

Åkrehamn (NO)

How can Åkrehamn develop from a fragmented car based landscape, into an attractive urban town centre?

Scale

XL/L

Team representative: architect/urbanist/ landscaper

Location: Åkrehamn, Karmøy

Population: Åkrehamn 7 885, Karmøy 42 186 inhab.

Reflection site: 286 ha

Project site: 20 ha

Site proposed by: Karmøy municipality

Actors involved: Karmøy municipality, Private partners

Owner(s) of the site: Karmøy municipality, private developers, others

Commission after competition:

Commission valued at 500.000 NOK (exVAT) in 2024/25 for developing the project further through involving users, giving feedback to the zoning plan and revising designs.

Karmøy municipality retains the option to increase the commission's size and scope with another NOK 500.000 at a later stage.

The winners will also meet local stakeholders and developers with possibilities of negotiating private commissions.



Åkrehamn is formally classified as a town, but does not feel like one. It lacks a clear urban structure, and has no discernible centre. The development of Åkrehamn has not followed the prescribed plan leading the town to be instead characterized by conglomerations of independent projects. These have, over time, responded to changing needs without any consideration of the unique qualities of the place as whole. Most of the streets even lack sidewalks, and there is very little separation between pedestrians and cars. Parking lots take up an inordinate amount of surface space in the centre. Åkrehamn lies amidst a beautiful coastal landscape, where you find some of Norway's best beaches. It is also directly exposed to the North Sea and thus has a rough climate with intense wind and plenty of rain which has only further contributed to a car-centric urban development and lifestyle.

Åkrehamn grew as a coastal community, and its identity is closely linked to its relationship with the sea. But from an urban perspective, it has turned its back to the water. The historic centre is by the older fishing harbour, while since the 1950s, new development has spread along the main road passing through the town. Now, the main road functions as a kind of high street. Both the municipality and major business owners in Åkrehamn now realize that the city cannot keep uncontrollably and aimlessly sprawling, without a plan. It is in everyone's interest to make a holistic vision, so that new projects will allow Åkrehamn to develop more sustainably and systematically. The residents of Åkrehamn feel a great deal of pride in the beautiful landscape surrounding the town. Now, it is time to elevate the town itself to a place where people can meet, live and feel safe in their everyday lives. A place that people can be proud of.

The municipality wants to incorporate co-creation into its plans and has taken the initiative to partner



17

Flexibility and adaptability to different uses. There is will to invest in Åkrehamn, but it is still a small place where each new building is a considerable investment. New proposals should explore flexible uses for buildings such as housing that can easily be converted to commercial use and vice versa.

How can a new urban centre connect to the harbor and the breath-taking landscape?



up with local stakeholders as well as the county to participate in European. The competition will form the backbone of a plan for how to create the future Åkrehamn and forms part of a broader co-creation process where the goal is a legally binding plan and public-private partnership that will be used as a tool in the process of transforming the centre from plan to reality.

QUESTIONS TO THE COMPETITORS

The goal is to give Åkrehamn a vital and functional centre that promotes more walking and biking. We need a plan for how the existing urban structure can be strengthened, and how the centre can be strengthened through developing the connections between the harbour and the main road.

The site has massive potential for both new construction and transformation of existing structures. We see this area as the key for achieving a sustainable urban environment in Åkrehamn and create stronger continuity in the urban fabric.

How can the site be developed to create an attractive town centre? How can the sustainable city simultaneously be a place for businesses, retail, and a preferred place to live in an area currently dominated by suburban housing?

How can we create high-quality and inclusive outdoor areas and urban spaces? How can the town be better connected to the sea, the beach and its natural surroundings?

The task is to make an overarching urban plan, one that can convincingly allow room for ambitious visions and realistic processes for implementation. Show how the vision can be implemented in the immediate, short, medium and long term.