

# OPENING MÄLARPORTEN

Growing Västerås as a resilient, diverse, and living city



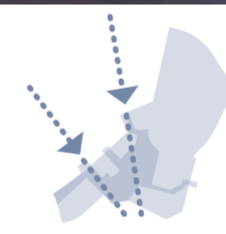
HEALING THE LAND



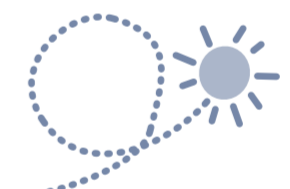
CONNECTING



TRANSFORM



OPEN MÅLA



LAST MOVE

## VÄSTERÅS - HIDDEN LEGACY

People arriving by train to Västerås Station find themselves standing between two realities. Looking north you find one of Northern Europe's oldest cities, an existence stretching back 1000 years; home to a cathedral, a castle, one of the world's largest electrical companies, and 130,000 people. Looking south, though, is a different reality: a landscape of warehouses, silos, asphalt car parks, and a few lonely apartment buildings. However, this area is not peripheral. Västerås was founded at a river mouth on the shores of Lake Mälaren, but over time, the city has found itself cut-off from the lake; and this area, south of the railway, is what divides them.

This area is known as Mälarporten, the gateway to Mälaren, however for the people of Västerås, this gateway is currently largely closed. At present Mälarporten is occupied by surface car parks and the remnants of industry. There are few places here for life - few places to work, eat, play, rest, or enjoy.

Västerås Stad understands this and wishes to use Mälarporten to reconnect the city to the lake.

So what can we do to open Mälarporten? How can we grow Västerås into a resilient and diverse, living city?

## CORE VALUES | DESIGN STRATEGIES

Mälarporten is currently very closed to Västerås, which means the Västerås is currently very closed to lake Mälaren. To solve this, our proposal aims to open Mälarporten. Our proposal opens Mälarporten by employing five main strategies:

**Healing the land** is a vital first step, but is a part of the process that is often pushed to the background in city development proposals. While the landscape of Mälarporten is not natural, it contains many, smaller, elements of nature that our proposal seeks to enhance. The railway sidings park, for example, is full of self-seeded trees and plants, currently growing as weeds. We propose to keep these, and stitch them into the a new park: one that supports local biodiversity, native species and embraces natural elements. This is one form of healing the land.

Healing the land also means healing the water. Whilst Svartån is Västerås' well known; many people don't know that Västerås has a second river. Starting at Munkgatan, and running under the ground to its mouth near the Mälarporten Silos is Lillån, Västerås' little river, which was buried in the early 20th century, back when heavier industry took place in the city. The river has almost been

forgotten, however our proposal will uncover Lillån, allowing it to flow openly once again, and bring benefits for wildlife and landscaping, as well as flooding resilience.

**Connecting** is the second important strategy for Opening Mälarporten. The area currently sits isolated from the rest of the city in many ways. Through various actions such as diverting bus routes into the area, bringing new functions and activities to the area, and finding new uses for existing industrial buildings on the site, we can help to connect Mälarporten to the lake and the city.

**Transforming** is the third strategy for this area. Västerås is a growing city, and the municipality wishes for this area to grow and transform. Our proposal is to make this transformation in a careful and phased way. The area may be being physically transformed by construction, but in order for Mälarporten to become a resilient, diverse, and living place, it must be transformed by a careful process of growing: growing culture, growing local business, growing new nature.

**Opening** is another important strategy. The railway which splits Mälarporten from the city centre brings both benefits and challenges. It is a great asset to have a travel centre next to this area, however the tracks of the railway physically form a barrier to the city. Our proposal brings strategies to minimise this barrier effect, both temporarily in the short term, but also permanently in the long term, through bridges, green corridors, and improved streetscape.

The **Last Move** strategy highlights the importance of having an 'end game' for the site. All of the actions in our proposal, even small or short-term, play a role in the long-term strategy for the site, and are not only about creating short-term placemaking. New trees in temporary planters will be planted in the ground on site one day; temporary shipping containers will give business the opportunity to establish financially before moving into permanent premises, once they are built; and a temporary bridge across the railway will encourage people to use a new route to the site, before a better permanent bridge can be built. All of our short term and long term strategies are linked: our proposal always has a 'last move' in mind.

## PHASING PROJECT TEMPORARY TO PERMANENT

### PHASE 01: HEALING PROCESS IN ACTION AND SOCIAL USE ACTIVATION



- Improve the local biodiversity by increasing the green areas in the inhospitable areas, mixing the use of permanent and temporary solutions according with the availability of each site.
- Tree nursery implementation in future park areas (healing through the vegetation).
- Pilot test for the modular temporary landscape

### PHASE 02: ACTIVATE THE SILOS AND ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION OF TEMPORARY LANDSCAPE MODULES



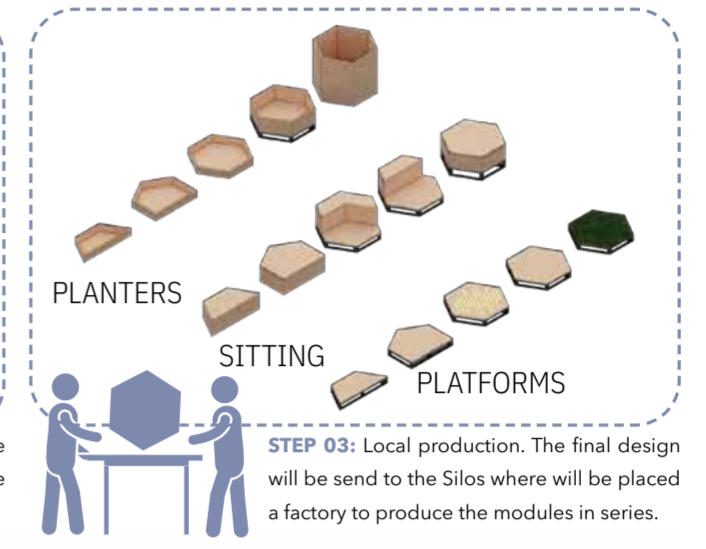
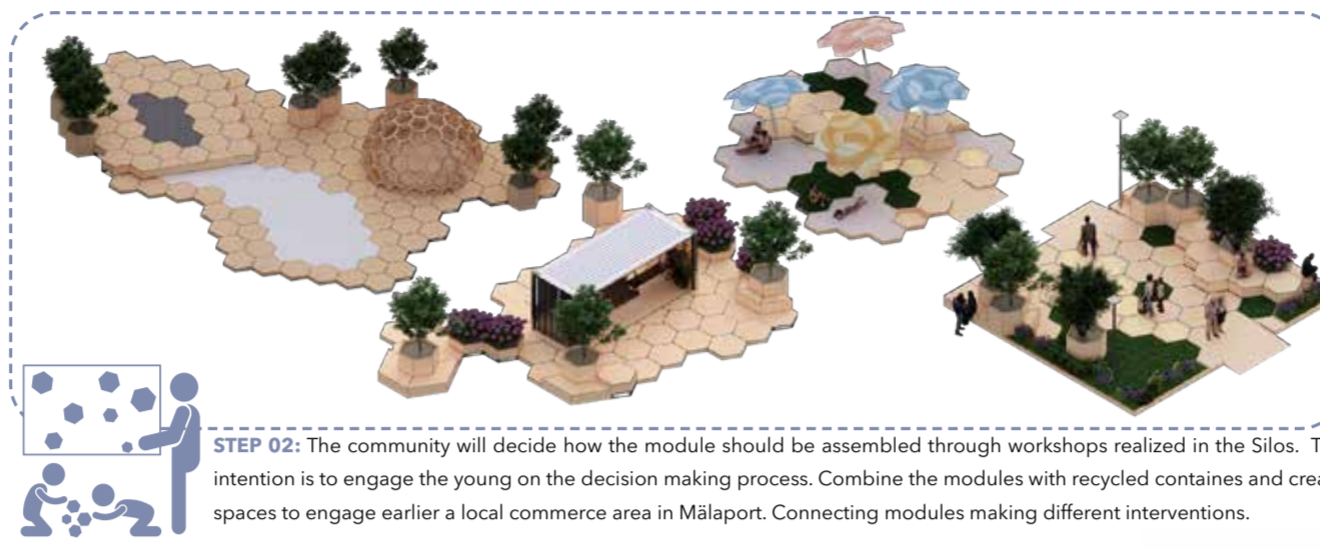
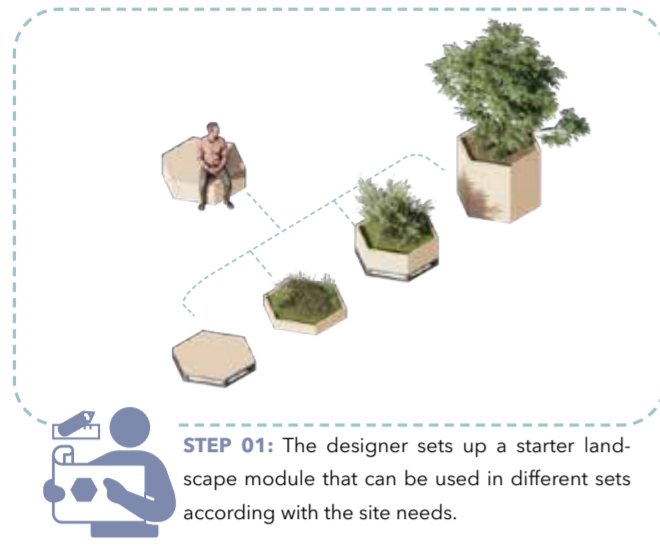
- Activate the silos before the demolition decision. The silos will be used as a local based factory design for the temporary landscape modules and as a temporary community center in order to bring the people to Mälarporten in the early stages.
- Design with the community. The idea of the modules is to engage the community to play as a "lego" toy and build the interventions during workshops considering the use of each intervention.

### PHASE 03: EXPAND THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN MÄLARPORTEN AND THE CITY



- Expand the local public transport system, creating a new circular bus route connecting the city center directly to the harbour area and connecting with the existing local transport network.
- Earlier Introduction of new bus stops in Mälarporten
- Implementation of a temporary bridge on the north side of the site project to promote the early use of the future new park area.

TEMPORARY GREENERY - FLEXIBLE LANDSCAPE MODULES



TEMPORARY GREENERY - FLEXIBLE LANDSCAPE MODULES



PHASE 01: Temporary wooden bridge built quickly, for first years of use. The new park filled with the temporary landscape modules, temporary buildings and running track connecting the Idrottshall to the the outside.



PHASE 02: Permanent bridge built alongside in conjunction with later developments



PHASE 03: Temporary bridge deconstructed after permanent bridge & developments are complete

MÄLARPORTEN THROUGH SEASONS - SUMMER AND WINTER

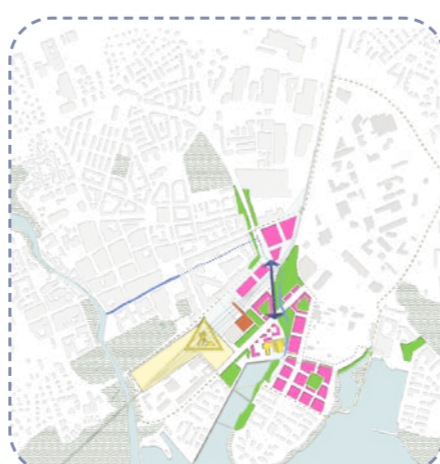


PHASE 04: WATER MANAGEMENT AND PERMANENT WATERFRONT INTERVENTION



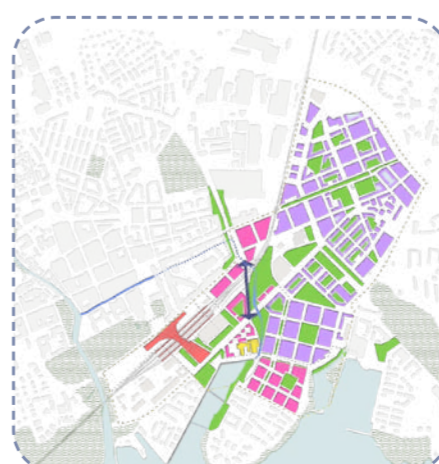
- Restauration of the old canal inside the city and in the project site.
- Implementation of bioswales, water retention, rain garden in the area).
- Waterfront intervention: installation of a walk board along the shoreline.
- Waterfront intervention: implementation of Sauna and a public swimming pool connected to the water.
- New bridge connecting the train station directly to the other side of Mälarpporten.

PHASE 05: DEFINING THE PERMANENT GREENERY AND FIRST NEW DEVELOPMENTS



- Definition of the permanent greenery in the site. Placement of the new park area in the heart of Mälarpporten.
- Settling the permanent crossing between Mälarpporten and the city center.
- Definition of the first areas of housing development.
- New station under construction (BIG proposal)

PHASE 06: MALÄRPORTEN LAST MOVE



- Definition of the last development areas inside the study site.
- Creation of link between the existent and new green areas.
- Adaptation of the silos for housing and commercial areas.
- Link established with the new central station (BIG)

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