

E¹⁸ Stadhuisplein, Amersfoort (NL) Scale L/L

Rebuild Culture

Rebuild Stadhuisplein into a dynamic Cultural Quarter which integrates performance venues, honours heritage and creates a pedestrian-friendly design, bridging the historic core and river-front redevelopments into one vibrant urban experience.

Location: Stadhuisplein, Amersfoort
Population: 160,000 / 285,000 Metro
Reflection site: 3.56 hectares
Project site: 1.90 hectares
Proposed by: Municipality Amersfoort
Actors involved: Municipality Amersfoort
Team composition: Architect non mandatory

Follow-up Process

The Municipality of Amersfoort is dedicated to establishing the new cultural district as a crucial element of the broader urban development plan. Building on the proposed phasing concepts, the Municipality seeks to collaborate with stakeholders to implement innovative ideas generated through this competition. Furthermore, the Municipality is open to conducting feasibility studies to explore long-time opportunities for the Stadhuis (brown brick building), whether through a partial study or as part of the comprehensive and integrated development strategy.



The Stadhuisplein area in Amersfoort is a historically layered urban site that reflects the city's evolution from a medieval settlement to a modern municipality. The location is part of the protected cityscape of Amersfoort's historic core, emphasizing its high cultural and architectural value.

The challenge is to rebuild a dynamic cultural quarter integrating cultural podiums while respecting and using the quality of its historical character and scale that amplify the city's social and cultural vibrancy. The area lies in the historic city centre at the border of the significant redevelopment zones along the River Eem, presenting the challenge of crafting a cultural urban district with a pedestrian friendly design that acts as a transformative link uniting these areas into a cohesive and harmonious urban experience.

Cultural District

The area requires a rethinking of the connection from the Varkensmarkt to the Eem and from the Stadsring to the Westsingel (Molenstraat). The primary focus is cultural performance, approached from a broad perspective and encompassing various scales, theater, film, music, including education and performance in theater. The cultural program, featuring large blind boxes, along with the current logistical problems, forms the primary challenge in an area rich with significant historical values. The area struggles to reconcile Amersfoort's historic core with its modern urban use and fabric. The site retains historical remnants includes key complexes such as the Zocherplantsoen, Observantenklooster, Johanneskerk, and Sint Pietersgasthuis.

The urban design proposal is to balance public space and new buildings with historical preservation while addressing logistical challenges. The plan must envision Stadhuisplein as a new cultural district that integrates historical and modern functionality, ensuring that new programs enhance (green) public spaces and foster inclusive urban life.

Step by step development / Phasing

Part of the challenge is an organic development, step-by-step phasing. Propose a phased development strategy that addresses current temporary uses, optimizes land utilization, and seamlessly integrates future growth while enhancing connectivity. During the long-time development, the several parts of the City Hall can be an engine for place-making, and the beginning of the cultural district during the restructuring of the area. Important in this part of the assignment is a prospect /script for the development for at least 7 years which preserve the value of the City Hall (as it probably will be redeveloped instead of demolished). The three main sections in the area each playing a pivotal role -

- The building along Torenstraat (Hellestraat 24) is earmarked for demolition, the space between





Sint-Joriskerk and Torenstraat, currently occupied by parking and logistics for the Sint Jorisplein shopping center, requires redesigning or integration into the overall plan.

- The Molenstraat street profile can be optimized to a single-lane road, while the long building along Molenstraat, including the bridge and annex of the “Stadhuis” building, will remain in use for 2 years before demolition. The original “Stadhuis” (brown brick building) will be preserved for 5-7 years, with temporary use planned for the next 4-5 years, although its long-term future remains undecided.
- The Achter Davidshof, situated between the City Hall and train tracks, serves as a vital transitional zone, playing a key role in urban development along the Eem and enhancing connectivity and spatial quality.

Urban Historical scale for Cultural Synergy

Define an ensemble of buildings and spaces promoting openness, transparency, street life and entertainment. The envisioned cultural district will be a central destination, combining functions for theater and a large music venue, film, music, and exhibitions to attract diverse audiences. While accommodating evolving cultural needs, providing scalable options for event programming and audience engagement. The program features a centralized cluster, including at least a large multi-functional theater and film screening rooms, creating a cohesive and versatile cultural venue. Support spaces encompass production facilities, rehearsal studios, and artist workspaces, fostering an environment that enhances creative synergy.

Propose Visionary urban design ideas to transform Stadhuisplein into a new cultural district, balancing historical preservation with modern urban functionality. The new cultural district proposal must integrate cultural performance spaces— theatre, music, film, and education creating seamless connection from Varkensmarkt, Eem, Stadsring and Westsingel.



Stadhuisplein is poised for transformation into a new cultural district, where history and modernity coexist. Propose a phased development strategy that will guide this transformation over the next seven years, ensuring an organic and sustainable evolution, leveraging the City Hall as an anchor for place-making and fostering dynamic cultural experiences.