RECAPTURING AND RECREATING NAMSOS

PROJECT BOOK

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RECAPTURING AND RECREATING NAMSOS project book

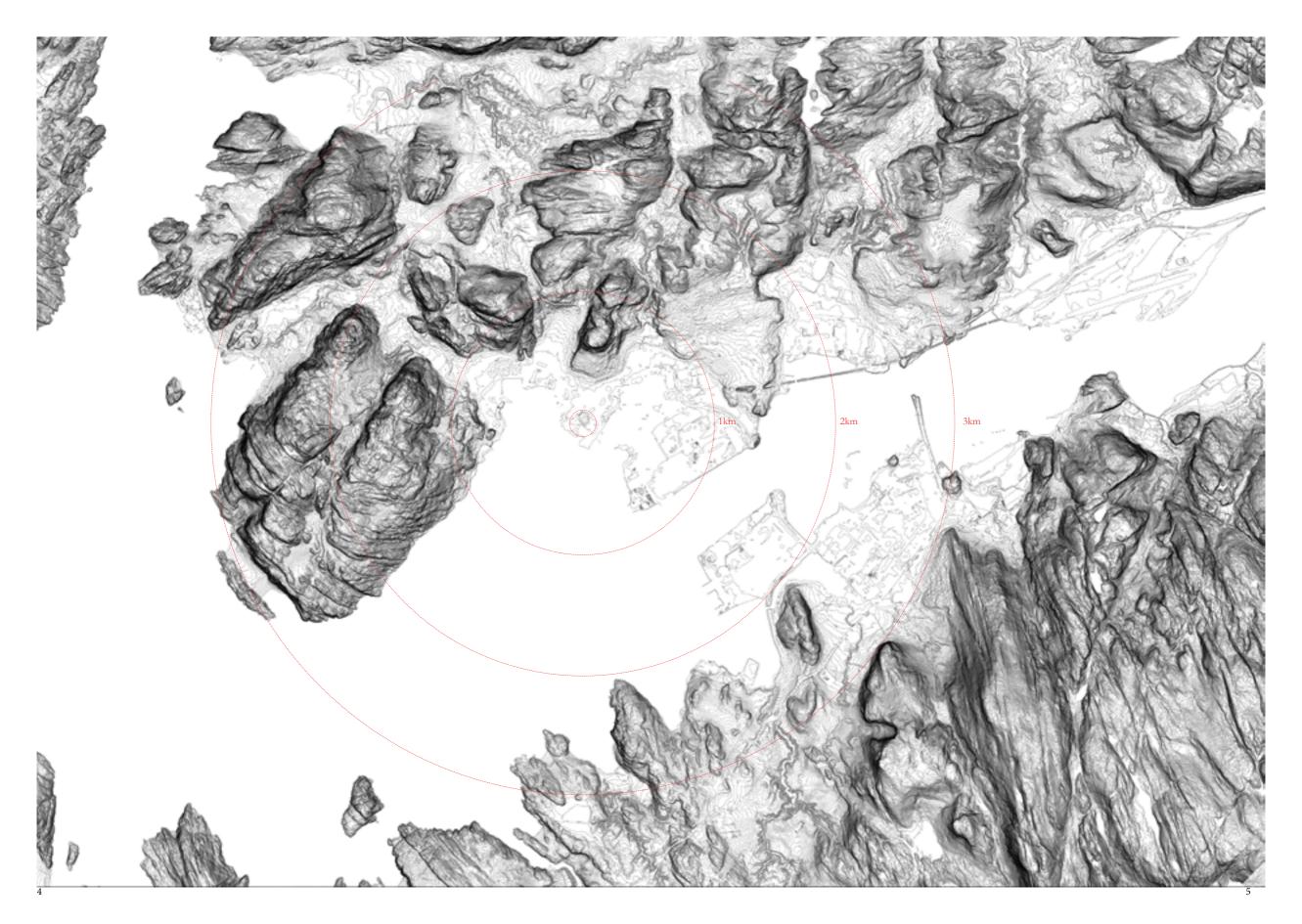
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We would like to thank our supervisors for their valuable help in the development of the project:

Kerstin Höger Sverre Flack

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INTRODUCTION

-ABSTRACT-

Namsos is one of many small cities in Norway that are currently facing the consequences of centralization. While the big cities are experiencing a steep growth, many of the small cities and towns are losing population. Namsos is, as per yet, still showing at a remarkably slow but steady population increase. However, due to the municipality's location outside of the growth axis that extends from Trondheim to Steinkjer, as well as to the lack of jobs opportunities and functioning train system, the continuation of this positive development may be not guaranteed in the future.

Recapturing and Recreating Namsos is a thesis aimed at exploring and discovering Namsos, its identity and its potential for development and bring forth a proposal for that may serve as a positive example for other small cities and towns of Norway.

The thesis is divided into two parts, in which the first part is a demographic study of Trøndelag, as well as of Namsos. The objective behind the region analysis is to gain a comparative and, as such, a more comprehensive insight of Namsos that can serve as a platform for the development of the project.

The second part of the thesis is a proposal on how to develop Namsos in a way we hope can increase the town's opportunities, visibility and attractiveness for both residents and outsiders alike.

As there are few buildings of historical importance, we have concluded that the current identity of Namsos is to a large extent manifested through the traditional grid-plan, the history and historically related industry, as well as the surrounding natural elements. It has, as such, been our wish to strengthen the visibility of these elements in a way that allows the town to more clearly express its history. By reinforcing the town's historical and physical identity we hope to create new working and living opportunities for residents as well as for migrants.

-AIM OF THE THESIS AND RESEARCH TOPICS-

Recapturing and Recreating Namsos is intended as a study as to how Namsos can become an attractor of population, as well as how the town can further be successfully developed in the case of a successful magnetization of population.

This project aims to take into consideration different topics of research and development such as:

• Population densification through the use of urban catalysts: implementation of industry, education and infrastructure as points of attraction.

• Urban expansion through conscious use of historical elements as a means to reinforce urban identity: Namsos classical urban grid and the town's attachment to the wood-industry.

• Enhancement of the connection between the town and the surrounding nature.

• Creation of new urban living rooms to strengthen the bond between residents and their city through active use.

It has been our intent to explore these topics of research in order to bring forth a proposal that can be implemented to raise the attractiveness and popularity of Namsos. Namsos is a small city by the Namsen fjord in the north of Trøndelag. The city came to exist in the mid 1800's due to the demand for a town where timber from Namdalen could be handled and shipped. As such it has a strong history connected to the timber industry. Namsos survived almost complete destruction as many as three times over the course of 100 years and currently only the neo-classical grid plan remains of the original city. Today, Namsos is one of many small cities in Norway that are currently facing the consequences of centralization. While the big cities are experiencing a steep growth, many of the small cities and towns are losing population.

Namsos is, as per yet, still showing a remarkably slow but steady population increase. However, due to the municipality's location outside of the growth axis that extends from Trondheim to Steinkjer, as well as to the lack of jobs opportunities and functioning train system, the continuation of this positive development may be not guaranteed in the future.

For this reason we have decided to focus this thesis on urban development in Namsos with focus on the city's identity markers as catalyst for population growth. We wish to explore ways to bring forth new opportunities for Namsos in the hope that the city can become an attractor of population. In our proposal we suggest four catalysts for growth:

1. The first catalyst is the reactivation of the now closed Namsosbanen. Namsos' lack of a functioning train system is a hindrance for the settlement of new industries, as well as for travelers who wish to reach the city. By reactivating the railroad, we open for the settlement of new industries that are dependent on freight trains for transport, and we make travelling to and from Namsos easier than what it currently is.

2. The second catalyst is the regulation of a new industrial area for wood-industry. By making Namsos a center for wood industry, and by connecting it to the local university, we create new job possibilities both in industry and in research, while reestablishing Namsos historical identity as a wood-industry city.

3.The third catalyst is the development of a new urban area in Namsos, conjoined to the old centre. By extending the grid plan of the old city we integrate one of the main identity markers of Namsos into the new urban area and create a coherent urban plan.

4. The fourth catalyst is the integration of nature into the urban structure: Namsos is surrounded by nature but has little greenery in the centre. By creating a park that surrounds the centre, and connecting it with the existing city, we integrate nature and open to the enjoyment of a variety of activities inside of the urban structure.

The main goal behind the project is to Recreate Namsos by Recapturing and manifesting its identity.

-NAMSOS' VISIBLE IDENTITY-

Namsos has a series of identifying traits that distinguish it from other towns and cities. Through the process of analysing the town, it has been important for us to become closely acquanited with its most important and unique characteristics, as one of the main goals of our thesis is the strengthening of Namsos' identity.

1. As previously noted, Namsos' identity is closely connected to the local wood-industry, being it the sole reason for the town's origin in 1845. The existence, for long periods of time, of a great number of sawmills that employed over half of the population lends to the place a historical foothold that, however diffused in comparison to what it once was, is still a strong connector between the town and its population. At the moment, the only surviving sawmill of Namsos is Moelven Van Severen, one that, with its central location places it within walking distance from the town-centre.

2. A second point of identity that can be found in Namsos is the urban plan. This neo-classic grid plan has survived destruction by fire no less than three times. And while the town has risen from the ashes and reinvented itself, it has done so following the strict delimitations of the grid. As such, it can still be experienced while walking through the streets today. 3. The third point of identity of Namsos is the surrounding nature. The Namsen fjord and river, as well as the hills that surround the town, have been important factors in its shaping, as has the town's location by the estuary of Namsen river. Of the three high hills that surround the town, Bjørumsklompen in particular has become a landmark and it is from here that most of the aerial photographs of Namsos have been taken throughout the times. Bjørumsklompen is also one of the most popular hiking destinations of the area.

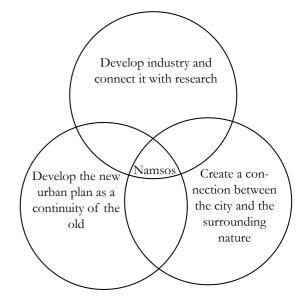
4. Namsos has also, over the last few decades also acquired an identity as the birthtown for several Norwegian musicians connected to the genre "Trønderrock". Through this connection it has come to be known as "Rockebyen Namsos" or Namsos Rock City.

-STRENGTHENING THE IDENTITY-

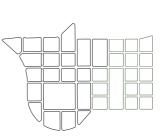
In the development of our project, we have focused on recapturing and reinforcing the identity of Namsos. The purpose is to achieve a stronger Namsos, that in itself not only manages to sustain the existing population but that also attracts new inhabitants.

To achieve this, we have looked into the factors that lend the city its most characteristic traits, both historically and physically, and proposed three interventions that we believe would enhance and reinforce three main identity-traits of Namsos.

The first intervention we propose is to strengthen the wood industry, as well as to connect it with the existing industries. As we know, Namsos' roots are strongly connected with the sawmill industry and was, up until only a few decades ago, a strong presence in the Norwegian wood industry.
The second intervention is to relate a new urban plan to the existing grid plan and by doing so, sustain the characteristic traits of the town and as such, also the perceptive experience that the grid plan brings to the user.
The third intervention is to strengthen the connection between the town centre and the surrounding nature by introducing green and blue structures into the urban plan, as well as the connection between the inhabitants and the city by introducing a series of activities in the city centre.

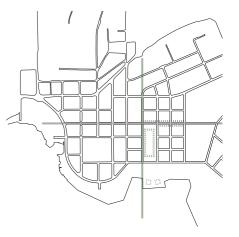


THE PROPOSAL



-EXTENTION OF THE GRID-

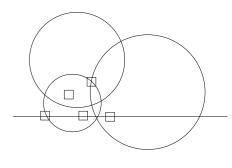
The strict grid is one of Namsos' identity markers. As such, we propose an extention of this grid as a way to connect the new area with the old.



-ACTIVITY AXES-

There will be two main activity axes that connect the new and the old town, in which most public activities will take place.

From West to East is the service axis and from North to South is the culture axis.



-CATALYSTS FOR GROWTH-

To incentive the population growth through migration, we propose the introduction of a few catalysts that we consider to be important such as industrial development, reinstallment of the railroad and urban activation and development.

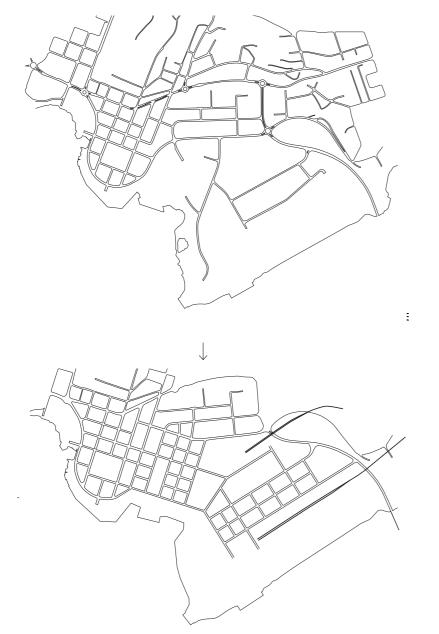


Namsos has an existing walking path called the Bridge-walk. We propose a further creation of two new paths - a green circle to connect the town with the surrounding nature and a blue circle to connect the town with the fjord. A series of activity points create further points of interest along the paths.



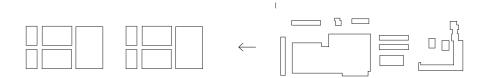
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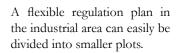
-INFRASTRUCTURE-



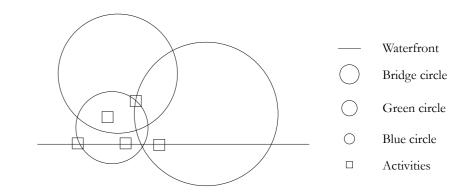
Two areas have been regulated: a strict grid in the urban area and a flexible grid in the industrial area.

Namsosbanen is reestablished and a new line for freight trains leading into the industrial area is built. -REGULATION OF INDUSTRIAL AREA-

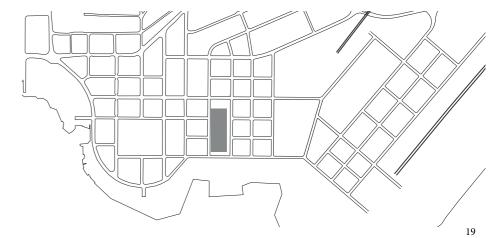




-ACTIVITY CIRCLES-



-REPURPOSING OF EXISTENT ARCHITECTURE-

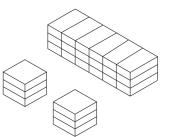


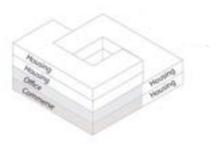
MASTERPLAN











-STRICT GRID-

To forge a connection with the traditional grid plan of Namsos, the new urban area will be regulated into a strict grid. This ensures a coherency between the old and the new town as well as a preservation of identity.

-FLEXIBLE GRID-

The industrial area is regulated into a flexible grid with plots of different sizes. This ensures maximum adaptability to accomodate new industries' varying needs for space, while also establishing an indirect connection with the urban area, as it allows a for possible future urban development.

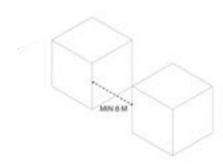
-MIXED TYPOLOGIES-

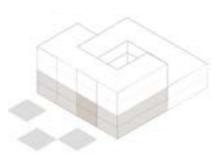
To allow for a great variety of expression as well as of possibility of choice for inhabitants, the new urban area will have a number of different varieties ranging between closed blocks, slabs, rowhouses and urban villas.

The typologies will be sorted according to the district.

-MIXED USE-

Buildings will have mixed uses along the main street with commerce and services on the ground floor, offices on the first floor and housing on the uppermost floors. This ensures a greater variety of uses and, as such, an activation of the street at different times of the day.



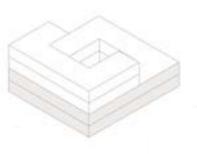


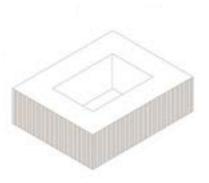
-MINIMUM DISTANCE-

The distance between the plots will be of 10 meters. The minimum distance between buildings will be of 8 meters in the urban area, and minimum 10 meters in the industrial area.

-ACTIVE FAÇADES-

Grounds floors along the main street will consist of commerce and public services. The sidewalks and outdoor areas may be integrated into building uses, or they may be rented out for public use. The goal is to maintain an active and engaging street life.



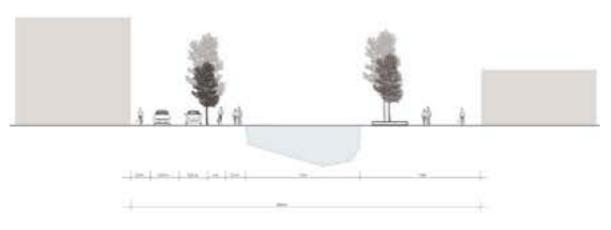


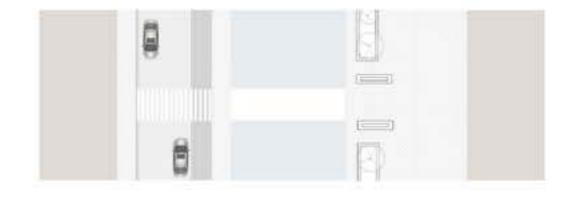
-MIN. AND MAX. HEIGHT-

Most existent buildings in Namsos are two to four floors. To maintain the expression of the city, buildings in the new area are to maintain a minimum height of two floors and a maximum heights of four floors.

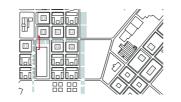
-MATERIALS-

As another marker of identity for Namsos, wood has been chosen as the main construction material for the new urban area. The use of wood is sustainable, connected to local history and in high supply locally. -SECTION A-A-

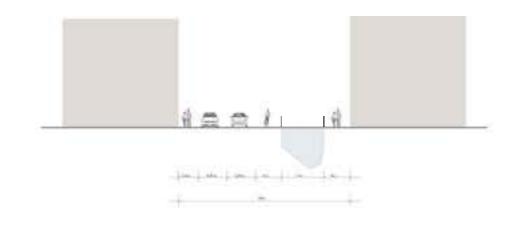


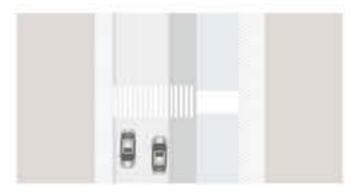


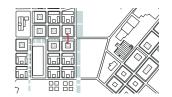
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-SECTION B-B-



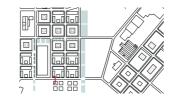




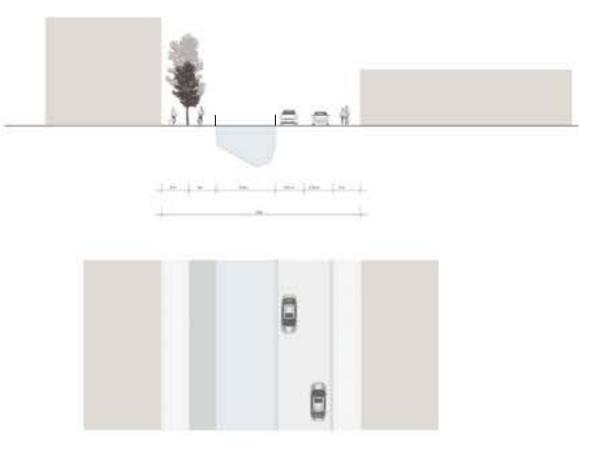


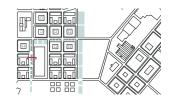


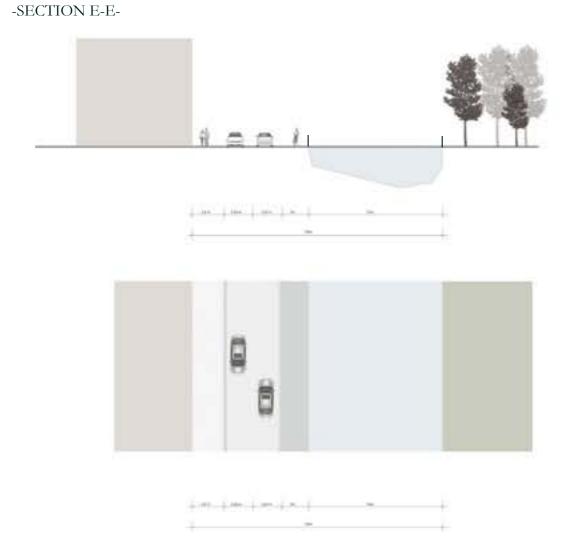


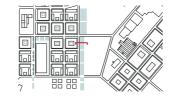


-SECTION D-D-







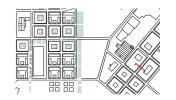


-SECTION F-F-





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-TYPOLOGIES-

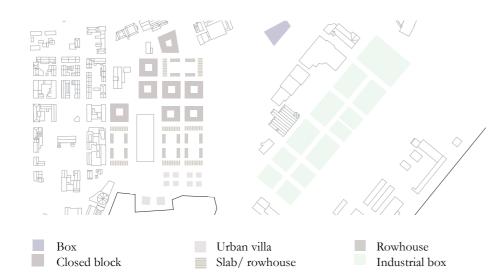
In Namsos centre we find mostly open blocks consisting of several conjoined buildings of differing sizes, materiality and expressions. Most are 2 to 4 floors in height, with very few exceptions. There are few apartment blocks as most inhabitants of Namsos reside in detached houses around the city centre.

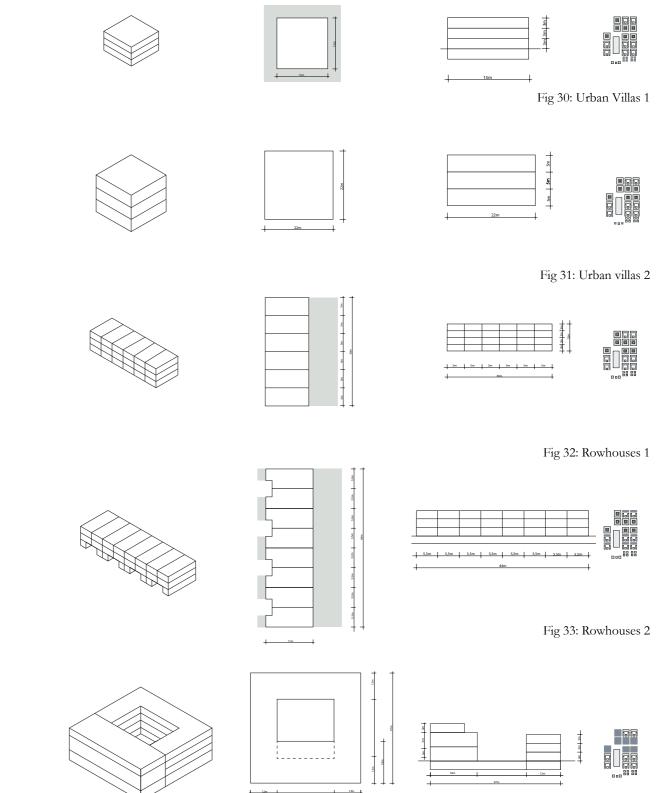
In our proposal we can find a similar mixture of typologies, such as closed and open blocks, in which the closed blocks are constituted by apartment buildings and commerce, while the open blocks are constituted mainly by rowhouses and slabs. To the South-West of the site we can also find urban villas located in the park.

The different typologies create diverse expressions in the urban structure while simultaneously offering inhabitants a variety of choices of habitation.

The buildings of Namsos were, traiditionally, built in wood and timber but during the reconstruction after the bombing, most houses in the centre were erected in brick and concrete. Nevertheless, the majority of buildings that surround the centre are still made out of wood.

To reinforce the connection between the new urban structure and the town's historical connection to the wood-industry, as well as to revive Namsos' identity as a wooden city, all new buildings are to be constructed wood, preferentially from local materials.





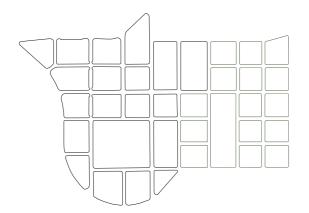
-URBAN STRUCTURE-

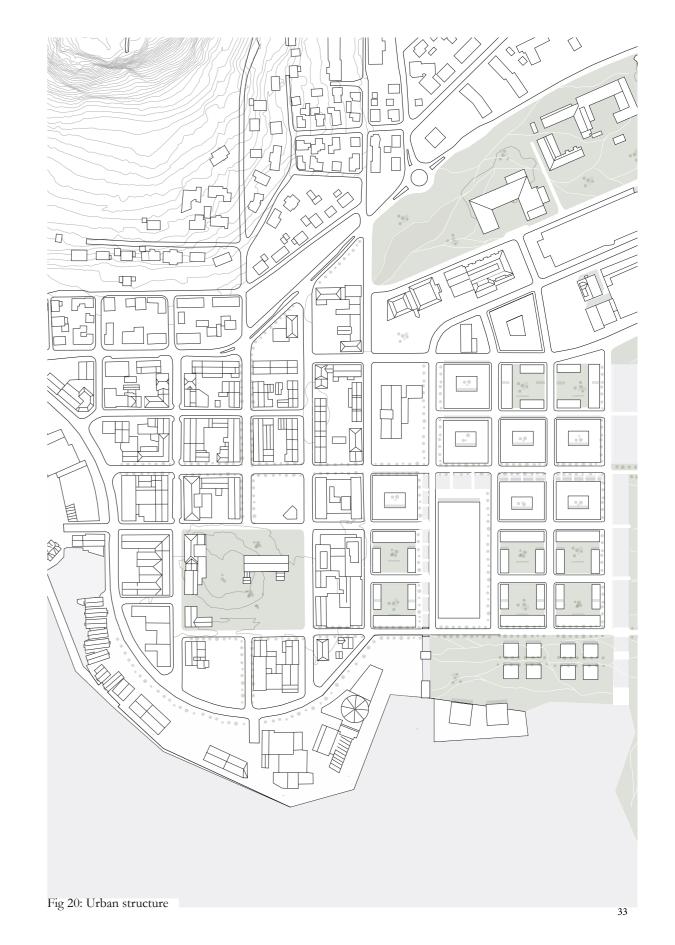
The centre of Namsos consists of a grid plan with mostly open blocks of circa 60 x 40 meters. The blocks are spaced approximately 12 meters from each other.

In the project we have decided to continue the grid, keeping the original structure and approximate block sizes. This choice was made for several reasons:

The grid is one of the strongest identity traits of Namsos, one that has survived the many catastrophes that has ravaged the city through it's existence. A continuation of the grid in an urban expansion will provide a sense of familiarity and continuity for inhabitants.

The grid structure is flexible and provides a great deal of possibilities in urban expansion while simultaneously maintaining a strict organization of the plots. The open structure provides pedestrians with ample choices when it comes to choosing paths. The chosen length of the blocks give an opportunity for a varied impression of the street, provided there is a variety of buildings and public uses.





-BLUE AND GREEN STRUCTURES-

As often happens in urban development, the nature around Namsos has had an important role in defining the city, particularly its location, limits and basic shape. When standing in the centre however, there is little connection with the surrounding nature: there is little greenery in the streets and the view to the fjord is mostly blocked by buildings that have been erected along the waterfront. Some of these buildings are old and of historical value, such as the old warehouses (brygge) while others have come to exist in recent years.

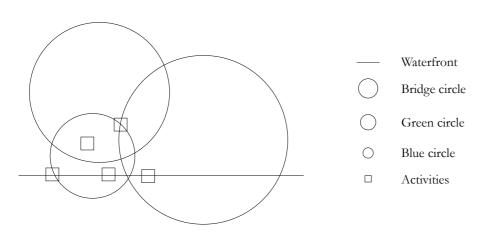
Seeing as the surrounding nature has heavily influenced the development of the town, it is important to create a stronger connection between the urban structure and the green and blue structures.

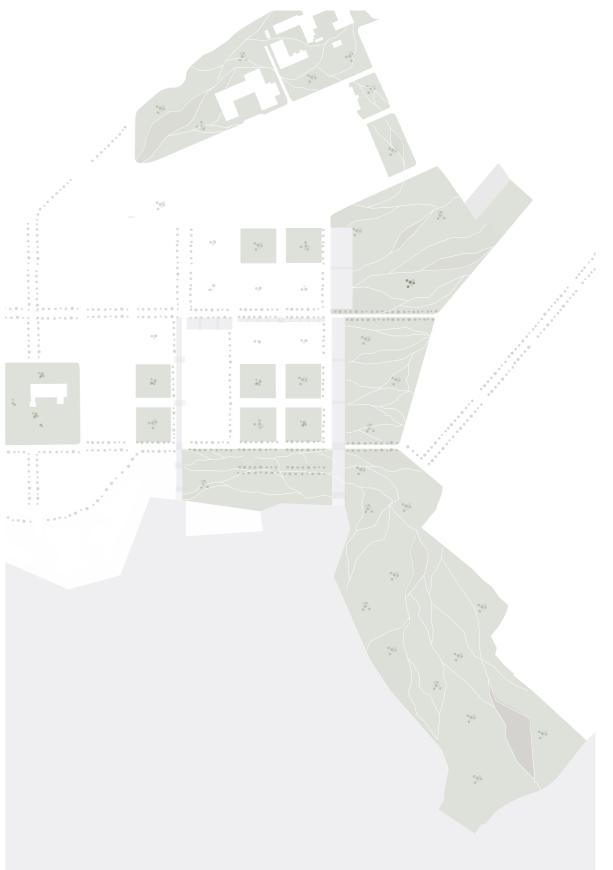
To reinforce this connection we propose two interventions:

1. The creation of a canal (blue circle) that extends into the urban area, that aims to enhance the connection with the water,

2. The creation of a park (green circle) that surrounds the centre and connects with the surrounding nature and strengthens the shape of the gridplan.

Furthermore, we wish to connect the green circle with the existing Bridge circle, a walking path that connects two bridges close to Namsos.





-INDUSTRY-

Namsos came to exist due to the need for a place for processing and shipment of timber that was to be collected further up in Namdalen, and has, as such, strong roots as an industrial city connected to the wood industry. Of the many sawmills that once existed in the the town, a single one remains as a direct connection to Namsos' origin.

Currently, the city has a relatively low variety of jobs to offer its inhabitants, one of the main reasons for the emigration towards other areas of the region to occur. On these grounds, we propose the reinstatement of Namsos as an industrial city through the regulation of parts of our site to industrial areas for wood-industry. An example of a possible new industry for Namsos would be a biorefinery, as it provides a complete utilization of raw material for the development of valuable specialized products, and presents sustainable alternatives to oil-based products.

In our project, we have decided to regulate 5.4 ha of the south-eastern area of our site for the implementation and development of new industries. This area is partly occupied by the sawmill Moelven Van Severen, as well as by a few large scale commercial structures. This location is ideal for an industrial development due to its closeness to the river and to the existing wood-industry, but also due to its distance from the town centre. The separation between the town and the industry will limit the bypassing of heavy transport through the urban areas and make it possible to create a new train line for transportation of goods to and from Namsos without interfering with passenger lines.

In the proposal, we have chosen to regulate the industrial area into blocks of different sizes in a flexible grid. While there is no way of knowing the shape and size of future industrial buildings, as these are very much dependent on the individual industries' logistics, we believe that a flexible grid plan might be easily adaptable to short and long-term future developments.

Furthermore, as the tendency is for towns and cities to expand and integrate industrial areas into their urban structure, and by doing so, forcing industries to move to the outskirts of urban areas, we find it important to create an urban structure that can be adapted to a possible future urban development or changes in the nature of the area.



-INFRASTRUCTURE-

Namsos has an infrastructure consisting of a functioning road system, a small airport and a deepwater port for Hurtigbåten and transport ships, mainly connected to Moelven Van Severen.

The city lacks, however, a functioning train system. While a railroad exists, it has not been in use for decades, due to deterioration of the tracks. Furthermore, there is no immediate plan to restore the tracks and to activate Namsosbanen due to restoration costs.

An operative train system is an important feature towards a functional city, especially one that is not located centrally, as it bridges the gap between different locations both for inhabitants and industries. A good train system is, furthermore, significant for transport and becomes crucial for the implementation and smooth operation of industries.

In our project, we have chosen to propose the restoration and activation of Namsosbanen for both industrial and passenger trains: While the existing railroad will be restored and used for passenger trains, a new line will be proposed built for freight trains. While the passenger trains will follow the original track to the urban area, the industrial railroad will separate from Namsosbanen and lead to the industrial area of Namsos.

With the reinstatement of the railroad and the further development of the town, also the road system will undergo changes and developments, such as the adaptation of an existent road to encompass the intersection between road and railroad. Furthermore, most of the parking lots in town will disappear and parking will be concentrated mainly in underground parking houses connected to each block, as well as along the streets.

The restoration and development of Namsosbanen is to be one of the first and most important changes in Namsos, as it will serve as catalyser for further development both urban and industrial.

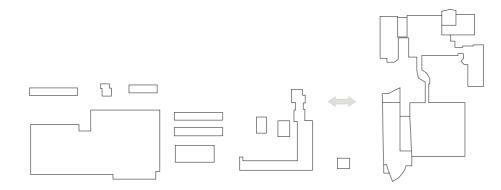


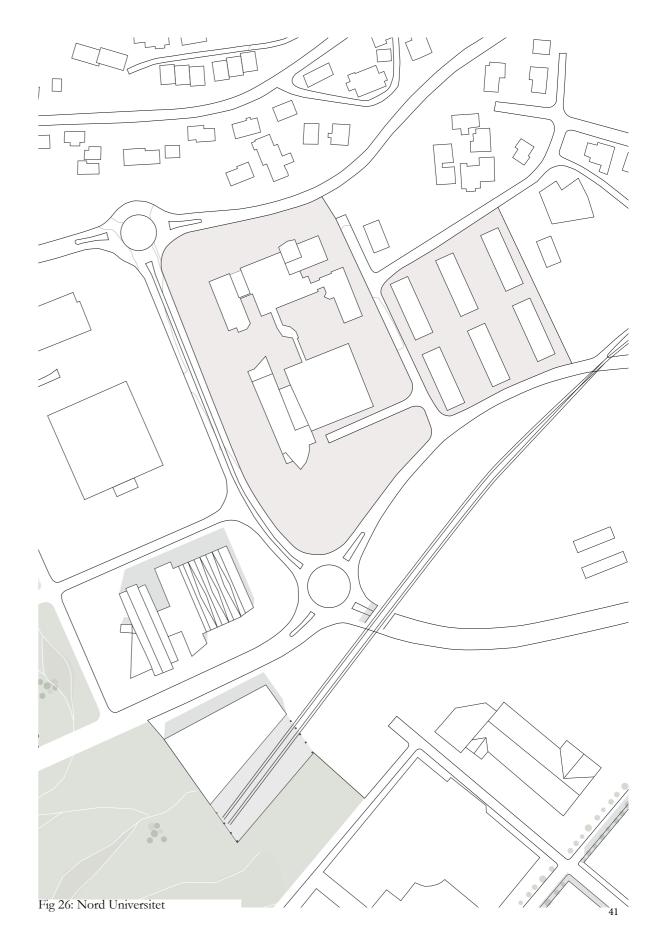
-EDUCATION-

For a strong urban development it is crucial to create work posts and higher education opportunities. A city should offer a variety of possibilities in different fields in order to attract a greater variety of people to settle. Currently, Nord-University has a campus situated in Namsos that focuses solely on delivering higher education in the Health-sector, mostly due to its close location to Namsos Hospital.

To achieve a more efficient urban development while simultaneously strengthening the local historical identity of Namsos, a connection between research and development can be established with the wood and timber industries. By linking different sectors of education, the pool of research can be increased, with one example being that of pharmaceutics from wooden products.

For this reason we propose an expansion of the university to include research and development connected to the wood and timber industries.





-ACTIVITIES-

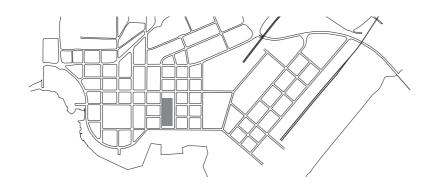
Even though Namsos currently offers a broad amount of activities for inhabitants, few of these are directly connected to the town centre.

To better activate the centre, as well as to strengthen the connection between citizens and the city through use, we propose a series of instalations and activities to be placed alongside the park area as well as in the open public squares, and by the fjord. The activities we propose to be implemented are based on citizens' replies to a survey conducted by Namsos Kommune about what activities they wish to have in the city. The goal is to increase inhabitants desire to procure the town centre for living as well as for active use and socializing.

For Namsos, we propose the implementation of several new playgrounds in different locations of the site of intervention, a new outdoor sports field in the park area, as well as a dog-park. Due to popular request of younger citizens of Namsos, we have proposed the opening of a climbing-park, a fjord bath, a skatepark and a go-cart track. Furthermore, we envision the possible utilization of public squares for community-activities such as urban gardening and flea-markets.

Also based on requests of inhabitants, we propose the implementation of a series of indoor activities in public buildings to be located at the site, such as a game court for bowling and other social games, gym court with trampoline park and an activity house for adolescents.

Last but not least, the old *Nexans* industry building will be repurposed for public activities with spaces for renting. This building has the capacity to house and auditorium, food court, offices, a gym, and more.



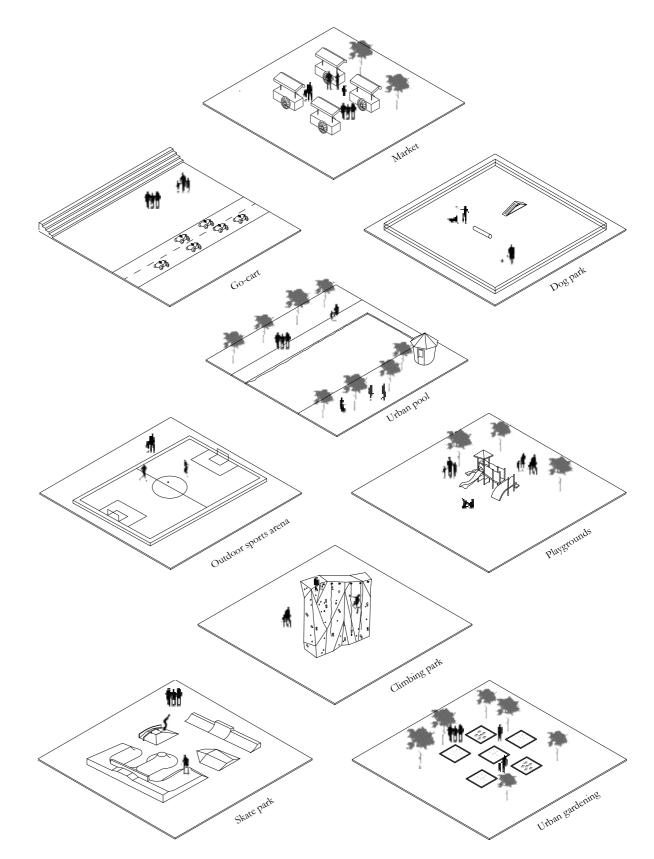
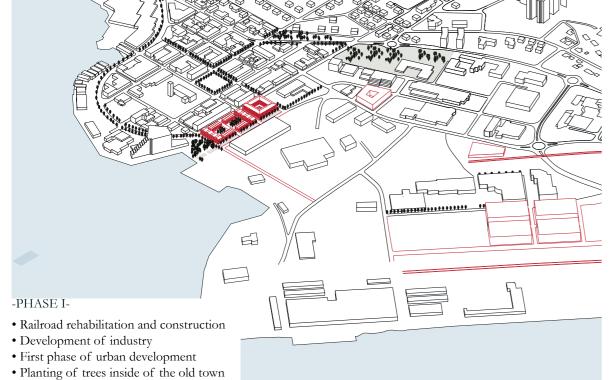
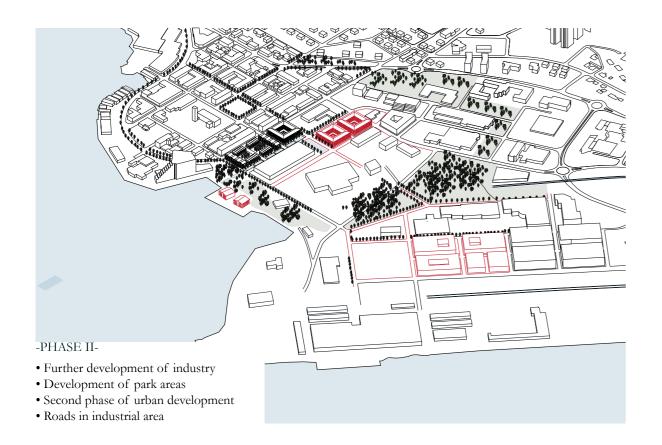


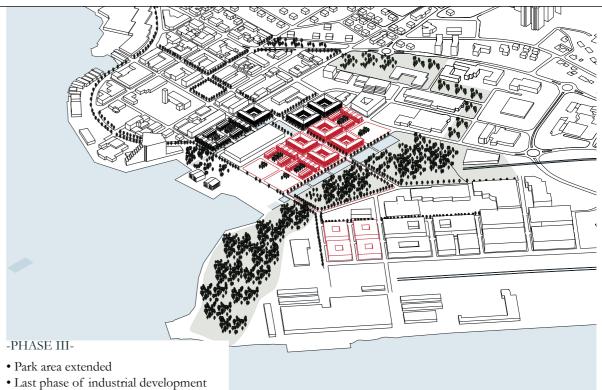
Fig 28: Proposed urban activities

PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

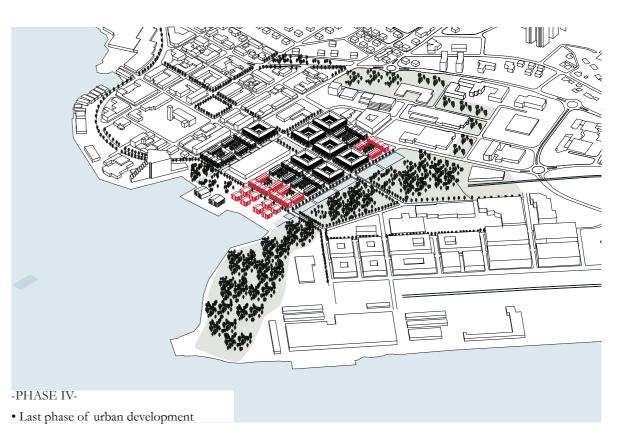


• Roads leading to and inside industrial area



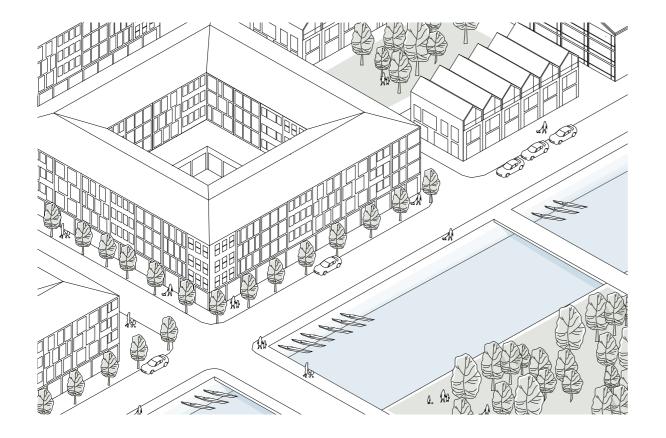


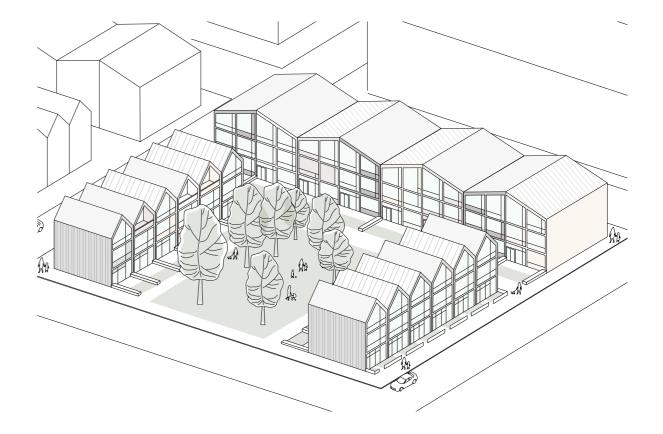
• Phase 3 of urban development



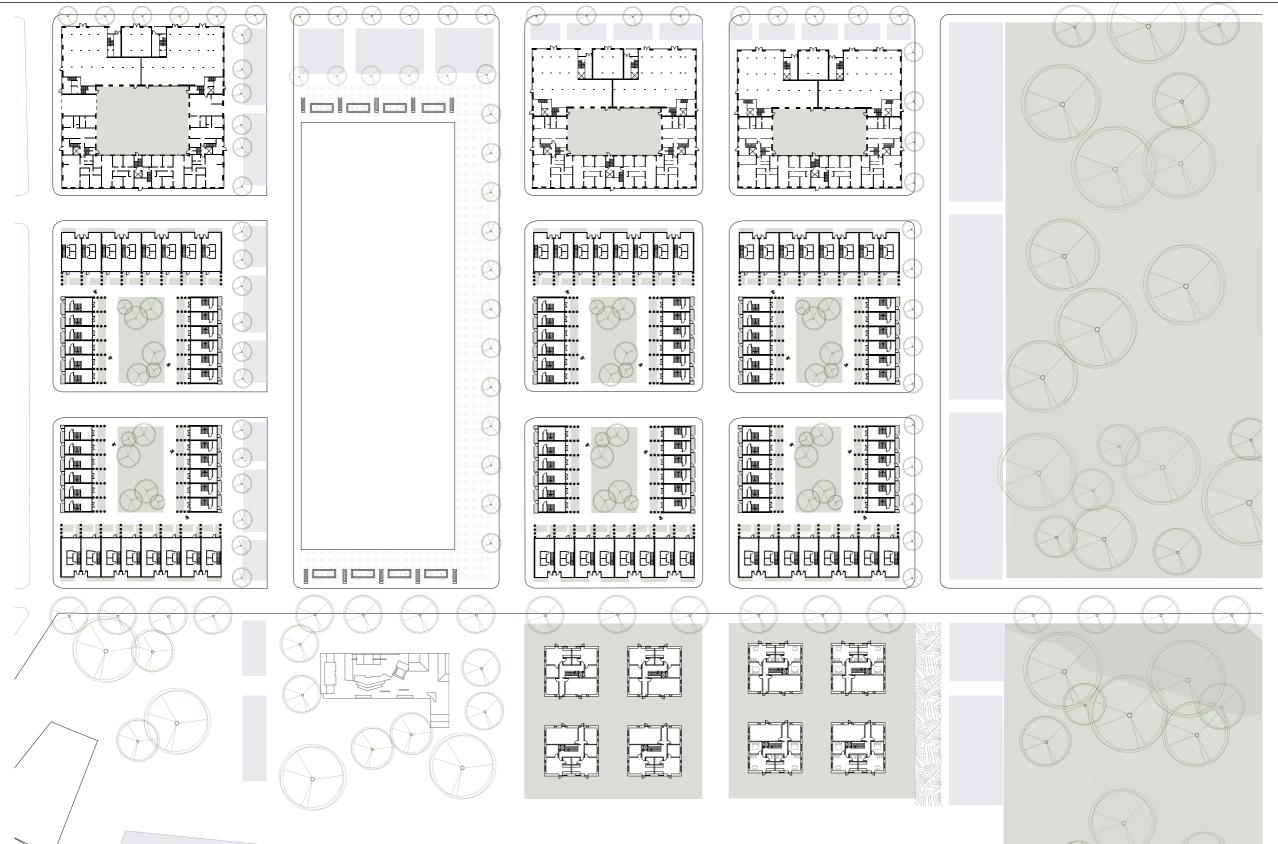
AXONOMETRIES







ZOOM



ELEVATIONS

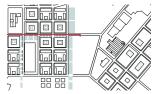
-ELEVATION A-A-

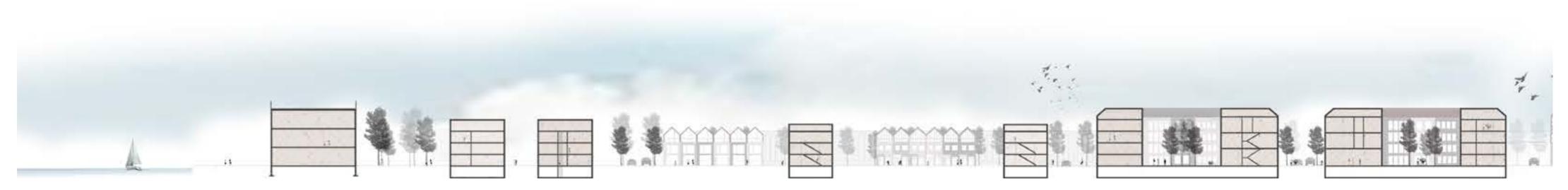


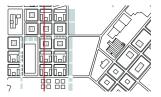
-ELEVATION B-B-













MODELS - MASTERPLAN 1:2000









MODELS - ZOOM 1:500









REFERENCES

Today, 37% of Norway's territory is covered by forests, and half of it (8,6 million hectares) consists of productive forest. It plays a crucial role for people in Norway and all over the world. The forest provides revenue opportunities, helps maintain agricultural productivity, food security, and supply of clean water. They are sources of renewable energy, which is key to future value creation and prosperity, as well as to a wide range of products. Forests also contribute to better environmental quality, to reducing and adapting to climate change and to preserving biodiversity.

The Norwegian forest and wood industry can contribute significantly to increased value creation and employment in Norway, and at the same time help to solve the global climate challenge. Forest industries have great potential for further industrial growth in Norway. The development of the wood industry in Norway is very important, so in 2013 the Agriculture and Food Department established a wide and unifying strategy for its short and long term development, where research, innovation and knowledge dissemination were the main focus.

A strategic report, "Skog 22", has been developed explaining how the norwegian forest and wood industry can contribute towards the increase of value creation and employment in Norway, while simultaneously helping to solve the global climate challenge: according to the report, the industry will take on a key role in the shift towards sustainability in Norway following the oil era.

The Norwegian forest and wood industry has a financial potential of about 180 billion NOK per year. Furthermore, according to the Norwegian department of forestry and landscape, it is possible to increase timber extraction with at least 15 million square meter, which is an increase of 35 % compared to the average felling in 2008-2012. The forest and wood industry can, as such, be seen as a visible key actor in bioeconomy, which will certainly be an attractive industry in the future.

To manage the varying possibilities of development, such as plantation of trees in new areas and densification in already utilized areas, plant breeding and fertilization offers a potential for increasing forest production in Norway. Densification of productive forest will not only create a massive volume of raw material for the wooden industry, but also

reduce CO2 by increasing its uptake. The forest, with its unique capacity for absorbing and storing CO2, will be able to play an important role towards limiting climate change. The development of the wooden and forest industries needs to take responsibility for the research and development of both streamlined and revolutionary products and technologies.

Report "Skog 22" points out a few crucial measures for strengthening competitiveness in the forest and wood industry, which could make the Norwegian industry able to compete on the worldwide market. An important example is the development of better infrastructure: there is the need for an expansion of the forest road network, a removal of bottlenecks points and an increased investment in the development of railways and harbours. If these needs are taken in account and resolved, the forest industry in Norway will grow both bigger and stronger.

Research and higher education within climate, environment and environmentally friendly energy, innovative and adaptable industry is also a point of strong importance, and will likely be prioritized by the government in the future, making the wood and forest industry crucial for the future development of the country.

Furthermore, the importance of education and research in the field of forestry will be important for knowledge-based value. As such, it is of great importance that universities and professional schools prioritize the higher education related to the maintenance and use of wood.



Source: Innovsjon Norge, Norges Forskningsråd. (2015, January) Skog 22 - Nasjonal Strategi for skog- og trenæringen. https://www.trondelagfylke.no/contentassets/67a56bd8148a44348b7fd498f0ba3792/regional-planstrategi-2016-2010.pdf Big cities and small towns in Norway have been growing for centuries, gradually changing from day to day. This continual development is important for inhabitants, businesses and nature alike. High quality urban design and place development should be prioritized, and include economical, social and environmental concepts of sustainability in the planning and implementation of urban structures.

Each year a number of towns and cities are nominated for the prize"Attraktiv By - Statens pris for bærekraftig by- og stedsutvikling". The award highlights a willingness and ability of a town or city to create a vibrant and attractive place to live, work, run a business and visit.

In 2016 Askim, a town in Østfold, was nominated for the prize. The city received town status in 1996 and has 14 402 inhabitants. Askim has a policy in which a gradual urban centre development is in focus, with emphasis on identity. The positive development of the town is recognizable by the fact that there are plenty of homes in the center. The municipality also gives a second life with new content for industrial buildings.

In 2017, Egersund was nominated. This city focuses on the development of the urban centre, and on the creation of "attractive spaces and good involvement processes with the trade strand." Near-center sites facilitate increased housing construction, which is a prerequisite for further centralization of the center.

An analysis of those cities gives an understanding of what cities need and which principles small cities with low attractiveness can apply in their future development. The focus should be on development of centre and near-centre located sites, attractive public spaces and outdoor areas that are well integrated into the urban space as well as public and cultural services. -BLUE AND GREEN RINGS-





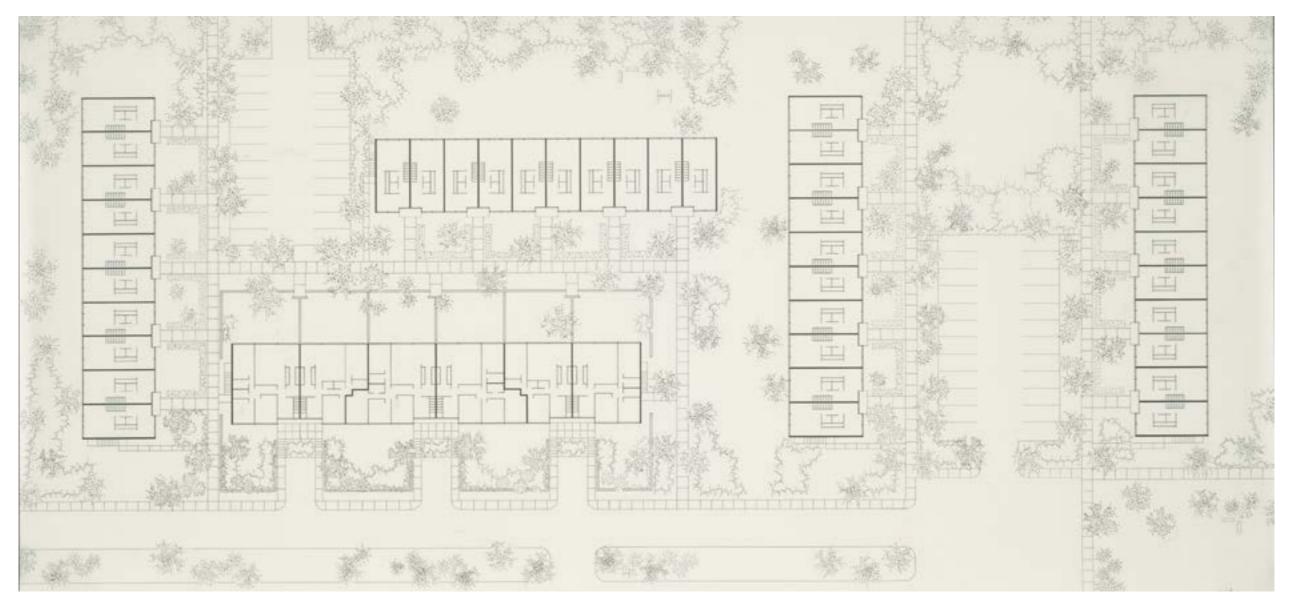


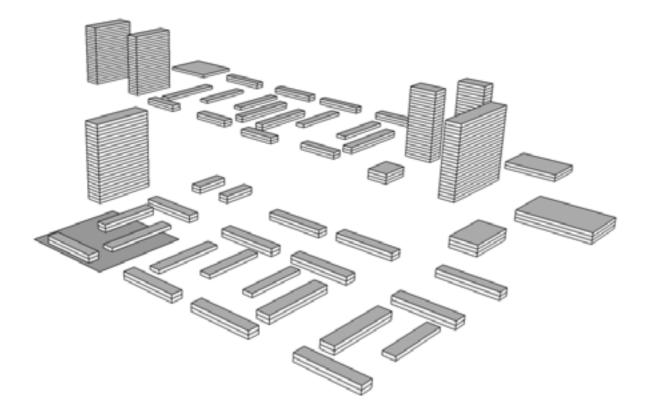


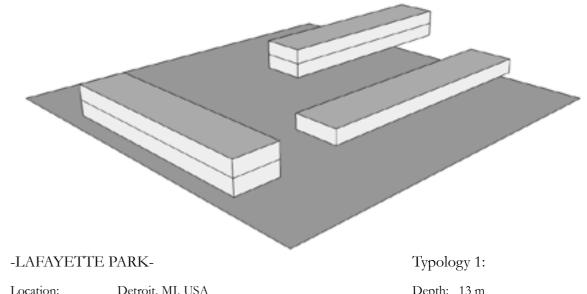


Source: Regjeringen.no. *Attraktiv by - Statens pris for bærekraftig by- og stedsutvikling*. https:// www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/kommuner-og-regioner/by--og-stedsutvikling/attraktiv_by/id2474509/

-LAFAYETTE PARK-



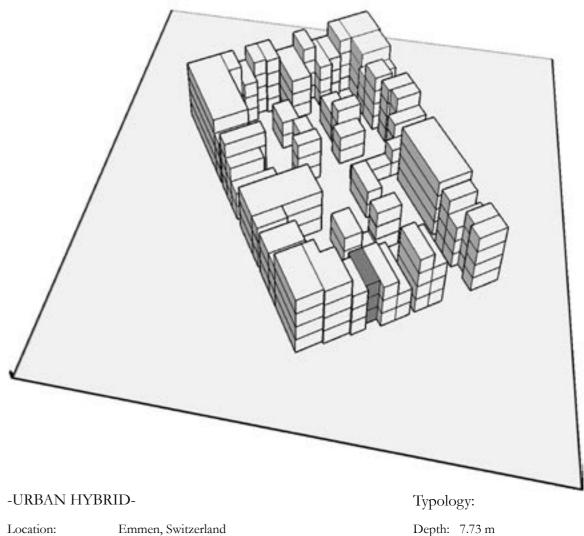




Location:	Detroit, MI, USA	Deptn: 15 m
Architect:	Mies Van Der Rohe	Width: 69 m
Project year:	1959	Height: 3 m
FAR 31,99%		Typology 2:
Foot print:	2 020,1 m ²	Depth: 12 m
Floors:	1-2	Width: 58 m
Total floor area:	3 199,1 m ²	Height: 6 m

-URBAN HYBRID-



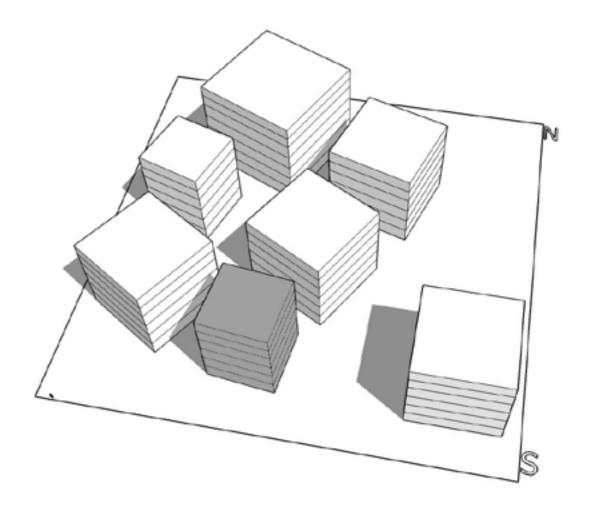


Location:Emmen, Swit:Architect:MVRDVProject year:2013FAR 103%Foot print:167,57 m²Floors:2-4Total floor area:4879 m²

Depth: 7.73 m Width: 4.27 m Height: 10 m

-VANNKUNSTEN-





-VANNKUNSTEN-

Typology:

Depth: 15.3 m Width: 15.5 m Height: 18 m