Perkkaa Perks

SRV is busy elsewhere in Espoo as well – just off the Leppävaara railway station, there is an interesting environmentally-minded community being planned. In October 2010, Siemens sold the lots and the building it owns in Espoo’s Perkkaa

suburb to a three-way partnership of SRV, Sato and Ilmarinen.

The zoning revision for the area is already in process, with the aim to form new blocks for top-notch residential buildings.

In the future, the area should be transformed into yet another neighbourhood where living, recreation and jobs are located close to each other. The intended living floor area is 110,000–120,000 square meters, which translates into some 1,500 apartments. The planning of the area is driven by its central location as an extension of the Leppävaara urban center – as well as energy efficiency.

The Perkkaa area is a great fit for SRV’s residential strategy, says Poutiainen.





"It is another chance for us to demonstrate our new concepts for environmentally-conscious quality living in an urban setting." The aim is for the zoning revision to be completed in 2012.

Jätkäsaari Goes Green

In addition to providing cutting-edge residential solutions along the rails around the capital region, SRV is very much involved in the development of the old harbour and industrial areas which have been left vacant as main harbour operations have been moved eastward to Vuosaari.

One prime example of this trend is Jätkäsaari, a former goods harbour to the west of downtown Helsinki. SRV is partnering up with Sitra, the Finnish Innovation Fund, and VVO to realise a low carbon housing and commercial building complex in the area.

The €60 million project – known as Low2No – is scheduled for completion by the end of 2012. The ambitious venture aims to generate research and

evidence that will inform the policy, innovation and practices that will drive future low/no carbon development in the built environment.

The building complex covers 22,000 square metres and will provide new residences, office and retail space. Emissions will be reduced through building design and performance, mobility systems and food production.

As a forerunner in sustainable construction, SRV looks at Low2No as yet another opportunity to showcase the company's long-term commitment to green ideology. The project team contains top experts both internationally and from Finland, conforming well to the "SRV Approach" which means finding the best possible partners for each project.

"For us, working on different cooperation models is part of our everyday operations – we believe in the power of partnerships and are especially interested in participating in ventures where there are entire areas or bigger entities under development," says Jouko Pöyhönen.

Get Together

Collaboration with investors – both domestic and foreign – has yielded good results in the past. Pöyhönen comments that SRV wants to start talking with the investors very early on in the game.

"This is a way to achieve better risk management but also a great instrument to discover new opportunities."

According to Pöyhönen, cooperation with also the public sector has intensified over the years. Municipalities, for example, wield a lot of power through land use strategy, and SRV is interested in exploring the options together with the municipalities.

Perhaps the greatest public sector reference for SRV in recent years is the Helsinki Music Centre which will host its opening concert on 1 September 2011. Owned by the State of Finland (together with the City of Helsinki and Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE) the Music Centre is located just off the main railway station in downtown Helsinki.

Pöyhönen says that the downtown location has offered plenty of challenges along the way, but the company has been able to find cost-effective solutions from day one. In recognition of this, Rakennuslehti magazine selected Helsinki Music Centre to be the 'Best Worksite 2010' in Finland.

Face the Music

When asked about the secret of success, Pöyhönen replies that SRV has been able to "build on tradition": basically the same working crew which realised the Kamppi shopping centre and Flamingo entertainment oasis (both previous Worksite of the Year winners) have put their skills to good use at Music Centre.

"With a proven track record that we can operate effectively in a tight spot, we are confident that we can handle demanding new projects, such as Keilaniemi Towers." ●

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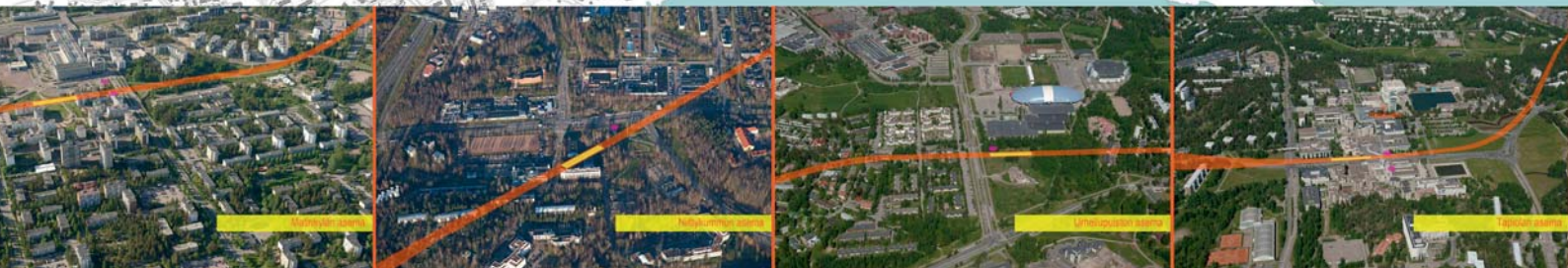


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Going West

Countdown to metro gains momentum

Construction of the west-bound metro is in full swing. The effort began in Ruoholahti, Helsinki, in November 2009, with operations kicking off in Espoo the following June. In November 2010 the one kilometre mark was reached. By the end of the year, excavation work was performed at nine points along the future metro line.



Starting the work in numerous places at the same time speeds the project up considerably. Matti Kokkinen, Managing Director of Länsimetro Oy, says that each metro tunnel can advance as much as 200 metres a month, depending on the quality of rock encountered.

“The next two years we’re pretty much digging, using the drill and blast method). After

that, we’re going to be filling those tunnels for another two years – inside constructions and operational systems.”

The metro should be up and running by Christmas 2015. Olavi Louko, Technical Deputy Mayor for the City of Espoo, comments that the development effort around the metro line does not stop there.

“There will be intense de-

velopment along the metro line – concentrating around the metro stations – for the next ten years.”

According to the original plan, the western expansion will introduce seven new stations, located in Espoo at Matinkylä, Urheilupuisto, Tapiola, Otaniemi and Keilaniemi, and in Helsinki at Koivusaari and Lauttasaari.

New Station

Recently, however, it was announced that Niittykumpu will be added to the list. Located between Matinkylä and Urheilupuisto stations, Niittykumpu was previously only an option for future construction, but it soon became clear that the most prudent course of action is to build and fund the Niitty-



kumpu metro station simultaneously with the other stations.

In fact, adding a station to the metro line after the fact – once the metro is fully operational – would have been very challenging indeed. Both Kokkinen and Louko agree that realising Niittykumpu in the first wave of construction makes a lot of sense.

“There will be funding available for the construction from land use agreement of the area, which means, in essence, that no additional money from the City will be required to fund the station,” says Louko. In addition to the metro station itself, there will be other costs resulting from setting up the municipal infrastructure.

SRV is going to be the principal developer of the area, together with SATO and Varma. According to initial plans, there

will be both business and residential buildings in Niittykumpu to the tune of 150,000 gross square metres.

Underground Excellence

The Espoo metro is no trivial matter – in fact, the project is the biggest single infrastructure undertaking in Finland today. All and all, the west metro will be 13.9 kilometres in length, comprising two parallel tunnels travelling underground for the entire length of the track.

In addition to the stations, excavation work will be carried out for fifteen vertical shafts designed for emergency exit, pressure equalisation, ventilation and smoke extraction. Nine work tunnels have been designed for construction and maintenance work.

The west metro will also run as an automatic metro right from the beginning. The Helsinki Metro will go automatic even before the completion of the west metro. The automatic system will make train traffic safer and faster, with increased frequency. To begin with, the shortest interval between trains will be 2.5 minutes. Ultimately, the metro ride from Matinkylä to Ruoholahti will take 16 minutes.

Once completed, the metro will connect the southern parts of Espoo to the regional rail transport system. It is estimated that over 100,000 passengers will use the metro daily and that around 60,000 will cross the border between Helsinki and Espoo every day. According to estimates, the busiest stations are likely to be Tapiola, Matinkylä and Lauttasaari.

Power of Three

The metro line is also very intriguing in the sense that it will link together the powerful Tapiola-Otaniemi-Keilaniemi triangle. Each of these areas has left a permanent mark in history, and together they form the most potent trio in the country.

Tapiola, for one, is the legendary “Garden City” and its commercial centre was a pioneer for urban development in Finland. Otaniemi boasts the Finnish version of Silicon Valley, combining higher education with research and business. Finally, in Keilaniemi one can find the corporate “dream team” of the land, with a skyline filled with proud towers of such international hi-tech companies as Nokia and Kone.

Antti Mäkinen, Project Manager for the City of Espoo,

says that the triangle will be developed considerably alongside the metro project. Keilaniemi, for instance, is likely to add a skyscraper or two – and there are also four residential towers in the works.

The residential towers would introduce spectacular, seaside high-rise living into Finland on an unprecedented scale. Also, the shoreline will be fully revitalised as these plans turn into reality, believes Olavi Louko.

“At present, Keilaniemi shoreline is underdeveloped, but the metro and residential arrangements will help bring some action into the area,” Louko comments, pointing out that, for instance, cafés and recreational activities could reverse the situation totally.

Vertical Passions

Turning attention inland to Tapiola Commercial Centre, one

learns quickly that there are a lot of exciting things going on.

“There are numerous projects that will materialise by 2015, coinciding with the launch of the metro,” says Antti Mäkinen. Primary among these is a new shopping centre that will have residential buildings constructed on top of it. According to the plans, the new entity will also feature a park on the residential deck.

“Right now we are looking at about 150 apartments,” Mäkinen explains the magnitude of the project which is just one example of how metro is going to transform the venerable centre. In four years, as the Christmas shoppers hop on the brand new metro to go to Tapiola, they will find a centre that is very different from today.

Otaniemi is also standing on the brink of a new era. Home of the new “innovation university” Aalto, the area is like-

ly to add architecturally ambitious landmark buildings into the campus. A completely new university main building may be in the cards for the future – located just off the metro station, of course – but it is too early in the game to say what will happen next. Nevertheless, something big is bound to take place, sooner or later:

“Aalto University is just getting started, but there is a lot of potential in the campus area,” Louko says, adding that there is plenty of unconstructed land left.

As the caretaker of the triangle, Mäkinen points out that the development in this area is very much linked to the City’s T3 strategy which brings together culture, science and business.

“These are already the strong points of the triangle and we are looking at the metro as one way to make the most of this combination.”

Tighter Structure

In broader consideration, the extension of rail traffic to the zone of the Western Motorway will strengthen the complex formed by Helsinki and the urban hubs of Tapiola and Matinkylä. Travel between rail traffic stations will also become easier. This will work towards the gradual formation of a uniform and highly accessible zone whose development will be spurred by the existence of the stations.

The location of the stations has been decided with a view to the current and future needs of the area and the metro has been designed in close cooperation with city planners, land use experts and traffic designers. This should go a long way in silencing the critics who argue that Espoo has no cohesion and no urban framework to speak of.

Olavi Louko notes that in many regards, the metro line



seems to be exactly what the doctor ordered:

“We are addressing numerous modern-day issues with the metro. Due to Climate Change considerations, residential living can not be scattered all over the place – the city structure must be tighter. We are answering the call by developing new communities along the metro line.”

The other major improvement is, of course, that many capital region citizens can soon make the switch to using the metro as their primary mode of travel. Energy efficiency of rail traffic exceeds that of bus traffic, not to mention passenger cars. Bus lines from southern Espoo to the centre of Helsinki along the Western Motorway will be replaced by feeder traffic. The west met-

ro is also expected to curb the growth of car traffic in southern Espoo.

Easy on the Eyes

A lot of effort has gone to the designing of the metro stations themselves. One of the prerequisites for the designers was instant recognition: that you need but to glance at the station from the train and know immediately where you are. The designation of Helsinki as the World Design Capital 2012 – with Espoo as a main partner – has only strengthened the resolve to come up with a memorable visual experience.

The platforms will be 90 metres in length, spacious and unbroken, with tracks located on both sides. The stations of the west metro will be fitted with

platform screen doors, increasing passenger safety in the platform area. Also the old stations will be equipped with platform screen doors.

Lighting of the stations plays a big role in the eventual user-experience. Natural light will be exploited whenever possible and lighting solutions will aim to promote accessibility and prevent glare. There will be no separate ceiling designs; ceilings will be shotcreted. The master plan calls for all stations to be accessible and each level easy to reach.

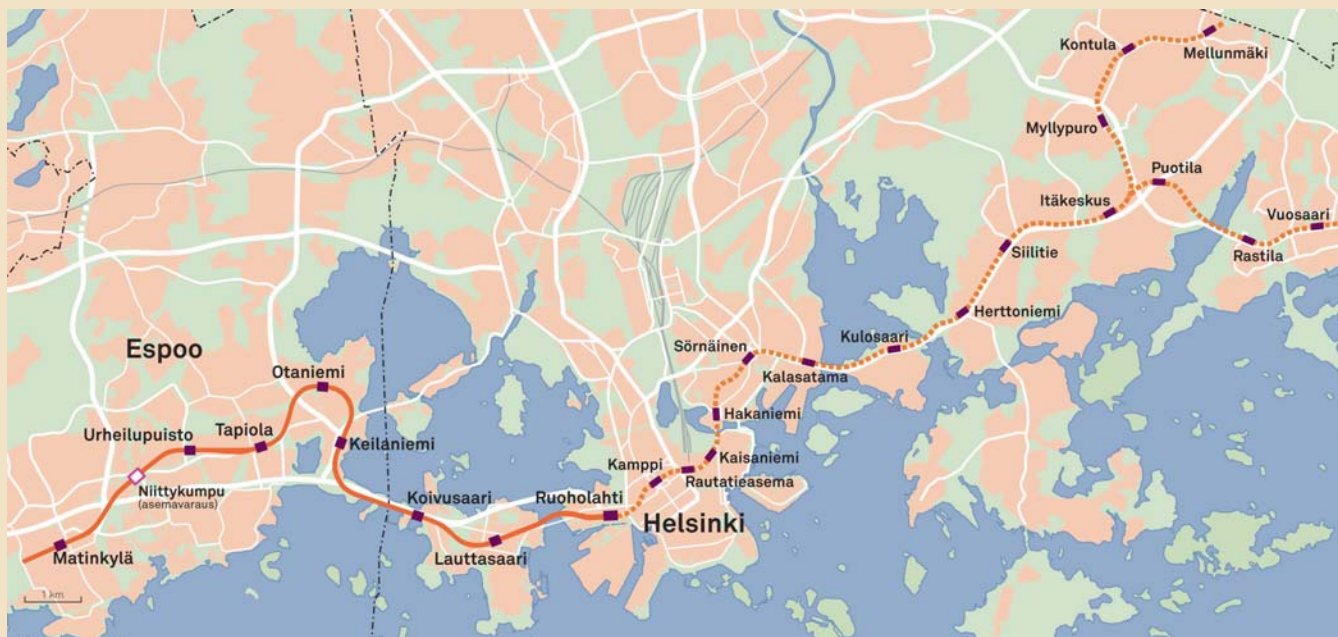
The City of Espoo acknowledges that a metro station changes its environs and creates new opportunities. The stations will be designed to have a tight connection to the local environment and its construction, services and traffic con-

nections. The individual starting points and needs of each area will be taken into consideration in the design of the stations' surroundings. The over-all guiding vision is that of “metro station as a meeting place” and it is realised a little differently in each of the locations.

Money Matters

What about the price tag of this grand venture? At present, the costs of the west metro are estimated at EUR 713.6 million. The City of Espoo and Helsinki have agreed to distribute the costs in accordance with a “split at the border” principle: both cities will cover the costs of construction incurred in their own areas. As a consequence, Espoo's share will be 72 per cent and Helsinki's 28 per cent.





Metro: Time Line

Metro traffic was introduced to the metropolitan region as operations started in Helsinki in 1982. The original metro line has been expanded many times since. The extension of the metro line to Espoo has been on the table from day one, and the development of the public transport system from Helsinki to the west has been stud-

ied on numerous occasions over the years.

Finally, the project planning for the west metro was launched in 2007 and completed in 2008. The Espoo City Council approved the proposal for the underground city plan enabling construction in January 2009 and Helsinki decided on the underground plan in

November 2009. The plan was ratified in Helsinki in December. Due to appeals concerning the underground plan in Espoo, there were some delays in ratifying the plan in Espoo.

Construction of the west metro began in Ruoholahti in November 2009, where a metro plan extending from Ruoholahti to Salmisaari shore already ex-

isted. An existing maintenance tunnel in Ruoholahti was used for excavation towards Salmisaari.

Excavation work began in Espoo and in Lauttasaari in Helsinki in the summer 2010. The objective is for the west metro to open for traffic at the end of 2015. ●

The cost estimate was drafted using the price levels of October 2007. At that time, the earth construction cost index indicating the cost level stood at 131.5. The cost estimate covers the construction of the entire project.

The Finnish government views the metro line to be a key component of its metropolitan strategy and a crucial part of not only metropolitan, but national infrastructure. With this in mind, the State has agreed to participate in the construction costs of the west metro with a 30 per cent share (attached to the index).

All the three main partners in the venture have al-

so been happy to note that the metro has a significant employment impact – which was especially important a year ago as the entire country was still in the throes of the recession. It is estimated that the project will require a labour input of approximately 6,000 man-years.

Keep On Rolling

Still, Matti Kokkinen is reluctant to call it a day even after 2015 – he would gladly keep pushing westward to Kivenlahti, and add five stations along the way.

“We would like to have a situation that work on the metro would continue in 2016, in the

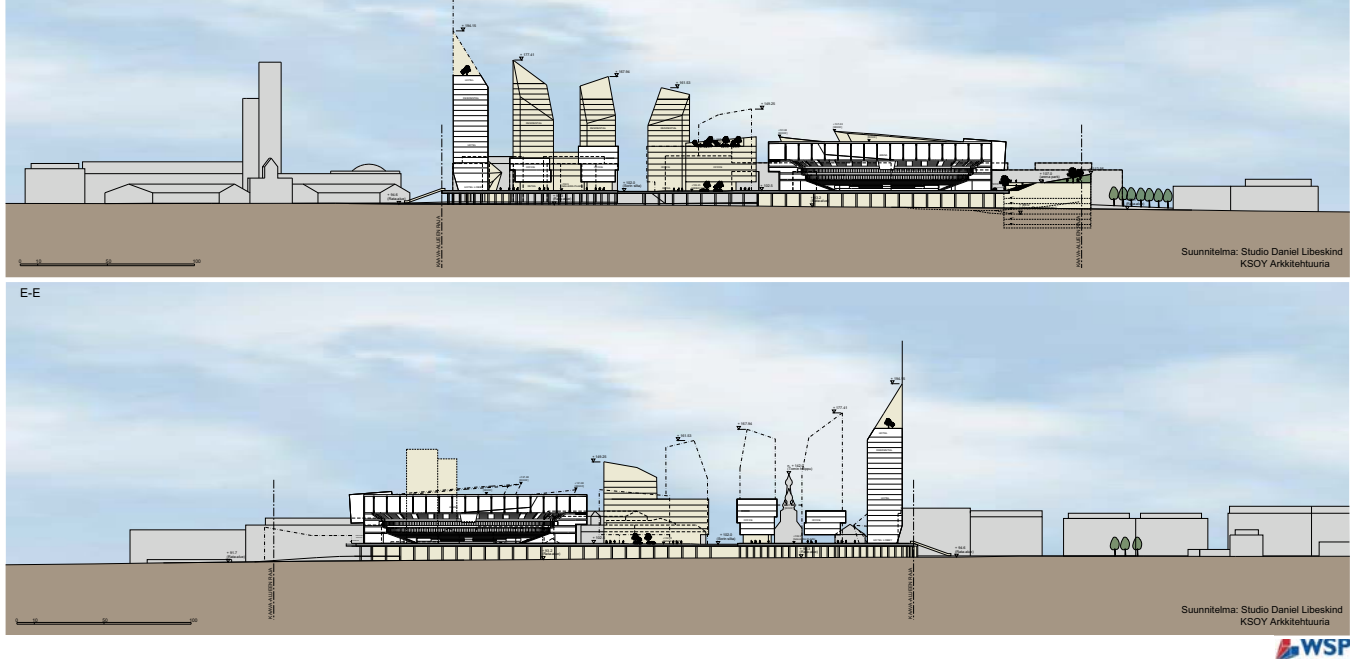
form of the extension line. The construction should be complete by 2019 or 2020.”

In fact, the Espoo City Council has already outlined that the designs of the final station, Matinkylä, should take into consideration the possible later extension to Kivenlahti. Kokkinen comments that metro traffic from Matinkylä to the east could continue all through the decade, while the workers would keep going west. Olavi Louko agrees with Kokkinen’s assessment: it makes sense to continue with the project, and not leave it hanging indefinitely.

“Finnoo station – in the middle of Suomenoja – would

be the first new station along the way, and we could conceivably start traffic there as soon as possible – there’s no reason to wait until the end of the decade,” Louko comments, eager to link Suomenoja to the metro infrastructure for obvious reasons: as the water purification facilities make their exit from the area, Suomenoja will turn into a hotbed of urban development.

“Suomenoja could feature as many as 20,000 residents and 7,000 jobs,” Louko points out. If the plans for Suomenoja are realised in present form, the new area would dwarf in size even Suurpelto, Espoo’s high-profile e-community. ●



Access All Areas

WSP Finland is leading the way in multidisciplinary planning

Multidisciplinary community planning is gaining foothold all over the world, and Finland is no exception in this. One of the pioneers in the field is WSP Finland which has a proven track record in multidisciplinary design.

Terhi Tikkanen-Lindström, Business Area Manager for Environment and Architecture, comments that Climate Change is one of the driving forces behind the trend.

“Sustainable development together with urban and technical design challenges simply call for multidisciplinary approach,” she says.

WSP Finland’s Environment and Architecture can bring a lot of expertise to the table, offering services which range from landscape and building design to land use plans, and from technical surveys to impact assessment. Together with the other eight business areas the range of services becomes significantly wider.

Tikkanen-Lindström admits that the company has a certain green mindset and design teams are always looking for new ways to promote environmental solutions.

“Working with urban projects, we are able to utilise many tools of the multidisciplinary planning, such as energy-efficient buildings and communities, greener traffic arrangements, rainwater treatment and

consumer habits. Our latest area considering these aspects is construction management,” she sums up.

Fast Track Execution

Sometimes the WSP professionals also need to think on their feet, as the latest city centre project demonstrates. NCC is realising a multifunctional arena in heart of Tampere using an ambitious deck construction. Built on top of a railway network, the ultra-modern complex features also retail and residential construction as well as offices and hotels.

WSP Finland was approached in May 2010 by Tampere city officials and NCC who had an urgent zoning assignment in their hands. The project was providing plenty of obstacles that would be best overcome via multidisciplinary thinking.

“The schedule was a killer, but we could hardly say no – the project was just so exciting,” Tikkanen-Lindström looks back. Planners at WSP rolled up their sleeves and got to work, producing the draft for the zoning plan at the end of October.

“In many ways, we had to start from scratch, but we had sufficient capacity and flexibility to pull it off,” says Project Manager Petri Saarikoski. Also crucial was the staunch resolve of the partners, NCC and the City of Tampere – everybody wanted the project to get a great start.

Multilevel zoning plan documents in themselves have called for innovative solutions and central location has brought a remarkable amount of stakeholders into the process.

Saarikoski notes that the role of a zoning consultant can be quite demanding in such projects since the consultant has to look at things from many different perspectives, and not forget the citizens’ viewpoint.

“Traditionally, the land use planner has worked directly within the city organisation, but now consultants are helping out and carrying a bigger responsibility.”

Solid City

Vesa Pekka Erikilä, Head of the Land Use and Architecture unit, comments that the City of


Tampere has launched a tremendous sustainable development pilot with this venture. For example, the buildings featured in the complex will feature highly sophisticated environmental construction, such as terraced roof gardens which optimise the use of rain water, for instance.

“The project promotes public transportation and brings cohesion to the downtown area – also the tall buildings themselves contribute to a favourable outcome,” Erikilä says.

Tikkanen-Lindström comments that the overall structural system of the complex including the deck is extremely demanding because of the many preconditions caused by the railway underneath.

“Structure borne noise is among the issues that has been studied, and since there are trains running under the deck, one must be prepared for major traffic accidents and other risks,” she says.

Still, Erikilä points out that deck construction seems to be very much the way of the future in urban projects such as Espoo’s Keilaniemi and Central Pasila in Helsinki. ●



Tapiola Group:

Beauty Treatment for Tapiola Centre

The Tapiola Commercial Centre will be completely revitalised with the advent of the new metro line. One of the key corporate players in the area, Tapiola Group, is keen on developing commercial premises on Merituulentie street. Vesa Immonen, Managing Director of Kiinteistö-Tapiola, says that he is glad to see that the metro project is now well on its way.

Tapiola Group is aiming to place specialty stores – featuring top fashion, beauty & health services and entertainment – in the new part of the commercial centre. The new offering would serve as a nice complement to the current service mix, Immonen believes.

Tapiola Group is also one of the most significant real estate owners in the area and remains fully committed to the neighbourhood. Immonen himself is a fan of the legendary centre: he feels that the centre is a true marvel culturally, commercially and also historically. All real estate investors should recognise the unique nature of the opportunities presented here, he says.

“The Tapiola Centre has already established itself, but it still engaged in an intense devel-

opment phase with regards to its services, traffic and living environments.”

Immonen recognises that the metro is a crucial element of the development process. Making all the pieces of the puzzle fit optimally (parking, bus terminal, new shopping galleries etc.) is a big challenge. For the best results, the commercial and cultural elements must be presented in a balanced manner.

“In the end, this transition will also boost the attractiveness of the area for residential purposes.”

Immonen adds that the residents, corporate players and real estate owners of the area – as well as the City – look at these things from different angles.

“In one way or another, we must be able to bring all these perspectives together.” ●



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Photos: Skanska

Jukka Pitkänen, Managing Director of Skanska Commercial Development Finland (left) and Gustav Nyberg, Chairman of Aspo.

Going Deeper

Skanska sets the standard for green office construction in Europe

Skanska Commercial Development Finland (CDF) is working on a green construction revolution. As part of the Commercial Development Nordic, the organization started operations in Finland only in 2007 and managed to hit a homerun with its very first office project.

In September, Lintulahti office building in Helsinki received a Platinum Level LEED certificate – first ever of its kind awarded to an office building project in Europe. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System was developed in 2000 by the US Green Building Council and has spread all around the world. Under the system, each building is assessed

using six different criteria: sustainable land use, water usage, energy efficiency, selection of materials and recycling, indoor air and new innovations in the planning process.

In December, it was time to unveil the plaque celebrating the milestone achievement at Lintulahti. Jukka Pitkänen, Managing Director of Skanska Commercial Development Finland, clarifies that the cer-

tificate was awarded for 'Core and Shell' in office building construction.

"Lintulahti was an important project for us – it proved that we can do this right," Pitkänen says, adding that CDF aims to go for platinum in its following projects as well. Skanska Commercial Development Finland is also a part of Skanska Commercial Development Nordic, which initiates, devel-

ops and invests in property projects within offices, logistics facilities and retail warehouses.

Aiming High

However, the next time around it may not be that easy – the LEED requirements keep tightening up, and it will be tough to rack up enough points for Gold Level, let alone Platinum. Still, that's where Skanska, as an organisation, wants to set its goals – as high as possible.

"LEED Platinum Level – or Gold, for that matter – is a moving target, so to speak. This is good in the sense that we can't rest on our laurels for one second – we have to keep evolving, constantly moving into the right direction."

Skanska in Finland did not have to do it all on its own, however. Internationally, Skanska is a real pioneer of green construction; in November, it was given US Green Building Council's Leadership Award for its efforts. Additionally in the United States, Skanska has realised numerous ambitious LEED projects and that know-how was put to good use in Lintulahti as the LEED process started in 2008.

"Skanska has around 500 LEED experts on payroll and we were fortunate to tap into their expertise when we started the LEED process." All of the company's own commercial development projects must achieve a minimum of LEED Gold certification.

Change the Game

Nevertheless, Pitkänen doesn't believe that LEED is the be-all-end-all of green construction; the certificate is a handy tool, but the really important thing here is the changing mindset.

"Better, more sustainable buildings are here to stay and we want to be in the forefront of this movement," Pitkänen says, adding that this transition is bigger than any single company, or industry, for that matter. In this sense, rival construction companies can be viewed as comrades-in-arms, united against a common foe.

Lately, Skanska has been hard at work trying to go deeper in its green ways. As a con-

sequence, the company came up with a "colour palette" that keeps track of the transition.

The first phase is 'Vanilla', which means that the building project is merely complying with the existing practices, codes and standards – but there is nothing extra on the table. 'Green' is the next step: these projects surpass compliance but not so much that they can be regarded as "near-zero environmental impact".

Finally, the desired stage is 'Deep Green', meaning that zero environmental impact level is achieved on the top priority issues.

"There are four priorities we look at under this system: energy, carbon, materials and water," explains Pitkänen.

Fantastic Four

Presently, Skanska is realising a project which gives the organisation a chance to try out its environmental ideas to the fullest. Manskun Rasti is the name of the state-of-the-art office complex which will be raised in a busy junction of Mannerheimintie and Hakamäentie. Promising to be a true gateway to Helsinki, the complex will feature four buildings which will provide exquisite business premises for companies of various sizes.

At Manskun Rasti, environmentally sound solutions are built-in in the sense that green methods were deployed already in the planning of infrastructure. Pitkänen says that with regards to energy savings, the greatest boost comes courtesy of revolutionary air conditioning technology.

"The switch to new system has been a positive culture shock to many," Pitkänen grins.

The development strategy comes with an interesting twist: the first building – the construction of which was launched in August 2010 – will become headquarters for Skanska Finland itself. The eight-storey building will feature 9,000 square metres, with Skanska as the only user.

This way, Skanska is able to use the construction of its own headquarters in a pioneering manner, as a testbed for innovation. Only solutions which



have been tested in "field conditions" will be passed on to the next buildings. As a result, it is Skanska that will go through entire trouble-shooting process instead of its clients.

Innovation Space

Jukka Pitkänen is excited about the coming quartet and believes that Manskun Rasti will be highly attractive in the eyes of many companies. It is conceivable that corporations with a certain progressive mindset will settle here, since the entire concept is quite appealing to forerunners and innovators. The flexible, open space solutions will certainly support the operations of such companies.

One particularly interesting feature is the "corner office belongs to everyone" ideology which allows more of the employees to enjoy the view. In this solution, office traffic is 'centralised' in the middle of the buildings. Pitkänen comments that the designs reflect the changing nature of office work – today's office workplace could benefit from mobile/remote working. Regardless of the size of the company, Manskun Rasti promises to deliver exceptional performance to the customers.

"Especially the second building is a good fit also for smaller companies," Pitkänen analyses. The eight-storey building will feature 7,500 square metres of leasable space. The construction kicks off in April 2011 and the building is scheduled for completion by August 2012.

"Presently, the core of the first building has been built about halfway. The building will be completed in the first quarter of 2012," Pitkänen says.

As for the buildings three and four, construction could begin after the summer 2011. These two buildings are located on the same plot and their ultimate development schedule is still open-ended.

Lintulahti Part II?

There are plans also to realise another office building in Lintulahti: after all, Skanska already owns a suitable plot in the area and proper zoning plan is in place. Next step would be to apply for the building permit:

"If everything goes well, we could start construction of the second building in Lintulahti, too, after summer 2011," Pitkänen says. ●

Closer to the Heart

Shopping centres need to reinvent themselves continuously to stay in tune with the customers

Finnish Government is assuming a tough stance on shopping centres. The Government wants to avoid the threat where shopping centres are built in the outskirts of big cities or – in some cases – in the middle of nowhere. The state is encouraging more environmentally conscious construction in places which are centrally located and can be easily reached via public transportation.

Kivistö Ring Rail Line station.





The new Willa Shopping Center in the core of Hyvinkää will be completed in spring 2012.

At the same time, in the capital region the trend is not so much to build new shopping centres but to expand the old ones – at least for the time being. Going against the mainstream, however, is Vantaa which is entertaining the notion of a super-sized shopping centre in Marja-Vantaa, the new green community close to the airport.

In May 2010, the Vantaa City Board issued a planning reservation for the Marja-Vantaa shopping centre which is developed by Ruokakesko Oy and Helsingin Osuuskassa Elanto. According to the original plans, the new shopping entity could be as big as 300,000 square metres – three times the size of Jumbo, presently Vantaa's biggest shopping paradise.

The Marja-Vantaa shopping centre is to be located, in part, on top of the Hämeenlinna road and right next to the coming Kivistö Ring Rail Line station. The Ring Rail Line will start operations in 2014, and the shopping complex could open its doors somewhat later.

Greener Shopping?

According to the initial plans, the would-be shopping centre should mirror the values of the surrounding area – namely, green ideology. The shopping centre should place a minimal strain on its environment with regards to its use and upkeep and the construction materials must reflect this as well. The City of Vantaa insists that the shopping centre is certified under LEED, Breeam or a comparative system. The zoning plan for the shopping centre is expected to be released for public scrutiny by autumn 2011.

Further up the road in Hämeenlinna, a similar project – if considerably smaller – is supposed to commence in the spring. Here, too, there is a deck over the motorway and a shopping centre located on the deck (see related story on p. 50).

Overall, shopping centres in Finland seem to be in fine form after the recession. For instance, the year 2009 was a challenging one in retail business, but shopping centres still performed well because of their natural strength factors. These include solid concepts, good location and diverse services. The annual sales grew 4.3 % (totalling

€ 4.9 billion) and number of visitors grew 4.5 % during the year.

Despite the global economic downturn, the net yield rate of shopping centres in 2009 remained at a good level (6 %).

Conquering Time

Juha Tiuraniemi, Managing Director Finnish Council of Shopping Centers, assesses that shopping centres must evolve further in line with the customers' needs which rarely stay the same. If the shopping centres succeed in this task, they will be "the beating hearts" of the communities, Tiuraniemi muses.

Still, there's a lot to be done if the shopping centres want to be successful in the 2010s. Tiuraniemi recognises that there is an intense race going on for the consumer's money – and perhaps even more relevantly, his/her time.

"We are facing a situation where customer groups are being broken into little pieces. This fragmentation extends also to the consumer's time," Tiuraniemi says.

Nevertheless, Tiuraniemi believes that shopping centres are in good position to take on this challenge. After all, shopping centres have always been able to adapt when times are tough.

In the future, Tiuraniemi believes that we will see more public sector services packed into retail units. This means that a store, school and daycare could all co-exist under the same roof.

"Bigger units make sense, when you're combining a number of customer needs with space efficiency. The challenge is to build entities that really work."

Social Formula

Tiuraniemi has visited in plenty of shopping centres around the world, and expects to see more stores that seek to "maximise the experience" in one way or another.

"If you succeed in engaging all the senses, you can grab the customer into your own world, in a way. In such an environment, the purchasing decision is easier to make."

Whenever somebody pulls out the "experience economy" card, people tend to think of young daredevils jumping out of airplanes and snowboarding down the Himalayas. Tiuraniemi points out that the experiences don't have to be extreme in order to engage the consumer.

"For instance, the senior citizens – the so-called grey panthers – are likely to appreciate attentive service, getting the feeling that somebody is listening to their concerns and really trying to help. In such a scenario, it is not the product itself that makes the difference but the pleasure one receives from the social interaction." ●



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Feeling the Flow

Tampere wants to change the face of logistics

Tampere Region serves as a testbed for an exciting new logistics concept.

Logiera – a brand new initiative of Tredea (Tampere Region Economic Development Agency) – seeks to do nothing more than revolutionise the flow of goods as we know it.

Director Jari Saarenpää from Logiera says that the time for innovative logistics thinking is now – or Finland will lose its momentum in the matter.

“In fact, Finland has been fallen behind from the general European development for the past ten years,” he argues. Part of the problem has been failure to think multimodal: logistics have been observed (and developed) mainly from the viewpoint of truck traffic. Rail operations do not get a rave review from Saarenpää either: he points out that only five European countries are still hanging on to their railway monopolies and Finland is one of them.

The third issue on Saarenpää’s list is the lack of true dry harbours. While many Finnish inland logistics hubs advertise themselves as dry harbours, Saarenpää argues that they, in fact, pale in comparison to their Swedish counterparts.

“Sweden has 26 dry harbours, where Gothenburg as a seaside harbour has been driving the development.”

Wanted: Better Integration

Fourth woe is first mile / last mile delivery. Delivery vans are making their rounds during the day in all Finnish major cities – half empty, Saarenpää adds.

“Everybody is busy running goods for their respective customers, and that’s it. There’s no integration to speak of.”

In big European hubs such as Amsterdam and Bilbao, the deliveries are handled in a smarter fashion. Delivery trucks and vans are able, for instance, to use the bus lanes, making for more expedient de-

liveries. Saarenpää says that Logiera is going on same direction, but is taking the concept to the next level.

“Around Europe, logistics concepts have been built from the ground up. Logiera is taking the helicopter’s perspective; we’re looking at things from above, so to speak. That is the best way to recognise the correct priorities and find working solutions.”

Green Wheels

Logiera is built around three key areas: green city logistics, intermodal green corridors and networked intelligent logistics.

Starting off with the green city logistics, the idea is to – finally – upgrade the rather dull urban logistics. The basic principle here is simple: the big trucks will arrive to collaborative warehouses, which are located on the ring roads around the city. There the goods are divided to smaller delivery vans, which take care of their designated area.

Part of the delivery vans drive to the City hubs. There the goods will be cross-docked to

small electric vans, which will drive to the city centre. Every electric van will handle one city block and will take care of recycling where ever possible.

Saarenpää acknowledges that the super-green vans are not going up and down the street just yet – electric cars are still in their infancy.

“In the meanwhile, however, we can utilise natural gas vehicles which have already en-

tered the market,” he says, adding that biogas cars are another option worth exploring.

Eastern Promises

With regards to intermodal green corridors, Saarenpää observes that here is a chance to realise an inland harbour as it should be done, complete with the value adding logistics services. The cherry on the cake is



Project Manager Markku Teittinen (left) and Director Jari Saarenpää (right).

the connection to the Far East: Tampere Region Airport Hub CLX is certainly attractive for e.g. Chinese businesses which are looking to establish a strong dominance in North Europe.

Networked intelligent logistics, on the other hand, highlight Logiera's commitment to openness – and education. Saarenpää envisions a web-based social learning environment which brings together logistics processes, training and best practise sharing. At the same time, there is a modular IT platform – enabling access to all essential information in real time – backed by “one-stop-shop” ideology.

“In logistics, great results can be reached through openness and transparency. We can learn how to do things the right way together.”

Saarenpää is aware that there's a long way ahead, but he is genuinely excited about the opportunity to build some-

thing different here.

“We want to be the leading logistics integrator in Europe by 2020,” he says.

Balancing the Risk

So far, Logiera has been gaining momentum, evolving from a vision (premiered at MIPIM 2010) to concrete strategy (launched in December). Saarenpää himself has a background from world-class logistics at Nokia Corporation, and he is eager to use what he has learned in developing this venture.

“By the end of year, we will be incorporated and get the ball rolling in earnest.” There is already an alliance of 15 players behind the venture, ranging from municipalities and universities to actual logistics companies. It is no secret that Logiera is expected to attract also foreign stakeholders.

Saarenpää talks about Balanced Private Public Partnership

which provides investment opportunities to both venture capitalists and state pension funds, offering different types of risk profiles. He observes that in regular PPP ventures, there is little initiative to develop the business operations, but under this model, the business focus is everywhere – and ongoing.

“We want to involve the public sector also after the initial phase, since there are issues such as congestion and carbon footprint which benefit from municipal and state attention.”

“Spirit of Tampere”

In addition to Logiera, there are plenty of other exciting things going on in the Tampere Region. For years now, the region has led the country in business growth, with companies both big and small being launched in the area. Executive Partner Markku Teittinen from Tampere Business Region says that interna-

tional companies have found the largest inland city in Scandinavia to their liking, too – looking at foreign companies establishing a presence somewhere other than Helsinki in 2009, quite a few found their new home in Tampere.

What makes the Tampere Region so attractive, then? Well, according to studies by Invest in Finland, the number one reason by far for coming to Finland is increasing the potential customer base. The runner-up is geographical location. Teittinen points out that the Tampere Region meets this criteria extremely well.

“We have two thirds of Finland's population within a two hours drive here. Tampere is really well situated from companies' perspective.” In fact, Tampere Region is the second largest economic region in Finland, boasting a population of more than 450,000.

Business & Pleasure

The business ecosystem in the neighbourhood is also world-class, offering a range of enticing opportunities for partnerships: this is evident in the region's strong hi-tech clusters which range from intelligent machines to nanotechnology and life sciences. The region has also been voted the most attractive region in the country several years in a row.

In addition, Teittinen speaks about “social infrastructure” which is top notch in the area:

“For employees of companies, Tampere can offer exceptional quality of life.”

Lately, the City has been raising its profile through an exciting project which seeks to perform an “extreme makeover” on the downtown area. Architect Daniel Libeskind's vision calls for a central arena and several high-rise buildings in the very heart of the community. Teittinen says that the ambitious venture has definitely increased the interest level towards Tampere:

“We are getting inquiries from various places about the project and it is easy to see that both people and companies are excited.” ●



Photo: Sari Mäkelä

Valkeakoski – Lakeland Logistics Hub

Logiera is energising the entire Tampere Region. One of the cities ready to take on the challenge of integrated logistics is Valkeakoski, located situated 35 km southeast of Tampere. Mikko Seppälä, Business Director for the City of Valkeakoski, says that the community is well positioned to serve the Logiera strategy. Especially the Jutikkala logistics area fits the bill perfectly.

“With great connections to numerous cities – in addition to Tampere, also Turku and Lahti – Jutikkala area has the ability to function as a significant contributor in the Logiera city logistics scheme. In addition, Jutikkala can also serve as a modern inland harbour according to the strategy.”

Jutikkala area also has plenty of room to grow, when the concept really takes off.

“We have a zoning plan in place which allows for additional construction very easily.”

Valkeakoski is located in the centre of Finland’s lakeland and has a population of 20,800. Due to a rich industrial past, the local businesses are as internationally-minded as any you’ll find in the nation – and this approach runs through entire organisation, whether big or small.

“Exports and imports are really in the DNA of the locals here,” Seppälä grins.

Tech Smarts

Another forte of the natives is top-level engineering/planning expertise, especially with regards to hi-tech machines. In addition, the Tampere University of Technology is only a short drive away, and the R&D efforts of the local companies have benefitted a great deal from cooperation with the University and local University of Applied Sciences.

Seppälä says that there is an atmosphere of “let’s make it happen” in the local business scene. The City’s Business Services fully reflect this spirit any and all problems are solved in an effective manner.

“We like to move fast,” Seppälä confirms.

The City of Valkeakoski is also in a good position financially, which means that the City can offer first-class services – even in national comparison. ●





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Playing with a Full Deck

NCC is transforming cityscapes through visionary solutions

NCC Property Development is launching innovative new concepts aimed at reinventing city centres. Rooted on sustainability, there are two exciting projects underway – one in Tampere and one in Hämeenlinna.

Archimation: Studio Daniel Libeskind for NCC



Tampere is the biggest inland city in Scandinavia, with a proud history of urban living close to nature. In the coming years, a totally new chapter will be written to the City's annals.

According to the plans, a new city sector will be built on top of a railroad line in Tampere. NCC and the City of Tampere enlisted the help of master architect Daniel Libeskind to create a strong vision for the project. Libeskind certainly did not disappoint: the visuals for the project are breathtaking and unlike anything else that has been seen in Finland.

The plan is defined by a deck which is to be built above the railway network. A multipurpose arena will be raised on the deck, along with office buildings and residential towers.

"In the first phase, we will realise Central Arena, and one building with office and residential premises," explains Developer Mikko Leinonen from NCC Property Development.

All and all, a total area of 60,000 square metres – consisting of offices, business premises, hotel rooms and residences – will be built on top of the deck. And then there is the Central Arena, of course – with a total area of nearly 50,000 sqm.

Maximising Connectivity

The deck structure connects the new city sector naturally to the surrounding city centre, while linking different city sectors previously divided by the rail-

way line. The vision promises to be equally impressive when viewed from the street level and from a distance.

Leinonen says that people's reactions to the plans have been overwhelmingly positive. The citizens are excited about the project and the owners of the neighbouring real estate property appear to feel the same – after all, the profile of the entire downtown area is upgraded along with the project.

NCC wants to waste no time with the construction, for it is on a "national mission" of sorts: the Central Arena should be completed in time for the 2013 Ice Hockey World Championships.

"We want to start construction in May 2011 and raise Central Arena in two years in

time for the World Championships," Leinonen says.

Ready for the Challenge

NCC acknowledges that the deadline is a challenging one – especially as rail traffic must continue undisturbed all through the construction. Still, the company is eager to take on the challenge, motivated, in a no small measure, by Libeskind's involvement in the project. The man who drew up the master plan for 9/11 Ground Zero is now bringing his magic to Tampere, Finland, and the project is the talk of the town.

Tero Estovirta, newly appointed Managing Director of NCC Property Development, says that cooperation with

Libeskind has progressed very smoothly.

“His vision is astonishing,” Estovirta comments.

Estovirta acknowledges that bringing in a world-class architect is not something you can do every day.

“Through Libeskind’s expertise, we gain outsider insights which, ultimately, benefit the end-users of the premises. This project is so crucial from the perspective of Tampere’s image alone that this type of involvement is justified.”

The vision images are now complete, but collaboration with Libeskind continues on. In addition, there is a local architectural agency, KSOY, involved in the project.

“KSOY is a local player who knows the city well, and has special expertise with regards to railway-related issues,” says Mikko Leinonen.

More from the Core

In Hämeenlinna, similar plans have been hatching for the better part of the decade. City of Hämeenlinna wanted to do something to revitalise the downtown already in 2002.

NCC was chosen as the

developer of the downtown area in 2003. In the spring of 2005, an architectural competition was held to launch the planning of the area. The competition winner was APRT’s proposal called Torit (Market Places). The title refers to the two large, open public spaces which are to be integrated into core dynamic of the project. Here, too, the plan features a deck construction.

In accordance to the winning proposal, downtown Hämeenlinna will be expanded from promenades directly into a shopping centre, making it easy to reach on foot, by bike or by car. The Hämeenlinna Centre will become a new “meeting place” for the citizens of Hämeenlinna and establish a true heart for the surrounding community.

Bogged down by appeals for a couple of years, the project is now back on track. Senior Developer Markus Salmela from NCC is expecting that the kick-off for construction will take place in April:

“All and all, the construction will take about three years. The Hämeenlinna Centre is scheduled for completion in spring 2014 and also at least some of the accompanying residential buildings should be

ready that same year. Residential construction reaches conclusion by 2015.”

Commercial Attraction

Put into numbers, this means retail premises to the tune of approximately 30,000 floor square metres, with residential adding another 20,000 floor square metres. With such numbers, Hämeenlinna Centre will be a commercial powerhouse regionally, and noteworthy even on a national scale.

And while logistics is a main issue in Tampere, it is of no less significance in Hämeenlinna, where the Helsinki-Tampere motorway must be worked into the plans. Presently splitting the city in west and east factions, the motorway will be covered by a deck in the coming years.

“This requires a lot planning, so that we can find construction solutions that won’t interfere with the flow of traffic,” Salmela says.

Once completed, however, the entire downtown area has been changed dramatically. Unit Director Jukka Manninen comments that the visibility of the shopping centre – and the en-

tire downtown – will receive a strong boost due to the project.

“Anyone driving from Helsinki to Tampere will notice it, and perhaps want to check it out.”

Manninen also points out that the two projects are similar in the sense that they “shape the entire cityscape”.

“There’s totally new type of city space that is being generated in both places.”

Size Matters

In addition, both projects are also quite attractive from the viewpoint of investors, both foreign and domestic. This kind of projects tend to be high-profile cases anyway, but Manninen comments that Hämeenlinna is no less appealing as a prospect.

“Whenever there is a shopping centre located in the middle of a community, it is appealing to the investors. We feel that the Hämeenlinna Centre is a product that fits the market very well – it is just the right size.”

Another thing that the investors often crave these days is green edge. With these projects, the mindset is decidedly environmental: both are realised according to exacting BREEAM qualifications. ●



All Fired Up

Culture Capital Turku launches the festivities

Let's get this party started. *Turku opened the Capital of Culture year 2011 with a three-day weekend full of events and activities on 14–16 January. The opening performance "This Side, The Other Side" on the evening of Saturday 15 January was the single largest event of the year.*

Photo: Matti Tahera



Photo: Pontek Oy

It is clear from the fireworks that the Capital of Culture year will definitely put Turku on the European map in a whole new way. Turku wants to examine the boundaries of culture to the fullest, to see what culture is all about. Right from the opening ceremony, the proud history of Turku as the oldest city in Finland intertwined with an open-minded outlook on the future, setting the course for the rest of the year. All and all, Turku is hoping to attract two million visitors during 2011.

benefit from the special year, but also the surrounding region – and the entire country, in many regards.

Join the Fun

Jouko Turto notes that the Culture Capital is a “common effort” for all Finns: “Participation is the key here. We want to make sure that everybody gets involved in one way or another.”

Also, during the year seeds will be sown for something more lasting as well. Instead of just

on all cylinders long after the celebrations of 2011 are over.

“Logomo is significant also in the sense that it opens up a brand new city district,” says Turto, hinting at the vacant space left in its wake by exiting railway operations.

Introducing: Fortuna Design Quarter

Further proof of the lasting impact of the year is provided by Fortuna Quarter which will become a “design heaven” just off

some good vibrations into the neighbourhood,” muses Turto, adding that the quarter is looking to deploy a new business strategy where the small local players join forces to reach a bigger customer base.

“We have plenty of world-class design-makers who are known for their unique products, but it is easier to operate if there is an entire cluster of like-minded players.”

Various concepts such as shop-in-shop and pop-up have been explored in order to find

In the words of Aleksi Randell, Mayor of the City of Turku, culture will “do good” for residents, visiting guests, companies and the surrounding region as a whole.

The same spirit is echoed by Jouko Turto, Director of Turku Municipal Property Corporation. He is excited that after the long years of preparation and hard work, the Culture Capital Year is finally here.

“This will be one spectacular year,” he says, adding that it’s not only the City that will

one year on a cultural rollercoaster, Turku wants to make culture a permanent part of its DNA.

“We are pursuing continuity: the City will continue its commitment to culture for years to come.”

A good example of this is Logomo, the industrial heart of the entire extravaganza. The ancient engineering workshop located by the railway tracks is getting a new lease on life as a cultural powerhouse which will host major concerts and exhibitions. Logomo will keep firing

Aura River in the downtown area. The key idea of the Fortuna is to introduce a completely new type of commercial area in town. The City sees Fortuna as a unique shopping destination, a place where you can immerse yourself in arts and crafts and go design-hunting like nowhere else. Brimming with history, tradition and 19th century atmosphere, the Quarter will give a big boost to the local creative industry and enhance the appeal of the downtown area.

“It’s all about bringing

the right solutions for the neighbourhood. In its core, Turto envisions 10-15 players with fixed operations in Fortuna area, and others enterprises in a more supportive role.

The development plan for the Quarter was drawn up in the autumn 2010 and there is already activity in the area. Still, nobody wants to see an all-out renovation effort in the Quarter during the big year.

“But when 2012 comes around, we can really get to work.”

Urban Makeover

For years now, the City of Turku has been going through a self-imposed “fitness programme” which is addressing many different sides of the community.

“Better centre for people” is an investment venture geared towards providing downtown Turku a nice beauty treatment. In 2009, the upgrade of Vähätori (Minor Square) area was finalised, giving way to fresh city environment where the focus is on light traffic. Next up, there was a high-profile competition for light traffic bridge that will link the core downtown cultural areas together.

The winner was finally announced in December: engineering agency Pontek won the contest with its subtle, statuesque Crescendo. The bridge curves slightly in the shape of an ‘S’, taking its cue from the River Aura itself. The jury of the race commended the winning entry for its “soft geometry” which plays well with the flow of the river.

“There is also a light system under the bridge, with lights reflecting back from the surface of the water. This should really be something to see, especial-

ly during dark,” says City architect Mika Rajala who was a member of the jury along with Jouko Turto.

The city plan already has a site reservation for the bridge, and it should be confirmed by the summer. The documents for construction ought to be ready by the end of the year.

“In 2012 we will start building the bridge,” Turto believes.

Softer Touch

After Vähätori and Crescendo, next in line for development is Vanha Suurtori (Old Grand Square). The idea here is to make the square more inviting by adding some trees and greenery and polishing up the neighbourhood. Here, too, preference is given to light traffic and solutions that fit well into the environment.

Yet another target for development is Linnanfältti which promises to showcase plenty of ambitious Finnish wood construction. In fact, the Linnanfältti area is one of the national pilots in the wood construction promotion programme. The City wants to realise a high-quality residential area in the vicinity

of the legendary Turku Castle: a neighbourhood that is visually appealing and fully conscious of history and tradition. A planning competition was utilised to stir up inspiration and imagination a couple of years ago, and now the City is just waiting for the right time to move forward with the project.

Beyond strictly urban planning, Turku is also launching an ambitious environmental art project. The City plans to build an internationally notable environmental art park area in Barker Park, which is located on the western shore of River Aura. Martha Schwartz, a well-known contemporary artist and landscape architect from the USA, has been recruited to design the park.

Schwartz is especially famous for her designs that renew the concept of the modern landscape; she has developed a design language that is known for combining daring shapes and colours with different construction materials and plants.

“The park will be a totally new kind of playground for children, for instance,” says Jouko Turto.

The goal is to start the partial implementation of the designs during the Culture Capital year, with full completion slated for 2012.

On the Move

Well before the official launch of the year, the international media was already buzzing about the spectacle ahead. The Guardian, for instance, called Turku “one of northern Europe’s secret beauties” and a “small town with a big soul”.

One could easily add to the list that Turku also enjoys superior position as a linchpin between East and West. It’s no wonder that a number of logistics operations and key players have found their way to Turku. In fact, the biggest logistics centre project in Fin-

land is presently under way in the region, with the aim of taking multimodal transport into a whole new level.

One has but to glimpse at a map to see the master plan behind the venture. As part of the Trans-European Network (TEN), the Nordic Triangle traffic corridor that links together the capitals of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and St. Petersburg is a key area of EU logistics development.

Turku’s role in all of this is to link the different modes of transport in the Finnish section of the corridor to Sweden via sea and train ferry connection.

Get Connected

The name of the new logistics superhub is LogiCity and it is located at the junction of Turku Airport, railway connections to Russia (and on to China), the motorway into Central Finland and the E18 ring road. The LogiCity area forms an internationally attractive cluster for companies which depend on efficient logistics. According to the LogiCity vision, more than one million square metres of floor space will be eventually open for construction here.

The south side zoning plan for the area was confirmed in 2008 and the plan for northern and eastern sides is presently under way. Upon completion, LogiCity is estimated to feature about 5,000 employees.

The first major player to settle in the area was Suomen Kaukokiito Oy which launched its terminal (encompassing 14,000 square metres) in March 2010 and has an option for further construction as well. Also Lääninkuljetus Oy and SRV have reserved sizeable plots from the area.

Wanted: Smart Partners

In June 2010, the responsibility of LogiCity development was transferred from Pilot Turku to Turku Municipal Property Corporation. Operations move now more intensively towards construction and property development, as the area begins to take shape in earnest. The main landowners in the area are the City of Turku and Finavia and now



Photo: Eye Music Trust

the hunt is on for 2-3 strategic partners who will help LogiCity live up to its full potential.

"The City and Finavia serve more in an enabling role, and by summer 2011 we want to find the right partners to help develop this thing further on," says Jouko Turto.

Business Consultant Ari Niemelä has been watching over the project from its infancy. He points out that LogiCity is not meant to be a nest for only logistics companies – also assembly industries can benefit from the multimodal environment and the added value service package here. However, the area will not materialise over night:

"LogiCity will take 10-15 years to fully develop, but we're on to a good start." TNT, for instance, has focused all of its air cargo operations here and also DHL has launched new services as well air cargo at LogiCity.

RFID Emerging

With the long timeframe in mind, new operative concepts have been worked out with regards to e.g. labour supply and radio frequency identification. The latter topic is also a subject of no small national interest, as LogiCity is a part of a large RFID project launched by the Federation of Finnish Technology Industries and TiVit Oy. The project is co-ordinated by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland.

"Previously, the problem has been that the technical solutions of the logistics buildings did not support the use of RFID to sufficient degree. At LogiCity we want to take these things into consideration already in the infrastructure construction phase," says Niemelä.

And, of course, one can't get away from culture even at LogiCity – in November, an environmental art piece was unveiled at the area. Similar "touches of beauty" have been felt all through the Turku Region business scene lately, reveals Jouko Turto.

"In BioValley, there is plenty of art which cuts all the way down to level of infrastructure," he says, mentioning bridges and lighting as examples of solutions that are extremely functional also aesthetically. ●

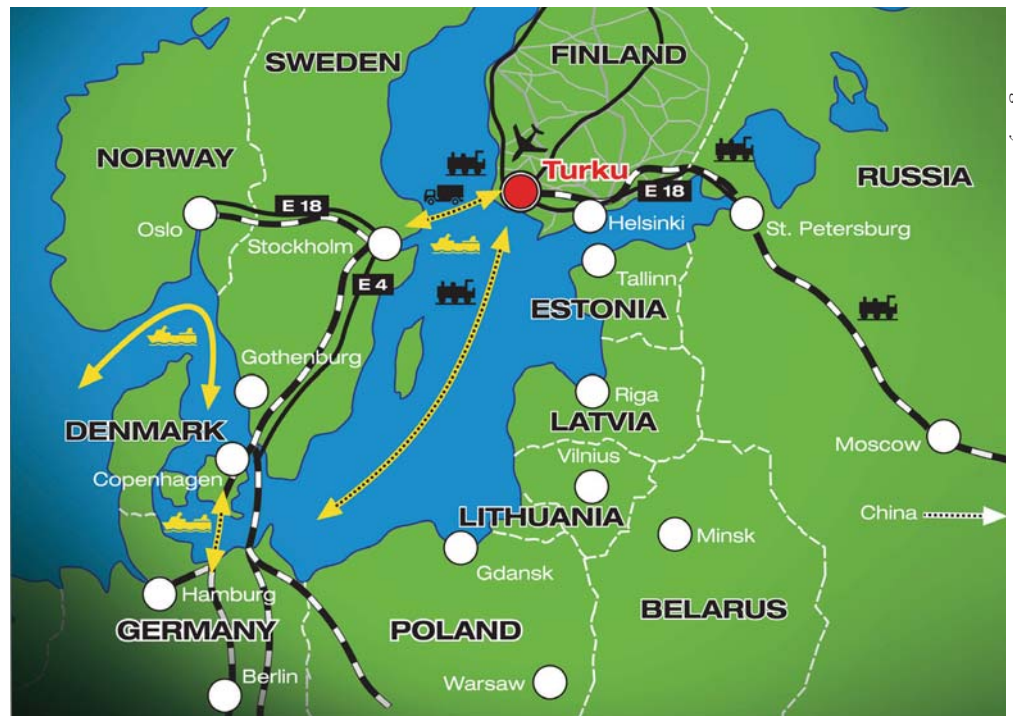
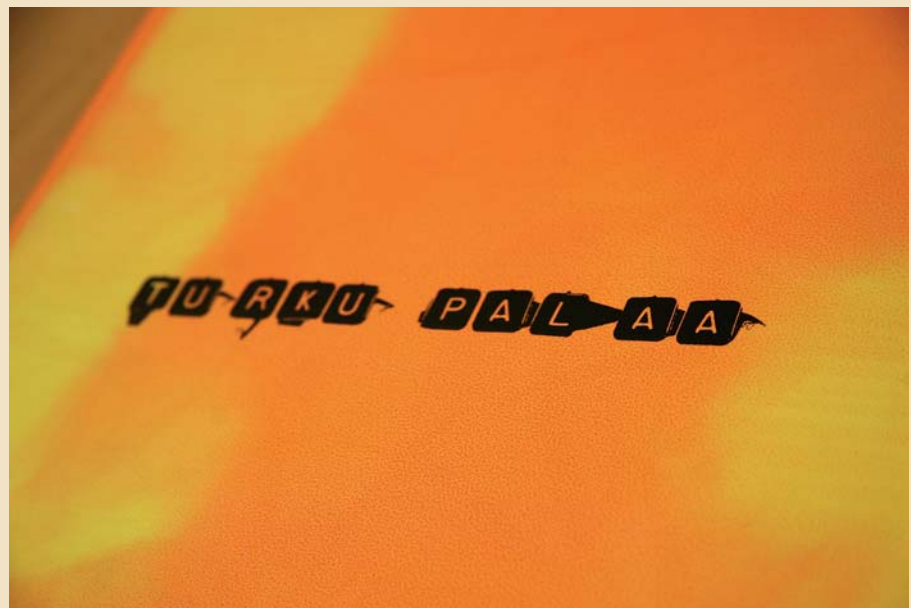


Photo: LogiCity



Turku 2011 – This city's on fire!

Turku shares the European Capital of Culture 2011 honours with Tallinn. The Turku 2011 Foundation has been commissioned by the City of Turku to oversee the implementation of the Capital of Culture year. The activities of the Capital of Culture year are complemented by the City's desire to keep developing the community on all fronts.

The main goals for Turku 2011 are well-being, internationalism, and the commercial export of creative enterprise and culture. The activities are based on a rather wide definition of culture with the emphasis on the culinary arts, exercise and well-being, science and multicultural encounters and, of course, the creative arts.

The Turku 2011 Foundation is responsible for managing the Capital of Culture programme and for coordinating the long-term national and international productions that support the goals of the Turku Capital of Culture. According to the target set by the City, by 2016 Turku will be "the creative hub of the Baltic Sea" with a strong foundation in arts and sciences. ●

Rail Revolution

Air supremacy meets rail dominance at Vantaa

Vantaa is known for its dynamic Aviapolis area which keeps attracting cutting-edge companies to the city. The Helsinki–Vantaa International Airport is an important anchor for many international companies, but in addition to air supremacy, Vantaa is about to add rail dominance to its resume.

The Ring Rail Line has been a dream of the capital region developers for a long time. Construction of the Ring Rail Line finally started in spring 2009 and the line will go into operation in the middle of 2014. The Ring Rail Line promises to be an urban rail line and a rail connection to the airport all rolled into one.

Jukka Peltomäki, Deputy Mayor for the City of Vantaa, expects great things from the new rail connection.

“The Ring Rail will change the metropolitan structure in ways that we can’t even begin to see yet,” he says. Peltomäki notes that already there are companies asking about the Ring Rail Line:

“In the coming years, jobs will materialise close to effective mass transportation systems. The Ring Rail Line will be hard to compete with in this regard,” he predicts.

Double Traffic

Peltomäki notes that when a corporation is thinking about estab-



lishing operations in someplace new, two questions spring to mind: will the over-all logistics work from the perspective of the company? And how does the logistics puzzle look to the employees when they head home after work?

The companies in the region get connected to the world, thanks to the airport and the new Vuosaari Harbour. In addition, the road network is also very developed, with Ring Road III serving as the main artery.

"And from the employees' point of view, the train is a very convenient way of making the trip between home and office."

The 18-kilometre line will bring rail services to completely new areas in Vantaa, and feeder traffic will allow people who live farther away to take advantage of services as well. The Ring Rail Line promises to be as green as they come: the connection will reduce the need for bus and car traffic along with associated environmental impacts, thus promoting the EU's climate policy objectives.

How does it all work in practice? Well, the Ring Rail Line will be a two-track urban line reserved exclusively for passenger traffic. Brand new SM5 low-floor trains designed for commuter services will operate on the line. The trains will run at 10-minute intervals in both directions during peak periods; rail capacity can be utilised more efficiently since trains will be able to run in a loop. The journey time from the centre of Helsinki to the airport will be about half an hour. The maximum line speed will be 120 km/h.

One noteworthy fact is that the Ring Rail Line will go under the airport in an 8-kilometre tunnel, which in turn calls for excavation effort similar to that of the west metro project.

Greener Living

According to the plans, more environmentally-conscious communities will bloom along the tracks, contributing to a more cohesive city structure.

The initial plans call for surface stations in Kivistö and Leinelä as well as the Aviapolis and Airport tunnel stations.

There are reservations made for additional stations under ground in Ruskeasanta and Viinikkala and on the surface in Vehkala and Petas. At the moment, however, it looks like Vehkala will be realised in the first wave of the development.

"We want to launch Vehkala at the same time with the original stations," Peltomäki says, adding that there have been talks about putting Ruskeasanta on the fast track as well.

According to predictions, the busiest stations will be Kivistö and Airport. The first new community along the Ring Rail is Leinelä which will feature high-quality living close to nature.

"At Kivistö, there is additional construction going on which is considerably solidifying the community structure."

Aviapolis Flies High

From the perspective of businesses, there will be plenty of interesting places to set up operations along the rails, but Aviapolis is still the one to beat. Having earned its wings many times over, Aviapolis leads the country in the growth of jobs. Aviapolis is a true international success story which is frequently used by such experts as Professor John D. Kasarda as a great example of airborne excellence (see the interview on p. 10).

According to Peltomäki, Aviapolis has a strong track record and the City can see no reason as to why this trend would end. After all, in today's world, great connections are everything. For those companies aiming to get a piece of the Asian market, for instance, Helsinki-Vantaa is a solid option, since Finland has the fastest routes from Europe to Asia. This works both ways, of course – in the next phase of globalisation, many Asian companies are finding their way to Europe, and may soon come to realise that Aviapolis and its neighbouring areas offer everything they need.

When it comes to the residential side, the hidden pearl of Aviapolis is Aerola which is anchored by legendary Alvar Aalto's designs. Once fully developed, Aerola will feature thousands of residents.



Sea Support

The new element in the mix is the Vuosaari Harbour which was opened two years ago. However, the global recession put the flow of goods in a stranglehold right afterwards and things still haven't normalised fully.

"We don't know the full effect of Vuosaari yet, but it will be considerable," Peltomäki says, pointing out that industrial areas such as Vantaa Axis get a big boost from the proximity of both the airport and the harbour.

In 2010, the strong performance of Vantaa was noted also by the Federation of Finnish Enterprises which ranked the City's industrial policy as number one among all the big cities. Respondents to the survey consisted of 2,000 entrepreneurs and delegates acting in boards of membership enterprises of the Federation of Finnish Enterprises. Vantaa held the number one position also two years ago when the survey was previously conducted.

According to businesses,

the City has executed a sound policy in preparing industrial issues as well as deployed a fast-response organisation that is remarkably business-friendly. Vantaa was also praised for its joint setting of goals and determined implementation.

Building on Tradition

Peltomäki observes that the present dynamic didn't materialise over night – there are decades of hard work behind the results.

"We have set up a low hierarchy organisation that features centralised infrastructure, land use and development all under one roof, more or less."

Another key issue is the active mindset – the City is eager to listen to the concerns of entrepreneurs and willing to come halfway (or sometimes more).

Still, Peltomäki points out that the minute you start congratulating yourself too much you fall out of the race.

"There's still plenty of room for improvement." ●

6 ways to look at Lahti

Urban but close to nature. Cultural, design-oriented, famous for its sports and laid back. The many faces of the city of Lahti make it just like me and you – versatile.

① ONE OF THE BEST CONCERT HALLS IN THE WORLD

Located alongside Lake Vesijärvi, Sibelius Hall is home to Lahti Symphony Orchestra.

Lahti Symphony Orchestra is one of the most highly regarded orchestras in the world, and its 'home court', Sibelius Hall, is ranked among the top five concert halls in the world.

As in Sibelius Hall, wood is a very prominent element in Finnish architecture and art. The Wood Architecture Park is a new tourist attraction in the vicinity of Sibelius Hall.

② A GREEN CITY THAT IS GETTING EVEN GREENER

Pikku-Vesijärvi Park is a green oasis in the heart of the city.

Lahti is serious about getting green. The region has a solid foundation in cleantech business, thanks to extensive research and a concentration of cleantech companies. The Finnish Cleantech Cluster is managed by Lahti. The city itself is aiming to cut carbon emissions with the help of the Green City project. Lahti is located between lakes and ridges; here, nature is almost impossible to ignore.

③ WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL 2012 IN COOPERATION WITH HELSINKI

Different forms of beauty: a Kemppi subfeeder for welding and the Cufflink product from the RingRing collection.

It's no coincidence that Lahti has joined forces with the

Greater Helsinki area to be World Design Capital 2012.

The Institute of Design in Lahti boasts a strong status in the Nordic design industry and educates design professionals to meet the needs of society and business.

The Finnish design tradition combines function and ergonomics with Scandinavian aesthetics – all of which is manifested in items like the Kemppi welding products that are manufactured in Lahti.

④ A COUNTRY OF WELL-BEING

Olympic medalist Aino-Kaisa Saarinen lives and practices in the Lahti Region.

With ski jumping hills within walking distance of the city centre, Lahti is clearly a winter sports city. The Lahti Ski Games event in early March brings large crowds to the ski jump pit.

Along with professional sports, the Lahti Region offers spectacular surroundings for outdoor recreational activities. Sports institutes located at Vierumäki and Pajulahti, the Messilä Ski Centre and vast outdoor trails on Salpausselkä ridge offer something for everybody.

⑤ THE BUSINESS CITY

Teerenpeli Restaurant brews its own beer and is the most notable whiskey distiller in Finland.

Lahti used to call itself the business city, and that statement still rings true. The Lahti Region is centrally located close to the growing

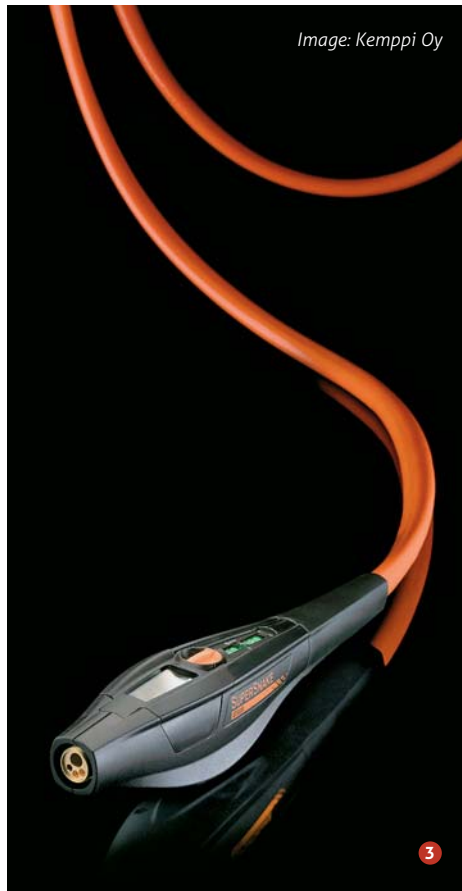


Aino-Kaisa Saarinen, image: ESS / Leena Liukkonen



Anssi Pyysing, image: Lauri Olander

markets of southern Finland and Russia, and this provides a very cost-effective business environment. Cleantech, mechatronics, the grain cluster and the furniture industry are dominant sectors and strong points for the entire region. The comprehensive education system makes it easy to find skilled employees.



Facts about Lahti

Founded: 1905

Location: County of Päijät-Häme in Southern Finland

Administrative position: District Centre

Population in the Lahti Region: 201,700

DISTANCES IN HOURS

Helsinki	1h
Vuosaari Harbour	1h
Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport	1h
St. Petersburg	2h 45min

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LAHTI REGION

www.lahtiregion.net

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LAHTI REGION

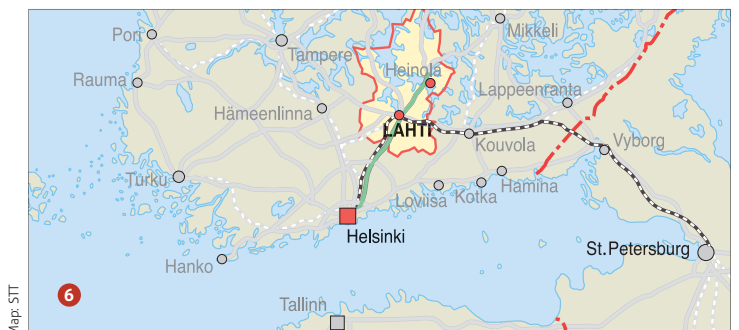
Miika Laakso, Development Manager,
Lahti Regional Development Company
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6 THE GATEWAY TO ST. PETERSBURG

At the junction: high-speed trains transport passengers between Helsinki and St. Petersburg.

Geography and excellent transportation connections make Lahti a natural gateway to St. Petersburg, Helsinki and northern Finland. Despite the high-speed railway and E75 highway, Lahti isn't just

a drive-through town: it has a compact, urban city centre where all the services are within walking distance. Outside Lahti's downtown, tightly-knit suburban areas and smaller municipal centres are scattered between the ridges and lakes. ■



Locate Your Business in Lahti

Photo: Havas Rosenberg Architects

Excellent traffic connections and reasonably priced facilities in the number one location in Finland

Lahti is an unbeatable location for companies: logistically, it is in the best possible location in Finland, and the city is one of the key growth centres in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Construction is big in the commercial sector, business is getting busy, and yet the facilities and plots are reasonably priced. The population of the city has increased steadily throughout the 2000s, and a professional workforce is readily available.

Lahti Cleantech Park.

Cleantech as Capital

The environmental business and cleantech represent the cutting edge of know-how in the Lahti region, that is why several cleantech companies that appreciate high quality property services and a trained workforce have located their business, or are in the process of moving to, the Lahti Cleantech Park.

The centre of environmental technology is constructed around the Lahti Science and Business Park, which manages the Finnish national environmental cluster and the Finnish Environmental Cluster for China project (FECC). The FECC project offers assistance to companies aspiring to enter the environmental or energy market in China. **The Science and Business Park** also has a strong role in the strengthening of investment operations in the environmental sector.

"Two out of three participants in the annual investment events find an investor for their business operations," says Juha Määttä, Director in charge of the property services at the Lahti Science and Business Park.

There are also environmental laboratories and a business incubator in the centre. The business incubator provides space for growth and development for approximately 40 businesses at the same time. Many such businesses have expanded their operations to the international market. Central producers of information and providers of a competent workforce include the Department of Environmental Sciences of the University of Helsinki, the Lahti Center of the Aalto University School of Science and Technology, and the environmental technology unit of the Lahti University of Applied Sciences.

The centre is currently being expanded, and the project is scheduled to be finished in 2012. The expansion will double the amount of office space and commercial properties and the number of experts working in the centre, while making the centre of environmental technology the largest in the Nordic countries.

"The growth in the environmental sector is one of the



Kujala Logistics Centre in Lahti.

fastest in the world,” Määttä says. “The Lahti Cleantech Park is to become a centre of 100,000 square metres, where over 2,000 experts seek solutions for material and energy-efficiency and other challenges of sustainable growth.”

Logistically Optimal Location

The logistically optimal location of Lahti is exemplified by the Kujala Logistics Centre, located in the optimal location for traffic in Finland right next to the E75 motorway, main road 12, and the Helsinki–St. Petersburg railway. As the operations of Finland’s main port, Vuosaari, increase to their full extent, a part of the goods are transported to an inland terminal for unloading. The distance between Vuosaari and Kujala is less than 100 kilometres by motorway. A railway connection can be constructed in the area according to the needs of the users.

Kujala has facilities even for large companies: the total land area is 50 hectares with building rights for 140,000 square metres, and expansion projects are being prepared. The grounds have been preliminarily constructed, and the street network, municipal engineering, and lighting are all ready. The final bonus is the price of the land, which is on average only one-fourth of the prices in the Helsinki area.

“The Kujala region is also outside the area where groundwater is formed, which means that the operations are less lim-

ited by groundwater,” says Juha Helminen, Lahti City Geodesist.

“The area is suitable for larger than average companies with more labour-intensity, whose market area covers the whole Finland, particularly companies focused on commerce and logistics that need high, simple, and effective facilities,” Helminen notes.

The Best Place for Your Business

Whether you come to Lahti by train or car, you will see the Asko Business Centre, formed in the old production facilities Asko and Upo. The red brick environment next to the railway station, the E75 motorway and main road 12, approximately one kilometre from the centre, is an excellent location for modern business operations.

“The factors that make the area perfect include its excellent location, reasonable price level, and the welcoming environment. **The needs of the customer** are already considered during the planning stage, and the customised premises can be renovated within six months,” says Timo Väisänen, Head of Property Management at real estate investment trust Renor, the company that owns and renovates the properties.

“This area is easily accessible: the train ride from Helsinki takes only 50 minutes, the drive from Helsinki one hour on the motorway, and the train from St. Petersburg 2.5 hours. The buses to Lahti from the Helsinki Airport stop next to the railway station. The area is being



The City of Lahti.

continuously developed, and one of the objectives is to have a covered pedestrian pass from the railway platforms directly to the Asko 2 building of the Asko Business Center by 2012.”

The five old factory buildings have a total of 130,000 square metres of rental facilities, of which 35,000 square metres are currently vacant. The size of the facilities varies from offices of less than 10 square metres to storage units of up to 15,000 square metres. **The area has unused building rights** for an additional 250,000 square metres in accordance with the adopted plan.

Approximately 190 busi-

nesses operate in the area, including the Finnish main warehouse of the world’s largest tyre company, Bridgestone. **The environment** has drawn several design experts and artists, as well as accountancy companies, engineering companies, and IT experts. The high quality facilities are also perfect for companies in the welfare sector, **and extensive health and welfare services** with centralised reception and social premises are planned in the area. ●

More information:
www.lakes.fi
www.lahtiregion.net

THE LAHTI REGION:

- Finland’s fifth largest urban region, 200,000 inhabitants
- Half of the population of Finland lives within 2 hours from Lahti.
- Ideal logistical location in the centre of Southern Finland
- Bridges culture and sports in a natural setting
- 10,000 companies in the region
- Logistics, cleantech and mechatronics among key industries
- Strong international expertise, especially Russian



Asko Business Centre.

Photo: Renor Oy

Business with a Local Touch

Central Uusimaa Region keeps attracting new companies

As the Helsinki Metropolitan Region keeps growing, added emphasis is placed on the municipalities which neighbour the three big cities (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa) in the area. Especially young professionals with children flock to municipalities outside the congested core – thanks to efficient traffic connections, these previous fringe communities are now seen as a more attractive option by both citizens and companies.

The Central Uusimaa Region, for instance, features some of the most potent growth in Finland. There is plenty of purchasing power in the area which, in turn, makes it possible to uphold diverse services – and to develop them further as the municipalities keep growing. At the same time, the region is known for its rich nature which contributes tremendously to the local quality of life.

The business climate in

Central Uusimaa Region also shows variety and depth, which means that the area is less susceptible to economic trends. In addition, companies benefit from the proximity of various innovation clusters, such as universities and R&D units.

Kerava – Listen to the Entrepreneur

City of Kerava is a good example of the proactive mindset of the Central Uusimaa Region. As

Confederation of Finnish Industries EK searched for the most pro-entrepreneur municipality in the land last year, Kerava came in third after Kaarina and Raisio. There were 50 municipalities involved in the study.

According to the study, the municipal decision-making takes the viewpoints of the local entrepreneurs into consideration very well. There are also plenty of incentives for business here.

City Development Direc-

tor Pekka Kauranen says that Kerava has a long tradition of working together with the local businesses.

“We meet regularly with the entrepreneurs and listen to their concerns with regards to urban planning, decision-making and implementation. This is part of our daily operations in Kerava.”

For instance, the City officials like to sit down for brunch with the local businesses and a

contact person is designated for companies so that they can navigate successfully through the administrative machine.

Hit the Ground Running

Over 1,200 companies have heard the call of Kerava and more are coming. Kauranen says that the City has really placed an emphasis on attracting new businesses into the area – and making sure that they get a good start here.

Recently, the talk of the town has been logistics. As the new Vuosaari Harbour started operations two years ago, there has been growing demand for state-of-the-art logistics centres. A key logistics hub in all of Southern Finland is presently being developed in Kerava, as the newcomer Kerca is expected to grab a sizeable slice of the goods traffic in the future.

Kerca boasts excellent location along the E75 motorway, at the junction between the main railway line and the Vuosaari Harbour line. In addition, the Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport is near as well.

“Kerava is Kerava’s most important industrial area and we are really investing on its future,” Kauranen says, adding that during 2011 the sale of land plots should kick off in earnest.

Tuusula Rolls Out the Red Carpet

Kerava’s western neighbour, Tuusula, has also enjoyed very

favourable development of late. Placing right at the heels of Kerava in the EK pro-business study, Tuusula has a proportionally large number of companies in contrast to the population and there are plenty of vibrant small and medium enterprises in the mix. The study also credited Tuusula for its strong showing on many different sectors ranging from construction to healthcare.

Development Director Hannu Haukkasalo comments that the municipality authorities are willing to go the extra mile for the entrepreneurs.

“We want to be flexible and try to customise business locations according to the needs of the enterprises as well as we can.”

Another important thing from the perspective of the companies is that the municipality seeks to provide total service from the get-go. If an entrepreneur wishes to present a promising venture to the municipality, it is more than likely that he/she will be met by a real welcome wagon – from Mayor to the zoning manager – to discuss the issue in depth. Companies have been astonished by this sort of lavish attention, since in many places the local authorities are not that keen on taking the time to talk with the entrepreneurs.

Focus on Focus

Here, also, a hot sector of the area has been logistics – especially the food & beverage de-

partment. In addition, wholesale has developed strongly as well. A new industrial area in the making is Focus, just off the airport. The zoning plan proposal for the area will become public during the spring 2011, says Haukkasalo.

“Also the plans for Ring IV are being worked on by the partner network,” he reveals.

As the businesses are coming to town in force, the municipality is developing attractive new residential neighbourhoods for the newcomers.

“For instance, the new Rykmentipuisto (Regiment Park) community in Hyrylä will accommodate as many as 16,000 residents.”

Järvenpää Gets Personal

Järvenpää offers additional proof of the dynamic growth orientation in the region. Located along the Helsinki-Lahti motorway and the main railway line to the north, Järvenpää has a population of 38,000 and is home to many international-ly successful companies.

Arguably the most famous Finn of all time, composer Jean Sibelius, also built his log villa Ainola here in order to be “sufficiently far from the temptations of Helsinki”. This holds true even today – at least to some extent, says City Development Director Minna Karhunen from the City of Järvenpää.

“We are not in the congested metropolitan core, but

close enough to make a difference. All-around accessibility is very good,” she says. Living in a “garden city” close to the nature also offers excellent recreational and leisure time opportunities.

“Living is inexpensive here and the service level is solid,” Karhunen points out, adding that these things impact the availability of labour which is one of the strong points of the City.

Introducing: Intro4

Furthermore, new ventures are constantly being launched. Primary among these is the new Intro4-area – encompassing nearly six hectares – that can accommodate both large and smaller companies. Over 25,000 square metres of tailored business premises will rise along the motorway, with construction kicking off in early 2011.

“This will be a highly visible area and a real calling card for the entire City,” Karhunen believes.

Intro4 can offer facilities for manufacturing or storage as well as for office, sales and service purposes or for a combination of these. The City is hopeful that the majority of the plots will be sold in couple of years.

Järvenpää has been able to attract many companies to the neighbourhood largely due to its corporate-friendly attitude, Karhunen believes.

“For us, every company is an individual; we don’t deal in bulk.” ●



Photo: SRV



Photos: LogiCity

Up with the Hub

Transport industry seeks boost from next generation logistics centres



In the aftermath of the global economic crisis, many industries need to reinvent themselves in order to survive. Logistics is one sector which was already under considerable pressure even before the recession (due to Climate Change), but now the situation is even more challenging. There are several issues which are shaping the face of logistics as we know it: a new kind of social responsibility and ecological awareness is rising as globalisation keeps intensifying its pace and scope.

At the same time, the customer demands highlight convenience and simplicity and the digital revolution advances into new areas. How will logistics cope in a world that is more complex, more dynamic, and more competitive? - Some answers may be found in the way logistics centres are designed today; to serve as multimodal hubs with emphasis on flexibility.

Looking at the logistics scene in Finland, it is clear to see that the construction of the new harbour in Vuosaari, slightly east of downtown Helsinki, has impacted the big picture. Most new logistics centres are raised within a "striking distance" from Vuosaari which is perhaps the most modern cargo port in all of Europe.

Kujala Kick-Off

One of the areas eager to get a piece of the pie is Lahti Re-

gion which has a strong reputation as a logistics expert. The region possesses a brand new significant hub which combines great connections with fresh logistics ideology: Kujala Logistics Centre.

Featuring integrated facilities and services for operators, the Kujala Centre is located about three kilometres east of the Lahti city centre at the junction of the E75 motorway, class I main road 12, and the east-bound rail service. The total area covers about 50 hectares of land, with 35 pre-constructed.

There is a provision for an industrial track to serve the companies in the area, as well as a provision to expand into surrounding city-owned land (about 100 hectares). The size of plots can be customised according to customer needs.

Success factors of Kujala Logistics Centre include excellent connections via road and

rail, ample supporting services, advantages of synergy through unified area structure and availability of land area and real estate as well as human resources.

In addition, Kujala Logistics Centre has a green edge, which is demonstrated by energy efficient solutions and environmentally friendly innovations.

The construction of the first phase started in autumn 2009 and was completed in August 2010. Altogether 14,000 m² of terminal, storage and office space was constructed for Transpoint Oy.

Kouvola Looks East

Another inland logistics powerhouse can be found about 60 kilometres to the east from Lahti. Kouvola, located in Southeast Finland, is the biggest railway hub in the land and also a leading 'dry harbour' in the country. There is already 200,000 square metres of terminal space in Kou-

vola, with the possibility to add another 200,000.

Kouvola relies on diversity: customs functions, special warehouses and various added value services can all be found in the area. The logistics companies in the region want to serve as strategic partners to their customers, finding new ways to improve productivity.

The region is focusing on the Russian transport business with full intention on developing the Trans-Siberian Rail operations – and looking even further down the tracks, all the way to China.

Keräva Gets Going

In addition to Lahti and Kouvola, a third significant inland logistics player is Keräva. The City's claim to logistics fame is Keräva (Keräva Cargo Center), a new logistics center that efficiently combines road, rail, sea

and air transport. Presently under construction, the 160-hectare site occupies a prime location along the E75 motorway at the junction between the main railway line and the Vuosaari Harbour line.

Construction of Kerca's first logistics building is scheduled for completion in 2011. These premises – GCC (Grand Cargo Center) Kerca – will total about 15,000 m² and will be built on a 4-hectare site next to the main railway line.

The import-export terminal and the adjacent container storage area – which links road and rail transport – form the heart of the center. Containers arriving by train are unloaded by crane for direct transfer to terminals, further transportation, or temporary storage in the container yard.

Kerca has building rights for about 270,000 m² of floor area. Terminal, warehouse and office buildings can be either

implemented for a single user or subdivided between numerous users.

Turku: Mastering Intermodality

Moving on to the coast, there is LogiCity – currently the biggest on-going logistics project in the land. Located just off the City of Turku, LogiCity is being built in an area bordered by the airport, the railway connection, the motorway into Central Finland and the E18 ring road. The ports of Turku and Naantali can be reached by road from LogiCity in about 15 minutes.

LogiCity wants to maximise multimodality, creating an environment where all modes of transport and a supply of versatile logistics services come together. For businesses that utilise logistics, LogiCity offers an operating environment that generates genuine added value.

LogiCity building per-

mits currently cover around 400,000 square metres of floor space. Once the land use plan for the northern side of the airport has been completed, more than one million square metres of floor space will be open for construction.

The Turku Region transport hub is designed for all companies seeking greater process efficiency through logistics. This covers companies typically operating in, for instance, transport and value-added logistics, the distribution centre business, warehousing and wholesale operations, and logistics functions for high-tech industries.

Logiera Launched

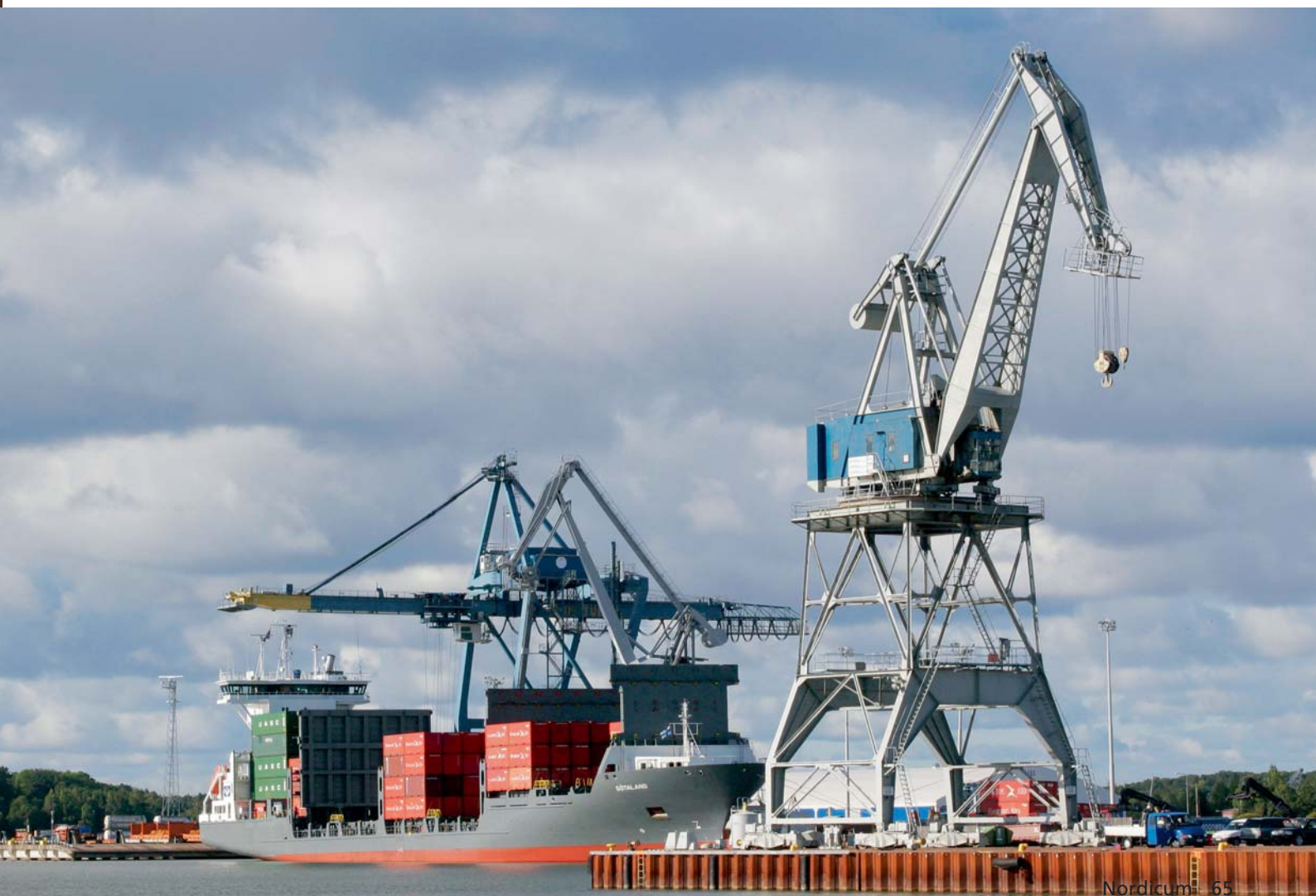
In Tampere, there is something interesting in the works which definitely deploys think-outside-the-box mentality. Under Logiera concept, freight transportation should become more sustainable and comprehensive

all around the region. The project is still in its initial phases, and the ball should start rolling in earnest later in 2011.

Logiera is a regional logistics integrator focusing on three key areas, namely green city logistics, intermodal green corridors and networked intelligent logistics.

For instance, the approach of green city logistics ideology seems fresh enough. The basic principle of the green city logistics is simple: the big trucks will arrive to collaborative warehouses, which are located on the ring roads around the city. Goods get divided to smaller delivery vans, which head off for their designated areas.

According to the vision, part of the delivery vans drive to the City hubs where the goods will be cross-docked to small electric vans, which will drive to the city centre. Every city block will be serviced by a designated van. ●



Real estate market picking up but

Office space still hard to fill

The business is still slow in the real estate investment market. The first three quarters of 2010 tell a sobering story: the volume of property trade was about EUR 1.4 billion which is a far cry from the 6 billion mark breached during the crazy days of the market. Foreign investment now accounts for little over one thirds and one can see that tables have turned – previously, it was the Finns who bought 1/3.

Photo: City of Helsinki Picture Bank / Mika Lappalainen



What's stopping the deals from materialising? According to KTI Property Information, the interests of the buyers and sellers do not meet – as they have not done for a while now. Potential buyers are only interested in the best, safest assets out there – but anybody who happens to own property meeting this description is likely to sit on it for now. When it comes to less clear-cut cases, there are differing perspectives

relating to risk assessment – buyers and sellers rarely see eye to eye on the price although sellers are slowly accepting the shift in secondary properties.

However, there are some rays of light in the mix. In many European markets, business has picked up as the finance markets have thawed and Finland should be no different in this regard – it's really just a question of when.

Office Woes

The biggest bottleneck in Finnish real estate is still the capital region office premises market. However, it seems that the growth in the number of vacant premises has halted. In the lease market, the “tale of two cities” continues: there are vibrant, dynamic areas with modern office space and then there are areas which feature old and worn-out facilities and a lot of

‘vacant’ signs. In the best corporate neighborhoods, both the rents and the occupancy rates are back on the growth path, while the less fortunate areas have more and more empty offices and rent levels are dropping.

With regards to office space, the bar has been raised high in the minds of the investors. Prime assets should feature long leases (preferably 10 years) and strong tenant credit. If the



renovated office space. This accounts for almost two thirds of the premises that are vacant at the moment.

According to KTI, there is more vacant office space in Pitäjänmäki and Pasila-Vallila-Sörnäinen triangle than anywhere else in the city. Outside the capital region, the lease markets of major cities are enjoying rather stable development.

Retail Leads the Comeback

Managing Director Janne Larma from Advium Corporate Finance believes that the real estate market will continue to develop favorably in 2011, mirroring the over-all economic activity.

“Retail premises in good locations have suffered the least from the economic downturn and we believe that demand for such premises will develop in a positive manner as consumption demand grows.”

At the same time, Larma acknowledges that the vacancy rates in office premises in the capital region are still problematic and will continue to be, even though we will see some of those empty offices filled again.

“The poor vacancy rate of office space focuses on older real estate that is located outside the centre areas and typically of inferior quality, because companies are preferring premises that are efficient and modern.”

With regards to logistics property, Larma expects the demand to increase as international trade starts growing again in 2011.

Identifying some challenges for the year, Larma again points out to high office vacancy rates and the flood

of new offices. Furthermore, the small number of potential financiers tends to make transactions tricky – especially when it comes to more risky property assets and assets outside the capital region.

“In 2010, the interest of investors focused on low-risk targets such as property with long-term leases with strong covenants or downtown real estate of the biggest cities. The challenge is to make the transaction market work with regards to other types of properties as well.”

Forced Sales Coming?

Larma does not rule out the possibility that some players are forced to sell some of their real estate assets in 2011 or 2012 as some financing agreements – which were made during the heyday of the market – get closer to expiration date.

Still, Larma sees plenty of causes for optimism out there. Yield demands are down and business has improved as a result.

“In 2011, we expect to see yield demands continue to decrease and activity level to grow,” he says, adding that the yield gap is exceptionally wide and should close up somewhat.

Some international real estate investors have left Finland in the aftermath of the economy crisis. Larma says that this is nothing new as such: Finland is a “fringe country” and investors will always pull out from the fringe first. Accordingly, investors will also return:

“Elsewhere in Europe yields have come down and Finland offers higher yield potential than other comparable countries.” Finland also features an economy that is in top form, reasonable rent levels and a solid business climate. ●

premises in question can offer multi-use efficiency or some other modicum of flexibility, so much the better. Green edge is also very much in demand.

During the last ten years or so, a lot of office capacity has been constructed in the Helsinki Metropolitan Region on the strength of positive economic trends. During the last four years alone the capital region has been flooded with over 600,000 square metres of new or

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Back in Business

Aulanko property investment convention gave cause for optimism.

Real estate professionals met in Aulanko, Hämeenlinna, in November 2010 with a new sense of momentum, as strings of top-level speakers gave their views on what to expect from the future.

In one of the most anticipated panel discussions of Annual Convention of Property Investment Prospects, top officials from the Greater Helsinki Area – Olavi Louko (Espoo), Hannu Penttilä (Helsinki) and Jukka Peltomäki (Vantaa) – sat down to talk metropolitan development. The Helsinki Metropolitan Area will stay on the growth path for decades to come, and it is up to the decision-makers of the region's three big cities to make sure that everybody is on the same page.

The panellists were of the opinion that the 2010's will go down in history as a "golden era of construction" since there are so many large, exciting projects underway. However, the State of Finland would like to see one city in place of the present three. The panellists countered by saying that they have nothing against such plans, but they criticised the Government for being a difficult negotiating partner.



Early Bird Market

Coinciding with the metropolitan dialogue, there are already those trying to sniff out new trends in the market. Michael Schönach from Catella listed several real estate subsectors which remain underdeveloped in Finland. One such field is healthcare – due to e.g. demographic reasons – but Schönach cautions against hype. Also public sector is expected to open up, but those contracts may be long time coming. In addition, Schönach expects to see large-scale logistics centres ripen into interesting options as they become available in the investment market.

Tapani Piri from Jones Lang LaSalle traced the market evolution from the crazy days of 2006–2007 to the present situ-

ation. In a heated market, property buyers were so desperate to strike a deal they would jump through just about any hoops. Overkill was evident as two-phased auctions with full vendor due diligences and parallel buyer side due diligences entered the scene. In the current situation, however, Piri points out that one should play nice with the buyer – the negotiations are now more balanced.

Greener Communities

With Climate Change pressing on, green construction is clearly here to stay – to give the seminar participants the latest, there was Director David Wood from Harvard. He noted that responsible investors are turning to environmental alternatives as tenants keep demanding greener prem-

ises. Entire sustainable communities are making their entrance, such as JESSICA in Europe and Sustainable Communities Initiative in the USA.

Beyond such projects, there's a glimpse of entire sustainable cities, which would utilise public-private partnerships to achieve holistic infrastructure. Wood is expecting investment vehicles to follow the visionary ideas which are already out there. The big question is, whether the green wind is strong enough to carry such heavy load: is there room (and time) for the market to develop?

A Finnish version of a sustainable community is the Low2No city block which will be raised in Jätkäsaari in Helsinki. Jätkäsaari is a Sitra pilot which will examine whether a zero carbon urban project can be replicable – and how to best steer infrastructure, institutions and culture towards that goal.

Marco Steinberg from Sitra points out that this is not a demonstration project. The 22,000 square metre development project calls for a € 60 million investment.

Design on Low2No was started in May 2010 and completion is slated for early 2013. According to Steinberg, creation of "common culture and language" as well as new retail and service concepts are among the main drivers in the project. ●



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Advium Corporate Finance Ltd is a leading Finnish corporate finance advisor in the major real estate transaction and one of the leading M&A advisors in Finland. Since its foundation in 2000, Advium has advised in more than 90 transactions with a deal value in excess of 8 billion euro.

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The City is part of Helsinki metropolitan area.
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Invest in Finland is a government agency promoting foreign investments into Finland. We assist international companies in finding business opportunities in Finland and provide all the relevant information and guidance required to establish a business in Finland.



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LAKES – Lahti Regional Development Company is a regional development organization. Its core tasks are co-ordination of the regional business strategy, enterprise services, marketing of the region and looking after the general interests of business life in Finland and abroad.

Specialty Areas

LAKES – Lahti Regional Development Company offers tailored and individual assistance to help companies find the best possible business premises and industrial land in the Lahti region.

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LOGIERA

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