

THE WAY FROM ROAD TO STREET

BU522



THE SITUATION

Varberg is a medium sized city in the south-west of Sweden. As a part of the city's transformation into a growing, climate-conscious creative hub of the west coast, the road Trädlyckevägen is changing from a large car-dominated road to a living, eco-friendly environment.

Trädlyckevägen leads from the city center of Varberg, between the areas of Håsten and Karlberg, to the eastern outskirts of Varberg. In the future, the road is meant to be a connection between the city center and the large future development area of Östra Träslöv. Currently, the road and its surroundings bears the mark of the planning paradigm of the 60's, with separation between building functions and modes of transport. While it offers efficient passage for cars, it also acts as a barrier between the bordering residential neighbourhoods and offers limited interest for pedestrians and cyclists.

In the middle of Trädlyckevägen is Håstens Torg, a local centre with some shops for necessities,

separated from the bike and pedestrian paths by a large parking lot, the design is adapted to the visitor travelling by car.

The challenge the project faces is that there is a need for more houses and more services, but also more attractive green areas and ecosystem services. The aim is to create a resilient city in regards to ecological, social and economical sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

- Encourage sustainable modes of transport by inverting the hierarchy of space.
- Provide more homes, commercial services and recreational opportunities.
- Extend the continuity of the urban fabric towards the eastern development area.
- Increase green-space quality with regards to biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate resilience.

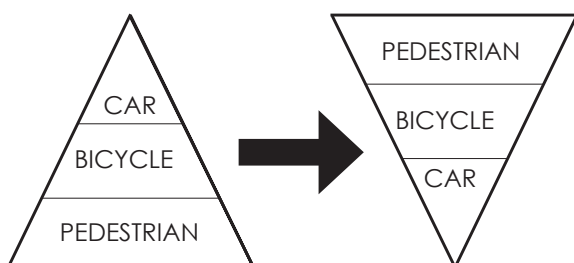
THE CONCEPT

The concept of this project is to transform the big road into a vivid street.

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The concept-pyramid describes the idea of changing the hierarchy of the road. As it is now, the cars dominate the road and make the cyclists and pedestrians adapt to their requirements. The bicycles have to go under the road, and therefore have a longer distance, and also, a difference in altitude that is annoying when biking. As a pedestrian you feel unsafe in the tunnels and the visuals and noise are not very interesting. In this concept, the pyramid of hierarchy is tipped upside down. Pedestrians and cyclists are now the owner of the street. The walking paths are located in the new park area and the crossings, for both bicycles and pedestrians, are made on the same level as the cars.

New houses are built close to the street. This will make the street more vivid and make it more safe due to more “eyes on the street” and the feeling of people around you. In the bottom floor, commercials and other services are located. Adjacent to the street and around the new buildings there are plenty of green area with a high biological and social value. There are activities and ecosystem services mixed together. In the larger park area there are space to play, have a pick-nick, kick some football or just chill out with your friends. Here are activities adjusted to fit all ages in Varberg.



THREE STRATEGIES

To achieve the goal of the concept, three main strategies are used; addition, concentration and diversification.

1 Addition

One objective of the proposed layout is to not subtract from the existing structure, instead to add and supplement it to ensure continuity for inhabitants and businesses, as well as to preserve already invested resources. The existing structure can accommodate a much higher volume of built space which we propose to focus around the area of Håstens Torg, trying to reach a “critical mass”, a density at which the development of the surrounding area will perpetuate itself due to the activities and opportunities radiating from Håstens Torg.

2 Concentration

The organisation of traffic through the site is arranged according to the planning hegemony of the 1960’s, with a high degree of separation between different modes of transport. This leads to perceived insecurity for pedestrians and cyclists due to solitary paths and underpasses not being observed from houses or cars, but also large areas of low-quality green space consisting of green strips with limited or no recreational or ecological value. The project proposes a concentration of traffic modes side-by-side along Trädlyckevägen, and consolidating green space to parks that provide ecosystem services as well as recreational opportunities.

3 Diversification

The area currently has a very homogenous structure in regards to building use and housing typology, another remnant of the planning ideals of its conception. Trädlyckevägen becomes a

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border between the single family housing to the south, and predominantly rental units to the north. The lack of workplaces, cafés, shopping venues and meeting places enforces a relationship of periphery-center between the neighbourhood and the inner city to the west.

The project proposes buildings that can contain city services, offices and apartments, and active street-level floors with shops, restaurants and activities that cater to passers-by. The outdoor environment is consciously designed to cater to different age groups, to bring people of all ages around the area together.

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION

The bridgehead of the transformation is Håstens Torg, today a parking lot with a limited assortment of shops. The large open area, situated in the center of the project area, is well suited to temporary interventions, such as farmers markets, food truck festivals and open air shows. In connection to these types of occasions, public forums will be held to gather the ideas and wishes of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, as well as an opportunity for city officials to inform the public about the plans for the area and to involve them in the development. These types of gatherings can hopefully be recurring events through the years, tying the area together and sustaining Håstens Torg as an active meeting place for all inhabitants of the surroundings.

A parallel process is to establish the new street section, with sidewalks and bike lanes along the



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cars, together with the new park areas. Reduced speeds and new level crossings serve to increase the sense of security when travelling on foot along Trädlyckevägen, and mitigating the border effect between north and south. The new park areas will create attractive living spaces creating a demand for housing as well as to increase pedestrian traffic through the area.

The old underpass is being remade into a storm water pond. Around it there are possibilities to sit or play, and the water makes the park more diverse in ecology and events. The new crossing makes the north and south of Trädlyckevägen more connected, and it will be less of a barrier with this new arrangement.

The citizens are to be included from the beginning of the project. They can be divided into various groups that are involved by different methods. The older people can be involved through pensioners' council in Varberg, the young adults can be involved at the university or by simple questionnaire online, and the children or their parents can be involved at school. After involving people in projects, it is important to get back to them and show appreciation towards their involvement.

THE VISION OF THE FUTURE

Håstens Torg will be a local centrality, offering services and entertainment to locals, visitors and passers-by. The proposed building layout around it create a new situation for the place, with the outside being the bustling crossroads of Trädlyckevägen and Föreningsgatan as an active street intersection with storefronts and sidewalk cafés, and the inside redefining Håstens Torg as a multi-functional urban room, shielded from the ongoing traffic.

The buildings themselves being constructed mainly with wood, and the street level floors filled commercial spaces of varying sizes, offering opportunities for big and small businesses alike. The roofs containing greenhouses and terraces, on the tallest buildings open to the public, offering views that extend all the way to the ocean.

The vision of the completed project is the idea of Trädlyckevägen as a main artery, connecting the future area of Östra Träslöv to the centre through pedestrian, bike and public transport through a tree-lined avenue. No longer acting as a boundary between areas, instead being a seam that ties the two neighbourhoods together.