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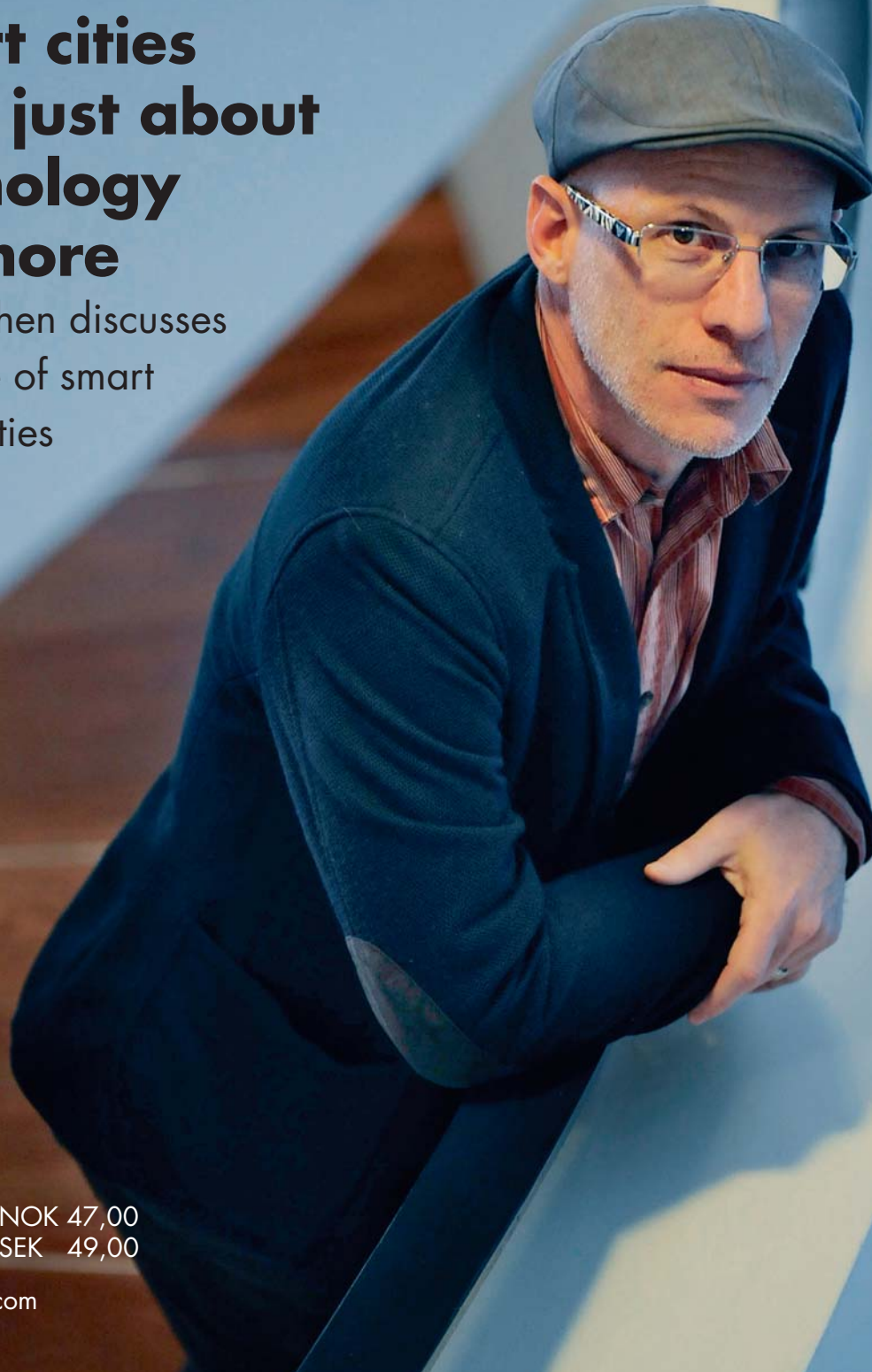
Helsinki
Redevelopment

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Real Estate Annual Finland

Smart cities – not just about technology anymore

Boyd Cohen discusses
the future of smart
communities



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All over the world, cities are leading the way into a better future. An era of accelerated urbanisation has commenced in earnest; the UN estimates that by 2030 cities will be home to 70% of the world's population.

Cities are economic powerhouses which account for 80% of global GDP. However, it is clear that the rising numbers of increasingly wealthy city dwellers put a serious strain on natural resources, too. According to Booz & Company, cities accounted for 66% of global energy consumption in 2010. By 2040, that figure is expected to climb to 80%. Furthermore, 80% of human generated carbon emissions come from cities.

The only way for the cities to cope with the coming change is by changing themselves. Cities of all sizes must become smarter and greener, to find ways to use technological breakthroughs in order to get the job done.

World Economic Forum put Finland – again – on top of its ranking of the most technologically savvy countries in the world. The survey measured the capacity of 148 economies to leverage ICT for growth and well-being, and featured Singapore, Sweden, the Netherlands and Norway as the runner-ups to Finland.

The report focused on the rewards and risks of Big Data which is one of the cornerstones of smart cities. In Helsinki, for instance, public data is being opened up for the people to explore – and, as a consequence, new types of services are being born.

One of the fans of Helsinki is Dr. Boyd Cohen, a leading authority on smart cities. NORDICUM had the opportunity to interview Cohen about the makings of a true smart city. Cohen commented that while the technology is necessary to usher in the new age, the hi-tech revolution is moving so rapidly that it is very hard for city administrators to keep pace and to separate the hype from reality.

And then there is the ever-present question of money. Cohen says that financing is a big challenge for local governments, but the EU has really been helpful in supporting, for instance, local smart cities pilot projects. This means that also smaller communities can “go smart”. In Finland, there are 19 pioneering municipalities which are engaged in a serious effort to reduce their CO₂ emissions by 80% by 2030. During the last six years, this network of green municipalities has cut their emissions by 20%.

Sami J. Anteroineen
Editor-at-Large

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YIT creates urban environments which link ecological, economic and social sustainability. Case in point: Tripla Centre in Pasila, Helsinki. **Pages 12–13.**



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Photo: Siege Architects



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Wanted: Urban IQ

Smart cities are in the forefront of digital revolution and the fight against climate change – and they're just getting started

Smart cities are not all about technology anymore. In fact, strictly speaking, they never were – but when smart cities first emerged as a concept, hi-tech was always front and centre, says Dr. Boyd Cohen, one of the planet's leading authorities on smart cities. Cohen believes that this misconception has caused some pushback from media and citizen groups, because of the general perception that the "big brother" will just have more ways to control, manipulate and observe the population in a smart city setting.



"There are times when technology by itself can be a real driver of innovation in smart cities, but, more often than not, technology is an enabler of innovation," Cohen explains.

Cohen is known for his extensive Smart City rankings. His list of Europe's most evolved smart cities (2013) included a newcomer, as Helsinki edged out Oslo for the 10th spot in the rankings – but that was just the beginning. When Cohen rounded up the world's smartest cities in 2015, Helsinki scored the highest points in a survey that featured 62 indicators. However, as only 11 cities responded to the survey in time, the results are far from conclusive – but Helsinki still managed to beat other pioneering smart cities such as Copenhagen, Barcelona and Singapore in this contest.

According to Cohen, where Helsinki really shines is the Smart Government arena. The city has more than 1,200 open datasets and has been actively promoting engagement with developers through hackathons – and hosted, for example, the first-ever global Open Knowledge Festival in 2012.

Too Ubiquitous To Fail?

Cohen is also impressed with Helsinki's Forum Virium Smart City Project which provides ubiquitous data to the citizens in hopes of improving the quality of life. Use of ubiquitous technology means that the hi-tech is thoroughly integrated into everyday objects and activities; these types of services involve, for example, real-time traffic information for the people. As public data is opened to all, it becomes possible for individuals and companies to create new and more versatile services.

One of the specific neighbourhoods that has caught the researcher's eye lately is the new Kalasatama District in Helsinki. Hand-picked to be a national pilot project for smart cities, Kalasatama combines renewable energy, Smart Grid technology, electric cars and smart traffic solutions to form a true green-edge community.

"Kalasatama District is a good example of inner city transformations occurring in cities throughout the globe," says Cohen, pointing out that many cities around the world have similar former industrial sites, in prime locations of the city with good potential for transit connectivity – and adjacent to a waterway, as is the case in Kalasatama.

Regeneration X

Cohen is of the opinion that these types of areas are very important, since they allow for regeneration of the city and support increased density.

"It also allows a city to rethink development and the role of technology, green buildings, mixed use, transit connectivity, public space and more," Cohen says.

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"These projects can serve as a testing ground for new forms of development and also become a tangible example for citizens of what the city aspires to be and what is possible."

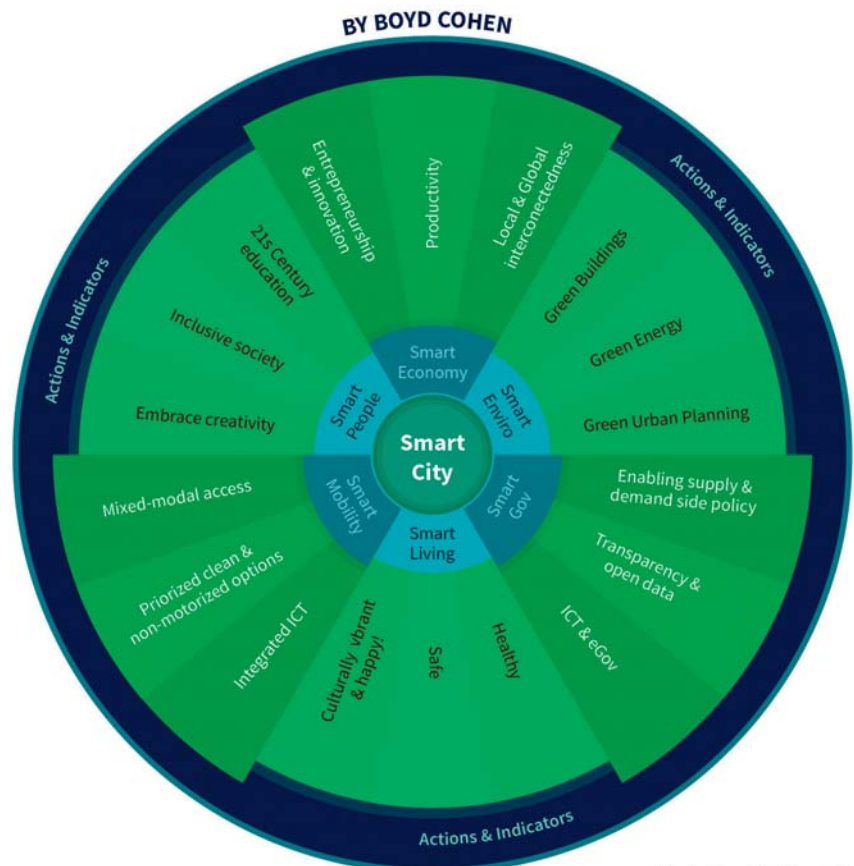
Having had the opportunity to work on several of these projects – particularly in Canada – Cohen knows that such redevelopment projects are beneficial from many perspectives:

"The projects are exciting for locals and can even serve as a source of professional tourism for architects, smart cities experts and urban planners."

Share the Wealth

Cohen recognises that Helsinki has earned a reputation for being digitally advanced – and there are several reasons for that: smart phone penetration is high, online government services are available, there are frequent open data and app competitions...

Furthermore, Helsinki has been an early player in the City SDK (Service Development Kit) project which seeks to create a shared platform for online services for cities in Europe and beyond. CitySDK began in January 2012, with seven European cities involved in the project in addition to Helsinki: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Istanbul, Lamia, Lisbon, Manchester and Rome.



Re-designed by Manuchis.

“Helsinki is also generally considered pretty advanced with respect to embracing environmental sustainability in its buildings and energy portfolio as well as the use of renewable diesel for its public transportation system,” adds Cohen.

Start Me Up

Listening to Cohen, it seems that everything in Helsinki is just about perfect and getting better – but there must be some weaknesses, too. What does Helsinki need to concentrate more in? – Cohen responds that among the EU leaders, Helsinki is behind in two things: contributing to a smart economy and improving smart transportation use and options for citizens.

“For me, a key measure for a smart economy is the rate of new entrepreneurial startups in a region,” Cohen says, pointing out that cities like Berlin, London and Barcelona seem to be doing better in this arena. With respect to transport, he looks at the use of public transit, availability of shared transit options (bike and car) and of course non-motorised transit (pedestrian and cycling) – and sees Helsinki gaining ground in this department.

“Helsinki is progressing in the area of promoting the use of electric vehicles in the city, which to me is an important driver of

smart mobility. Also the new personalised bus service, Kutsuplus, is a good example of municipal innovation in transit which could be adopted in other smart cities around the world.”

Beyond Helsinki

Boyd Cohen seems to know Helsinki very well indeed, considering that he’s only visited the city once. Having finished his Master’s Degree at the Copenhagen Business School in 1995, he is a big fan of the Nordics, however – and the Nordic capitals keep placing well in his smart city rankings.

But how about the Second Cities of Finland – for instance Espoo, Turku, Tampere and Oulu? Cohen confesses that he is not too familiar with these smaller would-be smart cities, since most of his research focuses on global, capital cities.

There are two reasons for this: first, there are simply too many cities in the world to study, so one has to focus on a smaller subset. Secondly, Cohen believes the trends which are generating such interest in smart and sustainable cities are most prevalent in larger cities – issues such as inadequate infrastructure for growing urban populations, inequality, pressure on local ecological systems, food security...

“Larger cities have to resolve these

pressures in innovative ways in order to transform our global society into one that can sustain life and support quality of life for citizens. Having said that, secondary cities have many roles in this. If they can become smarter, they can slow down the exodus from rural areas and smaller cities to the major metropolitan areas,” Cohen says.

Don’t Believe the Hype

Taking stock of the future challenges, Cohen admits that the technology side of smart cities is moving so rapidly that it is very hard for city administrators to keep pace – and to separate the hype from reality.

Another big challenge for local governments is finance. However, this is one reason why Cohen has been so impressed with the EU, since the Union has put significant money into supporting local smart city pilot projects.

“There really is no other region in the world where there is a collective effort to promote the smart cities agenda. Also, we need more innovative public-private partnerships whereby the private sector absorbs the risk, but has more to gain if the project is successful. Relatedly, cities need to continue to support local entrepreneurs.” ●

Sami J. Anteroine

Six Shooter

The key emerging trends in the current smart cities agenda by Boyd Cohen

- 1. Visioning & measurement.** The early smart cities movement was highlighted by pilot technology projects; cities sought to generate insights and brand recognition through the accumulation of “cool” tech-centric projects. Smart cities are realising that they must now be more visionary about what they are doing. They realise they need to create a baseline to understand how they are performing in a range of areas, and, together with citizens, develop a long-term vision of where they want to be.
- 2. Citizen participation in co-creation.** Cities used to treat citizens as users only, but there has, fortunately, been an evolution in recent years to support citizen participation. More recently, we have witnessed citizen co-creation where citizens take the lead in creating innovations that improve the quality of life in cities.

- 3. Sharing cities.** This trend is really only starting to catch on, but it has the potential to not just transform our cities, but transform the global economy in a way that we haven’t seen since the industrial revolution. Smart cities are realising that they need to find a way to support and collaborate with sharing economy innovators.
- 4. Direct support for civic entrepreneurs.** Civic entrepreneurs aim to improve the quality of life in cities through the introduction of innovative products and services – often supplementing what the city currently offers. Good examples of this include car sharing and bike sharing services to supplement public transit – and there are thousands of similar cases in cities around the globe.
- 5. Procurement for innovation.** Cities manage big budgets and smart cities are

finding ways to leverage these budgets to stimulate innovation in their cities. Rather than predetermine specifications and outcomes, cities can assign budgets to need areas, and let the private sector pitch a range of innovative solutions to address the problem or opportunity. Procurement for innovation allows cities to encourage innovation through wiser use of city budgets.

- 6. Innovation districts.** The Brookings Institute recently published a report on the growing trend of physical innovation districts in cities around the globe. Boston’s Innovation District, 22@Barcelona and Buenos Aires Distrito Tecnológico area all great examples of this trend. Innovation districts can stimulate the local economy, generate local jobs in the creative industries and revitalise neighbourhoods. ●

THE ANGLE

By Marja-Leena Rinkineva

The writer is Director of Economic Development, City of Helsinki

Open Helsinki



Helsinki was once again selected as one of the top Smart Cities in FastCo. Being recognised as a Smart City is exhilarating.

Naturally all the cities want to be smart, who wouldn't? But what is there for Helsinki in "being smart"? How do we want

to develop our city? What makes Helsinki a special place where to live, work, study and visit?

Some core values for Helsinki, also behind smartness, are openness and participation using design as a tool.

My predecessor had a slogan for our

citizens: Use Your City! I also truly believe that cities are meant to be used, not only looked at. For us openness and participation mean many things. On one level they imply the possibility to utilise and enjoy the city: parks, public spaces, city services etc. One of my colleagues had his baby's name-giving party in a public park. What a wonderful way to use your city! Also opening all the data to the public gives you an excellent possibility to use your city. Helsinki has become renowned for quickly opening up more than thousand public data sets for anyone to use and also to build business there upon.

Use Your City also encloses the idea of a well-designed city. Design is in the DNA of Helsinki. For cities, design methods imply permission to do things differently – to take on a challenging, user-driven, experimental and concrete approach by engaging the inhabitants of the city. Helsinki has hired a few designers to really look into how city services can be formed differently, more smartly.

On another level openness and participation is the option to take part in democratic processes, e.g. by voting, expressing opinions in city polls or participating in different activities. Many new digital means have been invented in Helsinki to increase participation. In urban planning, interactive maps have been utilised to capture the dreams of the citizens. In the field of public education, more than 6,000 parents accepted the invitation to brainstorm local future schools, using an internet tool. Yet another example: hundreds of people in Helsinki are participating to test new smart traffic solutions in the streets with their smartphones.

At the end of the day, openness, participation and design generate a more vibrant city. As our Mayor puts it: Helsinki is Fun and Functional. The smartness of Helsinki aims at increasing liveliness, which feeds economic growth and employment as well. For citizens this offers new possibilities for work, entrepreneurship and leisure activities. The role of the city authorities is to enable participation in open and smart ways. Cities exist for people and a great city, like Helsinki, is built together with citizens. ●



Triple Your Pleasure

Rooted on Smart City ideology, a new superhub is rising in Pasila

At the core of emerging Smart Cities, there is the perfect marriage of responsibility and business opportunities, says Juha Kostiaainen, Senior Vice President, Urban Development, at YIT.

"We believe that in the future, the focus is on sustainable urban environments which link ecological, economic and social sustainability," Kostiaainen sums up.

One of the drivers in this transition is mixed use of buildings: commercial pursuits combine with corporate and residential interests to create totally new kind of entities. In a way, we are going back to the original idea of the city, where everything was close, says Kostiaainen.

"Since the nature of work is so different now, this gives us more flexibility in realising these new solutions."

Kostiaainen wrote his doctoral theses

on innovative milieus ten years ago. Now he perceives many things that are making a huge impact in our lives that were only vague visions a decade ago – for example, people's enthusiasm in making and sharing various digital content.

Encounters Economy

In the context of city planning, adding IQ into the old system has the power to launch entire "innovation districts," Kostiaainen believes. At the heart of these creative environments one still finds something rather traditional: people getting together and learning from each other.

"In these encounters, the trick is bringing together people who represent different types of views – that's the best way to come up with something new."

In order to facilitate these "meetings of the minds" one needs powerful public transportation that is centred on traffic superhubs. "Mass transportation is dependent on the masses, otherwise it won't work."

Reinventing Pasila

YIT is eager to try out its ideas of sustainable urban development on a scale that is unprecedented in Finland. Case in point: the new Tripla City District, located in Pasila, Helsinki.

Pasila, located just a couple of kilometres north from downtown Helsinki, is already a tremendous traffic hub: this is where all the trains stop, and buses and trams swoop by the station non-stop. Still, the surrounding area has not lived up to its full potential and is ripe for development, opening as much as three city blocks for new ideas and energy.

By the turn of the decade, YIT aims to turn Tripla District into “Helsinki’s second city centre”. The versatile urban complex will feature offices, a shopping centre, apartments, hotels and the Helsinki metropolitan area’s new-and-improved public transport hub, says Tapio Salo, Senior Project Director of Tripla.

“We recognise that we have been entrusted with a unique location in the entire country and want to create a hallmark district for Helsinki,” Salo lays down the game plan.

Smooth Sailing

Tripla District will be completed by 2021 and will encompass the area around the current Central Pasila station. It will link both East and West Pasila and the planned high-rises on its south side to the new residential

area on its north side. Salo reports that the process is well underway:

“When everything goes well, we will have an authorised zoning plan in March 2015,” he says, adding that the planning effort is actually a bit ahead of schedule at the moment. He credits this to the City of Helsinki which is committed to realising Tripla District in a big way:

“We have great collaboration with the City and are very motivated to keep going forward,” Salo says. The next step after a legit zoning plan is to apply for a building permit before summer – and then it’s on to the actual construction. “We want to start construction in the autumn,” says Salo.

Big on Connectivity

Both Juha Kostiainen and Tapio Salo are of the opinion that the Tripla District will bring about connectivity which will be unparalleled in the whole country. As a consequence, the new Pasila station will be the busiest railway station in the land.

At the same time, the new Ring Rail Line will connect Tripla and Pasila to the Helsinki Airport. The City Rail Loop, once completed, will connect Pasila, downtown Helsinki, Hakaniemi and Töölö. And if Hel-

sinki should ever build a second metro line – running north-south – a reservation has already been made to build a metro station here.

Salo points out that using public transport as an anchor for various functions is a strong trend in Europe and should be a winner here, too: “Linking trains, trams and buses in a new way to create a true traffic hub for the metropolitan area is what we want to do – and make it as convenient as possible for the citizens,” Salo says.

Commercial Edge

As it turns out, the very same citizens are consumers, too. With this in mind, YIT is launching ‘Mall of Tripla’ which promises to lead the way into a new era of retail. Comprising almost 85,000 square metres of commercial space, Mall of Tripla will connect physical and virtual stores, bringing sellers and buyers together.

Kostiainen and Salo believe that it is possible to create new types of commercial services at the shopping centre, born out of the seamless union of space and technology. Another element is “action”: “We are looking into various ways to promote urban culture at the Mall of Tripla,” Salo confirms. There are plans to introduce performance venues (both big and small), perfect places for a picnic, art cafés, mini-size movie theatres...whatever it takes to make the Mall of Tripla a truly vibrant place.

“The element of surprise is what we want to nurture here,” Kostiainen says.

Beyond the shopping centre attractions, it is clear that also forward-thinking companies are taking notice of the new neighbourhood. Tripla is set become a core centre of business with 50,000 m² of leaseable office space, including headquarters-level office premises. There will also be two world-class hotels to serve both business travellers and tourists.

Optimise Your City

According to Kostiainen, the terminology involving the urban evolution has gone from “learning cities” to “creative cities” and “smart cities” – but it’s not just the buzz words that are changing, he argues.

“For twenty years or so, we’ve had the technological innovations needed to see this through. But it is also now that we’re learning to combine different elements in a meaningful way,” Kostiainen says, not hesitating to use the term “paradigm shift” in this context, either. In the aftermath of ‘Internet of Things’, we may soon have ‘Internet of Buildings,’ for instance.

“The change is upon us and it is rather intuitive in nature. This means that change can take place rather quickly, too – and we must be ready to seize the opportunities that it brings.” ■



Breaking New Ground

Innovative cities transform old mines and paper mills to 21st century moneymakers



The challenge that many cities face is generating new business and new companies, thus creating more jobs. Around the world, communities with strong industrial roots have struggled as mines and mills have been shut down. However, in the new knowledge-intensive Experience Economy there is plenty of room – and even a demand – for cities with an innovative mindset and willingness to see tradition and history as a springboard, not a roadblock.

Finnish Government is active in supporting a string of innovative cities with an eye for the future. Having pooled together resources between science, education, companies and the government, the cities will deploy methods that feature new development environments, creating pioneering markets and national and international cooperation in leveraging expertise.

Under the national Innovative Cities programme, development environments may include demonstration and testing platforms for new technologies and services as well as new operating models for competence-based entrepreneurship. Major investments for the future made by the cities (for example in energy and water supply, waste management, housing, transport and health care) have not been – as of yet – exploited as development platforms for innovations.

The Starting Five

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy has approved five national themes for the programme and named the urban regions responsible for leading the effort. The focus areas are Bioeconomy, Sustainable energy solutions, Future health care, Smart cities and industrial regeneration and Cyber security.

The City of Joensuu is spearheading Bioeconomy, with Jyväskylä and Seinäjoki also participating in this theme area. Joensuu, located in Eastern Finland, is one of the Finnish cities which is trying to think out of the box when it comes to rejuvenating the local economy.

The Joensuu Region has a lot of things going for it: there is already a diverse product development and innovation structure in place. For instance, The Finnish Forest Research Institute, the Geological Survey of Finland, the European Forest Institute and the Eastern Finland Centre of Excellence in Social Welfare are among the organisations that can be found here.

Adding to this, the internationally renowned nano research, carried out at the University of Eastern Finland, has resulted in the establishment of several nanotechnology companies in the region.

Seeking Growth

The most notable industry employers are the metal and engineering sectors, providing almost half the jobs. In addition, the region's forest industry experts have established Joensuu's reputation as one of the forestry capitals of Europe.

Recent growth has centered on the

metal industry, but also completely new sectors with plenty of potential have emerged alongside the traditional industries: bioenergy, mining and call centre sectors in particular have developed into full-fledged knowledge centres for Joensuu Region.

Furthermore, the presence of gold and copper has generated successful mining industry operations in the region. Interestingly enough, the most recent "mining operation" is not targeting precious metals, but experiences and emotions. Under the concept of 'Treasure Town', a small, former mining town of Outokumpu has created something unique at the old copper mine.

Building on Tradition

At the beginning of 20th century, Outokumpu was a tiny rural community in the backwoods of Karelia Region, but finding copper in 1910 launched the area on the fast track for industrialisation. In addition to copper, the multiple mines yielded e.g. iron, gold and silver for decades – until the mines were closed in 1989.

Anne Mujunen, Marketing Manager for Joensuu Region Development Company JOSEK, says that about ten years ago, the local actors started thinking about ways to bring the old mine "back to life".



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"The City of Outokumpu sought for outside ideas and the concept for Treasure Town was invented," Mujunen explains. The key idea was to create an attractive travel destination for the whole family, using the appeal of the old mine as a way to reach people.

"There are plenty of great places in Finland, but this type of a mining environment can not be found anywhere else." The City of Outokumpu has invested four million euros in the "underground renaissance" and expectations are high for the future success of Treasure Town.

Going Underground

But what does all this mean practice? Well, for instance, the old mine features various locations where metals were processed – and this space was completely transformed for the purposes of events such as theatrical plays and musical concerts. Tourists seem to have heard the call of the old mine rather well: during the summer 2014, the number of visitors doubled from the previous year, coinciding with the launch of the new Children's Mine.

Also more and more companies are making their nests at the mine. To push the momentum even further, the local players

created the Mine Game which was distributed to Finnish schools for educational purposes.

"The operations around the mine can be characterised as highly active and the area is being constantly developed by the City of Outokumpu," says Anne Mujunen. She expects that in the future, more investors and operators will arrive to the neighbourhood, since the infrastructure is now in place to achieve great things.

Data Loves Finland?

Other "treasures" are presently being uncovered all around Finland. As the old adage states: "Information is power," many players have seized the opportunity to make money out of data. According to experts, Finland is probably the data-friendliest country in Europe at the moment.

And why is this, you may ask? Start with the node-point connectivity between West and East, add super-reliable power grid and infrastructure... and throw in a game-changing IT sector and attractive support packages. Even the "refreshing" climate is an asset, since servers crave cool conditions. The talk of the industry is "free cooling" which means that the ambient environment (rather than refrigerators) is used to cool the servers.

The question that many data companies are asking themselves is this: why pay for a cooling system ten months of the year, when you can pay for just one month? Obviously, what you have here is a "data heaven" that made an impression on Wall Street Journal, even.

From Paper to Bytes

It all started five years ago when Google established a data centre in Hamina, Finland. After analysing numerous potential sites around Finland, Google set up shop in the old Summa paper mill, located on the Southern coast of Finland. Formerly owned by paper giant Stora Enso, the old plant fit Google's plans well – for instance, the data centre could use sea water to cool down its systems.

Google liked being in the neighbourhood so much that in 2013 the company announced an additional, EUR 450 million investment to expand its operations. The expansion represents the single biggest foreign investment in the history of Finland – and there are more similar cases on the way. Microsoft just launched a rather secretive data centre in the Uusimaa Region and the Russian search engine company Yandex is busy building its own centre in Mäntsälä.



Under the Waves

In order to usher in this new Digital Era, the Finnish Government is pulling all the stops to build a bigger, better Information Superhighway. In September 2014, the European Commission approved the Finnish state's capital investment on a highly attractive project that will construct a direct high-speed telecommunications link between Finland and Central Europe.

This mean, in essence, that a data cable will be laid to the bottom of the Baltic Sea to take connectivity to another level. The procurement process has already been started, and the construction work should commence in 2015. The submarine cable project will be ready for service by early 2016.

A new company is responsible for carrying out the project under the ownership and operations of Corenet Oy, a company acquired by the Finnish state in November 2013 and used as an investment catalyst to kick-start a strong digital cluster. The newcomer wants to become a significant actor in developing the speed and security of Finnish information networks.

Finland Leads the Way?

Ari-Jussi Knaapila – Chairman of Board of Corenet and Group CEO for the new company structure – comments that the new connection to continental Europe strengthens Finland's position as a leading country in data centre investments.

"Building fast and safe international connections is a prerequisite for the growth of digital economy and industrial internet. This objective is also included in the Finnish government programme and a vital part of the Digital Europe strategy."

According to Knaapila, strengthening the backbone structures of digital economy is a precondition both for the emergence of new industry and for the development of traditional industry, enabling the emergence of new business and employment opportunities.

Don't Crowd the Cloud

Building the submarine cable link is a critical project for the digital future of Finland and northern Europe, since the need for connec-

tions has increased significantly: globally speaking, cloud services are expected to grow by an approximately 40 % rate annually, and the telecommunications data volume is anticipated to be tripled by 2017. Presently, data travelling between Finland and Central Europe has to take a "detour," going via Danish networks or their Baltic counterparts.

Knaapila believes that as the submarine cable link will connect Finland to European and global information networks, the way is paved for an entire cluster of cloud companies.

"Cyber-safe and high-speed connections increase both the international interest in Finland and the Finnish competitiveness," he says.

A fund raising to match the 20 million euro investment by the Finnish state with private investors has been initiated. The total financial package for the project, realised as Public-Private Partnership, is estimated to be in the level of 100 million euros. ●

Sami J. Anteroineen

Service Edge

Business parks need to rededicate themselves to serving the customers once again, says Heikki Levo of Peab Invest

Business parks can reach their true potential only if the developers learn to listen to the tenants – and listen well. Managing Director Heikki Levo of Peab Invest believes that a lot of the talk involving business parks revolves around issues that are of secondary importance. As generals are always busy fighting the previous war, so are the construction companies tied to reliving the past glories.

"The ways of working have changed so much that the only way to survive in this business is to get very close to the customer – find out his needs and wishes and come up with the solutions and services that really support his business in the best possible way."

But isn't this what the developers and construction companies are doing – or at least claim that they are doing? – According to Levo, an industry veteran of 40 years, most construction companies are mostly concerned about putting up walls and roofs and doing a good job in the building depart-

ment – but fall short when it comes to the over-all service concept.

"It's the whole operative environment that matters here. If you have a high-concept services package, the tenant will respond favourably to that, because he sees the extra effort that went into the planning and realisation of the concept," says Levo, adding that as potential tenants take notice, so will the real estate investors.

One Solution Fits All?

Levo says that the days of standardised solutions – e.g. "this is the way a conference room must be and the cafeteria goes here" – are done in the industry, but not everyone has realised it yet. If solutions are not found on the shelf anymore, business parks will be developed with so much more freedom and creativity.

"In all of this, it is crucial that both the premises and the services are as flexible as they can be," Levo says, commenting that we don't know what shape and form office work will take in, say, five years – but we can start preparing for that future today.

For Peab, the new wave of business parks commenced in earnest with the launch of Moveres six years ago. Located in Pitäjänmäki, Helsinki, Moveres Business Garden went on to grab LEED Silver Certificate –

first LEED in the land. After that, Peab has stayed on the LEED path – but the "medals" keep getting brighter: Eventes Business Garden in Matinkylä, Espoo was awarded with LEED Gold and the new Ultimes Business Garden is going for platinum.

Reinventing the Garden

Peab Invest has had an idea, for years, to create a concept that attracts tenants and investors, but also such that can be successfully multiplied. The new, clarified Business Garden concept is being tried out in Ultimes Business Garden with Peab's partners and tenants and it will be in operation in spring 2016.

Ultimes Business Garden will shine due to its ability to mix both work life and leisure activities, all in line with a low-cost total service package in maintenance services, offered by ISS Palvelut Oy.

"But what really differentiates Business Garden concept in the market is our well-thought total wellbeing concept. We in Peab Invest see that the total wellbeing of employees offers the businesses a good step ahead and helps them to reach the set goals better," says Levo.

According to Levo, the Business Garden concept is just warming up:

"We have plans ready for four more." ●



How Smart Is Your Industry?

Combining expertise from various fields, Pori is pushing the boundaries of innovation with great results

Rooted on strong industrial tradition, a number of Finnish cities is making the transition to smart cities of the future. One of the pioneering communities in this regard is Pori, located on the west coast of the country. With 85,000 inhabitants, Pori is the 11th biggest city in Finland – and, more importantly, the Pori City Region is the 7th biggest work and economic area in Finland with 138 000 inhabitants. According to a report by Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Pori City Region is among the top three most positively developing regions in the land and a key industrial powerhouse.

For decades, Pori has been known as the place for “heavy-duty” engineering. Several major international metal industry companies with their extensive subcontracting networks are located in the area, with a product offering that reaches from huge oil rigs to combo harvesters and solar panels. While the fields of industry are diverse, there is a common ground here: focus on innovation is the first and foremost issue for local companies.

Perfect Package

Kristian Vainio, Business Development Director for the City of Pori, says that the city combines hi-tech, energy and marine expertise in a rather unprecedented manner

in Finland. “We have a great innovative setting, where there are breakthroughs made in various fields – and the entire ecosystem will benefit from this.”

One example of this bridging of industries is the offshore wind power park that is to be constructed just off the Pori coast in Tahkoluoto. Suomen Hyötytuuli Oy is planning to raise as many as 11 wind power plants in Tahkoluoto which will become the first ever offshore wind power park in the nation.

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy just gave a EUR 20 million backing to the project which involves also Technip Finland – a marine industry powerhouse with world-class oil rig expertise. With an energy company and a marine com-

pany working side by side, new opportunities are likely to emerge.

Cluster Power

Director Janne Vartia from regional development company Prizztech Oy observes that the offshore wind power park is a good fit for the local marine cluster. “The Port of Pori as well as the Mäntyluoto shipyard form the backbone for marine operations here and there is also room to expand,” he says.

Vartia perceives arctic expertise to be a key selling point for the local marine industry: “The offshore wind power park is a good example of this, since the project has to take into consideration the northern climate and the icy conditions in the winter.”



Photo: Tomi Mäntinen

existing and new customers. “Interest in LNG is found among industrial, shipping as well as heavy-duty land transport customers,” Mattila comments.

Wood Building Boost

Another field where energy comes to play is new residential construction. Wooden construction has been a strong focus area in Pori for years, observes Kristian Vainio.

“The Pori Region wood cluster is developing very nicely,” he says. One example of this is the FutureHouse2020 project where wood is used in innovative ways – even ways that often link with digital solutions and the app world. Vainio believes that especially senior citizens will benefit from the “digitalisation of homes”. In a recent Living Lab project, the elderly were targeted as a special group that is able to continue living at home – with a little help from some e-friends.

“Hi-tech solutions will aid seniors through use of sensors and guidance systems, making sure that the everyday lives of the elderly are safe and smooth,” Vainio describes the main idea.

High-level Recognition

The reach of this project went far beyond local: the Living Lab project for seniors’ wellbeing placed in the TOP5 in the European Commission’s RegioStars 2013 final. In the annual competition, the Commission looks for the most innovative projects / best practices in the entire EU.

Vainio says that the entire community is proud of the feat and eager to accomplish more:

“After all, now we have a great platform to build on.”

Building something new is very much the theme in the downtown area, too. The shopping centre Puuvilla has re-energised the commercial scene (see related story on page 20) and the new downtown campus will add educational edge. Satakunta University of Applied Sciences will build a cam-

pus right next to the travel centre. The value of these two projects alone is EUR 200 million – and in this decade, local investment decisions have been made to the tune of EUR 1.3 billion.

Rock the Rails

Deputy Mayor Kari Hannus says that the construction for the campus area will begin in 2015 and it is scheduled for completion in 2017. Nevertheless, the master plan for the travel centre area goes beyond adding just a campus:

“There will be a wave of office construction in the neighbourhood, as there is potential to build as much as 200,000 floor square metres,” Hannus says, adding that currently there are building rights for about 50,000 floor square metres.

Office premises right by the railroad tracks are in high demand by companies big and small – and even some residential offering is in the cards for this area.

“In essence, the entire travel centre area will be like a jar of honey: very attractive from the point of view of several target groups,” Hannus believes.

Buzz Me Up

Adding some excitement into the downtown area is something that the City really believes in:

“This type of action will re-vitalise the local community a great deal – and elevate also the local businesses,” Hannus says.

The education scene in Pori is sure to benefit from the new campus, but the city does have strong traditions in this area, too: the Pori University Consortium is a multidisciplinary centre of learning composed of units from four different universities, cooperating across faculty boundaries – and there are, actually, two universities of applied sciences here.

“Young people who graduate from local schools have good employment opportunities just around the corner,” Hannus adds. ●

Get Ready for LNG

Kristian Vainio and Janne Vartia point out that also the construction of a LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas) terminal in Pori provides ample evidence of the pioneering mindset in the marine industry. The Norwegian company Skangass is building a new import terminal for LNG that is to be finished in 2016. With this project, Skangass wants to create an efficient LNG logistics chain in the Pori area. The terminal will feature a capacity of 30,000 cubic meters; all and all, it will be the third Skangass terminal in the Nordic countries.

Sales and Marketing Director Tommy Mattila from Skangass is eager to see the Pori terminal completed on schedule so that the company can launch deliveries to both

Photo: City of Pori





Redbrick Redemption

Shopping centre Puuvilla re-energised an old industrial neighbourhood in Pori

The citizens have voted – with their feet and wallets. As the shopping centre Puuvilla opened its doors on 30 October 2014 in Pori, Finland, people showed up in a big way. The shopping centre management had set a target of 80,000 customers for the extended weekend (Thursday through Sunday), but the four-day grand opening drew in almost 125,000 people.

But with the economy playing the blues, how is it possible that a launch of a shopping centre is treated so favourably? One answer lies in dire demand: the Satakunta Region has been waiting for a full-fledged shopping centre for a long time, and now they have one. With leasable space of 42,000 square metres and over 60 stores, Puuvilla is the biggest shopping centre in the Region, and 11th biggest in the Finland.

But “filling the void” is just one aspect here. People flock to the place, since this shopping centre is one of the most interesting brownstone development projects in the country in ages: launched in the redbrick environment of the old Finlayson cotton factory, the site is treasured by the locals. Located by the Kokemäki river, the 100-year-old historical factory milieu had been waiting for the right development plan – and was, finally, realised with style and flavour that remain respectful to the industrial roots of the place. Even the name ‘Puuvilla’ (cotton) is a nod to the history.

History Embedded

Since the shopping complex is a true “crown jewel” for the local community, there was a good degree of pressure on the developers to get it right – the first time. Renor Oy

and Mutual Pension Insurance Company Ilmarinen set out to create a unique, central “retail and service centre for the future” that fully supports the existing urban structure of Pori. Marko Liimatainen, Project Director from Renor, says that throughout the project it was clear that this was something that was important for the entire Satakunta Region, not just Pori.

“We felt a strong need to do the best work we possibly can and the way to do it was staying true to the original spirit of the place. All the while, we kept thinking that it must be something that the locals respond to and appreciate,” Liimatainen says.

Time to Get Real

While creating an active community centre for the entire district, authenticity was clearly a big priority; another key thing was providing a new “living room” for the local people, a place where people go to meet other people, to enjoy themselves. According to the feedback from the customers, it’s ‘Mission: Accomplished’ in this regard too.

“The response from the people has been really good, even surprisingly so,” Liimatainen says, adding that the old, raw industrial feel – with lots of brick and concrete in evidence – has been a big hit with the

locals. The objective – of making Puuvilla the number one retail unit in the Satakunta Region – is that much closer to being realised.

“Furthermore, the shopping centre operates as a part of Pori city centre and only adds to the appeal of the downtown.”

City within a City

The Puuvilla area already involves about 100 active players. Thousands of people enter, work and study here daily. According to the master plan, Puuvilla will become a new type of centre for commercial and public services, education, administration and leisure, catering to the whole Satakunta region.

“What we have here is really a ‘city within a city’ – there are activities all around the district from morning to nightfall,” Liimatainen says.

Renor and Ilmarinen are the owners and investors in the project, with Skanska Talonrakennus Oy taking the responsibility in the construction effort. The total investment value of the construction project was approximately EUR 130 million.

Puuvilla has been designed based on low-emission use of energy: its heating and cooling systems will utilise geothermal



energy with an objective to cover 80 % of the heating and cooling yearly.

"There are 100 geothermal wells with a depth of 300 metres," Liimatainen explains.

Going Geo

Due to its central location and 2,000 parking spaces, the Puuvilla Shopping Centre will be within easy reach. The Centre is highly accessible by public transportation, foot or bicycle. Anchor tenants include K-citymarket, H&M and Stadium.

Juha Veistonen, Technical Property Manager for Puuvilla, comments that the two-year construction project finished right on schedule. There were, of course, challenges that come with a century-old building and incomplete documentation.

"The 3D modelling was in daily use, which helped the project along. Also the energy efficient solutions – such as geothermal energy and heat capture – are important for the final outcome," he says.

"Combining new and old has yielded

a great end result. The shopping centre corridors are spacious and function well, even with lots of people."

Good Vibrations

Shopping Centre Director Pasi Välimaa is equally impressed with the final result.

"The atmosphere here is quite unique, thanks to the design that makes it possible to mix the old with the new so well," Välimaa says, adding that many visitors have approached him and said that they can't believe that there is now a world-class shopping centre in Pori!

"It is apparent from the feedback that we have been able to preserve what people love about the old milieu and simply add the modern touch that is needed to make a great shopping experience."

Looking into the future, Juha Veistonen believes that the energy efficiency will be on a high level – already the geothermal solution looks like a real winner, even though seasonal modifications will be needed.

"We also expect that the building automation works well and that the solutions deployed here can take the challenges posed by time and varying demands." So far, so good: the opening weekend worked like a charm, even with the unexpectedly high number of customers.

Big Year Ahead

Commercially speaking, Pasi Välimaa believes that the year 2015 will be a good one for the newcomer: the goal is to lure in five million customers for the year. When asked about the recipe of success in the future, Välimaa says that there is always demand for meeting places such as shopping centres – if you play your cards wisely. After all, people are always looking to go where the action is, visit a new café or a restaurant, check out the events schedule...

"When you have this type of a 'citizen's living room' in this historical setting and located right here in the downtown area, it is easy to imagine that people keep coming back here, too." ●



Going the Extra Mile

The Western metro went for an encore before the line is even operational – the “bonus stretch” enables smoother logistics and more effective construction

September 29, 2014, provided ample cause for a celebration. The City Council of Espoo decided to issue an absolute guarantee for the loans that finance Espoo's share in the construction of the West Metro line Matinkylä-Kivenlahti. This means, in effect, that the continuation line for the western metroline with five new stations will, indeed, be built.

At the same time, it was decided that Länsimetro Oy shall be responsible for the line's construction, which was, pretty much, a no-brainer. After all, the same company has been in charge of the metro project from day one, with City's Deputy Mayor Olavi Louko even serving as the Chairman of the Board.

More significantly, however, the expansion project had also managed to secure the financial support of the state. The government headed by newly appointed Prime Minister Alexander Stubb saw the value in continuing the “biggest infrastructure project in the country.”

“Now that the original project is nearing its conclusion, it made perfect sense that we keep going,” says Matti Kokkinen, Managing Director of Länsimetro Oy. According to Kokkinen, continuing the project on-the-fly is clearly the way to go since there are labour, expertise and equipment available.

Don't Stop Me Now

Having to stop now and pick up the pieces, say, five years from now, would have been very costly indeed. Olavi Louko agrees with Kokkinen: “We have a great momen-

tum going and are glad for the political will that saw this project through.”

The City of Espoo is asking for the state to pay 30 % of the investment, but not right away. The government money should come in around 2017–2020.

“Also, it is no small thing that the Government is helping to secure jobs for 4,500 people by giving the green light for this extension. It is difficult to imagine another project of this scope which yields so much benefits and provides such a stimulus during an economic downturn,” Louko says, crediting Stubb's government for making the right move. After all, the parliamentary





Photo: ALA Architects

Kaitaa, Soukka, Espoonlahti and Kivenlahti. The price tag for the project is around EUR 800 million.

Also, Jukka Mäkelä, Mayor of Espoo, has applauded the government's summer-time decision - and vision. The extra stretch makes it viable for Espoo to pursue a more compact community structure that is based on rails. Mäkelä added that, for example, Espoonlahti is already a city centre of 55,000 residents and would benefit from better connectivity: there is no cause to delay with the metro project.

In November 2014, construction began with the excavation of work tunnels for Finnou Station and the Sammalvuori train depot. At the same time work began in Kivenlahti and Espoonlahti, and in December in Soukka and Kaitaa.

The entire line from Matinkylä to Kivenlahti will be completed in 2020 at the earliest. The original, Ruoholahti-Matinkylä stretch of the line will be completed in late 2015 and open for traffic in the autumn of 2016.

Mastering the Metro

According to Matti Kokkinen, the Ruoholahti-Matinkylä stretch is in fine form and the metro stations are being built. It is also apparent that the metro-building organisation has learned a thing or two along the way. Kokkinen and his team are looking to put all that knowledge to use good in making the "bonus stretch".

"We have most of our builders returning to work on the continuation line onwards from Matinkylä," Kokkinen says, adding that the market was "hungry" for this type of a project. The work starts with the excavation of six work tunnels that will keep the work crews busy for a year.

"After that, it will take 2.5 to 3 years to build the actual tunnels. The secret that allows us to stick to the schedule is starting work on the metro stations as soon as we're able to," Kokkinen reveals.

At present, the metro builders expect no problems from the earth itself: the ground to be excavated consists of the very same hard stone which is typical to the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. The metro will run in a tunnel from beginning to end, featuring two parallel tunnels with connecting tunnels, which have safety locks at 150–170 meter intervals. The connecting tunnels act as maintenance and rescue connections.

Safety First

The tunnel sections between the stations have vertical shafts, which have pressure equalising/smoke vent shafts and emergency exit stairways to ground level at 600–700 meters intervals minimum. An access drive-way tunnel will be built for every station. These tunnels will provide a connection to metro tunnels during construction time and operational years.

The safety arrangements and fire technical planning for the metro tunnel is conducted in accordance to fire technical planning instructions drafted for planning of the West Metro. The instructions have already been accepted by the building regulation/rescue authorities.

Kokkinen and Louko believe that the "West Metro 2.0" will be easier to realise than the original line – everybody knows what can be done and how much time that will take.

"Also, we have more time now to really focus on the development of the metro stations and the areas surrounding them," Louko says. That's not to say they were overlooked during the original project – turning the metro station environs into blossoming communities has been a key part of Espoo's master plan all along – but this time around, the City is looking to hit the bull's eye.

This means, in essence, the plans for land use must be connected to the metro planning in an air-tight way. The idea is that the land use plan will complement the metro plan and vice versa; new travel routes – complete with services – are generated that support the everyday lives of the passengers. According to Olavi Louko, each of the proposed stations could be the centre for a community of about 30,000 residents.

Greener Transport, Please!

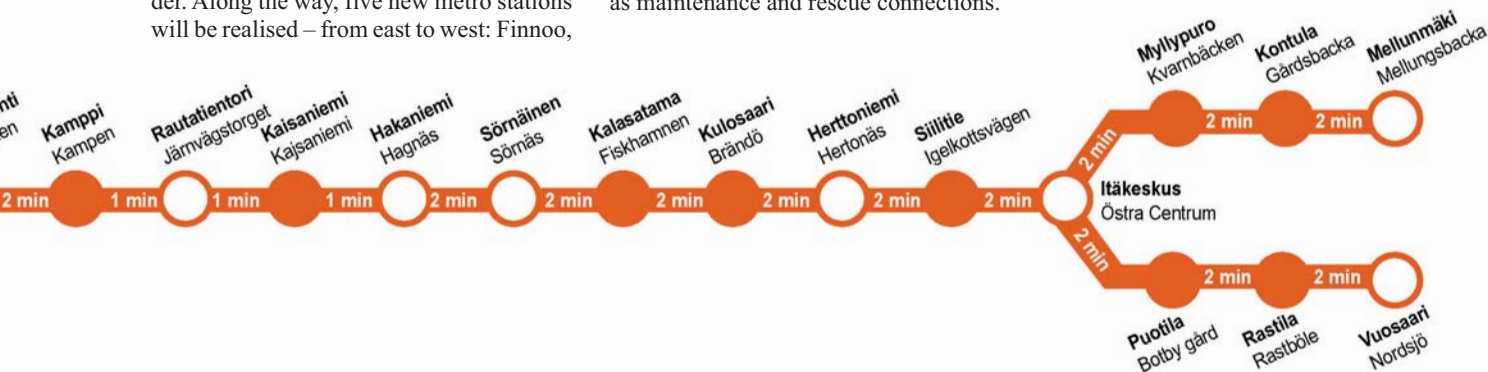
The metro extension is a good fit for state's Climate Change agenda, too. Finland is committed to bringing down the volume of CO₂ emissions and two big culprits in this arena are traffic and living. By building a "green to the core" mass transportation system and launching smart, sustainably-oriented communities around the metro stations is a very environmental move, as well.

elections are coming in early 2015 and no one can say what new political winds will be blowing then.

"The time to make the decision was now. Since we got the green light, we will make sure that this project will be a true success," says Kokkinen.

Western Horizons

The "extension to the extension" will mean adding a stretch of seven kilometres to the line, reaching almost to the municipal border. Along the way, five new metro stations will be realised – from east to west: Finnou,





According to traffic predictions, Matinkylä – Kivenlahti metro connection will increase daily public transportation trips by 5,300 trips by 2035. The metro line will decrease both the use of private cars and buses. With regards to private cars owned by the citizens, there will be a decrease of 20,000 kilometres driven per day. This is equivalent of having 200–300 cars taken off the road entirely.

The metro is scheduled to run every four minutes. According to estimates, 75,000 people will cross the border of Espoo and Helsinki everyday by metro in 2035. Garage space for cars is an issue especially at Finnoo, Espoonlahti and Kivenlahti stations. The City promises to take into consideration all forms of feeder traffic: from buses and private cars to pedestrians and bicy-

clists. The stations themselves should provide some “eye candy” too, as is the case with the original stretch.

Emphasise the Experience

Matti Kokkinen and Olavi Louko assess that the stations will deliver a totally new type of metro experience, each having, in a sense, a personality of their own. In fact, since a range of respected artists has been hired to work on the original stretch’s own designated stations – with artist Jaakko Niemelä coordinating the over-all effort – the same winning formula will probably be used in the realisation of the new stations.

The City of Espoo wants to take the visual experience to a new level while preserving functionality: the stations promise

to deliver “instant recognition”. This means that you can be sitting in the train and you need only to glance at the station you’re on and know immediately where you are.

Obviously, the lighting of the stations plays a big role in the eventual user-experience. Therefore natural light will be exploited whenever possible and lighting solutions are aimed to promote accessibility and to prevent glare. Good lighting also goes a long way to boost safety which is also one of the key issues on the City’s list. Furthermore, all stations have been planned to be located as close to the surface as possible, minimising the need for long escalators and lift connections.

Kokkinen and Louko promise that the continuation stretch will offer a memorable experience that will transcend the basic need



for transportation. Louko comments that it all starts with the strong identity of the stations and that particular neighbourhood.

“Solutions will be tailored for that specific community,” he outlines the plan.

Kivenlahti – Superhub 2030?

The year 2020 is still far away – and there’s no guarantees that the extension stretch is running by then – but we couldn’t resist “test-driving” the newcomer. The new end-of-the-line, Kivenlahti, seems like the place to start – after all, it will draw in people from all directions (and well outside city limits) as they start their journey east in the morning. It will be convenient to drive to Kivenlahti Station with your own car and then hop into the metro, since there will 1 000 parking spots available there. According to the plans, the station will feature a bus terminal and link with a brand new pedestrian sea-side boulevard.

In the mind of Olavi Louko, Kivenlahti could be something “really big” one day: “The Länsiväylä freeway is right there, so it could conceivably be covered with a deck and an office/commercial centre could be constructed in a very good location.” Arriving to the Helsinki Metropolitan Area from the west and coming to Kivenlahti could be a real experience: a “gateway to the metropolitan area”.

Project Director Kimmo Leivo from the City of Espoo is thinking along the same lines: “The connectivity at Kivenlahti is already pretty good, and the metro will add to that tremendously,” he says, pointing out that on the residential side, there will be a lot of new construction. In a perfect world, the area could see a big increase in both the number of jobs and residents.

“What we need to do here is to achieve critical mass by having a player of considerable size in the area. This would attract, for instance, branch offices to the place,” Leivo says.

Enter: Espoonlahti

Moving east, there is the Espoonlahti station which will be located below shopping centre Lippulaiva. The shopping centre is already a great commercial anchor for the neighbourhood – add metro to the equation and it’s easy to predict a lot of new apartments for this area, too. Kimmo Leivo would like to see more jobs and services in Espoonlahti: “This would be a good place for a business campus, for example.”

Matti Kokkinen adds that people very gladly work and live in the same neighbourhood, and if you can provide jobs, the odds are that local apartments will become a hot item very quickly indeed.

“We have seen this development with

Matinkylä Station, for instance.” One of the corporate newcomers to Matinkylä is listed company Outotec who chose Matinkylä after they made a survey which revealed that a good share of the personnel live somewhere quite near.

With Espoonlahti, many questions remain. For instance, it will be decided on a later date whether the station will feature a street terminal or a terminal building for the bus traffic. Still, as the City owns land right by the station, this provides ample opportunities for great many things.

“High rise construction with panoramic sea views is one option. We have once in a lifetime potential here,” Leivo says.

Soukka – Kaitaa – Finnöö

Next stops are Soukka and Kaitaa. Completely new residential construction has been planned especially for Kaitaa – with regards to Soukka, it’s going to be a more complementary form of development.

“There are existing buildings in Soukka, but still room for more – and solidifying the city structure is what we want to do here,” Leivo says. In City’s strategy, Soukka will service the surrounding area, where as the scope of Kaitaa is more local. The environs of the Kaitaa station will see complementary construction as well.

One more stop to make on the new



line: Finnoo. This station is a special case since there were plans to go ahead and realise it even if the “bonus stretch” plan fell through. But hearing Louko and Leivo speak very enthusiastically about this seaside neighbourhood, it is very easy to see why Finnoo is such a key piece in the City’s plans for the future.

“From our point of view, Finnoo is the last remaining significant seaside area that is open for development. We are committed to making this ‘last shore’ truly great,” Louko says.

Smart & Sustainable

Kimmo Leivo is in charge of a very important community which could, ultimately, accommodate as many as 17,000 residents. Presently, the area is a bit of a “diamond in the rough”: there are old industrial zones in Finnoo and a lot of vacant areas that are used for no specific purpose. The City, however, has turned this to a distinct advantage: at Finnoo, things will be conducted very sustainably from day one and the City is confident that it can be very efficient in the execution.

For instance, Espoo Mayor Jukka Mäkelä has promised that the new Finnoo will become a “sustainable, green maritime city of international standards” for all Espoo inhabitants. The City is also most eager to promote pedestrian and bicycle traffic, as well as energy efficiency and carbon neutral practices. According to Leivo, the City is also looking into a LEED or BREEAM certification for the area to make sure that no stone is left unturned in this quest for a green city.

The Finnoo station is located in the area of the current water treatment plant. The future main street network and land use plans of the centre have been taken into account in the planning work. The actual location of the station and its entrances will be defined later as the land use plans will be specified.

High Times

According to the preliminary plans, the northern part of Finnoo will be largely defined by the coming metro station and its surroundings. There are plans which allow

high-rise construction by the metro station: the highest of these towers could reach 30 storeys.

“Finnoo could feature as many as 10,000 apartments by 2040,” Leivo says, adding that most of the residential buildings would be ready by 2030.

The new-and-improved Finnoo is also looking to fully explore its access to the sea in the south. Presently, there is already an active boat harbour – accommodating 1,100 boats, it is the largest of its kind in the metropolitan area – and the harbour concept will be fine-tuned, as well.

Under the Boardwalk

The City is zoning a marina-type housing arrangement here, which means a high-quality, vibrant area, with a fly-bridge cruise through channel surrounded by boardwalks with restaurants and cafés. There will even be an artificial island with condominiums.

“We really want to make the Marina area into something which hasn’t been seen in Finland ever before.” The actual boat har-

“Certainly there’s no harm in having a lot of purchasing power in the neighbour-

Looking at the fresh new project, it is clear that the top management of Länsimetro Oy

“When we started work on the western metro five years ago, the goal seemed to be far away, too. Turns out, however, that time just flies when you’re building a metro,” Kokkinen smiles. ●

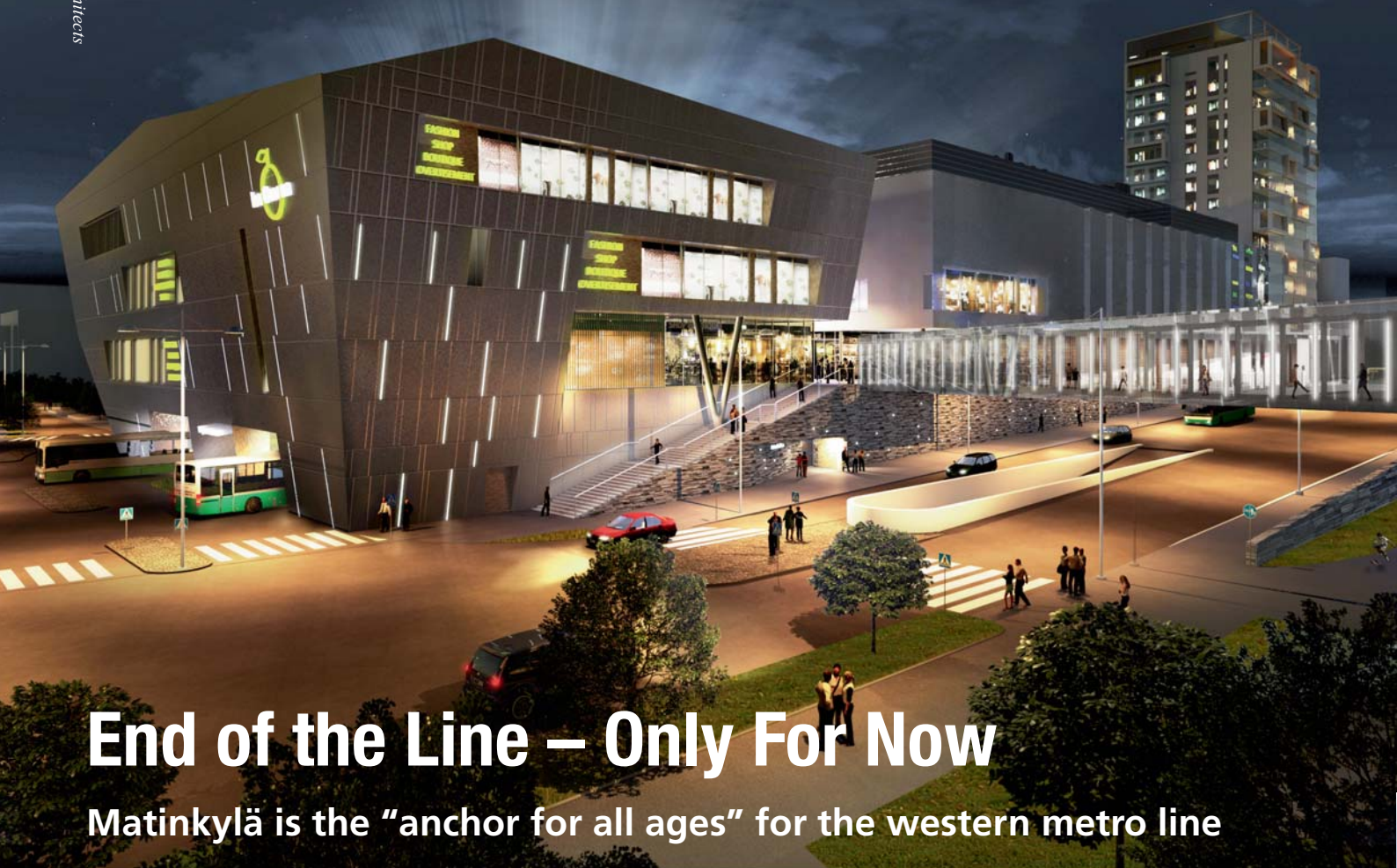
– selected highlights from the metro saga



September 2006, the Espoo City Council chose tunnel metro as the basis

Construction of the west metro began in Ruoholahti in November 2009, where a metro plan extending from Ruoholahti to Salmisaari shore already existed. Excavation work began in Espoo and in Lauttasaari

During the construction of the metro, Länsimetro Oy – the builder – championed the idea of continuing west from Matinkylä which was the end of the line. The preliminary general plan for the metro line between Matinkylä and Kivenlahti was completed in spring 2011. Having secured Government backing and City Council approval in summer/autumn 2014, the project can continue westward. Adding five new stations, the new stretch will run seven kilometres. The stations are Finnoo, Kaitaa, Soukka, Espoonlahti and Kivenlahti (from east to west). ●



End of the Line – Only For Now

Matinkylä is the “anchor for all ages” for the western metro line

As the new western metro line is poised for launch at the end of 2016, we already know there will be a sequel, an additional stretch of tracks going westwards.

For years to come, however, the end of the line will be Matinkylä which has experienced a wave of intense development lately. According to Markus Saari, Project Director for the City of Espoo, there’s still plenty of upgrades in store for the neighbourhood.

“We have just finalised the Matinkylä-Olari development vision in December and are looking to develop the area from the viewpoint of community, providing services for all citizens,” Saari says. In the future, this city centre located between the sea and Espoo Central Park will feature even more services, recreational activities and well-being focus.

Arrival of the metro and the new bus terminal will provide the approximately 50,000 residents of Matinkylä with great public transport connections to Helsinki and all parts of Espoo. Since Matinkylä is the end of the line, it is a crucial feeder traffic hub which is estimated to be used by over 30,000 passengers daily. In fact, based on

passenger forecasts, it will be the busiest station of the new line.

Bite the Apple

The dominant feature in Matinkylä is the shopping centre Iso Omena, the fifth biggest shopper’s paradise in the land. The Matinkylä metro station will be located on the empty lot at the southern end of the shopping centre.

The block where the station will be located is owned by the City, and is witnessing a boom in complementary construction. The plan for the block allows the placement of commercial services, offices or even residential buildings. The arrival of metro is

expected to attract both new businesses and residents here.

“In total, there is 70,000 floor square metres of construction going on in Matinkylä,” says Saari.

Public-Private Edge

At the very core of things, NCC Property Development and Citycon are making a genuine “metro centre,” conveniently linking the metro station, bus terminal and the shopping centre. Markus Saari says that the top level of the new metro centre will be reserved for municipal services: the City will have as much as 6,000 square metres of public services here. Also, the environs of the station will be developed into a services/wellbeing park which will feature a lot of “grey power”.

“We are committed to providing solutions that will make the area enjoyable to especially senior citizens,” Saari confirms.

Called Tynnyripuisto (Barrel Park), the new park promises to combine leisure and services in a novel way. “There are plans

to realise a swimming hall and educational centre at Tynnyripuisto,” Saari reveals.

In the Suomenlahdentie area, on the other hand, there will be a very diverse residential offering.

Together We Stand

Olavi Louko, Deputy Mayor for the City of Espoo, says that the “personality” of the area lends well to people of all ages – but the senior citizens are clearly a key demographic.

“Matinkylä can provide the quality services and wellbeing solutions that older people appreciate.” The key word here is “support”: the City wants to enable the living arrangements of various special groups, ranging from the elderly to the handicapped.

“We have a concept that focuses on community-orientation, on doing things together. With many different generations living side by side in Matinkylä, there is certainly a lot of potential here to build something really significant,” believes Markus Saari.

Louko notes that the “grey invasion” in Matinkylä reflects a current trend in the capital region: previously, especially those retirees with good pensions and significant assets moved to downtown Helsinki. They don’t have to do it anymore: “Many people who have lived and worked in Espoo all their lives find that the services here are great and don’t want to move anywhere,” Louko believes.

Also, the buildings and apartments in Matinkylä are new, offering hassle-free living for decades to come. In Helsinki, however, waves of renovations are sweeping all

over downtown and residents often have to evacuate for months.

“That’s not exactly something that senior citizens are looking forward to,” quips Louko who is six months away from retirement himself.

Build a Winning Streak

The success in Matinkylä has not materialised overnight. In fact, the area has undergone strong growth in commercial and residential construction since 2001. The corporate world is keen on the area as well: hi-tech company Outotec built its head office right here – which makes perfect sense since every fifth employee already lives either in Matinkylä or Olari. There are still free plots available that are suitable for building office facilities within walking distance of the future metro station.

A big part of the plans is of course Länsiväylä (Main Road 51) which serves as an entry and exit artery in the Finnish metropolitan area. In fact, one of motivational factors behind the decision to build the metro was to ease the rush hour traffic on the motorway – with the metro, a good chunk of the office-bound traffic will go underground.

Länsiväylä is also the main artery from Helsinki to the western Uusimaa regions and serves commuting from the western sections of the capital area and the south-western regions of Uusimaa. But is Länsiväylä “all that it can be”? Olavi Louko envisions a setting where Länsiväylä would be covered by a deck at Matinkylä to enable more cohesive building and smoother services.

“Deck construction is certainly one viable option, since the area in question sup-

ports the solution,” Louko says, adding that covering Länsiväylä makes more sense than introducing a similar deck in Espoo’s Lepävaara which is also an idea that surfaces occasionally.

Cover Me

Markus Saari says that deck construction would make the whole package more compact and provide ways to renew the look of the area. “The deck would probably include some green construction as well as residential buildings,” he says.

In any case, as the metro will affect the development needs associated with Länsiväylä, the synergies of road and rail must be studied carefully. After the metro is completed, the area’s bus network will principally comprise feeder traffic routes to the Matinkylä and Tapiola metro stations. For this reason, ensuring successful conditions for smooth feeder traffic will be essential.

Don’t Forget Niittykumpu

According to City plans, Matinkylä and the neighbouring community of Niittykumpu will offer homes to about 10,000 new residents by 2025 and an abundance of new workplaces. Markus Saari says that Niittykumpu is coming along nicely, as well.

“We start work on the metro station in early 2015 and have a good momentum going.” Niittykumpu is being developed as an area for housing and working where the mixture of old settlement and new architecture form an architecturally interesting entity. Linking with the new metro station, there will be solid basic services for housing and plenty of jobs. ●



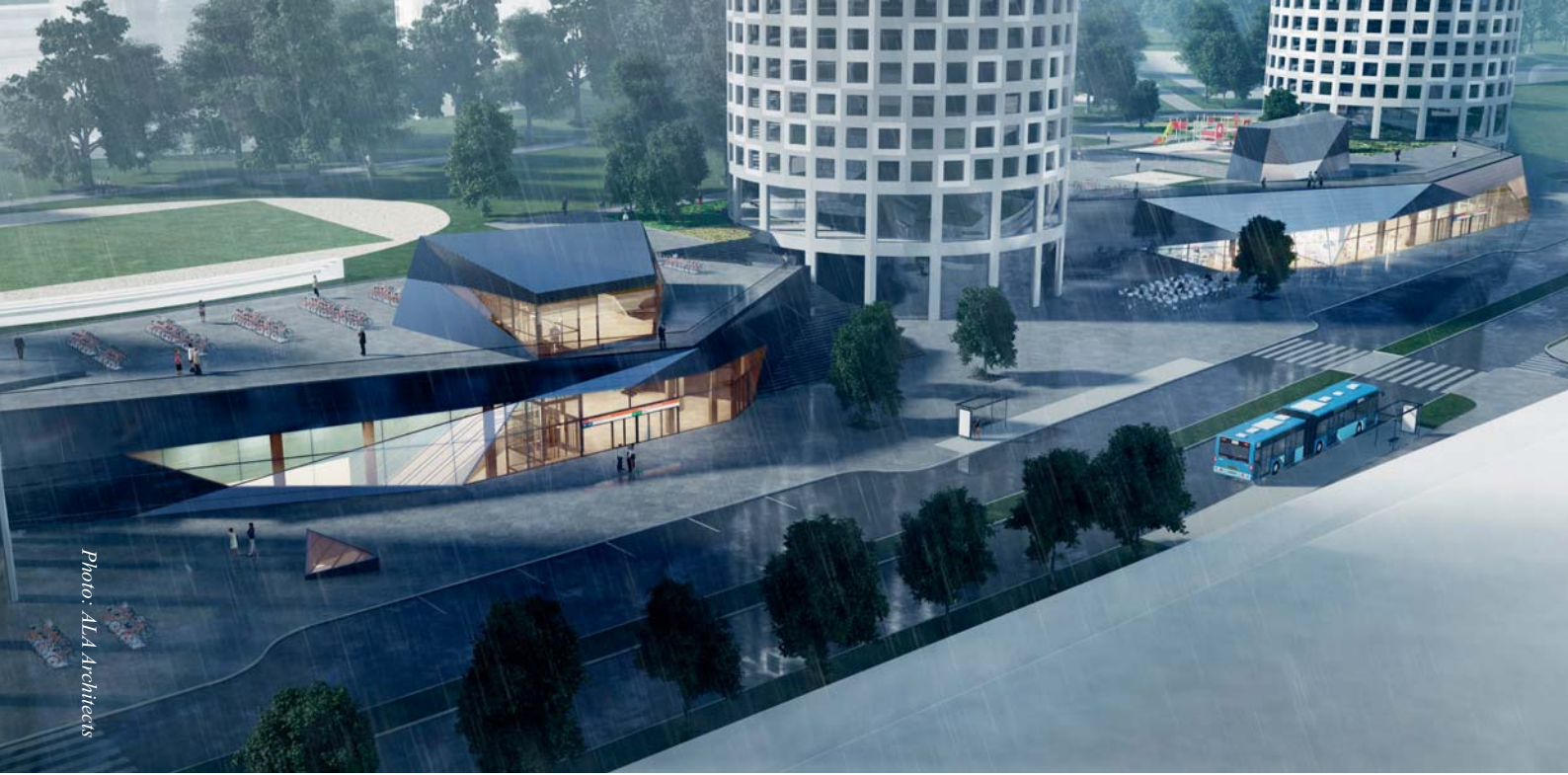


Photo: ALA Architects

Cleared for Launch

“Innovation Triangle” of Tapiola, Otaniemi and Keilaniemi is poised to take Espoo – and Finland – to a whole new level

Next year, the western metro expansion will take connectivity in the capital region to a whole new level. The largest infrastructure project in Finland will introduce eight new stations, of which six are located in Espoo. The entire Western Metro line will transport more than 100,000 people every day – which means that Espoo is building its urban structure in line with the key principles of sustainable development.

Perhaps the most noteworthy neighbourhood along the rails is the area of Tapiola, Otaniemi and Keilaniemi – known as “The Innovation Triangle”. Northern Europe’s largest innovation hub is the place where science, culture and business create new synergies in accordance to the City strategy. The profile of the area will be strengthened by the tallest residential and office buildings in Finland, tunneled main roads, a renewed culture and shopping district as well as a new university village for students, researchers and entrepreneurs.

Espoo Edge

But what is it about the Innovation Triangle that makes it such a phenomenon both nationally and internationally? Well, first of

all you have to take into account the role Espoo as a real champion of innovation and economic growth. Besides being the second largest city in the country, Espoo’s ecosystem accounts for 50 % of the research and development value for all of Finland. Furthermore, Espoo companies are responsible for around 50% of the turnover in the Helsinki Stock Exchange.

As part of the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Espoo is a gateway between Europe, Russia and Asia. Therefore global headquarters of major Finnish companies and more than 430 international companies are located in Espoo. With Helsinki as its neighbour and ally – and Stockholm, St. Petersburg and Tallinn not too far away either – Espoo enjoys a great location.

And, of course, Espoo has an innova-

tion engine that not everybody can match. The trio of Otaniemi, Keilaniemi and Tapiola is also referred to as “innovation garden”, which is a nod to the Finns’ love of nature. Tapiola is the “original Garden City” which is now going through a beauty treatment.

Reinventing Tapiola

In keeping with the original spirit of the district, a new centre will be built in Tapiola – a bold solution marked by its dynamic and sustainable character. Great care will be taken in the renewal to preserve the architecturally significant centre designed by the architect Aarne Ervi.

The aim here is to create an active, multifaceted urban centre with modern mass transportation terminals, well-organised parking and maintenance arrangements, a wide variety of services as well as pleasant pedestrian areas and meeting places. In addition, Tapiola offers culture and leisure activities such as WeeGee House and Cultural Centre as well as sports.

Going east from Tapiola, there is the Aalto University station, at the heart of Otaniemi. This station is located in the middle of the campus area which is charac-

terised by Alvar Aalto's red-brick architecture. The main entrance to the metro station will be situated on the west side of Otanientie, opposite Aalto University's main building, which will be immediately visible upon leaving the station.

The metro will connect Aalto University's main campus to the Helsinki campus with a metro ride of about 11 minutes which is good news for the students – and sure to re-energise the mass transport scene of the area. According to calculations, the daily number of passengers at the Aalto metro station will be around 10,000.

Making Waves

Dubbed as the “innovation university”, Aalto is the perfect example of the type of collaboration between business, hi-tech and design that the Innovation Triangle is all about.

Established in 2010, the Aalto University was created from the merger of three Finnish universities: The Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki University of Technology and The University of Art and Design Helsinki. With engineering students as the anchor at Otaniemi, also the design and business students are joining them on the transformed campus grounds.

In October 2013, a winner was declared in the open international architectural design competition Campus 2015 which was arranged by Aalto University Properties Ltd. The competition jury selected the

entry ‘Väre’, designed by the Finnish firm Versta Architects, as the first prize winner.

According to the jury, this scheme most successfully solved the challenges and conflicting demands of the competition – since the original campus area is designed by Alvar Aalto himself, not just any proposal will do for this key area.

Young Voices Heard

In more recent news, the City of Espoo decided in October 2014 to award the design of the user experience at the Aalto metro station to a team of students on the PdP course at Aalto University. The aim here is to give people using the Aalto University station “an innovative and exhilarating experience”. The team of students on the Product Development Project (PdP) comprises 11 students from different sectors, representing eight nationalities and four continents.

The Aalto University metro station is, naturally, an important entrance to Otaniemi. The task set by the City is to create a genuine urban centre at the station and to utilise innovative solutions in order to promote an emission-free campus.

Beyond the university campus, lies the “Silicon Valley of the North”: Otaniemi is the largest cluster of high technology in Northern Europe, representing the entire chain of innovation from education and research to startup companies and knowledge-intensive service businesses. This community includes 16,000 hi-tech profes-

sionals working in research organisations and technology companies. The European Commission has twice selected Otaniemi among the most innovative areas in Europe.

Keilaniemi: Still Aiming High

In addition to the metro line, also the covering of Ring Road I with a “green deck” construction will bring the three areas closer to each other. Within a year or so, Keilaniemi, Otaniemi and Tapiola will be combined into a single, strongly developing area where it is extremely easy to move around. During the next ten years, about five billion euros of public and private funds will be invested in the area.

Turning our attention to Keilaniemi for a moment, it is easy to see why the area is the corporate engine for the entire country. High-rise buildings are pretty much the norm here – with headquarters of such companies as Kone, Fortum and Microsoft in attendance. The hi-tech corporate neighbourhood is waiting for the metroline to make the lives of the employees easier, but the metro extension is expected to spark residential construction as well.

According to the master plan, Keilaniemi will eventually feature four housing towers with 27–35 storeys each, reaching as high as 100 metres. The area in question will include almost 80,000 square metres of residential building volume, and will add a completely new element to the area, revitalising also the shoreline with activities and services. ●



Photo: SARCA Architects

Louko's Legacy

Espoo's "development dynamo" is retiring in summer 2015
– what kind of a legacy does Olavi Louko leave behind?

The vision for the City of Espoo states that Espoo is a pioneering community that is driven by five city centres: a responsible, compassionate city that is great for living, learning, working and running a business. The one man who has probably done more than anybody else to bring this vision into fruition is Deputy Mayor Olavi Louko.

Länsimetro

While the mayors come and go, Louko has remained at his post since 2001, kicking a series of development projects in motion. Nevertheless, with retirement looming at end of July 2015 it is clear that the development plans of the future will be forged by someone else. Louko's impact on the city – and the entire Helsinki Metropolitan Region – will be felt for decades in any case.

Probably the biggest achievement for Louko was the building of the western metroline. The metro had been waiting for years and years to venture west from Helsinki, to burrow under the sea and hit the Espoo shores, but it wasn't until 2006 that the tunnel metro for selected as the foundation for the public transport system in southern Espoo – and the Espoo City Council finally approved the project in 2009. Construction of the west metro began that same year and is to be concluded in the autumn of 2016.

Saved by State

Serving as the Chairman of the Board for the project, Louko has seen all the ups and downs of the undertaking. The clear highlight in recent memory was the Government's decision to fund (by 30%) the extension stretch to the new line.

"This was an important decision for the future of Espoo and gives the City a lot of great options for development," Louko says. He perceives that in the years and decades to come, the metro line will form the "backbone" for the City often criticised for its sporadic urban structure.

"Now we will have a setting where there are two sets of rails – metro and the conventional train connection – in Espoo, bringing so much more cohesion to our urban structure."

Rail Brings Focus

Louko believes that future development projects will be realised along these tracks and there won't be "random communities" sprouting up just about anywhere.

"Lined up like pearls on a necklace, we will have a totally different kind of city," Louko says, adding that feeder buses will complete the picture.

"Electric buses have already been introduced into our mass transportation system and I think that this will be the way to go in the future as well."

But going back to the days when Louko took office 14 years ago, one has to ask, what has changed in Espoo – or in Finland, for that matter? – Louko observes that the beginning of the millennium was marked by "Nokiamania" when it appeared that the mobile phone king could do no wrong. Espoo, of course, benefited a great deal as Nokia paid record-breaking taxes year after year.

"With Nokia leading the way, also international players started to get interested about Espoo. In real estate this meant that international companies were soon buying just about any property they could get their hands on."

Wanted: Strategic Ownership

While international capital was welcomed, it didn't come without its share of challenges. The newcomers often purchased older properties, but had little interest in investing money in upgrades.

"For example in Tapiola Centre the owners were hesitant to do anything and the whole development project stalled." Finally, the arrival of LocalTapiola in the neighbourhood broke the deadlock and Tapiola Centre could continue its evolution.

"LocalTapiola was a main player in that scenario and, also, the news of the coming metro re-energised the property owners." It was this "now or never" attitude that has yielded great results in Tapiola.

Three Makes One

Another historic milestone during Louko's stint in office was the launch of the "innovation university" Aalto in 2010. Created from the merger of three Finnish universities, the Helsinki School of Economics, Helsinki University of Technology and the University of Art and Design Helsinki, the new academic player brought to bear hi-tech, design and business excellence in an unprecedented manner – also internationally speaking.


While there was talk of placing the main campus in downtown Helsinki, Louko stated firmly that this was nonsense – the main campus should be where the majority of students are, in Otaniemi, Espoo. After some (at times turbulent) debate, this is exactly what happened. The main campus of Aalto University is now located in the legendary redbrick milieu designed by Alvar Aalto himself.

"The decision to create Aalto University and place it here was significant and required also timely involvement from the state since the state owns the campus grounds," Louko says. ●



The Comeback King

Spearheaded by shopping centre Ainoa, the legendary Tapiola Centre is being upgraded for the future

An architectural rendering of the Tapiola Centre renovation project. The image shows a modern, multi-story building with a prominent white, perforated metal facade. The building is situated on a raised platform, with a wide, light-colored concrete staircase leading up to it. Several people are walking on the stairs and on the platform. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall atmosphere is one of a modern, urban environment.

Once again, there is an air of anticipation in Tapiola, the iconic “Garden City” of Espoo. Tapiola, of course, is near and dear to the hearts of all Finns and widely regarded as a natural treasure; upon its birth over 60 years ago, Tapiola was a shining example of a modern community rooted in natural values. The first-built parts of Tapiola Commercial Centre (from the 1950s and 1960s) still form a valued architectural landmark – but, over time, the centre lost some of its momentum and its sense of purpose.

The fragmented ownership of the Tapiola Centre didn't exactly help in the development of the area, and the emergence of strong rivals – in the form of new shopping centres – seemed to signal the beginning of the end for the Centre. Then the City of Espoo came to the rescue with its metro plans and a determined effort was made by the property owners to return the Centre to its former glory.

With the advent of the metro, more than 20,000 passengers will be using the Tapiola station every day. Looking at those types of volumes, it is easy enough to imagine that a completely new chapter in the development of the neighbourhood is about to begin. The over-all aim is to create a lively, multifaceted

urban centre with modern mass transportation terminals, well-organised parking and maintenance arrangements. When all these things come together, there will be no stopping Tapiola's comeback.

Back to the Future

As the Helsinki metro line extends to Tapiola in 2016, the blocks to the south of the original Centre will be renewed according to the same urban sociological principles that first created the Garden City. As a consequence, the Tapiola Centre will be totally transformed. According to the plans, the new Tapiola Centre will become the largest pedestrian centre in Finland.

How does it all work, then? Well, the level previously in use for private car traffic (Merituulentie,) will feature retail spaces and a pedestrian area. There will be plenty of parking space for bikes in the vicinity of the metro station. New plazas and pedestrian streets will appear in Tapiola Centre, and the roof area will be green and well-groomed.

And it's not all talk, either. As the shopping centre Ainoa opened its doors in October 2013, it was clear that the Tapiola Centre was well on her way to becoming great once more. Owned by Tapiola KR III Real Estate Fund, the newcomer is still relatively small – with 10 000 square metres and 30 shops – but the aim is to expand the shopping centre significantly in the years to come. Kirsi



(From left to right) Kim Särns, Kirsi Borg and Vesa Immonen believe that Tapiola is about to witness a "real renaissance" in the years to come.

Borg, head of new entity Promote Tapiola, says that the shopping centre will eventually feature 50,000 square metres and as many as 100 shops.

"The construction for Phase II has already started and should be finalised by January 2017," Borg says.

Hit the Ground Running

The first phase has surpassed all expectations: in just a year, Ainoa has become a genuine meeting place for the local community. This is good news for the shop owners, since the purchasing power in this particular area is second to none in the entire country.

"The purchasing power here is 30–40 % better than the Helsinki average, for example," Borg offers a comparison. There is plenty of customer volume in the area, too: in fact, 93,000 people live within a 10 minute car ride from the shopping centre.

Also, the youthful approach and dedicated focus on leisure appear to be winning strategies. The reports from the shopping centre's "youth team" confirm that it's just the kind of place that the younger people have been wishing for – a place where you go to meet your friends and just hang out.

A big part of tomorrow's winning concept is Stockmann department store which will form a major anchor for Ainoa in the coming years. The department store will move from its previous location to Ainoa as the Phase II kicks in.

Under Construction

Presently, however, both Tapiola and Ainoa are dealing with their share of challenges as the construction continues in the area. This means that people are worried, for instance, that they can't find a parking spot. Borg says that considering this temporary handicap, the new shopping centre has performed very well:

"The number of customers has grown steadily since the opening" The real "critical mass" however, will be reached as the construction is complete and the metro is up and running. Presently, there are already 150 stores in the commercial hub.

"This neighbourhood is a real winner, now and in the long run," she believes, adding that there is a genuine opportunity here to build and expand on a great legacy.

"As there are more apartments coming to the neighbourhood, the customer base and

purchasing power will improve even more. We are definitely on our way."

Residential Power

Real Estate Funds Director Kim Särns from LocalTapiola Real Estate Asset Management is thinking along the same lines: "There are as many as 260 apartments coming to the area – and also smaller apartments which are in high demand by young people," Särns says, explaining that the master plan is to introduce some "new blood" into the community by renewing the demographics.

"The younger customer groups are mobile and used to utilising a wide range of services."

The idea here is to solidify urban structure by building up, which means, in essence, that apartments will be realised on top of other buildings. "This type of compact construction is something we have been working on for a long time. This is a great location that makes it possible to accomplish a variety of things," Särns says.

Särns is not even worried about the murky economy, since Tapiola is built with the focus on the long term – it's not about winning the day, it's about winning the dec-

ade. "In fact, this is a good time to develop new service concepts. The economic situation forces you to think about all aspects and the end result will benefit from this," he says.

Green to the Core

'Tapiola' and 'Ainoa' are names straight out of the Finnish national epic, Kalevala, which celebrates the rich folklore of this Northern country. According to the legends, Tapiola is the court of the Forest King – and the upgraded version is decidedly "green" as well. Ainoa is clearly a shopping centre where the environmental approach is not mere words: the centre features the first remote cooling system in Espoo and the entire waste management process has been fine-tuned to meet strict standards. Eventually, the shopping centre will utilise an automatic waste transportation system where waste is whisked away by a pneumatic tube.

"We already have that capacity built-in and the system will be deployed in 2016," confirms Kirsi Borg.

Vesa Immonen, the Managing Director of LocalTapiola Real Estate Asset Management, says that the development of Tapiola Commercial Centre remains a high priority for the company.

"What makes Tapiola Centre unique is that it opens outwards, not just inwards like a regular shopping centre does," Immonen says, while pointing out that the over-all brand of Tapiola is also in fine form – only in need of some polishing up.

The One and Only

According to Immonen, there is no place quite like Tapiola in the entire country. "When you have that type of solid, well-known foundation, future development will only add to the appeal of the neighbourhood."

From the point of view of LocalTapiola, the company is truly committed to the area, already owning more than a dozen properties here.

"Eventually, our local investment will reach EUR 600 million," Immonen says,

adding that this represents the biggest real estate investment in the history of the company. "Tapiola is also our homebase, as we have over 1500 employees here. It's hard to imagine that we would put our headquarters anywhere else."

Opportunity Knocking

For LocalTapiola Real Estate Asset Management, the development of Tapiola is but one front where the company has been making moves lately. While the real estate market remains a tough arena, there are positive signs:

"The investors are more active now," Immonen says. A certain "back-to-basics" attitude is prevalent among tenants, owners and investors, with attention turning to prime real estate more and more. For example, modern premises with solid energy solutions are a hot item on the market – especially if they're located in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area.

"There are opportunities also in this market," Immonen sums up. ●

The Original Garden City

Tapiola has a rich history that spans over seven decades. The community is internationally known as a ground-breaking effort in city planning and construction; architecturally speaking, the area is held in very high esteem, receiving lavish praise also for its versatility.

The city district is a unique combination of well-planned residential living, enjoyable green areas and sports venues, as well as diverse commercial services. Tapiola has always been known as a cultural powerhouse as well. For instance, The City of Espoo theatre is already here and there's talk

of realising a brand new City theatre right here, too, when the time is right.

Tapiola is surrounded by city districts known for hi-tech, education and research – the most noteworthy of these areas being Otaniemi and Keilaniemi.

Tapiola is a part of Espoo and a neighbour to Helsinki; there is only a distance of

ten kilometres to downtown Helsinki. The launch of the Western metroline marks the beginning of a new era in the development of the classic neighbourhood. ●



Aalto the Audacious

Aalto University spearheads the development of Otaniemi

There are big things in store for Aalto University and its environs in Otaniemi, Espoo. First of all, Aalto University is looking to build a true main campus to fully reflect its reputation as “the innovation university”. The cornerstone in these plans is the new metrostation – to be launched in late 2016 – which will push connectivity into a high gear for sure. The metro will spark up also R&D and corporate activities in the area, as well as residential solutions, says Kari Kontturi, Managing Director of Aalto University Properties.

The starting point is that the core campus itself consists of 250,000 square metres, R&D functions and companies add 200,000 square metres and housing rounds up the picture with 200,000 square metres. We are, however, looking to advance on all these fronts,” Kontturi says.

The university is pulling all the stops to create a world-class campus, with a new hallmark building leading the way. Having won a tough international architectural contest, Väre (designed by Finnish agency Verstas Architects) provides the unique solution the university was looking for all along – in fact, the winning entry sets a new standard for future university learning environments also within the international arena.

Stay True

Kari Kontturi assesses that the winning entry and the entire surrounding process have relied in interaction and true dialogue in an unprecedented way.

“While zoning issues are sometimes hard to figure out, we have stayed true to the original concept and that is exactly what will be built,” he promises. In fact, preparatory work has already been started on the site, making way for real construction which is scheduled to start in summer 2015.

“If the building were to be finished in 2017, that would be a fine addition to Finland’s centennial celebration,” he adds.

In addition to the new building – known as Arts Building – there will be a shopping centre (7,000 sqm), as well, linking with the metro station.

“We feel that Otaniemi is also a great area to pilot new retail concepts, so there might be something a little different here,” Kontturi says.

Red Carpet Treatment

As new real estate is being raised, the University is letting go of many of its old properties. Currently there are 10,000 square metres of free space that Aalto is releasing for other use, but the University seeks to increase that number to 45,000–50,000 sqm by 2021.

“This is no fringe real estate, but properties located very close to the core campus. We expect that a significant part of the space will be used by companies,” Kontturi says, adding that Aalto would very much like to facilitate a “corporate immigration” to the neighbourhood. Even though Otaniemi is a respected brand of the academic/corporate

world, there’s so much more one could still achieve:

“We have a situation here that provides the right location, the right people and the right story,” Kontturi says, referring to the Otaniemi legacy of doing things together.

“What we can provide is easy and open interaction that is sure to benefit companies big and small.”

Living It Up

A key part of this emerging ecosystem is the residential element. Otaniemi does not wish to be a “silent satellite” where all life flees around five o’clock – and therefore up to 7,500 new residents by the year 2025 are in the plans for the area.

“This means adding an extra 300,000 square metres of residential construction, a good part of it right by the sea,” Kontturi envisions. Around 10 % of the new residential would be student dormitories. ●





Combining cutting-edge construction with commercial pull, shopping centre Veturi was Finland's representative in the competition for the Nordic Shopping Center Award last year.

Change the Game

Shopping centres are becoming multipurpose experience hubs in order to win back the consumers

With the pressure from e-trade, shopping centres are working hard to reinvent themselves. One way to succeed is to become 'destinations' in their own right. Around the world, many new shopping centres are incorporating a heavy dose of entertainment, restaurants and cafés to their mix to make their centres recreational in addition to strictly commercial; the idea is to drive frequency of visits and length-of-stay. In the USA, there's talk of 'retail entertainment centres' (RECs), 'retail-tainment', 'shoppertainment' or 'mall-tainment' – which certainly means that consultants are awful at twisting words, but, more significantly, heralds the beginning of a whole new era for shopping centres.

One of the most outspoken protagonists of this new age is Joe Pine, the author of *The Experience Economy*. According to Pine, what we're doing today is we're moving to an experience economy where what consumers want are experiences – memorable experiences which engage them in an inherently personal way.

Appearing in October at Aulanko Property Investment Convention in Hämeenlinna, Finland, Pine showcased his perspectives on the changing face of retail. He argued that in order to succeed one must move away from commoditisation and get to the core

of experience, because of the personal and unique nature of the experiences themselves: they can't be duplicated or reduced to the lowest common denominator.

Anchored on Authenticity

Pine is especially keen on authenticity. In order to get "real from the genuine" there must be something special about the place itself. The magic of a place is a sum of two things: venue and event. This simply means that people love to go where the action is and the surroundings are pleasant enough.

When Pine talks about heritage, he doesn't mean that you have to have a medieval castle as your base of operations to have a rich history or a good story – he points to the success of Starbucks as an example of this.

Critics say that the problem with selling experience is that people get used to it: there is always somewhere newer to go. But the shopping centres aren't about to throw in the towel: according to International Council of Shopping Centers, in place of customary tenants, a new breed of tenants – grocery stores, fitness centres and even post offices – is emerging in the USA. In Finland, on the

other hand, it has been observed that public services, such as libraries, are a pretty good addition to a shopping centre.

Shopping Around the World

A quick trip around the world tells us that retail is being reinvented everywhere. In Japan, the Aeon Mall complex at Makuhari New City caters to pet lovers, providing e.g. a pet hotel and a pet store. In New Zealand, an entire shopping centre was built out of shipping containers. The Beach in Dubai combines shopping, the sea and an outdoor cinema; the Siam Paragon Mall in Thailand includes language schools, a cooking school and an aquarium.

Yet everything pretty much pales in comparison to Mall of the World, also located in Dubai. This ongoing project will integrate the largest shopping mall in the world with the largest indoor theme park in the world.

Additional districts within the project will include a wellness-dedicated for medical tourists, a “cultural celebration district” as well as a wide range of hospitality options comprising 20,000 hotel rooms catering to all types of tourists. Once completed, the Mall of the World is projected to become a year-round destination, welcoming around 180 million visitors annually.

Restoring Balance

Whether you do your shopping in a warm or cold climate, it is clear that non-traditional tenants have elevated the occupancy rates at shopping centres and also help consum-

ers combine trips to one destination. Still, the threat of internet looms over retail. Even the legendary Stockmann department store – located in the very heart of Helsinki downtown – has fallen on hard times, because people may visit the store to try on some clothes, but once they’ve decided on the size and colour, they go online to make the actual purchase.

The balance between a virtual and a physical store is off, and conventional retail operations are paying the price. Still, not everything is lost: according to a recent Accenture report, a growing number of US shoppers plan to make purchases at bricks-and-mortar stores, but they want the experience to be more convenient. This means, for example, that 19 percent of consumers surveyed said they are reserving items in-store or are buying them online for in-store pickup, while 14 percent are buying at the store and having the item shipped to them.

Redefining Roles

Using physical stores more as distribution centres is a novel idea that could have deeper implications for retailers’ profitability – it is possible that this, indeed, is the road to better inventory management, fewer markdowns and higher margins, but it’s too early in the game to know for sure.

While virtual stores can fit the whole world in a website, shopping centres have walls, floors and ceilings – physical (and costly) limitations. However, now it seems that one handicap is about to be eliminated. While previously, modifications of retail

space were difficult to carry out, there are more flexible concepts being developed all the time.

In Finland, for instance, the steel manufacturer Ruukki has championed a new way of building that allows for space to be modified and upgraded in tune with the changing times. This concept was used, for instance, in the construction of shopping centre Veturi (located in Kouvola, Finland) which went on to represent Finland in the competition for the Nordic Shopping Center Award last year.

Shopping Centre 2020

But what else is in the cards for shopping centres? According to the visions, in a decade or so we will visit stores where full-body scanners that take our measurements and recommend the clothes that best fit our bodies. Checkout that can be done from inside the dressing room or with your smart phone and no one has to wait in lines anymore.

A wild card in the deck is 3-D printing which may change consumer behaviour even radically. According to Intel report, shoppers will develop an expectation for retailers to “print on demand” individualised products just for them. Consultants are talking about “hypercustomisation” going mainstream.

Another area for development is in-store navigation. Once sensors are placed around stores, shoppers will be able to receive additional information about items that they walk past or pick up, as well as targeted promotions based on where they are in the store. ●



Joe Pine, the author of The Experience Economy, says that shopping centres must aim for authenticity at all times and get “real from the genuine”.

THE ANGLE

By Petteri Lautso

The writer is Customer value director of Ruukki Construction

Building Information Modeling brings unprecedented life-cycle cost control to retail and commercial property development



It is a big advantage if the cost and timetable implications of each tenant request during and after construction can be evaluated swiftly. The changes in consumer behavior are so fast that we can't necessarily predict exactly how the commercial spaces designed now will be used when the building is ready, let alone after ten years of use.

Increasing attention is paid to flexibility of buildings, but it might not be simple to balance immediate construction costs and possible future savings. Ruukki construction has successfully used building information models (BIM) containing also cost and schedule data, so that developers can reduce hassle and improve the user experience they offer tenants.

Another good example of the power of building product supplier BIM comes to play when optimizing operating costs. Changes in global economy can have drastic effects on energy costs. For developers it doesn't mean striving for extreme energy efficiency, but solutions that produce reliable information on investments and operating cost.

For example Ruukki Construction's Energy panel, an exterior wall system that delivers extreme air-tightness has been well received. The BIM model that is a part of the system makes it possible to assess the investment cost and future savings on building level simultaneously.

For Ruukki Construction, that delivers frames and envelopes, the use of build-

ing information modeling has made it possible to deliver not only the physical structures, but information over the building life-cycle and specific issues at a given time during construction.

New technology allows the entire chain of players from major building component manufacturers to users and owners of buildings to work together seamlessly.

It is now just a question of building the right project team to realize the full potential of BIM. ●

The Helsinki Hook-Up

The Pasila – Vallila – Kalasatama axis provides a powerful trio – and companies are hearing the message loud and clear



The Helsinki downtown area will expand to Pasila which will become a new kind of city centre with e.g. ambitious high-rise construction.

Helsinki is in the middle of a massive transformation that is unprecedented in Finland – and, in fact, one would be hard pressed to find an undertaking of equivalent scope anywhere in Europe. The original trigger was this was the exit of all local port operations from central city areas to a brand new port in Vuosaari, east from downtown, in 2008. As a consequence, the field opened up for ambitious waterfront construction like never before: residential, commercial and office construction kicked off along the shores.

But it's not all about the waterfront, mind you. Beyond the shoreline, there is plenty of action as well, as the City is taking full advantage of also inland opportunities. But no matter where the City is raising new neighbourhoods, the redevelopment strategy calls for the creation of compact city sections. The development is carried out on the "mixed-use principle": jobs are mixed with many types of housing for different income groups, to avoid segregation along income lines and long commutes.

Jaakko Stauffer, Head of Helsinki's Real Estate Office, says that the City is keen on increasing the dynamic nature of the city by using all the tools in its disposal:

"We feel that as Helsinki keeps growing, we must be able to facilitate this growth by introducing new city districts and by re-energising existing ones," Stauffer says.

The Power of Three

A key piece in the City's plans is the emerging Pasila – Vallila – Kalasatama axis, which runs from Pasila District in the west all the way to the sea in the east. In this area, there are plenty of exciting things going on – and the City wants to make sure that the synergies between the three Districts are explored to the fullest.

Minna Maartola from Economic Development comments that the Pasila – Vallila – Kalasatama is a "strong engine" for the city's growth in the future.

"All the districts have their own profile, but when considered, and then developed as one entity, there's so much more that we can achieve," she believes.

But what is the Pasila – Vallila – Kalasatama axis all about, then? Well, getting



Helsinki keeps growing and getting more compact from within. Head of Helsinki's Real Estate Office Jaakko Stauffer.

started from the west, we find Pasila District which is certainly about to experience a real renaissance in the coming years – and decades. Redevelopment has been lagging behind here, too – but as railway functions are being reorganised, a lot of space has become available for construction.



The Pasila high-rise competition is under preparation. Project Manager Dan Mollgren is in charge of the planning.

Pasila – The Second City Centre

Pasila is already recognised as the number two traffic hub in the nation: all the trains stop here and trams and buses very much congregate in the area. This means that Pasila is – in essence – “the second city centre” 3.5 kilometres removed from the “real” downtown. Still, as potent as Pasila already is, there are plans to make it much more impressive: the idea here is to turn Central Pasila into a new kind of urban centre for business, service and housing.

A next-gen traffic/commercial hub – called Tripla Centre – will be built in the railway yard area freed up in the Central Pasila area. Building rights of approximately 183,000 square metres will be zoned in the area, and the total value of the project is approximately EUR 1 billion.

Niina Puumalainen, the City Project Manager for Pasila, says that Central Pasila is a “strategic priority” for the City – but also the State.

“The City of Helsinki and the State are working together with Tripla’s developer YIT to get the perfect result here,” she says, adding that the Tripla project provides “a unique opportunity” to create a real powerhouse.

“The collaboration so far has been great and we hold ourselves to a very high standard when it comes to the realisation of Tripla.”

Rail Reach

The new-and-improved Pasila station will be the busiest railway station in the land. The new Ring Rail Line will connect Tripla and Pasila to the Helsinki Airport and the City Rail Loop, once completed, will link up Pasila, downtown Helsinki, Hakaniemi and Töölö in a more effective manner. There is even a reservation for future metro station.



The first phase of the Central Pasila project consists of realising Tripla

In addition, trams and buses will continue to run through here. Also, the focus on pedestrians and cyclists will be intensified a great deal: green transport is supported by providing parking places for 3,400 bicycles (and charging stations for almost 400 electric cars).

Jaakko Stauffer comments that the location of Pasila is unrivaled in the capital region.

“Furthermore, with the development of Central Pasila we are able to bring East and West Pasila together in a brand new way.”

This new, greener Pasila will also feature green roofs which will cover one third of the total roof area of Tripla – and be utilised elsewhere as well since the entire Cen-

tral Pasila is realised under the principle of sustainability. There will also be a public park for the residents, located in the middle of the area.

The diverse Tripla Centre – designed to be comfortable in terms of both functionality and landscape – will feature offices, shops and a conference centre, housing, hotel, multipurpose arena and a terminal for public transport. According to Puumalainen, the Pasila station will be totally transformed into a modern meeting place that will certainly add something extra to the urban experience.

“This is perfectly in line with the present-day offering of Pasila, since a lot of Helsinki’s top culture and entertainment attractions are already located here”, she says.

Vallila features a strong financial sector cluster. Banking & insurance company Pohjola’s new building is currently under construction.





Companies recognise the appeal of the emerging Central Pasila and therefore want to go there. Pasila Project Manager Niina Puumalainen.



settling in the newly zoned Konepaja area. Major banks keep moving their operations here, too,” she says.

There’s plenty of corporate history in the area: for years, financing & insurance sector companies have made their nests here, there’s plenty of ICT jobs in the neighborhood and health and life sciences industry have a remarkably strong profile, too. In fact, with GE Healthcare taking the lead, there’s even a dynamic “Health Innovation Hub” for healthcare startups in the making in Vallila.

“Health Innovation Hub is one example of the local progressive mindset. Smaller companies benefit from being in the vicinity of the big industry players as networking and joint projects become easier,” says Maarttola.

Get Creative

There are also other reasons why SMEs have flocked to the neighborhood. The rents are lower here, but you’re still “wired in” to the urban action; in fact, many professionals of the creative industries prefer older, industrial environments to new premises in any case. Red brick and rough concrete seem to provide that final seal of authenticity that many actors in the fields of media, design and architecture appreciate.

City has been having talks with e.g. the key property owners in the area, and it is clear that the local companies and developers want to press on with the evolution of the neighbourhood. Maarttola says that the dialogue is on-going, and the idea is to make it deeper and more systematic.

“Presently, companies are making initiatives to improve the area. The City is listening to the companies very intently, since we share the same goal in development,” Maarttola says, adding that the city is not only interested in the “new and shiny,” but is committed to taking care of the existing neighbourhoods as well. An idea contest



jects such as Tripla in a more sensible manner.

“We have a solid blueprint to see us through the process,” confirms Puumalainen.

It never hurts that companies are very excited about Pasila, too, and eager to establish operations here. In fact, it is among the few places in the metropolitan area where you don’t have to consider – not even for a second – whether the location is good or not.

Reinventing Vallila

That’s not to say that the neighbouring Vallila is hard to reach. This enterprising district is a favourite of the companies of all sizes due to, largely, accessibility issues. Trams and buses form the backbone for public transport and the Pasila station is not too far either.

Minna Maarttola comments that a lot of companies have cited convenient access to the Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport as one of the reasons for coming to Vallila.

“Vallila has increased its appeal of late, with big companies such as Amer Sports



Kalasatama Centre, REDI, will feature towers that reach 100 metres.

was arranged in autumn 2014 as one way to make sure that Vallila keeps moving in the right direction.

It is also estimated that the significance of Vallila will increase in the coming years, as a mass transport hub will be built in connection to the Kalasatama metro station. And that's not the only thing that is expected to change as Kalasatama begins to take shape over coming years: the new seaside neighborhood has the power to impact a variety



Kalasatama will be a smart city district. Hannu Asikainen, Kalasatama Project Director.

of issues, and Vallila is sure to benefit from such a high-profile neighbour.

Kalasatama – Seaside Splendour

But what is it exactly that makes Kalasatama so great? Well, it all starts with great seaside views and great connectivity. Located along the eastern shores of the core city area, Kalasatama is just minutes away from downtown. Effective public transport – spearheaded by the Kalasatama metro station – and the central location make Kalasatama an alluring prospect for residents and companies alike. For example: if you fancy a stroll by the sea, there is a six-kilometre promenade right by the shore.

Project Director Hannu Asikainen believes that, upon completion, Kalasatama will be a “simply tremendous” area for everyone.

“The area is still being developed, but there's already a strong community spirit, an attitude of doing things together,” he says.

The development of the Kalasatama district will continue well into the 2030s, and, eventually, the district will feature 20,000 residents and 8,000 jobs. Today, Kalasatama is already home to about 2,000 residents.

Mini-Manhattan in the Making

Kalasatama will also feature high-rise construction of unprecedented verticality: The



Health tech has made a big impact in Vallila. Development Manager Minna Maartola.

Kalasatama Centre, known as REDI, will consist of eight tower blocks which will feature 20–35 storeys (the highest tower reaching 132 metres). The towers will be complemented by a versatile commercial centre as well as a nearby social and healthcare centre.

“REDI will be a strong anchor for the community and the commercial functions will go well beyond what people expect from a regular shopping centre,” Asikainen

says. Not to be outdone by Tripla, REDI will be another great example of the “Experience Economy”. The concept, honed by the developer SRV, will combine seaside atmosphere, high-rise buildings and superb connections.

There is also something else which distinguishes Kalasatama from other urban development projects out there. TEKES (The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation) chose Kalasatama to be the very first pilot in its national Smart Cities programme. Implemented by the City of Helsinki, the project will develop Kalasatama into a model district of smart urban development – with open data as one key driver.

Next-Practice? – Yes, Please!

“Smart Kalasatama” aims to put the best practices of the future into a test in real life, as living lab attitudes are taking root in the area. Various smart development activities have been planned for Kalasatama or have already been started in the district. Perhaps the most far-reaching among them is a smart energy project – carried out by Helen, ABB and Fingrid – which will turn the district into a testbed for ambitious smart grids. This means, among other things, that residents can produce energy themselves.

As part of the smart traffic agenda, the

use of electric cars is encouraged in Kalasatama and other new solutions with regards to smart transportation and traffic will be tried out here, too. In line with the green ideology, Kalasatama also features an underground waste collection system.

Kalasatama will be different from similar international projects, since the district will not rely on a single technology or scheme – but, instead, the pilot seeks to develop Kalasatama comprehensively into a smart city district on a broad basis. The “Kalasatama Spirit” is very much about launching pilots to find out what works and what does not – and the wishes and needs of the residents give the City the necessary platform for action.

“Kalasatama is a very special place for the City and we want to make sure that it turns out great,” Hannu Asikainen says.

Cleared for Launch

From the point of view of the Pasila – Vallila – Kalasatama axis, it is fortunate that there are such strong new commercial players – Tripla and REDI – to hold the line in either direction, comments Jaakko Stauffer.

“With Tripla and REDI leading the way, we expect to see these three neighborhoods really flourish. In many ways, these areas complement each other and add something special to the big picture.” ●

Fast Facts

Pasila-Vallila Kalasatama

Located roughly 3 km north of central Helsinki, Pasila will become a second city centre for Helsinki. This major development area will eventually provide homes for 20,000 inhabitants and 60,000 jobs.

Vallila, a former industrial area, is transforming into a multifunctional area with housing, offices, and commercial services. The area’s strong workplace concentration, housing, and large corporate head offices will be complemented by new residential housing and premises for business in the former railway depot and industrial blocks.

The nearby Kalasatama, a former harbour, is being developed into a business/residential centre; with 20,000 residents and 8,000 jobs by 2040. A metro station serves as a hub for this easily accessible and compact urban area. ●

Helsinki High-Rise Competition



Organised by the Finnish State and City of Helsinki, ‘Helsinki High-rise’ is a competition for the design and construction of the Central Pasila Tower Area, which is located in Helsinki immediately adjacent to the downtown area. The aim of the competition is to choose a high-quality plan for the development and construction of 150,000–200,000 square metres for residential, office and commercial space.

‘Helsinki High-rise’ is a Design-Build competition, in which the party submitting the highest quality plan-solution will have the right and obligation to procure the building rights for the start-up area specified in the competition, as well as develop and construct the planned area. In addition, once construction on the start area has made sufficient progress, the competition winner has the right to procure the building rights for a

specified option area and the obligation to develop it as agreed.

The plan location is the Central Pasila Tower Area which is located in Finland’s most accessible area. This superior traffic hub could become a home for 8 to 10 towers (with no less than 15 floors each). In connection to the making of the Tripla Centre, the towers-to-be have the power to shape the skyline and the identity of the “new Pasila”. ●



Subway Smarts

With compact urban structure in mind, SRV is targeting three metro stations for ambitious development

In making the smart & sustainable communities of the future, there are a range of issues to consider – but from the point of view of the developer/constructor, there's a couple of things that top the list.

"From our perspective, we want to participate in projects which solidify the city structure. The other issue is mixed-use: we believe that bringing both residential and commercial development into an area will yield the best result," says Jouko Pöyhönen, Director, Project Development for SRV.

Pöyhönen points out that apartments should never be too far from where the jobs are; in an ideal situation, you can walk to the office, or be conveniently whisked away by public transportation.

In recent years, exploring the possibilities of public transportation has shaped SRV's business strategies quite a bit. As the decision was made to build the western metroline to Espoo, SRV was immediately interested – along the metro tracks there are plenty of intriguing development opportunities.

Kalasatama Leads the Way

But the biggest news is to be found in east, in connection to the existing metroline, in Kalasatama, Helsinki: namely, SRV's largest development ever – REDI. As local port operations exited the area a few years ago, the neighbourhood is being developed into a vibrant seaside district. Markus Laine, Director, Real Estate Transactions and Investors for SRV, believes that REDI will emerge as the new, powerful centre for the Helsinki core area in the east – and become a true pearl for citizens and visitors alike.

"REDI, opening in 2018, will be the core of the Kalasatama District. The area will develop substantially during the years to come and the end result will be spectacular," he says.

REDI will be the beating heart of the local community, business and services –

with over 60,000 square metres of retail space, it promises to be almost double the size of the shopping centre Kamppi, SRV's previous success story in the field. With REDI, SRV is looking to upgrade the concept of a modern shopping centre – and has spent years in preparation to take on this challenge. As a consequence, SRV's top design teams have been planning, from day one, to make REDI a great place to meet other people, to hang out and have a good time.

Destination: REDI

According to SRV's plans, REDI will be a "dynamic destination experience" offering retail and leisure, unique merchandising mixes, and entertainment attractions. Introducing a whole new city district to the Helsinki city core is something that doesn't hap-

pen every day – and that’s why REDI will be planned and executed with utmost care.

“REDI will be the anchor of the new community in Kalasatama – and that is a big responsibility,” acknowledges Laine. The total investment value of the shopping centre and parking facility is around EUR 480 million.

This cross between a shopping centre and a city centre – in the middle of a catchment area of 1.2 million people – has already attracted a lot of attention in the business circles. Laine reports that tenant negotiations are ongoing over the majority of REDI’s leasable space:

“Especially those tenants thinking on the long-term are on the move,” Laine says, adding that in Kalasatama it all starts and ends with the perfect location:

“There are half a million people living with a 15 minutes’ car ride from REDI,” he says. Even the international airport is quite accessible from here.

Going UP!

But what kinds of goods and services will REDI entail, then? According to the plans, there will be food, fashion, leisure, activities and attractions, cafés and restaurants... everything you need for quality every-day life. The 150 stores and restaurants of the shopping centre should be able to oblige even the most demanding customers.

What’s more, REDI will also bring about a new age of skyscrapers in the metropolitan area – with as many as eight high-

rise towers reaching for the sky. This octet of towers will be built around the Itäväylä highway and the Kalasatama metro station.

All and all, there will be six residential towers, one office tower and one hotel tower, with the highest of the pack rising up to 126 metres. Consequently, Itäväylä and the metro will be covered with an expansive green deck, allowing for smooth traffic flow.

Thanks to the towers, more than 2,000 people will be able to call REDI their home. Presently, the first two residential towers already have a legally valid building permit.

Keilaniemi: The Sequel

Markus Laine observes that SRV is now engaging in high-rise construction on a scale that is unprecedented in Finland. This type of construction simply hasn’t been done yet – by anyone, he points out.

Still, combining high-rise construction and residential development is a rising trend with SRV. There is another “vertical” project in the works at Keilaniemi, which is the very first place where the new metro will enter next year, as the western line becomes operational. Keilaniemi is already an area of legendary business status – with a proud skyline of corporate towers – but residential functions have been missing from the picture so far.

With four new high-rise buildings – the Keilaniemi Towers – SRV is looking to diversify the area:

“Thanks to the metro station, it is now possible to add also residential construction

into a neighbourhood known for its top international companies,” Jouko Pöyhönen says, adding that while connectivity is a key issue here. Also, the seaside views from the towers will be something quite special to behold, as the buildings will be 32–40 storeys tall.

“We are excited about this opportunity and eager to get to work on building the towers,” he says.

Niittykumpu – Everyday Excellence

Taking the metro westward from Keilaniemi, one will reach the Niittykumpu station within minutes – and here we find yet another active SRV operation. A local grocery-driven shopping unit of 6,000 square metres – as well as two residential units rising to 24 floors – are being built on top of the metro station... the makings of well-rounded community for the future.

Jouko Pöyhönen says that SRV has had its eye on Niittykumpu for a long time, but first it looked like development in the area was a ‘no-go’. As the company made a commitment to spearhead the project, City of Espoo agreed to go ahead with the plans.

“Niittykumpu will become a genuine district centre with a great balance of the everyday functions,” Pöyhönen believes, adding that there are plans to build well over 100,000 square metres of residential space in the area.

“As the present-day car dealerships’ area is turned into apartments, the profile of the entire district will change.” ●



The Rebirth of Cool

**Wanting to make office fun & functional,
Skanska CDF launches an ambitious development
project at the Helsinki Airport**

Improving productivity is what more and more companies are looking for today. Updating the entire concept of today's office is very much linked with this goal. Björn Mattsson, the newly appointed Managing Director for Skanska Commercial Development Finland, says that companies should recognise how the ways of working have changed over the years.

"There is a war for talent going on and in order to attract the best people, companies need the best premises," he sums up.

The problem, of course, is that it's getting increasingly difficult for companies to know where they are going to be in five years – or two years, for that matter. At Skanska CDF, this equation is solved by adding a good degree of flexibility into the mix: what is needed now is office space that lives and breathes according to the needs and wishes of the tenants.

No More Desk Duty

Skanska believes that the offices of the future will be central nodal points at which co-workers can get together in different "constellations" – and find ways of working that suit themselves and their organisation better. This means that companies must abandon the old philosophy of simply having people sit by the desks. In the future, we will see more offices which feature silent rooms for work that requires intense focus, livelier rooms for teams and projects, phone

booths and "hot desks" for someone just popping in and out.

"We want to explore if it's possible to make the office 'cool'," Mattsson says with a smile.

Under Skanska's Activity-Based Workplaces (ABW) concept, the space is simply used more effectively and more creatively – and this will bring savings to the company as there are less square metres. Giving the employees the premises and the tools to do their work in a better way – a fun way, even – will boost employee satisfaction and productivity. Mattsson points out that the old days of "management by Excel" are over:

"People's wellbeing is more than an Excel spreadsheet. These are issues that all employers are going to have to address sooner or later."

New Science of Office

According to research, work satisfaction increases by 20–30 % when moving from conventional office to ABW. At the same time, when there is a designated space



Director Antti Nousiainen at Skanska CDF says that the new Aviapolis District will be characterised by unprecedented connectivity.



Björn Mattsson, Managing Director for Skanska CDF, wants to find out if it's possible to make the office 'cool'.

for every function, the productivity of the work can increase as much as 20 %. Taken together, the efficient use of space and the increase in productivity can bring in savings to the tune of 40 %.

Director Antti Nousiainen at Skanska CDF adds that ABW can boost performance in new or old premises – more than anything else, it is a question of commitment.

“Companies do realise that these types of solutions lead to better business performance – and that the competitors in the same business streams are aware of this, too,” Nousiainen says.

Rail Redemption

Looking at the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, Nousiainen observes that the workplace is not the only thing that is changing: massive infrastructure projects are taking place in the west and in the north, as metro expands to

Espoo and Ring Rail Line makes its way to the Helsinki-Vantaa International Airport.

“Rails are giving the metropolitan area better connectivity and we want to make the most of the opportunities therein,” Nousiainen says. And it's more than talk: in December 2014, Skanska CDF started the construction of the new centre of Aviapolis Area, an ambitious development project which combines office construction with residential, commercial and hotel construction. Located right next to the airport, and on top of the Aviapolis Railway Station, the Aviabulevardi Office building will feature 9,200 square metres of leasable space and encompass six storeys.

“The location by the Aviapolis Railway Station is very attractive, since you're only a stone's throw away from Airport terminal. We've already had numerous inquiries about the project and the first leases have already been signed,” Nousiainen reports. Needless to say, Skanska's Activity-Based Workplaces has been a strong selling point in attracting the customers.

Ready for Take Off

Behind the high demand is the fact that the Aviapolis area near the airport was already a hot item for companies with a progressive mindset even before Ring Rail Line. When you put rails and wings together, you get something that is quite unprecedented in Finland: a natural superhub.

“This will probably be the most international spot in the country,” Nousiainen says.

With the Aviabulevardi office building serving as the strong heart for this new community, what types of companies is Skanska CDF looking to attract to the building? Nousiainen says that he knows for a fact that many sales organisations or brand offices are actively looking for just this kind of space – and now it's available.

“We aim for the medium size companies more than small companies,” he says, adding that 400–800 square metres is the projected average space per tenant.

Life After Five

But the business and office activities is just one element here – Nousiainen promises that there will be life in the neighbourhood also after 5 o'clock when the lights go out in the offices.

“We want to help in creating a 24/7 area where there is lots of activity and many things to do.” Conceivably, as the identity of the district is strongly linked with aviation, this is something that can be explored in the realisation of the area.

“The Finnish Aviation Museum is already located there,” Nousiainen points out.

The residential offering is going to be rather broad-based, with private/rental apartments and also assisted living solutions. In the area, there will also be a shopping centre which brings a good mix of public and commercial services to the local residents and the workers.

Green Edge

Aviabulevardi will be a green neighbourhood, as well. Nousiainen says that the office complex will go for both LEED and EU Green Building certification, and bring tried-and-true environmental solutions to the project.

Skanska has a long history with LEED – having almost single-handedly introduced LEED certification in Finland a few years back – but the company is not dead-set on Platinum Level in every single case.

“With LEED, of course, the standards keep rising all the time. Our intention is to optimise the sustainable solutions and provide the best possible outcome here,” Nousiainen concludes. ●





Magnetic North

Oulu is ready to become the leading city in Northern Scandinavia

Northern Scandinavia is ripe with opportunities – if one has the will and resources to pursue them. Leading the pack in this department is Oulu, the largest city in Northern Finland with 250,000 residents. Located on the shores of the Bay of Bothnia, in the Oulunjoki river delta, Oulu has long been known for its innovative expertise – for example, Oulu’s ICT prowess is remarkable also on an international level.

Now, however, there is something new and exciting underway. Declaring itself the “Capital of Northern Scandinavia,” Oulu has intensified its collaboration with other Nordic hubs – such as Luleå in Sweden and Tromsø in Norway – which has led to new flight connections between the key cities. Juha Ala-Mursula, Director of BusinessOulu, which is responsible of the economic development for the City, says that getting all the partners involved in the project has taken years of work, but all the effort is starting to payoff now:

“We believe that a new type of ‘Gateway to North’ is now being born, especially from the perspective of business and investments. In the Northern Scandinavia, there are many intensively growing areas which are now united under one banner,” Ala-Mursula lays down the game plan.

Northern Promises

Head of Marketing and Communications of BusinessOulu, Pauliina Pikkujämsä comments that Oulu – as well as the other great cities of the North – are standing on the threshold of a new age. From mining to nuclear power, from biorefineries to new creative industries, there is plenty of action going on.

“In recent years, we have seen a trend where all eyes are suddenly on the North: there is a huge investment boom underway that will impact great many things,” she says. Balance of power, so to speak, seems to shifting quite a bit as there is nothing to prevent the folks up North from taking full advantage of the emerging opportunities.

The City of Oulu is spearheading this big transition by launching a considerable investment programme: the City’s new

investments will total as much as € 400 million in the coming years. A priority on the City’s list is the retooling of the downtown area, as development projects to the tune of € 73 million target the city centre.

Retail Reach

The new Valkea shopping centre – scheduled for launch in spring 2016 – is a key piece of these plans. Located in the heart of Oulu’s city centre, Valkea is designed as a unique shopping environment for e.g. fashion products and a true living room for the city’s residents.

“In addition, there are also smaller shopping centres that are coming to the downtown area,” Juha Ala-Mursula adds.

The lively hotel scene is another hot ticket right now. According to Ala-Mur-

sula, there are several hotel projects in the pipeline and results should be forthcoming quickly:

“The City has the ability to move fast with permits, since there is zoning already in place that enables the construction of hotels.”

Master the Flow

Furthermore, Oulu has been placing additional focus on smooth downtown logistics under its “Logistics Street” concept which is another enabling factor, making it easier to service the city center in more diverse ways. The completion of underground parking facilities in 2015 will also facilitate a smoother flow of traffic.

That same spirit of connectivity extends into the digital networks, as well. In fact, Oulu is the leading city in the utilisation of 5G networks.

“We have Europe’s best wireless ecosystem here, regardless of the industry,” Ala-Mursula says, adding that not many worthy challengers emerge from outside Europe, either. The solid ICT foundation was built during Nokia’s glory days and that expertise still remains, for the most part, in the area: many ex-Nokians have, for example, launched their own startups and come up with numerous innovations, often with ties to the ever-increasing app world.

Going North!

This buzz has not gone unnoticed by the industry’s top international players. Ala-Mursula reports that during the last six months, ten new international ICT companies have established operations here – from such countries as Taiwan, Germany, Norway, Italy, USA...

“If you look at all the Foreign Direct Investments made in Finland in 2014, you can quickly see that Oulu comes on top in this department,” Ala-Mursula says.

Especially ICT companies with ambitious R&D that are eyeing Oulu right now, Pauliina Pikkujämsä says.

“All and all, our ICT sector encompasses more than 1,000 highly-skilled experts – and that number is growing,” she says.

Young Power

Expertise and education are very much key words in the Oulu Region, as the City boasts, for example, the second largest university in Finland and more than 30,000 college students. The students, in turn, provide new blood to the local economy in various ways, making sure that the community stays dynamic and vibrant.

“The goal for the City is to become the fastest growing economic region in the country – and we feel that we’re well on our way,” Ala-Mursula and Pikkujämsä sum up. ●

Santa Claus Logistics?

Talk about your demanding deliveries. As Ruukki Construction, the City of Oulu, Helsinki Design Week and architect & design agency Snøhetta organised an open architectural design competition for young architects and designers, they had something very special in mind. The mission in ‘The Unbelievable Challenge’ was to find innovative ideas and solutions for logistics center placed in the City of Oulu that would meet the challenges that the Nordic investment boom sets for retail and logistics buildings. World-famous logistical supergenius, Santa Claus, was chosen to represent the investor.

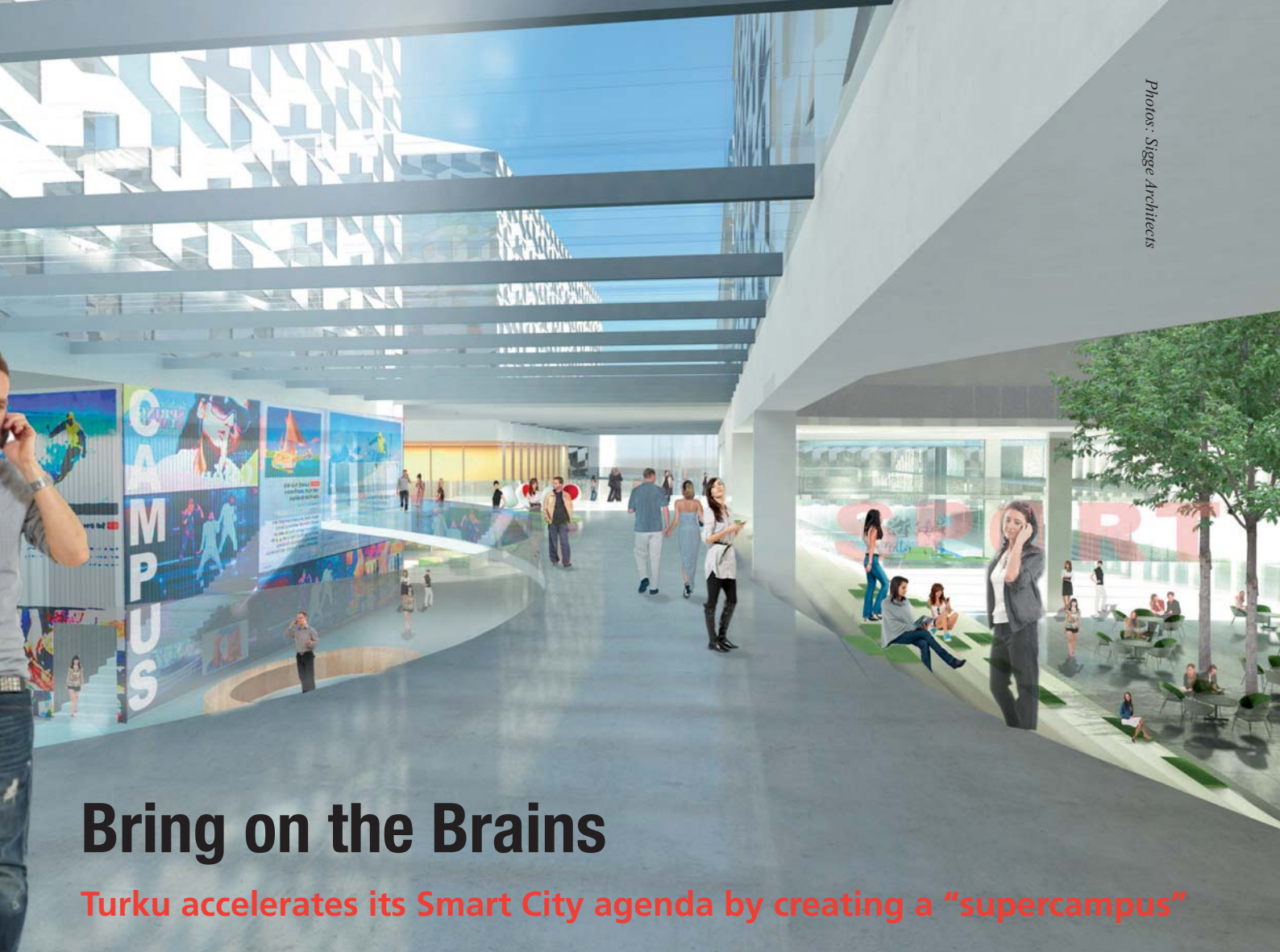
Launched in spring 2014, the Unbelievable Challenge culminated in Helsinki in December with the announcement of the winner. The entry ‘Nothing is impossible,’ submitted by Alexandru Oprita and Laurentiu Constantin of Romania, was chosen as the winner.

According to the jury, the strength of this proposal is being able to exhibit surprise and magical character within the building itself. The magic happens on the building’s façade. A simple idea makes it possible to blend the borders between traditional and online shopping. It also makes it possible to position logistics buildings in the best possible areas without sacrificing cityscape.

The jury was genuinely surprised at both the sheer number of entries – 243 in total – and the amount and quality of thinking that the entrants had obviously invested in the competition. Out of the high-quality entries, jury selected six finalists, one of which was awarded the main prize – a ten-week fully-paid internship at the internationally acclaimed Snøhetta agency in Oslo, Norway. Four others each received a prize of € 1,000. ●



Photo: Alexandru Oprita & Laurentiu Constantin



Bring on the Brains

Turku accelerates its Smart City agenda by creating a “supercampus”

Going well beyond sustainable, Turku gets busy raising its urban IQ: Smart City attitudes and practices are gaining momentum in the entire Turku Region. This transition did not, however, take place overnight: sustainable development has long been a core value at Turku and the community has been internationally noted for its efforts, too – for example, receiving the ICLEI Honorary Award in 2006 and signing the European Declaration of Sustainable Cities already in 1996. Turku really switched into a high gear in 2011, as the Urban Infrastructure Initiative (UII) workshopped intensively with the City of Turku to identify priorities for advancing sustainability.

In fact, Turku was the first city to take part in the UII programme which brought some international “heavy hitters” from such companies as Toyota and Siemens to Turku. A key project of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), UII was launched in 2010 to help cities meet the inter-connected challenges of sustainable development.

Brainstorming Boost

Jouko Turto, Director of Turku Municipal Property Corporation, recognises that the workshopping sessions of 2011 ignited a spark that has yet to die down:

“There was really good interaction and dialogue. The top executives of World Busi-

ness Council were eager to learn about our best practices and there was much we could learn from them as well,” says Turto. As it turns out, the workshopping resulted in Siemens and the City signing a three-year contract to fully explore the realms of smart and sustainable practises in, for instance, new city neighbourhoods such as Skanssi.

“The cooperation with Siemens has taught us the value of working together with companies in such issues as energy, transport and sustainable construction and living.”

Next-Practice Reach

It was apparent already from UII sessions that, for example, public-private partnerships and performance contracting could

be relevant in order to realise light rail in the city; to realise cutting-edge smart grid systems; to take regional traffic management to another level. Encouraged by its past successes, Turku has sought to create cross-over initiatives that bridge conventional “silos”.

Jouko Turto notes that the most promising ideas cut across several themes. Hi-tech solutions are very much on table, as for example applying ICT to improve city energy efficiency will start to reach its full potential.

The crown jewel in midst of all this is the Turku Science Park, one of the biggest and oldest innovation parks in the land. There are plans to realise a world-class hi-tech campus in the park which has a long and successful history of bridging the academic and the corporate.

Domino Effect

Mikko Lehtinen, Managing Director of Turku Technology Properties, says that next phase in the evolution of the Science Park will begin in spring 2015.

"The making of the campus will start in earnest as the Turku University of Applied Sciences will focus all its resources in the Science Park." This, in turn, will start a domino effect as other educational players will claim the properties left vacant by University of Applied Sciences.

"We are able to utilise existing space to accomplish so much more," says Lehtinen, adding that the question that is most on people's minds is 'Why wasn't this done before?'

"It's really such a simple, efficient solution," Lehtinen says, obviously glad to get the ball rolling soon.

Dream Campus – The Making Of

Currently, Turku Technology Properties owns 100,000 square metres of existing premises – and the creation of full-fledged innovation campus will, eventually, add another 75,000 sqm into the mix. In the entire Turku Science Park area, there are over 250,000 square metres of completed premises.

Mikko Lehtinen explains that the master plan relies on transforming Itäharju, a former industrial area located right next to Science Park, into a new type of neighbourhood which combines studying, living and leisure in a brand new way. Ambitious high-rise construction, restaurants, stores and residential development are all in the cards for the Science Park – Itäharju combo.

According to Lehtinen, Science Park – Itäharju area will be transformed into a "true city district", with parks, sports grounds and all types of activities.

"We're looking to build a place that is not about business or residential concerns alone – a place where people simply like to go to hang out and have fun," he says.

Cover the Gap

However, in order to fulfil the promise of the new city district, connectivity needs to improve a great deal. To facilitate this, a new hospital – with a price tag of EUR 180 million – will be built across both E18 motorway and the railroad tracks. Timo Hintsanen, Turku City Planning Director, says that realising the hospital on top of E18 and rail will go a long way to integrate the local urban structure, linking the emerging supercampus with downtown.

"Furthermore, we are also looking into various solutions that boost mobility

within the Science Park – Itäharju campus," Hintsanen says, adding that this is very much in line with the City's commitment to become the "most attractive city for students".

"As internal transportation is made easier, the campus will really get going." There's also much more that can be done to boost the cohesion and identity of the campus in various ways: for example, the campus lighting solutions could be provided by solar means, giving it a "signature look," Hintsanen observes.

Greener Energy

Turku Technology Properties is driving this change with a decidedly green mindset. Mikko Lehtinen reveals that the company has looked into producing energy for itself – and via use of thermal energy, solar panels and excess heat recapture, very impressive results can be achieved.

"According to studies, we could potentially produce as much as 50–70 % of our own energy," Lehtinen says, while admitting that the target sounds ambitious – but raising the bar as high as it will go is something that the organisation wants to do.

"After all, currently our annual energy costs are around EUR 2.5 million. If you reduce energy consumption even by 10%, you get significant savings," Lehtinen crunches the numbers.





Science Park plans are well in line with the City's Climate and Environment Programme which wants to cut greenhouse gas emissions per capita by 30 % from the 1990 level by 2020. The City also believes that preventing climate change and creating a low-carbon society present significant opportunities for businesses in the region.

Winning Formula

The Science Park area is, of course, in the very core of Turku's smart city plans, since this is where the "big brains" are to be found. There are universities, numerous high-tech companies and other service providers in the neighbourhood – with more to come, believes Jouko Turto.

"The recipe for success involves local players, both big and small, cooperating in new ways. Creating and utilising expertise networks in the best possible way – that's what the Turku Science Park is all about," Turto sums up the winning formula.

Naturally, it doesn't exactly hurt that the Science Park has, not one, but two areas, where it has world-class clout: biotech and ICT.

Booming Biobiz

BioTurku – the cluster for biotechnology actors in the Turku region – presently comprises around one hundred players, including companies as well as training and research centres. The cluster companies are constantly on the look-out for information which has accumulated over time, but has not been put to good use commercially. The players at BioTurku have a lot of expertise at pinpointing such areas – and turning raw data into global hit products.

A long-time anchor in the biobiz is drug development. Nevertheless, many people are still surprised to learn that 10 per cent of new European medicines – which

have been cleared for sale by the authorities – has actually been developed right here in the Turku Region.

Dynamic Data

The facts and figures involving ICT are equally impressive. The information and communication technology is the second biggest business sector in Southwest Finland at the moment, and has been growing continuously and steadily (currently employing 13,500 people). The Turku–Salo region forms Finland's strongest ICT expertise cluster outside the Helsinki metropolitan area.

The "extra edge" of ICT lies largely in the fact that it is one of those sectors which can give a boost to just about any industry.

At Turku Science Park, applied ICT is linked to – in addition to Biotech – also maritime and metal industries. Other up-and-coming areas include electronics, digital media and speech and language technology.

True Blue

New and intriguing opportunities have opened up also by the sea as the German shipbuilder Meyer Werft bought the Turku shipyard – and announced its desire to develop the local operations. Timo Hintsanen reports that this recent development is a great fit for the emerging 'Blue Industry Park' which brings local players together.

"In connection to the shipyard, there will be production, R&D and training," Hintsanen says.

But let's go back to the new city neighbourhoods for a moment. Jouko Turto points out that Turku wants the future city districts to be innovative, ecological environments, as well as engines of economic growth. Skanssi and Linnanfältti are two key areas in City's plans – and especially the latter has been waiting in the wings for a long time. Now, the word is finally 'GO'.

"The construction of Linnanfältti area begins in 2015," confirms Turto.

The Soul of Smart

According to Turto, the City development strategy is not about realising individual projects – no matter how big in scope – but about looking at the big picture, and driving the message home on all fronts.

"From our perspective, that's the essence of smart, urban development." ●



Opportunity Knocking

Union Investment Real Estate sees great potential in Finland – and elsewhere in Nordics



Sustainability, energy efficiency and the environment remain the key drivers in the real estate investment sector, says Philip La Pierre, Head of Investment Europe, Union Investment Real Estate GmbH. La Pierre says that his company firmly believes that sustainable practices go hand in hand with economic added value and the viability of sustainable products over the long term.

In fact, Union Investment is one of Germany's first major property portfolio managers to have conducted a comprehensive analysis of its global real estate fund portfolio according to sustainability criteria. The properties in Finland, for example, are all designed to meet the group's sustainability requirements, most of them hold BREEAM certificates.

The company has been active in the Nordics – meaning, in this case, Finland and Sweden – since 2005. Its portfolio in Finland currently comprises six office properties and a logistics centre in Espoo, Vantaa and Helsinki, totalling some 200 million Euros. In 2013, Union Investment acquired the headquarters of construction company Skanska in Helsinki for its open-ended real estate fund UniInstitutional European Real Estate. Completed in 2012, the property has LEED Platinum certification and is fully let to Skanska.

Wanted: Top Quality!

The Skanska headquarters building is a good example of the company's quality-oriented investment approach:

“Working with dependable partners

such as Skanska, we have established an excellent portfolio in Helsinki within the space of just a few years that has attracted international attention,” says La Pierre.

Another quite recent acquisition in Finland was the new Alberga B office building in Espoo which was acquired in 2012 for the company's Europe fund. The vendor was Finnish project developer NCC Property Development. That same year, the company also acquired the Eventes Business Garden, an office development already 100% pre-let on a long lease.

Exploring the Market

According to La Pierre, the high-growth metropolitan region of Helsinki remains a key investment focus for the company.

“We could also imagine investing again in project developments like we have done several times. Investments in project developments – via forward purchase – give us the chance to secure core properties which are not easy to find these days,” says La Pierre. Union Investment is also looking for investment opportunities in Sweden and Norway.

La Pierre reports that investments in

city-centre office space and business parks are “the mainstay” of the company's investment strategy. In addition, Union Investment is investing in logistics properties, shopping centres and business hotels in selected locations that offer the prospect of attractive returns over the medium and long term.

Retooling Landmarks

In addition to new real estate, the company is also involved in the preservation of existing landmark buildings. Union Investment has gained a lot of experience in refurbishing buildings from its existing stock. A prominent example is the repositioning of the former Unilever HQ in Hamburg which is now a multi-let building and comprises the company's Hamburg headquarters.

Union Investment Real Estate GmbH is one of the largest investment managers for real estate in Germany, having been active in the real estate business since 1965. Union Investment Real Estate is Germany's largest investment management company for open-ended real estate funds. ●

Lutz Ehrhardt

Core Values

Tampere is reinventing its city centre and waterfront – and it's just getting started

The City of Tampere is looking to retool its downtown area – and use this “core power” to take the entire Tampere Region into a whole new level. The Tampere City Centre already holds plenty of appeal, but there's much more to come: according to the long term plans, the city centre will feature 15,000 new residents and 15,000 new jobs by 2030.

Director Tero Tenhunen says that the name of the game is making the city centre as attractive as possible by capitalising on the potential of Tampere's extremely compact structure and unique location.

“There are already as many as 40,000 people living in the city centre, so we're talking about a very significant increase,” he says, adding that the majority of the new commercial development will be in the vicinity of the railway station.

There is already a brand new downtown tower hotel just off the railway station – and from the looks of it, the tower may be but the first sample of new “Vertical Tampere”. As the train station will enter a total makeover, an ambitious deck construction will be built over the tracks – and towers will be raised upon the deck.

Hybrid Power

Tero Tenhunen points out that the deck construction will bring welcome cohesion into the city structure, now divided by tracks. In the process, a totally new city district will emerge.

“For the coming development, we feel that the railway station will be the Ground Zero,” he says.

Hybrid construction will be one of the key drivers here: commercial use, offices and residential solutions will all be deployed. The City is opting for a well-balanced mix that will add diversity into downtown.

Still, vertical dreams are but one element of the big picture. Tenhunen talks of the City's “Five Star Downtown” concept which calls for urban appeal, high qual-

ity, diversity, attraction and originality – all things that Tampere has in spades, but there's still room to improve:

“For instance, we have barely scratched the surface of what we can achieve in waterfront construction. In the coming years, our shorelines will be totally renewed,” Tenhunen says.

Reclaim the Shores

It is true that for a community founded between two lakes, the shoreline has been rather underdeveloped so far. Tenhunen explains that development plans were delayed for a long time – subject to the completion of the Rantaväylä tunnel.

“As the tunnel will take car traffic underground, the waterfront will open in a new way at the Ranta-Tampella District,” Tenhunen says. The tunnel is already half done, with completion scheduled in 2017.

“Ranta-Tampella will be a great example of ambitious waterfront construction,” says Tenhunen. Eventually, more than 3,000 residents will make their homes in the new waterfront community, right next to the commercial services of the downtown.

Still, Ranta-Tampella is not the only high-profile waterfront project in the making: Tenhunen expects to see the same volume and even higher quality at Eteläpuisto area, just a bit south from the city centre. The Eteläpuisto architectural competition explored the various uses of waterfront – the local Pyhäjärvi Lake – and these ideas are guiding the coming development effort.

“With these kinds of sites, there is a big responsibility, since you only get one chance. This is why we want to make sure



that everything is top-notch from architecture to services and parks.”

Underground Success

The role of the Rantaväylä tunnel is crucial, as it will eliminate traffic bottlenecks and facilitate smoother downtown logistics. Underground parking is yet another game-changer: the City wants to remove as much as 60 % of street parking and take the cars underground. The new next-gen underground parking facility P-Hämppi is leading the charge, having won the European Parking Association (EPA) Award in the category of best new parking facilities in 2013. It represents the first phase of a larger, long-term city centre underground parking facilities plan.

According to EPA, the P-Hämppi represents “state-of-the-art parking facility automation”. Key benefits of the solution are very high accuracy license plate recognition with high-resolution cameras and advanced entry control and vehicle guidance features.



“Parking solutions such as P-Hämppi also support retail in a very effective way,” adds Tenhunen.

Walk This Way

Safety and service orientation are very much the watchwords that are driving the change in downtown also in a larger context. With cars diving underground, the urban environment is transformed, leaving more room for pedestrians and bicyclists. Tenhunen talks about “Slow City” ideology that is taking root in the city centre:

“We want to make sure that the downtown area works from the perspective of the pedestrians. We do welcome cars in the city centre but they have to yield to pedestrian demands here.”

And there’s more, too: a light rail transportation system is also being planned for the city centre. Conceivably, tram traffic between Hervanta and Pyynikintori could kick-off in 2019 – with complementary construction and real estate development

to take place in the vicinity of these tracks, as well.

Light rail systems outside Helsinki are rare, but Tenhunen is optimistic that the project will go on: “We believe that the tram would be a good fit for Tampere and there is also political will behind the plans.”

360° Reach

According to Tenhunen, the City must rethink its urban ways, since the city is on the growth path and will remain so for decades, apparently. During the next 25 years, there will be 115,000 new residents in the Tampere Region – and, proportionally speaking, the increase is bigger than that predicted for the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. Tampere – as the biggest inland city in Nordic countries – also has a catchment area that is different from, say, certain Nordic capitals, since the Tampere catchment area forms a full circle.

In addition, in recent years Tampere has clearly been among the winners when it comes to attracting people, companies

and investments. Businesses – both big and small – have flocked to the neighbourhood, drawn by Tampere’s great location, traffic connections and versatile commercial services. Furthermore, the two local universities make sure that there is sufficient brain power for the companies establishing operations here.

Play It Smart

As per City strategy, Tampere has been working hard to make the city a better place for people and business. The central idea of the “Tampere Model” is to establish smart infrastructure that is sturdy enough to enable, for example, digital services and administration.

Wide-spanning collaboration is also important to the city. With the launch of the new HHT Corridor (Helsinki-Hämeenlinna-Tampere), attention turns to the rails connecting the three cities – and the possibilities therein.

“There is a strong axis in the making and we want to be a part of it.” ●



International expo area is connected directly to the city centre and gates.

Off the Ground

AiRRport promises to unleash the true potential of air, road and rail traffic

There's a real game-changer in the works in the Tampere Region. The idea is to revolutionise air travel – or rather, to make sure that air traffic fulfils Tampere's promise as a Smart City of tomorrow. Known as the AiRRport concept, the new logistics scheme promises to bridge air with road and rail in an unprecedented manner.

Kari Neilimo, Chairman of the AiRRport Group, perceives remarkable business opportunities in the venture. Neilimo argues that the concept is a “truly strategic” tool that can rejuvenate business in West and Central Finland a great deal.

“In today's world, it's hard to imagine a company that can survive without great connections. With the AiRRport concept, we move that much closer to a whole new world economically. This is bound to give wings to also new business models and opportunities.”

Another issue to consider is the Helsinki-Hämeenlinna-Tampere (HHT) economic corridor which is already the number one engine for growth in the country – but the AiRRport concept can really enhance its competitiveness, too.

Get into the Pipeline

But what is AiRRport all about, then? Private consultant Toni Virkkunen and Jouni Lehtomaa from Ramboll explain that, at present, goods enjoy better freedom of travel than people who are being herded from one security check to another at the airports. We have come to accept that as part of post-9/11 world – but what if there would be an alternative?

“We have existing infrastructure in place that should be used to facilitate smoother air traffic. All that is needed is for the railway network to be integrated into the airport in a new way,” Virkkunen says.

This means that if you're travelling from, say, Jyväskylä to Tampere to take a flight, your “travel experience” starts

already at the Jyväskylä railway station as you go through luggage check. Once you're in the train, you're already in the “flight zone”. When you arrive to Tampere, you're promptly whisked away to the right gate and fast-track security check – and you're ready for take-off.

“Under this de-centralised concept, standing in lines for extended periods of time will be eliminated almost altogether,” says Lehtomaa.

Downtown Dynamics

Also, the service level will improve tremendously. The current trend is to build up airports into massive “semi-cities” with just about anything a traveler might possibly need – but this seems rather excessive, given

the fact that the passengers are only passing through (the faster the better). Instead of building up airport services, why not utilise the existing service offering?

“At Tampere, it would make sense to use the Tampere railway station as a hub for all modes of transport. Airline passengers could spend some time in the Tampere city centre prior to the flight, instead of wandering around at the airport,” Virkkunen says.

The concrete visualisation of the concept – which features e.g. low-cost gates and runways – has been conducted by architect agency Lunden. All and all, the AiRRport gurus have been working on the concept since 2012.

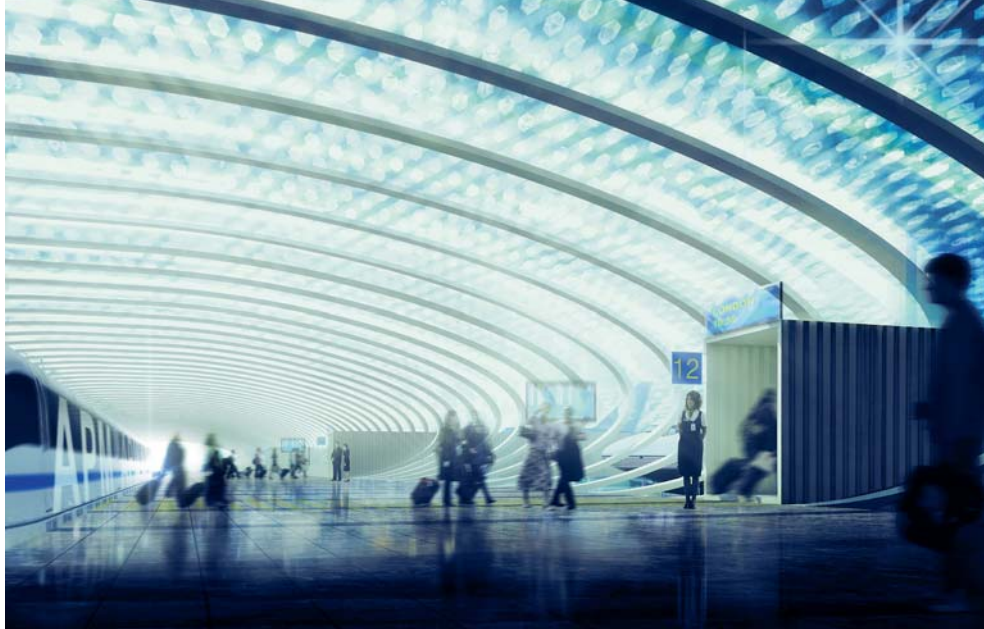
True Intermodality

In the logistical circles, ‘intermodality’ has been one of the buzz words for years now – but Virkkunen insists that nothing really concrete has been done about it.

“Now what we need to do is forget the traditional view of air terminal and find a way to do it more effectively, in a manner that puts the customer first. The promise of AiRRport concept is ‘Travel Made Easy’ – and we are convinced that we can deliver on that promise.” For the Tampere Airport, this could mean that the present annual passenger volume of 500,000 people will explode to five million within a period of, say, 10–15 years.

The AiRRport planners have a wealth of research to back up their master plan. The International Air Traffic Association (IATA), for example, believes that queues won’t be around for long at airports. Hi-tech is expected to hit traditional safety checks in force in the coming years and tools such as ‘Trusted Traveller’ systems will be more widely deployed.

“Everything is geared towards automating the flow of people at airports anyway. What we’re looking to do is to optimise it,” Virkkunen says.



Low Cost Gates.

Customers’ Rebellion

Jouni Lehtomaa comments that airport will simply have to change, since the passengers – the customers – won’t tolerate the present situation for much longer.

“The price of airfare has already come down thanks to budget airlines, but the airports have not changed with the times.”

Harri Ojala from the Tampere Chamber of Commerce adds that the Tampere Region now possesses a great chance to take the local economy to the next level.

“According to our studies, the most important issue on the local companies’ wishlist is a fully functional, international airport,” Ojala says, adding that the AiRRport concept could give the local business climate a serious boost. “The AiRRport concept could launch a positive cycle where a number of good things come to exist.”

Managing Director Päivi Myllykangas from Tampere Region Development Agency is thinking along the same lines and adds:

“Tampere is the second largest growth center and the most attractive city to live in Finland. Furthermore, foreign-owned companies appreciate the availability of skilled workers our university city has to offer. Half of the companies say that skilled workforce is the reason why they located in Tampere; two-thirds stay because of them.”

The Missing Link

Toni Virkkunen is fond of talking about the “physical Internet” in this context – meaning that as data travels the worldwide web, so do people and goods travel in a global network of their own. The physical Internet is formed by roads, railway tracks and vapour trails up in the sky, but something is missing from the equation.

“To make this work, we need a better interface between air travel and road and rail traffic,” he says, adding that this link is rather tiny one – considering the vastness of the entire logistics system – but without it, nothing will change. ●

One Vision

The AiRRport vision goes hand in hand with Tampere Region Master Plan 2040, which predicts intense growth for the region that is already the most attractive area in the eyes of citizens and companies alike. By 2040, there will be 480,000 people in the Region – and 70,000 new jobs. Improved connectivity is a ‘must’ in this scenario, says Tampere Region Director Päivi Nurminen.

“The AiRRport concept is a key part of

our drive to make the most of the emerging opportunities,” she says, adding that international focus is something that the Tampere Region wants – and the new concept delivers that very well, indeed.

“Under the concept, both new and old companies are able to tap into the global flow of traffic more effectively. The overall impact goes well beyond regional considerations,” she says.

The local municipalities – numbering

eight in total – stand united in developing the Tampere Region which has made it easier to get things done. Nurminen doesn’t hesitate to call it “the best regional collaboration” in the whole country.

“We have been able to pursue growth and seek answers to, for instance, traffic challenges without being hindered by municipality borders,” Nurminen says. ●

Just Push 'Start'

Startups energised the Aulanko Property Convention

The real estate professionals showed up in numbers again in Hämeenlinna, Finland, as the Annual Convention of Property Investment Prospects was held in Aulanko. During the two-day November seminar, trends of money were analysed in no small detail, since the changing financing and investment market presents its share of challenges – and also opportunities. To take care of the latter, Aulanko featured an interesting startup event this year: five startup companies from the real estate sector pitched their ideas to the jury of three Finnish business angels.



One of the angels, Jaakko Salminen, commented that while the real estate sector is perceived to be a rather conservative industry, the recent technological advances can revolutionise the field. Listening to the five startups, it became apparent that hi-tech is one of the future drivers of the real estate business.

Real Estate 2.0

According to estimates, there is a EUR 15 billion investment potential in Finnish real estate alone, and these startups are very much about scalability that can take their business global. Since 75% of the buildings

that are standing today will still be around in 2050, a big focus is on retooling existing real estate assets in terms of e.g. energy efficiency – and this was a key issue for many of the startups present.

With input from the audience, the jury selected the winner of the pitch event and RF SensIT CMM came out on top. Founded in 2012 to commercialise the cutting-edge technology from an Aalto University project, the company specialises in continuous moisture monitoring (CMM). The CMM system anticipates and pre-empts moisture-related problems, offering a healthy dose of visibility in both newbuild and renovation projects.

Safety First

Accepting the EUR 10,000 award for best pitch, the Managing Director Ismo Olkonen commented that his company perceives great potential in the market, since there is a stated interest to make sure that, for instance, schools and daycare centres don't suffer from mould issues.

In addition to the startup scene, also industry veterans were recognised during the convention: for instance, Hanna Kaleva, Managing Director for KTI Property Information, received Person of the Year Award and also Citycon and Renor were acknowledged for their innovative ways.

International Flavour

Among the most high-profile international speakers of the event, there were two that made a big impression on the participants: Joe Pine from Strategic Horizons and Bruce Orreck, the U.S. Ambassador to Finland.

Pine talked about how the new "Experience Economy" is shaping the face of real estate and Orreck encouraged everybody present to take advantage of the green building opportunities that are already here. He argued that "building smart" is not as costly as even some experts seem to think – in the US, for instance, the legendary Empire State Building was recently turned into a 100% green, high-performance building during a very cost-efficient beauty treatment.

"You must do things that are extraordinary – do not just put bricks together," he told the audience. ●



Back in the Game

Property transaction volumes have bounced back – will the trend last?

In 2014, the total volume was close to EUR 4 billion, marking – by far – the highest volume since 2008.

The largest individual transaction of 2014 was the foundation of a new logistics and industrial property investment company Certeum Ltd (portfolio value EUR 917 million), but even without the Certeum transaction, last year's total volume would have been up 60 percent from previous year.

Janne Larma from Advium Corporate Finance comments that what we're seeing now is, largely, things getting back to normal.

"In addition, the property market has become more active partly because of the exceptionally attractive yields that real estate can provide in comparison to other alternatives."

Foreign Power

Also, foreign investors have increased their activity of late; the share of foreign investors amounts to 38 percent of all transactions. Measured in euros, the volume of foreign investors' transactions last year was higher than any annual volume since 2008.

The biggest newcomer in the Finnish market is the Swiss Partners Group, which purchased all remaining retail and office properties of the Niam III fund for EUR 240 million. Another active player is Swedish investor Redito.

At least for the moment, it seems that "Helsinki is the new Stockholm" in the market. According to KTI Market Review (autumn 2014) net yield for a prime office in Helsinki is some 100 basis points higher than in Stockholm, which is a strong sales argument in current market conditions, where investors do appreciate annual cash flows. In the world of turbulent currencies, the euro also strengthens the competitiveness of Finland compared to the other Nordic markets.

Sweden Leads Shoppers

Janne Larma agrees: as Sweden has witnessed elevated prices lately, Finland is becoming more attractive in the eyes of Swedish investors, too.

"During the last two years Swedish

investors have made several purchases in the Finnish market," he points out. According to Larma, the Swedes are also keen on the neighbour since the market is easy enough for them to relate to.

Also Germans, French and even Italians have been shopping around in Finland recently; and, according to Larma, also Danes and Norwegians are eager to get a piece of the action, too. Larma observes that as European main markets have seen prices go up pretty quickly, an attractive fringe market like Finland is bound to draw some attention.

Optimistic Outlook

The strong interest of foreign investors is expected to continue also in the future. Of the respondents of RAKLI-KTI Property Barometer at the end of last year, some 60 percent believed that foreign investment demand will increase in the coming 12 months. This lends support to the total transactions volumes, which are also expected to increase, especially in the office and retail property sectors.

Janne Larma is one of those who believe in the positive trend: he perceives for the upward trend to stay strong a long way into 2015 – and if the Finnish economy were to catch a break, at some point, those volumes would go up even more.

"Already we know of several significant transactions that will take place in early 2015 and many interesting transactions are now entering preparation phase. We believe that taken as a whole the year 2015 will be at least as active as 2014 was."

Construction Woes

Still, not everything is sunshine and flowers in the land. KTI Market Review states that due to negative economic development, construction activity is decreasing in 2014 and 2015. Residential construction has slowed down due to weak consumer demand; residential property funds are trying to lower the hurdle for new construction starts through co-operation with construction companies.

Commercial property development has slowed down by corporations' low investment volumes, as well as by unused space capacity in vacant or under-utilised space. Ongoing commercial property development projects are strongly driven by tailored tenant solutions and / or new traffic connections.

Are You Connected?

Janne Larma believes that office demand will remain a two-sided coin. Those existing properties with good location will remain attractive even with new office offering entering the market. This is due to the fact that the Helsinki Metropolitan Area keeps drawing in more and more people and companies want to establish operations in quality premises which are readily accessible via public transportation, for instance.

"We believe that Helsinki downtown area will retain its strong position and demand will continue to be on a high level. Also, the western metro line will elevate the status of such areas as Keilaniemi and Ruoholahti in the future," Larma says, pointing out that both of these areas possess plenty of high quality office capacity.

Looking into not-so-immediate future, Larma observes that the new city districts such as Pasila and Kalasatama are bound to make an impact on the market as well, due to great connectivity and proximity to downtown.

Residential Hanging On

In the residential property markets, rents continue increasing, although at a slower pace than in previous years. Increases are most significant in Helsinki metropolitan area; in other major cities, increases continue but have slowed down. The development of new rental dwellings is concentrated on non-subsidised stock.

The KTI Market Review observes that low availability of plots, as well as slow planning processes and tight construction regulations remain the biggest obstacles for rental residential development. ●

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JOSEK serves all companies in the Joensuu region, from start-ups to established enterprises developing their operations. The business consulting service also assists enterprises and organisations seeking to locate in the Joensuu region. We offer our services free of charge.

See pages 9 and 14

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LocalTapiola Real Estate Asset Management Ltd provides real estate investment and management services. Half of the company is owned by LocalTapiola General Mutual Insurance Company and the other half by LocalTapiola Mutual Life Assurance Company.

LocalTapiola Real Estate Asset Management Ltd offers real estate investment, managing and counseling services as well as manages real estate investments and fixed assets. The company also engages in rental business, marketing, house management and administration, maintenance, outsourcing and sales services.

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We offer direct assistance to individuals, corporations and other organisations interested in accessing the business markets in Oulu.

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Specialty Areas

Ruukki specialises in the development, production and launch of products and services to promote energy efficiency and functional modifiability of commercial and industrial buildings. We are committed to creating added value both for real estate occupiers and investors.

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SRV is a leading Finnish real estate developer specialising in development, construction and commercialisation of retail and office premises, hotels, logistics and production objects, as well as residential property. SRV is aspired to improve quality of life through sustainable solutions for the built environment.

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