

The Green Structure Strategy for the City of Växjö 2013

SHORT VERSION



The Green Structure Strategy for the City of Vaxjo. Parks, nature areas and lakes - the greatest qualities of the city. A green environment provides life quality to the citizens.



● **PARKS, NATURE AREAS AND LAKES** are some of Vaxjo's greatest assets. These play an important role for the choice of residence, attraction points to visit and the location of businesses. The green environment provides life quality for the citizens in daily life.

The Green Structure Strategy for Vaxjo identifies and describes the qualities and functions of the green environment for the city planning process and the development of the city. The program also gives a vision of how the green areas in the city can be sustained as the city is expanding.

The green areas in Vaxjo are categorized into five different functions: cultural aspects and identity, recreation and outdoor activities, biodiversity, climate mitigation as well as urban agriculture and grazing on the city fringe. The strategy gives clear guidance on how the different functions can be further developed, and work in synergy.

The full version of The Green Structure Strategy for the City of Vaxjo 2013 is available on the website of the City of Vaxjo: www.vaxjo.se/greenstructurestrategy ●



The green structure strategy provides information and knowledge

What is a Green Structure Plan and what is the purpose?

The comprehensive strategy for the green areas in the city is a planning tool for the future development of Vaxjo. It describes the city's green areas, their values and functions. The strategy does not judge between different areas and functions. It does however provide guidelines for how the green areas should be maintained and developed as the city expands in order to fulfill local, regional and national environmental goals. People's need for recreation areas, parks, green links and nature areas are entwined with our long term responsibility for a sustainable society, which takes climate change, biodiversity and the different functions of ecosystems fully into account.

What does the term green areas stand for?

The Green Structure Strategy includes the city of Vaxjo with surroundings, initially green areas belonging to the municipality such as public parks, nature reserves, forest areas, agricultural land and grazing areas. However, all green areas are of importance despite ownership. With regards to biodiversity privately owned gardens and parks also are of importance to the city. The green setting around schools, hospitals and offices do provide important recreation opportunities in daily life as well as privately owned forests on the city fringe. Solitary trees in the formal layout of the city of Vaxjo are important for climate balance, and provide identity and character. For this reason the strategy includes all forest areas close to the city, as well as formal parks, green squares, planted boulevards, cemeteries, green areas on housing estates and other cultural landscapes in the city.



THE AIM IS TO FURTHER DEVELOP THE GREEN AREAS OF VAXJO

The city of Vaxjo has identified a strategy for what should be retained and developed long term in the forthcoming work with the green environment.

The overarching goal is: "Vaxjo - the City of Parks and Lakes with nature around the corner". Public areas such as streets, squares, parks and nature areas should be positively managed.

The citizens of Vaxjo should have easy access to parks, nature areas and lakes for swimming from their residences and work places. The city's nature areas should primarily be managed for recreation and nature experiences. Parks, lakes and larger recreation areas should all be accessible by foot and bicycle from the city, via green links. The green links should provide a variety of character and functions such as nature trails, play areas, swimming areas, sport fields and picnic areas. The aim is to provide a green network for all citizens within walking distance.

Nature areas and parks should be managed to promote biodiversity and easy access for everyone. The development of a robust green structure for the future should be an integrated part of the city planning process; actively creating new green avenues, squares, parks and green spaces as the city grows.

The city of Vaxjo should provide clean water, fresh air and valuable nature whilst being fossil fuel free.



Most of Vaxjo's citizens today have access to a green area within easy access from their home. The city's green and blue areas also provide an important refuge for a rich flora and fauna. They also assist in absorbing excess rain water, provides a buffer against air pollution as well as extreme temperatures. All green and blue areas fulfill one or several functions, alone, and together, as a system.

To retain and develop an identity

CULTURAL VALUES AND IDENTITY

The cultural values and specific identity of the city – a green heritage to manage and enhance

The cultural heritage is an essential part of the long term management of resources for a sustainable society. Many natural values and functions of green areas and landscapes are closely connected to, and dependent on, cultural values and traditions. Information and knowledge of our cultural values is therefore essential in order to protect the environment long term for future generations.

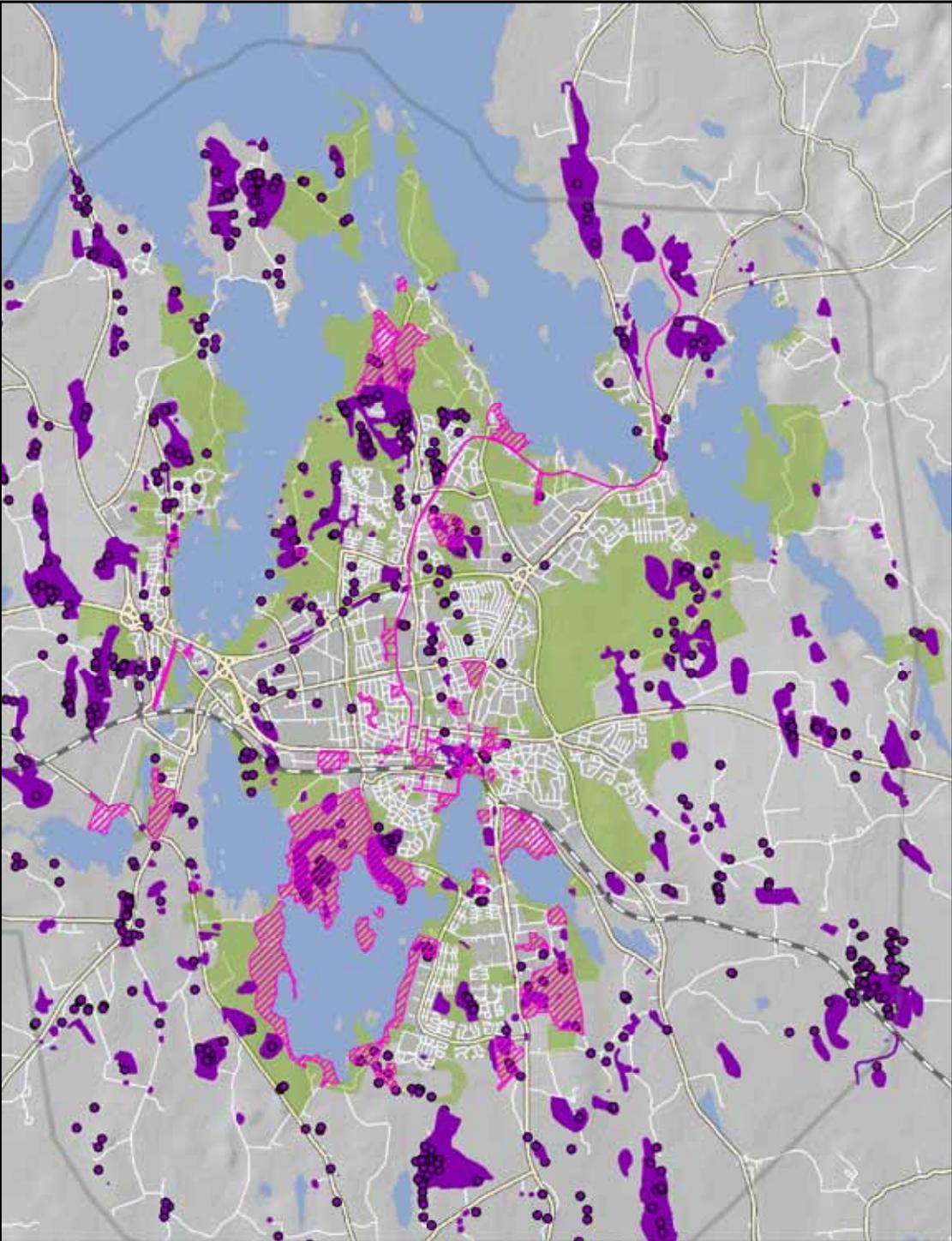
Cultural values cannot be recreated once lost. Many green areas have a rich cultural legacy such as archaeological remains, are testimony to the landscape architectural history, the landscape maintenance regimes as well as folk traditions. Many of the city's green elements and open places plays an important role in the city's history, and are part of the citizens identity. These places can be appreciated by each and everyone during community events and different cultural celebrations. History enthused places such as the ancient ruins at the Castle of Kronoberg, and the areas associated with Carl von Linne' at the Carolus College by the Cathedral, among many, are ideal venues for art installations and cultural performances.

● **Guidelines for future planning:**

An attractive and sustainable city is built on the characteristic identity and the long term management of existing natural and cultural values of the city.

These values should increasingly be protruded and integrated. The green areas reflects the historic development of the city and the leading city planning ideals throughout history. The cultural values of the city's open areas are of strong symbolic, historic and social importance for the citizens of Vaxjo.

CULTURAL VALUES CONNECTED TO THE GREEN STRUCTURE OF VAXJO



-  Areas of distinct importance for cultural heritage
-  Archaeological remains
-  Green areas



More trees in the city – to provide character and climate balance in central spaces

Beautiful solitary trees, distinct avenues and boulevards in the city centre form part of the identity of Växjö. They provide shade, define space and help with orientation. They also provide biodiversity, improve the quality, bind carbonmonoxide and act as a buffer against strong wind. The trees also reflect the change of seasons and create a better city to live and work in

● *Guidelines for future planning:*

The existing natural and cultural values should be retained and enhanced as Växjö develops as an attractive and sustainable city.

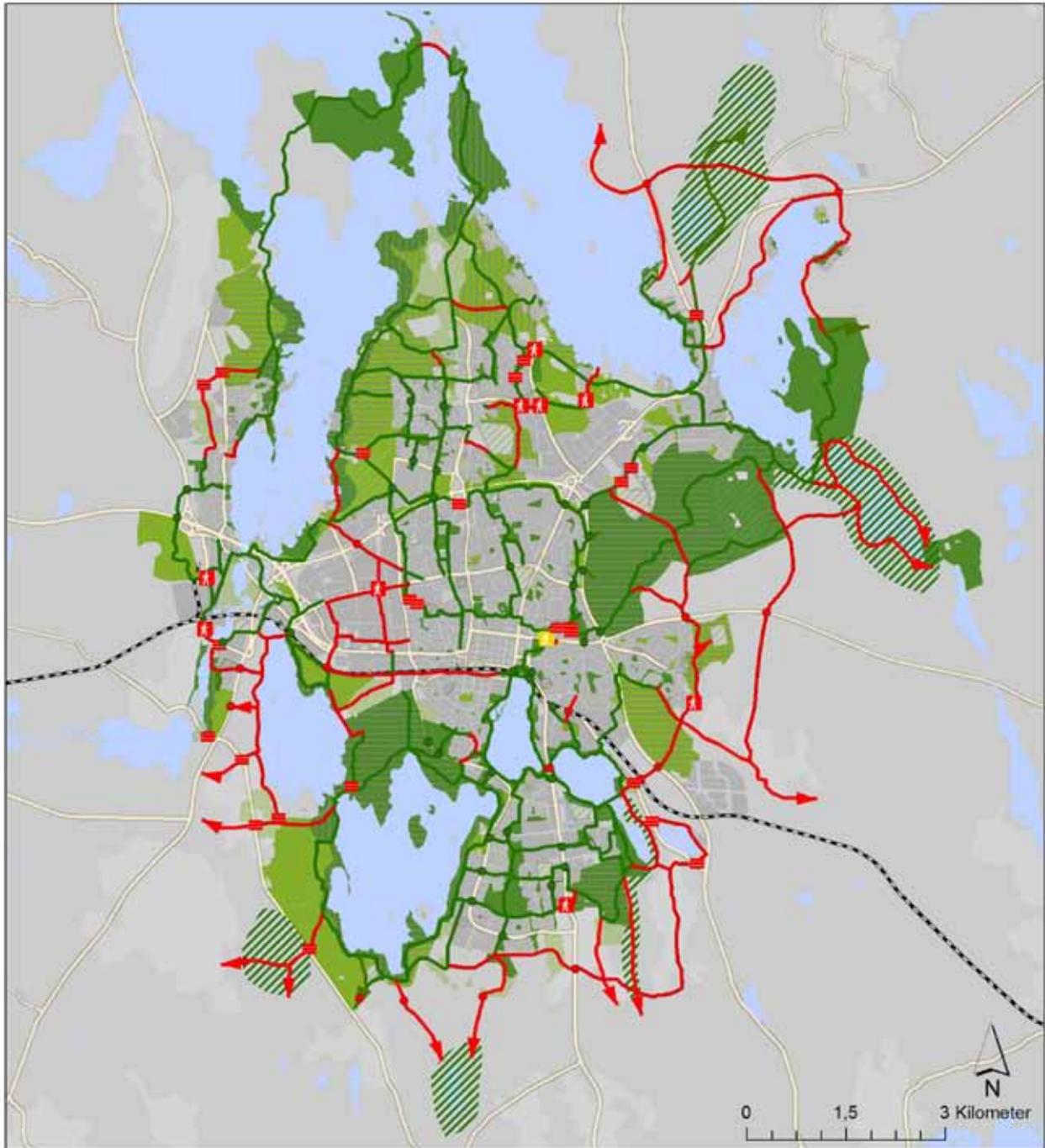
The natural and cultural values - the foundations of today's Växjö

The landscape which surrounds Växjö strongly contributes to the character and identity of the city, with the many lakes, a varied topography and the abundance of vegetation. Here our history is embedded as the landscape has been shaped both through natural processes and through human activities.

● *Guidelines for future planning:*

Existing nature and cultural landscapes should be retained and enhanced as Växjö develops as an attractive and a sustainable city.

AREAS VALUABLE FOR RECREATION WITH PROPOSALS FOR ENHANCEMENT



Green links

- Existing green links
- Proposed green links
- Existing pedestrian passage (underpass or footbridge)
- Existing pedestrian crossing
- Proposed pedestrian passage (underpass or footbridge)
- Proposed pedestrian crossing
- Proposed marking for passage

Valuable recreation areas

- Areas of especially high recreational value
- Areas of especially high recreational value, enhancement required
- Areas of especially high recreational value, enhancement recommended
- Areas partly of especially high recreational value
- Areas partly of especially high recreational value, enhancement required
- Areas partly of especially high recreational value, enhancement recommended
- Proposed new recreation areas
- Other area with recreational values



Access to green areas in daily life

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AND RECREATION

Green links – safe routes for everyone

An overarching structure of green links integrates the dispersed green areas and lakes across the city. The green network provides recreation during longer distances in a green, quiet and safe environment. The green links also improves public access to parks and larger nature reserves. The green links vary in terms of character and content from well kept green pedestrian paths to nature trails, green avenues and popular cycle tracks. Today Vaxjo is well provided with green links in north-south direction and through the circular cycle track "Around Vaxjo", whilst other parts of the city would benefit from further improvement.

● Guidelines for future planning:

The green links of the city should be developed to provide recreation during longer distances via continuous green links. New green links should be provided to enhance the existing green web
Easy access, good orientation and variation along the tracks should be provided to create a stimulating and safe environment. Overview and signage contributes to achieve safe green links for everyone



Attractive parks and nature areas – the living rooms for Vaxjo’s citizens

Most citizens have access to parks and nature areas of different kinds. Access to attractive green areas increases people’s motivation to physical movement and activities. The use of parks and green areas is determined by the physical and perceived access to them.

Within 50 m from the residence a smaller green area should be provided for rest, shade and small children’s play. Within 300 m from the residence, a larger park of at least 1 ha should be found. Within 800 m from the residence a larger nature area should be provided. Attractive green areas should be found with easy access from preschools, schools, care homes and hospitals in the city.

● Guidelines for future planning

Easy access to parks and nature within short distance from residences, schools, care homes and hospitals is an important quality which should be retained and enhanced as the city of Vaxjo expands.

Areas important for recreation should be retained untouched when the city grows. Parks and nature areas should be developed to offer a rich variety of character, scale and activities throughout the city. Also areas suitable for larger groups of people should be accommodated.



Accessible beaches and lakes for activities provides a range of qualities

The many lakes in and around the city of Vaxjo is a characteristic and one of the greatest assets of the city. The beaches are important not only for recreation but also for biodiversity. Many trail routes are well established and used by many people, whilst beach zones also are important ecological corridors for flora and fauna.

● Guidelines for future planning

The accessibility to the lakes in Vaxjo and the recreational use of them should be enhanced, whilst the lake shore should be retained and managed in a sustainable manner.

Active and diverse recreation – places where people meet, relax and work out

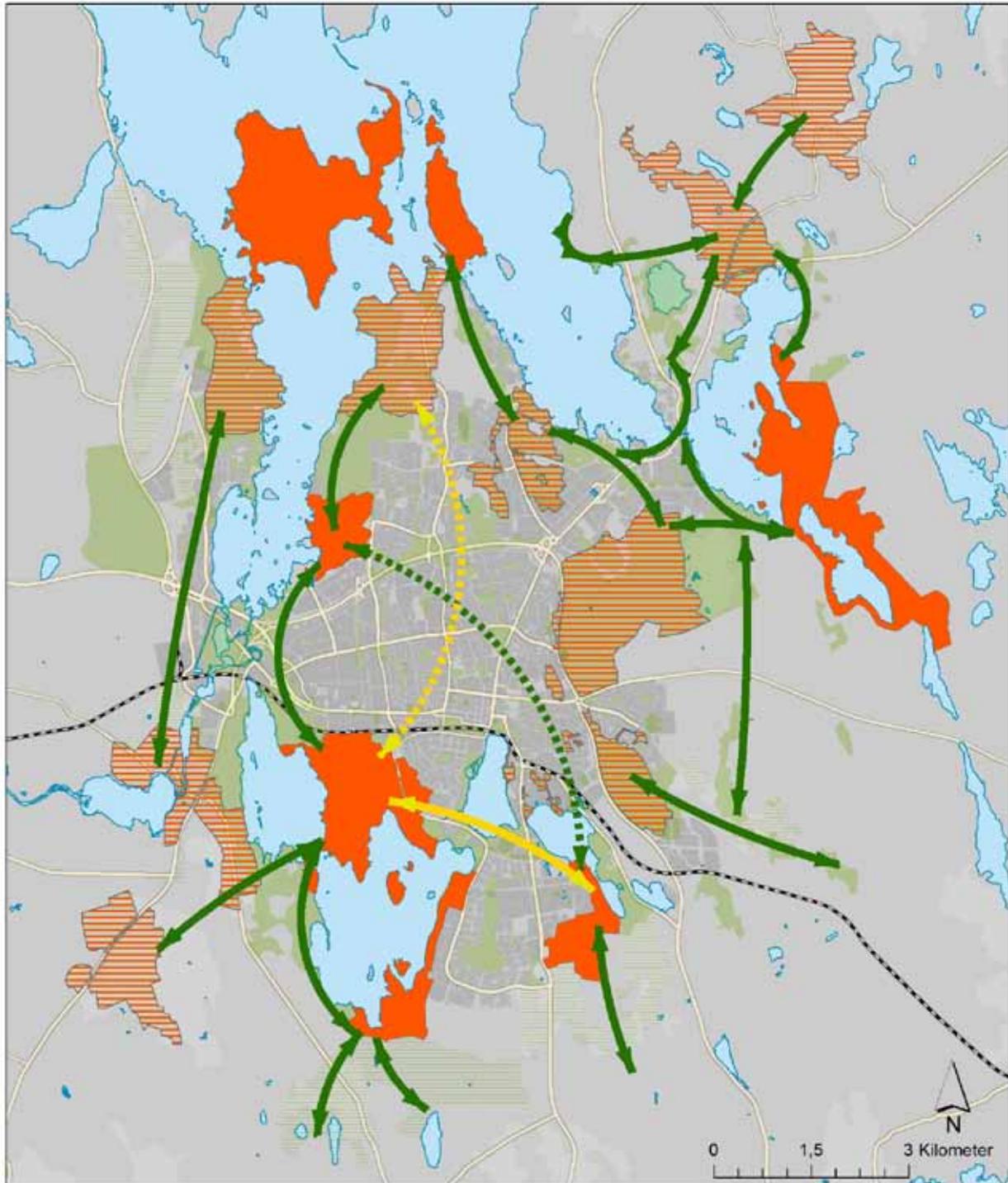
The cities recreation areas are established meeting points and are actively used by the public, organisations and schools. The most important areas for recreation in Vaxjo today are Fyllerydsskogen, Araby-Kronoberg, Bokhultet, Evedal and Teleborg.

The recreation areas should provide great variation in order to care for different interests, needs and functions for all citizens. The critical factor is easy access, in the form of easily obtainable information about different areas, as well as the physical access to different places.

● Guidelines for future planning

The recreation areas of Vaxjo should be developed both for citizens and other visitors alike. They should be easily accessible both physically as well as in terms of information for the public. The recreation areas of Vaxjo should be retained and secured, both in terms of protecting and managing existing areas, and establishing new ones, as the city expands.

AREAS WITH BIODIVERSITY VALUES



Ecological corridors

- Existing Ecological corridors
- Existing Ecological corridors, enhancement proposed
- Existing Ecological corridors consisting of several small areas
- Existing Ecological corridors consisting of several small areas, enhancement proposed

Biodiversity core areas

- Biodiversity core areas
- Biodiversity core areas of exceptional value
- Areas on the city fringe of high biodiversity, however not studied in detail
- Areas included in the current study of biodiversity



Flora and fauna provides diversity in the city centre

BIODIVERSITY AND GREEN AREAS

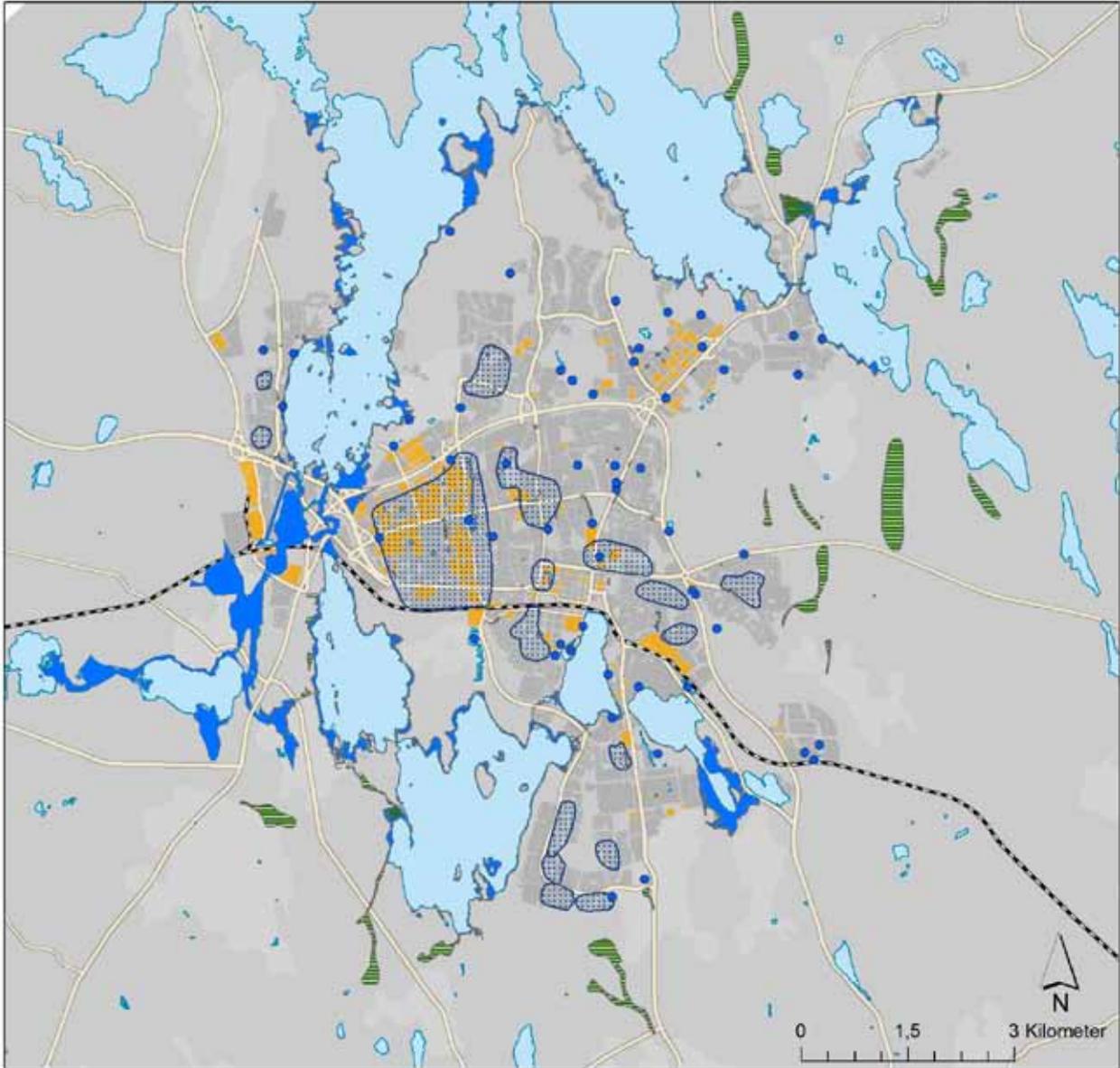
A rich flora and fauna in the city – nature experiences for all

Vaxjo has a rich biodiversity as exemplified by the 160 red listed species of plants and animals found in the city itself, and on the city fringe. This figure is substantially higher than in the surrounding landscape. The specific morphology of the city with the abundance of lakes, forests and other green areas interspersed throughout the city, and large, coherent nature and park areas are the foundations for this rich biodiversity. Whilst retaining the respect for nature values, access can be provided at certain points for the public, schools and organizations to enjoy the rich wildlife, when properly managed. The variation in character and the special identity of the city needs to be retained as the city expands. The values and sensitivity of the different nature areas determines their future use, including their suitability for change, such as urban development.

● Guidelines for future planning

The biodiversity should be regarded as a natural resource and asset, which is a responsibility to retain and enhance long term as the city develops. The biodiversity should be prioritized especially in areas identified as biodiversity core areas. Sustainable habitats should be retained and enhanced throughout the different parts of the city and the surrounding landscape as the city expands.

AREAS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE FOR CLIMATE MITIGATION



Proposed rain water management

- Existing rain water magazines in green areas
- ▨ Existing low point for rain water magazines, to be further investigated
- ▨ Proposed subzero magazine
- ▨ Proposed open reservoir magazine for rain water, to be further investigated

Restrictions

- ▨ Risk for flooding as identified in the FOP 2012. Lakeside area within the maximum level should be retained as park or nature area

- ▨ Risk for flooding of existing drainage system, as identified in the FOP 2012. Existing green areas within this restriction zone should be retained, and development avoided. If areas are developed within this risk zone, compensation principles applies. In addition, land required for longterm climate mitigation should be considered.
- ▨ Buildings > 4000m² with > than 70% hardstanding. Existing green areas within these properties and their close surroundings should be retained. The ratio green areas/hardstanding should increase through further planting in general, despite land ownership.



Sustainability today and in the future

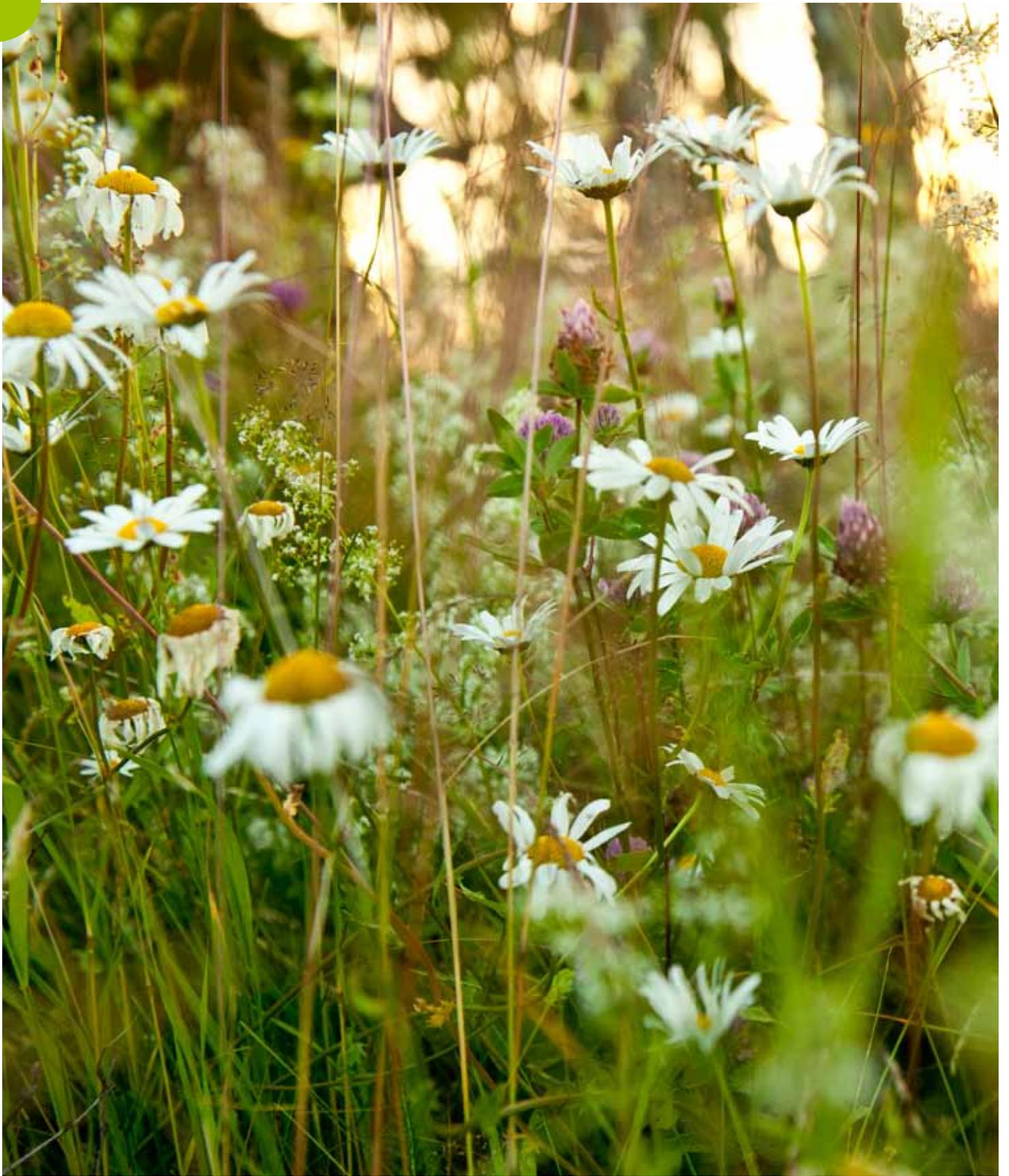
CLIMATE MITIGATION

Green structure for a sustainable city – as precaution and to additional values

The green environment contributes to making the city more sustainable and resilient against climate change. Green areas absorb and purify rain off, enhances the quality of the air in the city and act as a buffer against strong temperature fluctuations. To create a robust green structure as part of the city planning process is therefore of great importance for a sustainable city development. A dense mosaic of parks and nature areas, ecological corridors, green links and squares, trees as well as green roofs and water areas well spread throughout the city is the base for climate mitigation. In some areas of Vaxjo, such as the city centre, Vastra Mark and the north and south parts of the city additional new green areas for climate change need to be provided to complement the existing city structure from a climate perspective. Green areas also lessens the effects of flooding on the drainage system. The retention of green areas is especially important in such risk zones.

● ***Guidelines for future planning***

Green areas are important corner stones for a sustainable city development. To further develop and retain a robust green structure which contributes to buffering the climate in a changing climate is an essential aim.





An open landscape to be retained

CULTIVATED AND GRAZED OPEN AREAS

Space for cultivation and pastures in the future – social values and a better understanding of nature

The existing cultivated and grazed areas in Vaxjo are important qualities of the surrounding open landscape and thus for Vaxjo. The ambition is to retain these activities in some form as the city expands.

This enhances the city and adds experiences for all citizens. To retain open cultural landscapes is part of the overarching green space strategy for the city. By integrating pastures and recreation areas the opportunities to get closer to grazing sheep and cattle, and to rural life, are increased.

The green areas of the city and the surrounding green fringe also provide opportunities for small scale cultivation and pastures. Urban agriculture creates many benefits; locally produced fresh food, a better understanding of nature and the limited natural resources of the globe.

● Guidelines for future planning

Existing cultivated land and pastures should be retained as far possible, as the city is further developed through strategic planning. Further more, space should be allocated for cultivation and pastures in different scales as the city expands.



The epithet “The Greenest City of Europe”, the aim that all citizens should have access to a green area within walking distance, the responsibility for clean water, fresh air, biodiversity and sustainable ecosystems – the longterm dedication for a green space strategy is essential. This involves a range of challenges which need to be highlighted and addressed as the city develops in the future.

An expanding city which includes green at heart

Development and intensification

In 2030 Vaxjo will have a population of 100 000. To make this a reality, intensification of brown fields as well as development on the city fringe will be required. In order to retain the aim “Vaxjo the city of parks and lakes, with nature around the corner”, a clear vision and strategy for the overarching green and blue structure in the municipality as a whole is necessary.

Lakeside living with clean lakes for swimming

The lakes and beach zones in Vaxjo are important recreation areas, valuable biotopes for flora and fauna and natural buffer zones for water fluctuations, which is increasingly important in the light of climate change. In parallel, the demand for lakeside residences and arranged recreation along the lake shores are rapidly increasing. This could lead to conflicts of interest with e.g. legally protected rights for public access, protected recreational use as well as nature conservation interests all focused along the lake shores. In depth studies and a longterm planning strategy for the future land use of these areas is therefore required.

A changing climate

Green areas are important to mitigate the negative effects of global climate change. Effective mitigation and adaptation to climate change requires a combination of local, regional, national and global strategies. An overarching strategy with a longterm perspective for green and blue structures in the municipality as a whole is necessary for managing climate change effectively on the local level.



Urban agriculture

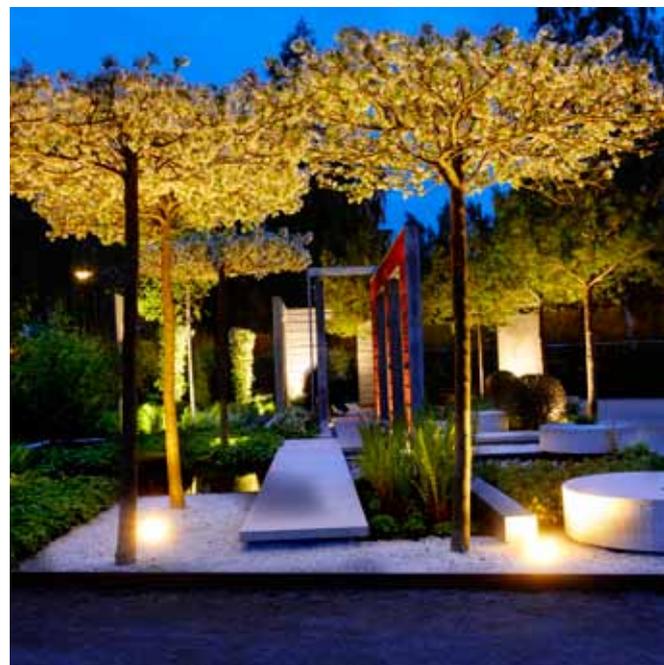
Urban agriculture is a trend which is rapidly increasing. Important drivers is the citizens wish to engage in environmental issues and make a positive change, an increasing interest in health and well being issues, the creativity of seeing plants grow, the wish to engage with others and the need to create sociable neighborhoods. The demand for urban areas for cultivation and pastures may further increase in the future.

Everyday sport and health

Play areas, parks and nature areas close to the home and to schools are important for daily recreation, play and outdoor activities. Open spaces, parks, play areas, recreation and nature areas are important tools to stimulate movement in daily life, contributing to better health, an increased well being and an active social life.

The Greenest city in Europe

The brand name of Vaxjo, "The Greenest city in Europe", means a constant strive for a sustainable and environmentally friendly city. A robust green structure where existing ecological, social and cultural aspects are retained long term, is an important part of this task. An overarching green and blue strategy for the municipality as a whole plays a key role in keeping Vaxjo as the greenest city of Europe, also in the future.



Short version

In this leaflet you will find out more about green areas in Vaxjo.

Green areas are:

Parks

Forests

Meadows

Pastures

Gardens

Other areas where trees, shrubs and flowers grow

Green areas are important for the well-being of you and me, for keeping our wild life thriving and to lessen the effects of global climate change.

In Vaxjo we would like to retain existing green areas and to create new ones as the city expands.

When we build new developments we will ensure there is space to enjoy nature and to plant new trees.

Everyone who lives in Vaxjo should be able to access green spaces when ever they would like to!

Executive Board | Leisure Services Board | Cultural Board | Town & Country Planning Board | Technical Services Boars

A cooperative strategy for the City of Vaxjo

www.vaxjo.se/greenstructurestrategy

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