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Reinvent the Theater

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AMERSFOORT
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EUROPAN18

Competition brief European 18

Published on, March 2025 The Netherlands

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Dear European competitors,

Amersfoort is thriving and embracing significant growth. Several major societal challenges require solutions, including issues related to housing, mobility, energy, sustainability, and climate change. How we shape these solutions will define the city now and for many generations to come. We prioritize the development with care for the living environment of people, animals, and plants. Strengthening greenery and nature is essential for biodiversity and liveability. To achieve this we focus on connections between neighbourhoods and between people.

In line with these ambitions, European Netherlands and the Municipality of Amersfoort are proud to present six locations for European 18. These locations are strategically significant for the municipality and aligns closely with this session's theme of resourcing, highlighting Amersfoort's search for innovative approaches to urban transformation.

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Reinvent the Theater

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Amersfoort in the region

Amersfoort is a historic and strategically located city in the central part of the Netherlands. Situated in the province of Utrecht, it lies at the heart of the country, making it a key connection point between the Randstad - the economic and urban hub of the west, including cities like Amsterdam and Utrecht.

The rural regions of the north and east, such as Gelderland and Overijssel. The city is surrounded by diverse landscapes, including the Utrechtse Heuvelrug National Park to the south, the Eemland polder area to the north, and the Gelderse Vallei to the east.

Amersfoort is a major railway junction, with its central station providing direct connections to key cities like Amsterdam, Utrecht, Zwolle, and Deventer. These factors contribute to its accessibility and its role as a regional and national transit node. The city's accessibility supports its function as a residential and economic center, attracting commuters, businesses, and visitors from across the Netherlands and beyond.

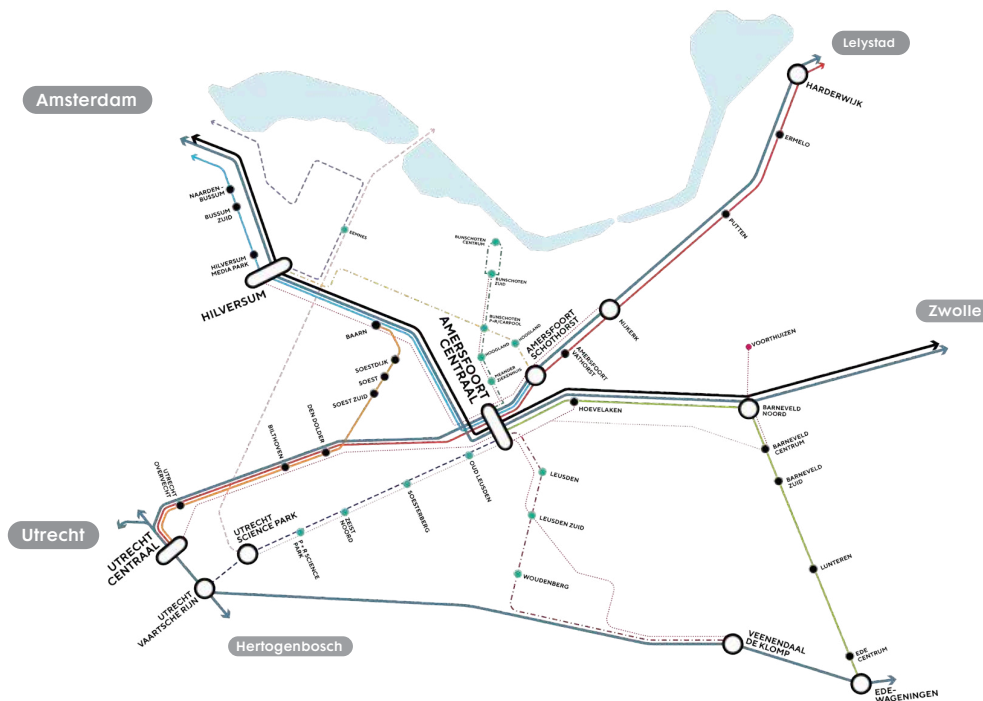
Amersfoort's central location has made it a significant transportation hub. It is well-connected by major highways such as the A1 (east-west) and A28 (north-south), facilitating efficient road travel.

The Regional Vision for Amersfoort, emphasizes its integration with the broader Utrecht Metropolitan Region. The city leverages its proximity to Utrecht, one of the



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Principles from Regional Spatial Vision

Growth Within Urban Areas

Prioritize development within existing built environments to preserve open spaces.

Support Vital Villages:

Enable limited growth in villages and focus additional expansion in the regional heart

Naturally Attractive

Use water systems for climate adaptation. Preserve and enhance landscapes.

Heart of the Netherlands

Improve accessibility and prioritize cycling in urban planning.

Locally Vital

Strengthen urban centers and regional recreational structures.

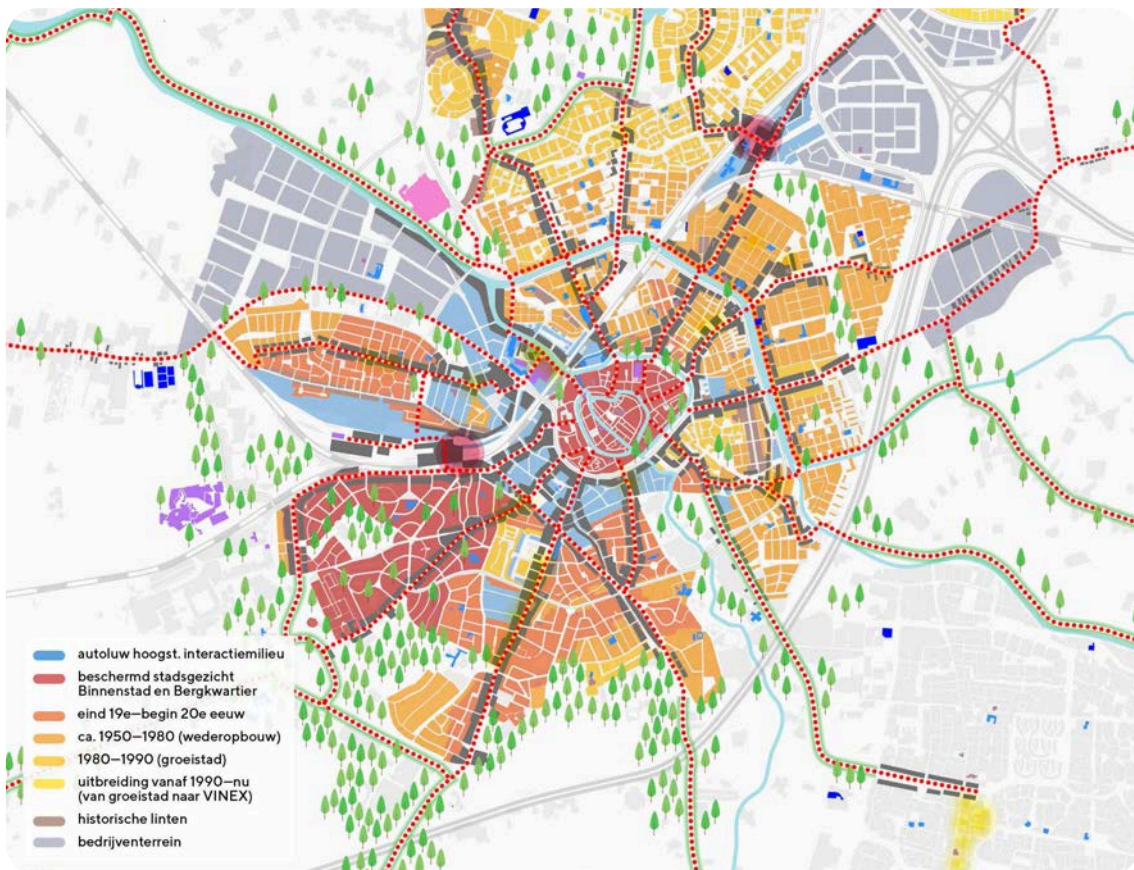
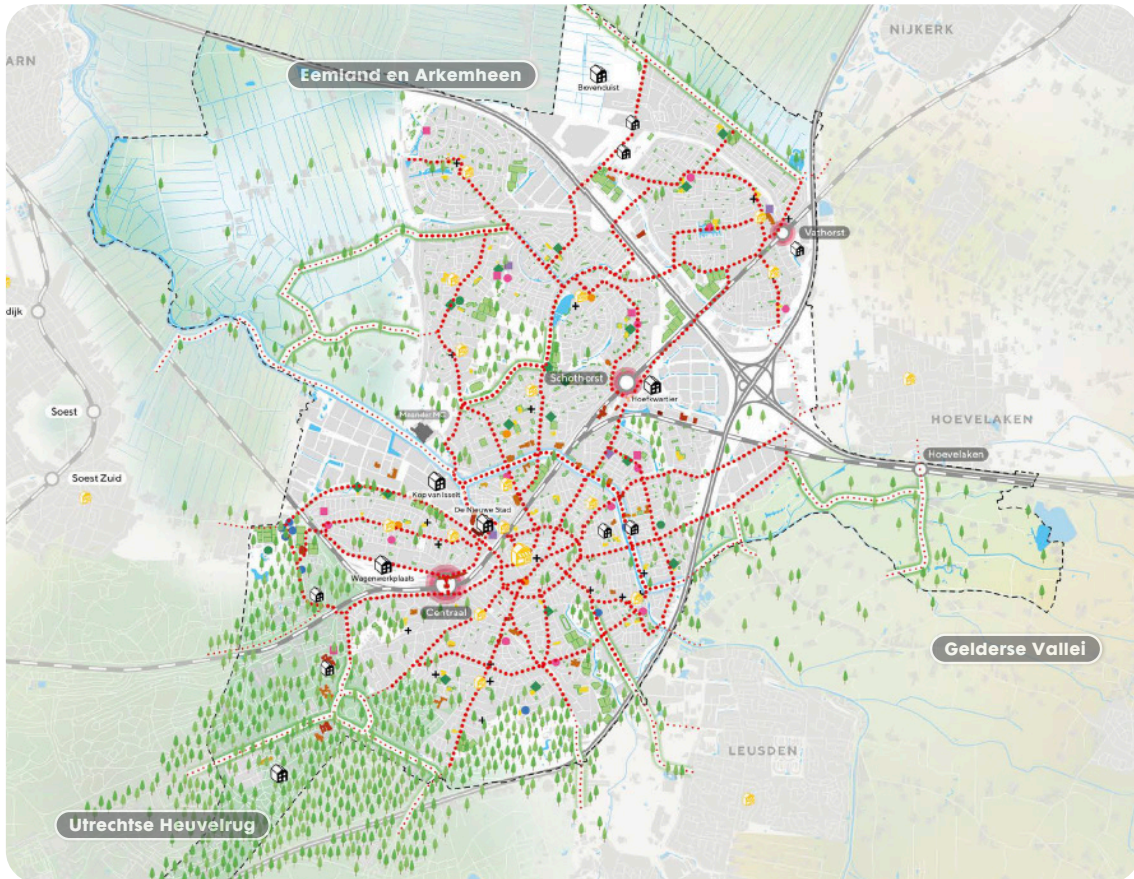
Thinkers and Doers

Develop distinctive living/working environments, focus on sustainability and foster interaction.

Implementation Plan

Monitor housing and workspace needs; start new development planning before shortages arise.





Urban Arteries and meeting places

Amersfoort envisions its urban arteries as vibrant lifelines that connect diverse neighbourhoods through shared spaces, dynamic programs, and cultural identity. The diversity of these arteries is key, as they vary in design while adhering to five fundamental principles: inclusivity, vibrancy, orientation, continuity, and identity. These principles guide the development of spaces that are both harmonious and distinctive, ensuring they remain meaningful for all residents and visitors.



Inclusive spaces

Create a network of vibrant and accessible meeting places that inspire community engagement, encourage inclusivity, and improve connections through thoughtfully designed public spaces



Vibrant program

Establish dynamic urban corridors that integrate vibrant urban functions, creating spaces where activity and liveliness thrive. Prioritizing accessibility and safety ensuring that every individual feels a sense of belonging and connection, creating human-centred neighbourhoods.



Orientation

Ensure that the orientation of spaces along the urban corridors enhances the identity and diversity of the environment, creating a harmonious blend of functionality and aesthetic appeal while avoiding fostering feelings of insecurity. Buildings and spaces should be designed to feel open, welcoming and safe.



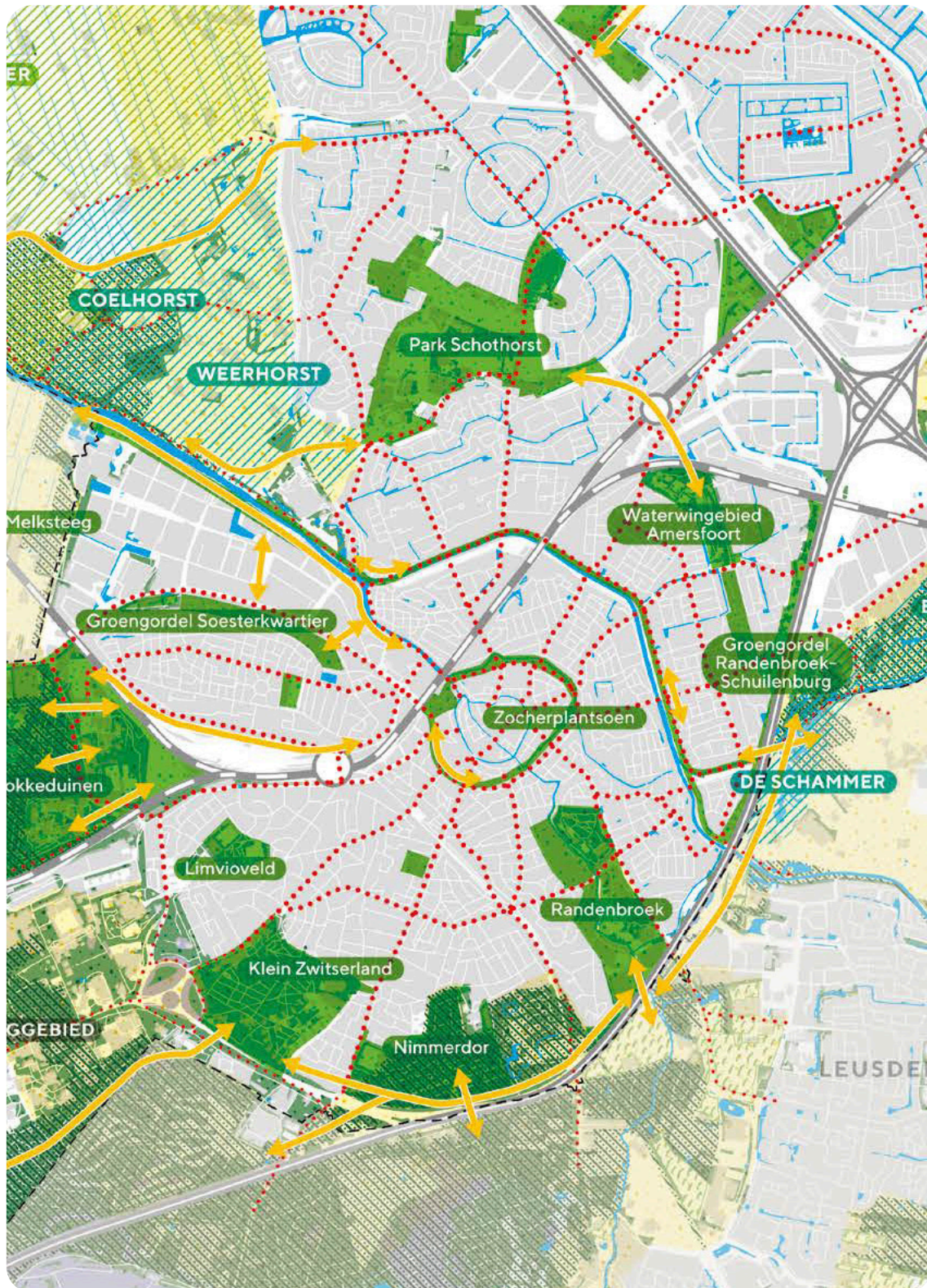
Continuity

Create welcoming and safe corridors for slow traffic ensuring seamless connectivity between neighbourhoods and the city. Prioritizing cyclists and pedestrians, we aim to foster environments that encourage mobility, strengthen communities and enhance the overall quality of urban life.



Identity

Enhance the recognizability and unique character by celebrating diversity, integrating cultural and historical elements, and fostering a sense of pride and belonging, making the urban arteries memorable and meaningful to all who traverse them.



It is also about the inclusivity of public spaces;
Are they accessible and reachable for everyone, young and old, and for
people with disabilities.

— from summary of participation in the environmental vision, 2021

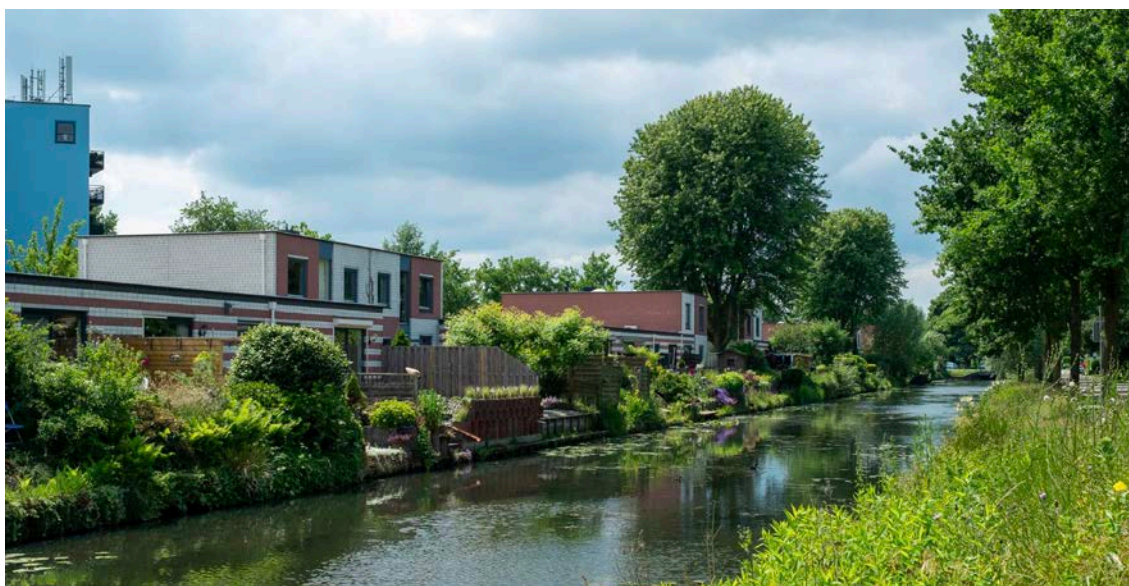
City Environmental Vision

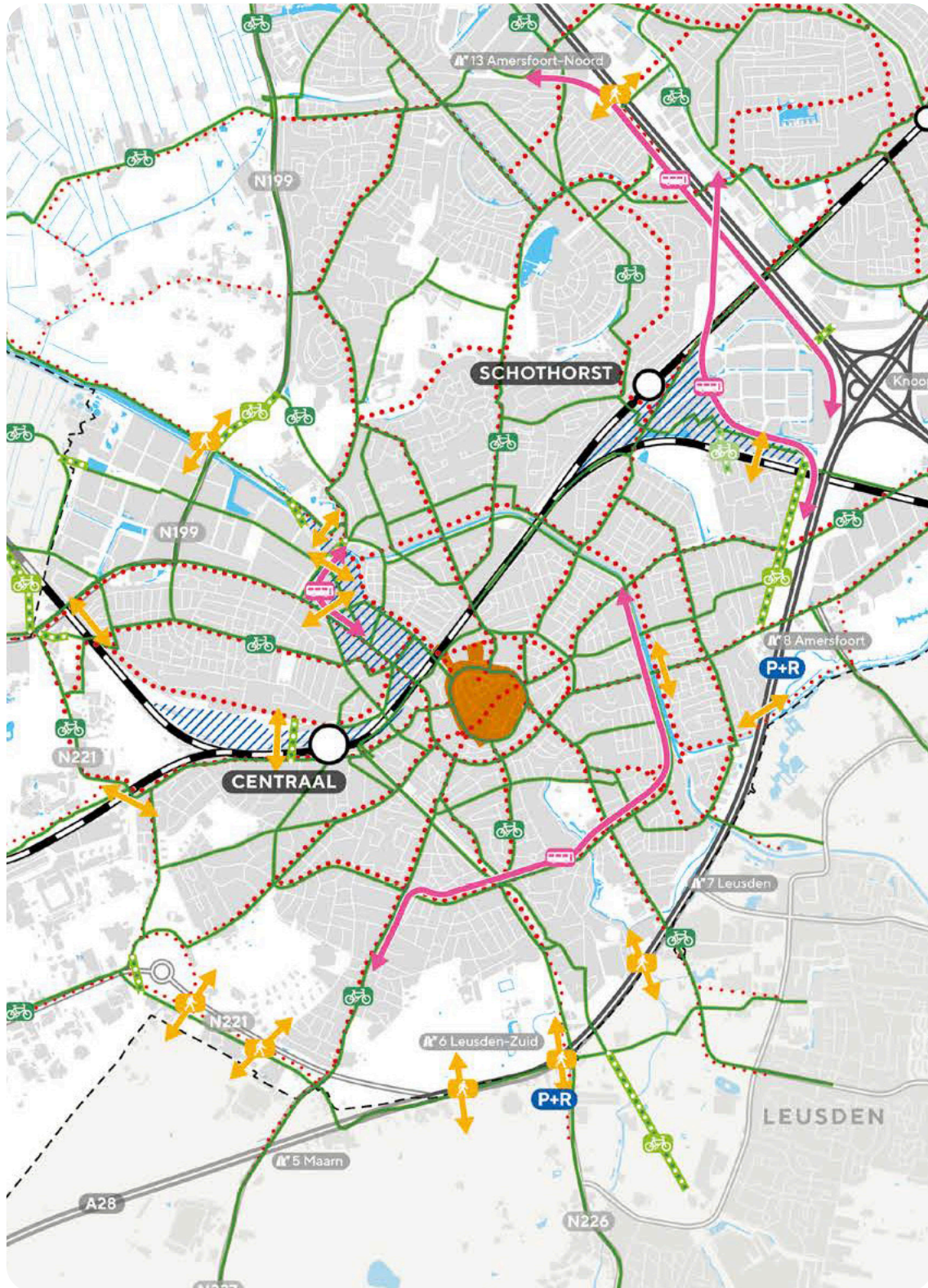
A green city in a green environment that embraces water

WE CHOOSE TO LET THE NATURAL SYSTEM GUIDE THE DESIGN OF PUBLIC-SPACES

Healthy living together means a city with ample space for water and greenery and a robust, well-functioning natural system. A green city in a green environment provides opportunities for relaxation, recreation, social interaction, and healthy physical activity. A healthy living environment contributes positively to a healthy lifestyle, social cohesion in neighbourhoods, and spaces with room for peace, quiet, and clean air. We aim for a nature-inclusive city and countryside where people, plants, and animals feel at home. We want to live with nature, not at the expense of it.

Therefore, it is essential for us that the living space for trees, plants, and animals grows alongside the city. To achieve this, we will work according to the Basic Nature Quality principles. We enhance biodiversity with sufficient and well-connected water and greenery for people and animals. To create a sustainable, healthy, and attractive living environment, water and soil will guide the design of (public) spaces wherever possible.





The Stadsring keeps the city center trapped and closed. This barrier should be removed so that the city center can grow further as a lively and welcoming hub.

— from summary of participation in the environmental vision, 2021

A City with Sustainable Mobility

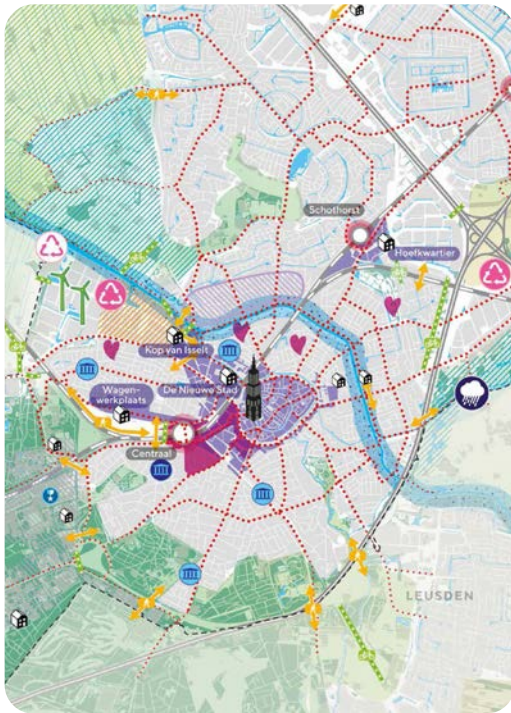
WE CHOOSE SUSTAINABLE AND ACTIVE MOBILITY WITH MORE SPACE FOR CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

In the future, Amersfoort will be an accessible and liveable city that embraces active mobility (walking and cycling) and public transportation. Proximity is the key. By building compact and mixed-use areas along urban arteries and at centrally located, easily accessible meeting points, near amenities and public transport hubs, we encourage active mobility and the use of public transport. This reduces the need for car travel.

To keep the city accessible and liveable, cars will no longer take priority in spatial planning. Instead, we prioritize pedestrians first, followed by cyclists, public transport. Private car use is the last priority, to achieve this shift we implement parking regulations. Together these measures lead to a better living environment, lower parking demand, and more space for greenery, climate adaptation, and areas for recreation.



An inclusive and attractive city to live in

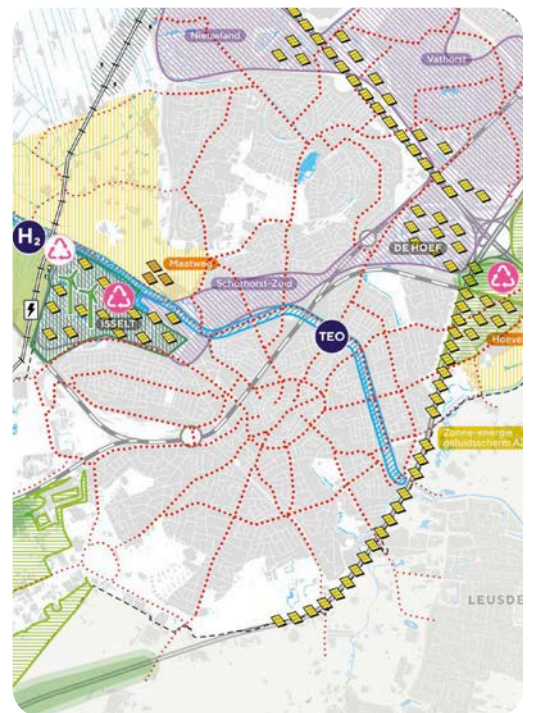


AMERSFOORT PROVIDES A HOME FOR EVERYONE AND CHOOSES HEALTHY GROWTH WITH SUFFICIENT DIVERSITY

Healthy living together means that all people have a home and feel at home. This applies to existing residents as well as the large number of people seeking housing. The city grows so that everyone can have a home. Pleasant living—feeling at home—not only involves having accessible, affordable, and suitable housing but also a healthy and inclusive living environment and how people coexist. Many different people can live alongside and with each other here, where everyone can be themselves and feel connected.



A city becoming Sustainable & CO2-Neutral

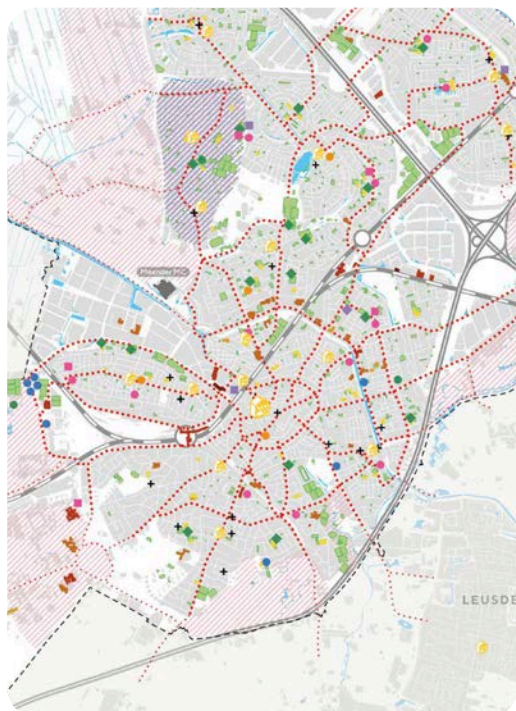


WE CHOOSE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MATERIALS

Healthy living together means transitioning to sustainable energy. We focus on an inclusive approach where no one feels excluded, and everyone can participate in the energy transition. Together with residents, organizations, and entrepreneurs, we inform about changes, engage in dialogue, and provide support where needed to make progress in the energy transition. By 2050, we will emit no harmful greenhouse gases because we will have replaced fossil fuels with renewable sources such as solar, wind, or water. Our goal is to become energy neutral as quickly as possible.



A city where facilities grow next to development

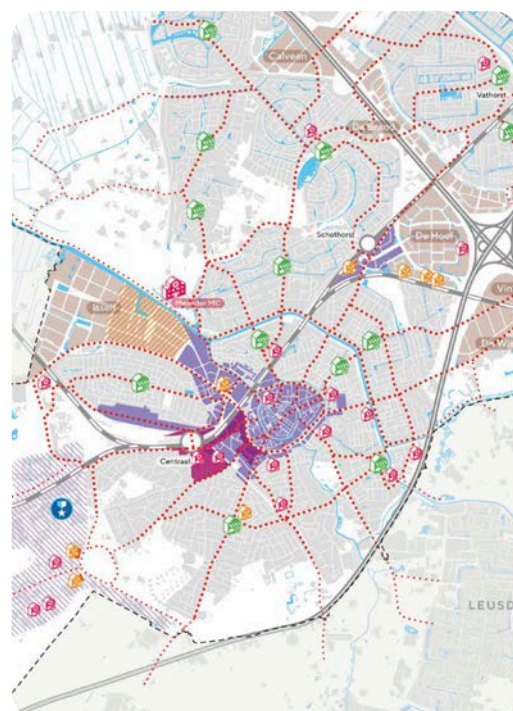


WE WANT FACILITIES TO GROW WITH THE INCREASE IN POPULATION

Social facilities contribute significantly to a healthy and attractive society. They play an important role as meeting places within the city. In a city with a growing population, the demand for facilities also increases. We distinguish between urban facilities and those at the neighborhood or district level. An increasing number of seniors and residents with disabilities require different forms of culture, recreation, services, and care. With the growing number of children and young people, there is a rising need for education, childcare, and spaces for sports and play. The changing demand for facilities will not be uniform across the city.



A city with a diverse and resilient economy



WE WANT THE JOBS TO GROW WITH THE INCREASE IN POPULATION AND WE AIM FOR AN ECONOMY THAT IS SUSTAINABLE, CIRCULAR, INCLUSIVE, HEALTHY AND LIVEABLE CITY

Amersfoort aims to be a versatile economy that aligns with the needs and skills of its residents. Economic activities will contribute to the city's vibrancy and appeal, offering a high level of amenities and innovative solutions to ensure fairness, sustainability, and resilience. We stimulate the transition to a green and circular economy. We aim to meet space needs within the existing city limits, requiring careful land use and a clear framework for economic prospects. Business and office locations play a key role in housing Amersfoort's enterprises, alongside workplaces in neighborhoods, the city center, and various shopping and recreational areas.



Given the Earth's ecosystem fragility and the myriad social crises we face, there's an urgent need for innovative approaches to counteract harmful resource extraction, overconsumption and environmental degradation.

This imperative has birthed a call for regenerative projects that seamlessly weave together elements of nature and culture. Central to this mission is the cultivation of synergistic connections between biogeophysical data, socio-spatial justice and health.

In pursuit of resilience, we propose three interlinked avenues that invite exploration and action.

Resourcing in terms of

Natural Elements and Risks

It's imperative to re-evaluate the fundamental relationship between humanity and the elements of nature—water, air, earth, and fire. While these elements provide essential sources of energy and fertility they also carry inherent risks and vulnerabilities. Understanding and mitigating these risks is paramount as we strive to coexist harmoniously with our environment.

Resourcing in terms of

Ways of Life and Inclusivity

The rapid evolution of lifestyles in our digitally interconnected world demands a re-evaluation of how we inhabit and interact with our surroundings. Fostering inclusive communities that prioritize intimacy, commonality, and solidarity is key. This entails adopting bioclimatic and permaculture strategies that not only accommodate human needs but also nurture symbiotic relationships between humans and non-humans, ensuring sustainability for all.

Resourcing in terms of

Materiality and Reuse

Our built environment presents an untapped reservoir of resources waiting to be harnessed. By adhering to the principles of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, we can unlock the potential of existing structures and materials to minimize waste and resource depletion. Embracing bio-geo sourced materials and localized construction techniques not only promotes environmental stewardship but also fosters a deeper connection to place and community.

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R e s o u r c i n g



Koppelbrug
Rethink Health

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Kop van Isselt
ReIntegrate Old

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EUROPAN18

AMERSFOORT is thriving and embracing significant growth. Over the next decade, the city is dedicated to improving the quality, energy efficiency, and sustainability of its existing built environment, with a strong focus on prioritizing the needs and well-being of its residents.

In line with these ambitions, European Netherlands and the Municipality of Amersfoort are proud to present **SIX LOCATIONS** for European 18. These locations are strategically significant for the municipality and aligns closely with this session's theme of **RESOURCING**, highlighting Amersfoort's search for innovative approaches to urban transformation.



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Stadhuisplein
Rebuild Culture



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F l i n t
Reinvent the Theater



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A m i c i t i a
Restore Urban fabric



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O t t o S c h e l t u s
Reconnect City

A m e r s f o o r t

R e s o u r c i n g



AMERSFOORT
reusable
recyclable
reconnect
resources
EUROPAN18



Flint

Flint
Reinvent the Theater

URBAN CONTEXT

Historical Information

Development of Flint

Urban Context

Connected to the city and station

Flint features an interesting history and inspiring structural design, though its inward-facing layout, uninviting facades toward the adjacent urban spaces and limited functional adaptability hinder its potential to function as a lively cultural and social venue for diverse audiences. Theater operations are constrained by these limitations and lack synergy with the surrounding public realm, highlighting a disconnect between the building's current configuration and Amersfoort's ambition towards inclusivity and community engagement.

The design task is to Reinvent Flint building into a lively hub and a new destination for neighbourhood and city, opening it up to the surrounding public space and leveraging its distinctive structural qualities to meet the evolving needs of Amersfoort.

F I I n t

Reinvent the Theater



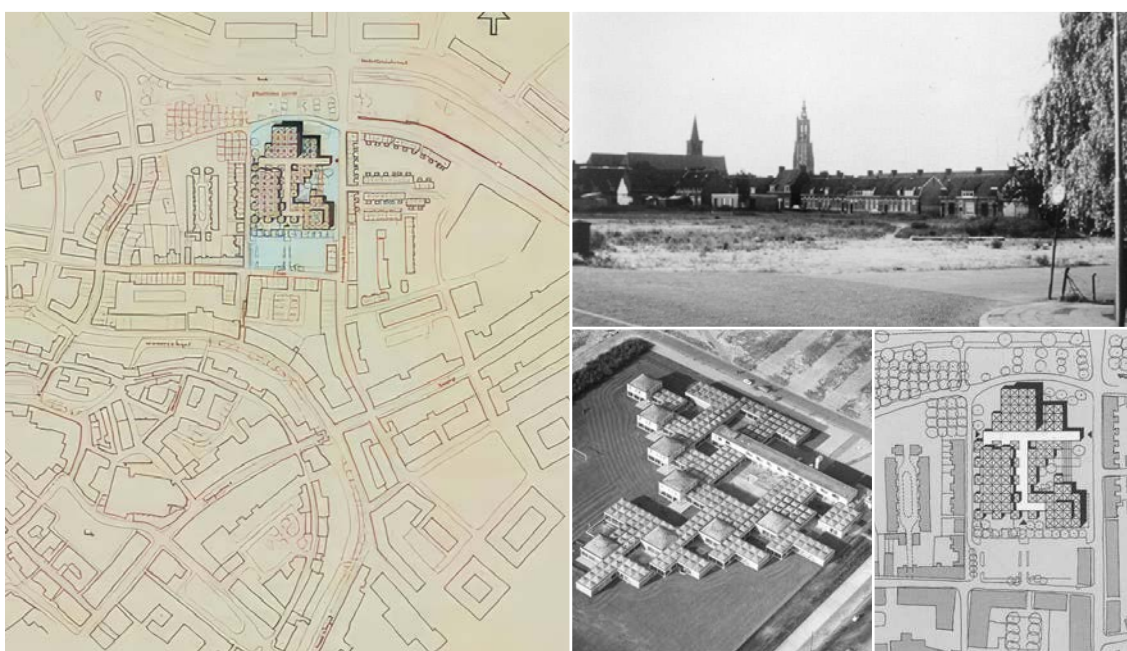
Historical Information

Flint is located in the Coninckstraat area of Amersfoort, Netherlands, near the historic city center and the scenic Eem Canal. Established in the 1970s, it was designed by architect Onno Greiner as a "speelstadje" (play village) to serve as a cultural hub for the city. Today, Flint functions as a multifunctional venue, hosting theater performances, events, and community activities, while facing challenges related to its integration with surrounding urban and green spaces.

Flint was built in a historic part of Amersfoort, replacing a working-class neighbourhood known as De Teut. The decision to construct the cultural center here led to significant changes in the area's urban fabric. Many homes and businesses were displaced, sparking controversy among locals. Despite resistance, the municipal council ultimately prioritized cultural development over preservation of the neighbourhood.

Architect Onno Greiner aimed for a design that blended with the city's historical character while introducing modern elements. The structure featured interconnected spaces, adaptable layouts, and multipurpose facilities, reflecting the needs of a growing cultural hub. His approach embraced structuralism, influenced by architects like Aldo van Eyck, ensuring that the building could evolve over time.

Public reception of Flint was polarized. While some appreciated its functionality and accessibility, others criticized its aesthetic, calling it an eyesore. Over the years, however, it became an integral part of Amersfoort's cultural landscape, hosting numerous renowned performances and serving as a key venue for artistic expression.



The theater underwent expansions and refurbishments to improve visitor experiences and accommodate contemporary production requirements. Efforts were also made to integrate Flint better with the surrounding urban environment, fostering stronger connections between the venue and the city center. Today, it stands as a testament to the evolving nature of cultural spaces and their impact on urban identity.

Development of Flint

Origins and Early Years (1969-1977)

In the 1960s, Amersfoort faced growing demands for a modern cultural venue to replace outdated facilities like the Grand Théâtre and Markthal. Flint was designed as a cultural center in Amersfoort, with the aim of making a wide range of arts and culture accessible to a broad audience. The construction was made possible by government policies that encouraged cultural facilities in cities to improve liveability during the period of industrialization. Architect Onno Greiner played a significant role in the design, emphasizing flexibility and multifunctionality.

Architect Onno Greiner conceptualized Flint as a interconnected blocks and corridors to creating a sense of urbanity within the venue. The design reflected the structuralist architectural movement of the 1970s, emphasizing modularity, flexibility, and harmony with the surrounding urban fabric.

In 1977, Flint was officially opened. It was built in the working-class neighbourhood of De Teut and received mixed reactions from the start. Some considered it architecturally innovative, while others labelled it as one of the “ugliest buildings” in the Netherlands.

The original design included a large theater hall (804 seats), a smaller city hall for multi-purpose use, and creative workshop spaces. Early user groups consisted of local theatregoers, touring performers, and community organizations. The facility aimed to blend professional performances with grassroots cultural activities.

The 1990s saw a diversification of performances, including musicals, cabaret, and





contemporary dance, which attracted a broader audience and increased Flint's regional significance.

Growth and Challenges (1977-1990)

Flint grew into an important theater and cultural center in Amersfoort. It hosted theatrical performances, concerts, events, and conferences. Throughout the 1980s, Flint became a popular venue for both artists and audiences, despite criticism of its architectural appearance. In 1990, Flint was severely damaged by a fire, which led to significant reconstruction efforts. The rebuilding process introduced improvements that made the theater more suitable for contemporary needs.

Modernization and Changes (1990-2013)

During the 1990s and early 2000s, Flint underwent several renovations and modifications to meet modern demands. The theater increasingly became a venue for large productions and renowned artists. At the same time, efforts were made to make its operation more financially sustainable.

Around 2010, discussions arose about constructing an entirely new building, but due to economic constraints and municipal budget cuts, it was decided to opt for an extensive revitalization of the existing structure instead.





Revitalization and Future Vision (2013-Present)

In 2013, a master plan was presented for the renewal of Flint. The focus was on: Sustainability, energy efficiency, Improved operational opportunities leading to a more attractive and flexible building for cultural and business events. These renovations made Flint future-proof and ensured it maintained its central role as the cultural heart of Amersfoort.

Today, Flint is not only a theater but also a venue for conferences, events, and social gatherings, flexible spaces such as the Stadszaal were repurposed for these activities. It remains a significant cultural landmark in the city and continues to contribute to Amersfoort's cultural identity.

Renovations improved spatial flow and adaptability for varied events. Modern sound and lighting systems were added, enhancing the venue's appeal for large-scale productions. Greiner's modular design facilitated these updates without compromising the architectural vision.



Urban Context

Flint, located in the Coninckstraat area of Amersfoort, is a key cultural and architectural landmark with strong ties to the city's historic and urban fabric. The venue occupies a strategic position on the edge of Amersfoort's historic center, bordered by residential neighbourhoods, public spaces, and green corridors. Its immediate surroundings reflect a blend of historical charm and modern urban challenges, balancing cultural heritage with evolving mobility and accessibility needs.



Walking from the historic Hof to Flint provides a unique perspective on Amersfoort's urban character.

The route along Langestraat offers a vibrant urban experience with restaurants, cafés, and retail spaces lining the street. Visitors along this route pass the historic Kamperbinnenpoort, one of Amersfoort's iconic monuments. This route via Coninckstraat leads the visitors to the East entrance of Flint. The Coninckstraat itself is lined with late 19th or early 20th-century arbeiders-woningen (worker housing), known for their grid-like internal courtyards and tree-lined paths. The quiet and serene character increases towards the northern part of the Coninckstraat as one goes away from the hustle and bustle of the city center. This path reveals a blend of Amersfoort's medieval charm and modern-day vibrancy.

Alternatively, the route via Muurhuizen, Blauwebruggang and Weversingel takes you through some of the most picturesque parts of the old city. Muurhuizen, a circular street built on the foundations of the medieval city wall, showcases beautifully preserved historic buildings. Walking along Weversingel offers a moment of calm, with its green spaces and proximity to the water providing a peaceful atmosphere before arriving at Flint's entrance. The route opens up to the Walikerstraat and continues toward Flintplein. The transition from historic core to the modern setting of Flint, maintaining the city's intimate and walk-able nature.



Both routes highlight the city's layered history, making the journey to Flint an enriching experience. However, Flint remains largely obscured from view along the way, and there is little indication that a significant cultural venue awaits at the end.

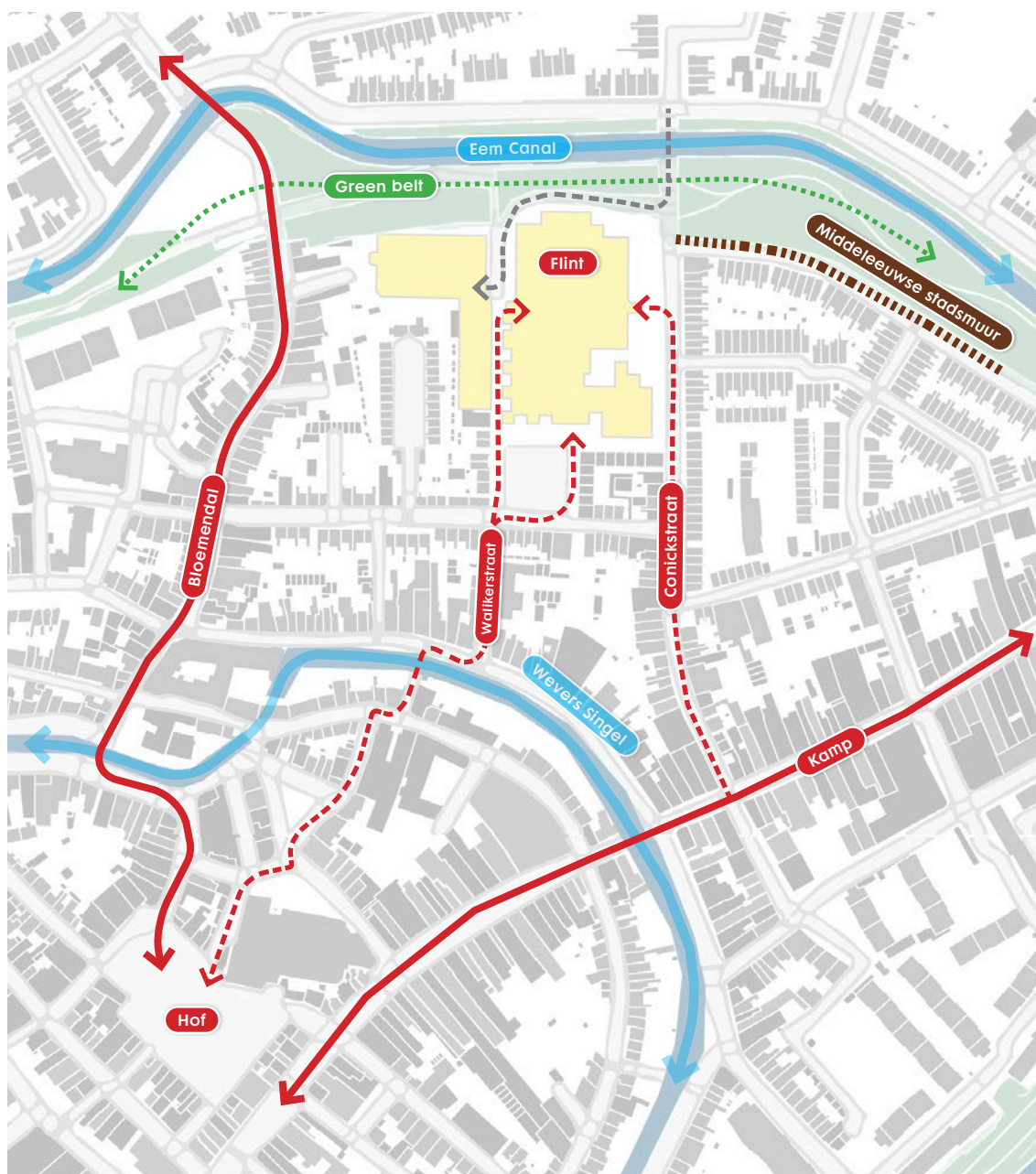


Green belt

Green belt around Amersfoort's historic core. However, the connection between Flint and these natural elements is limited by a blank façade and the wide, car-accessible Walikerstraat. This hard boundary diminishes the potential relationship between the cultural center and its natural surroundings. The Eem Canal and Plantsoen serve as important recreational and ecological assets for the city. Improving the integration of Flint with these elements could enhance the area's spatial quality and visitor experience.

The Stadsring itself traces its origins to the 19th century when the city's fortifications were dismantled. This transformation allowed the area to develop into a significant urban feature, serving as a boundary and connector within Amersfoort's spatial framework. Over time, the Stadsring has evolved to accommodate various functions, including acting as a key traffic artery and delineating the transition between the historical inner city and surrounding neighbourhoods.

While the greenbelt / stadsring supports high vehicular connectivity thereby impacting urban liveability. However, there is significant potential to enhance its role as a unifying urban space through measures such as improved landscaping,



pedestrian crossings, and better integration with adjacent public buildings and spaces.

Entrances and Bike Facilities

Flint offers entrances from both the Coninckstraat and Walikerstraat. Efforts by the municipality have introduced a bike-share facility accessible from the Walikerstraat, aligning with the city's sustainability goals and promoting non-motorized mobility options.

Flintplein

This public square, adjacent to Flint, has potential for becoming a more active and inviting community space. Currently, its primary function as a parking lot overshadows its role as a welcoming forecourt to the cultural center.

PROJECT SITE & ASSIGNMENT

Structuralist Design and Adaptability
Current Challenges
Re-programming and Opening Up
Competition assignment

Create a vibrant, inclusive multi-functional building a space where innovation and creativity converge to connect a diverse, multi-generational community. Envision a place that fosters collaboration and inspiration through a strong and new cohesive commercial and/or social program.

Guided by principles of transparency and openness, propose transformation which embrace the building's original design Principles including its flexible grid, internal street, and multi-purpose spaces. Enhance the principles of its structuralist design to foster adaptability and sustainability.

Design a welcoming ground floor with seamless indoor-outdoor connections.

F i l i n t

Reinvent the Theater



Structuralist Design and Adaptability

Flint's design is rooted in structuralist architectural principles, which emphasize modularity, flexibility, and adaptability. Architect Onno Greiner envisioned the building as a dynamic cultural space that could evolve over time to meet changing needs. The structure is composed of interconnected volumes, allowing different functions to co-exist while maintaining a sense of openness. This design approach enables easy modifications, ensuring that the building remains functional for diverse uses, from theater performances to exhibitions and conferences. By integrating flexible layouts and multifunctional spaces, Flint continues to adapt to contemporary cultural demands while preserving its architectural identity.

Inner Street-Like Layout

One of the defining features of Flint's structuralist design is its inner street-like layout. Inspired by urban pathways, the interior spaces are organized around a network of interconnected corridors that mimic the scale and experience of city streets. This design fosters a sense of exploration, encouraging visitors to move fluidly between different sections of the building while maintaining a sense of cohesion and openness.

Higher Volume

The theater hall is designed with a higher volume to accommodate large-scale performances and optimize acoustics. This elevated space creates a striking contrast with the lower, more intimate areas of the complex. The strategic use of openings and sight-lines allows glimpses into different sections of the building, reinforcing the interconnected nature of the design while enhancing the visitor's spatial awareness. From the higher levels, one can take in the stunning view of the Onze Lieve Vrouwetoren along with the picturesque rooftops of the historic city, creating a breathtaking panorama that connects the past with the present.





The User Groups

Flint serves as a vibrant cultural hub, welcoming a diverse mix of audiences, including those interested in arts, education, and community engagement. As a central venue in Amersfoort, it hosts a variety of performances, events, and artistic showcases, fostering a dynamic and inclusive environment for creativity and cultural exchange.



Flint welcomes a wide range of audiences by offering a diverse selection of performances, including musicals, cabaret, classical concerts, and family shows. The venue provides an engaging cultural experience that appeals to theater enthusiasts, music lovers, and families, ensuring a vibrant and inclusive artistic atmosphere.



Local schools, art groups, and community organizations actively use Flint as a space for workshops, meetings, and exhibitions, fostering creative and cultural engagement. Previously, Scholen in de Kunst, an art education organization, was housed within Flint before relocating to the Eemhuis, reflecting the venue's role as a dynamic hub for artistic development and collaboration.

Event organizers frequently utilize Flint for a variety of purposes, including conferences, corporate events, and private functions. The Stadszaal, along with smaller meeting rooms, provides versatile spaces that cater to both large-scale gatherings and more intimate meetings, making the venue a preferred choice for professional and social events alike.



Flint attracts both national and international performers, providing well-equipped backstage facilities, including dressing rooms and technical support, to accommodate professional productions. The venue's adaptable spaces and high-quality stage technology make it a sought-after location for artists, ensuring smooth and professional performances while fostering a creative and engaging environment.



Visitors to Flint can enjoy Theater Café, which offers dining options before and after performances. This open space serves as a social hub where patrons can gather, discuss performances and immerse themselves in the cultural atmosphere of the venue.

Activities in Flint

Flint attracts audiences of all ages and artistic tastes. Whether it's a captivating theatrical production, a stirring musical performance, or an engaging dance show, the venue provides an inclusive cultural experience that fosters appreciation for the arts and brings the community together.



Serving as a vital hub for corporate and educational events, Flint provides spaces like the Stadszaal to host seminars, exhibitions, and workshops. These adaptable venues accommodate professional gatherings, fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and cultural enrichment within the community.



Playing an active role in the cultural life of Amersfoort, the venue strengthens its connection with the city by hosting community meetings, art exhibitions, and local celebrations. By providing a platform for cultural exchange and social interaction, it helps bring together residents and visitors, strengthening community bonds and enriching the city's cultural landscape.



Actively promoting artistic learning, Flint offers a variety of creative workshops and collaborates with art organizations. These initiatives provide opportunities for individuals to develop their skills, engage in hands-on artistic experiences, and contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the community.

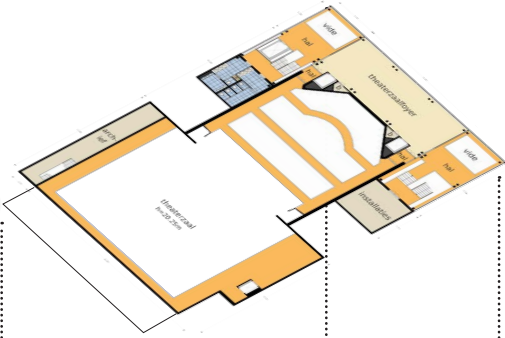


There is a noticeable lack of seamless indoor-outdoor activities at Flint. While the inner courtyard is actively used as a restaurant terrace, the Flintplein and the green space in front remain underutilized, presenting an opportunity for enhanced public engagement and community interaction.

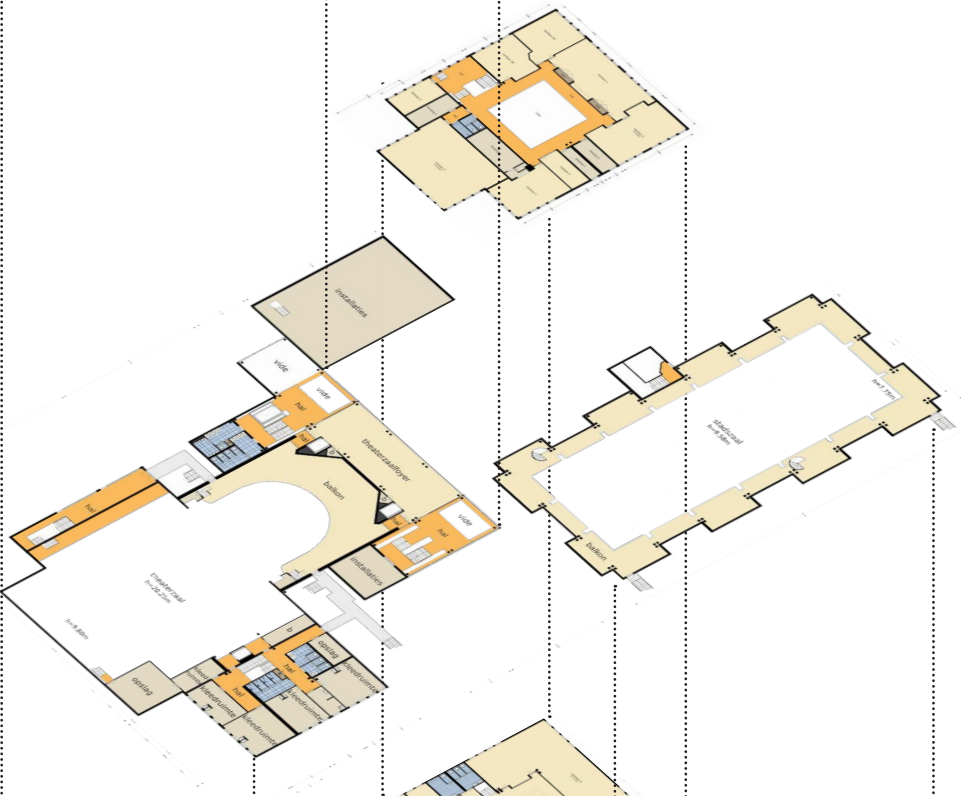




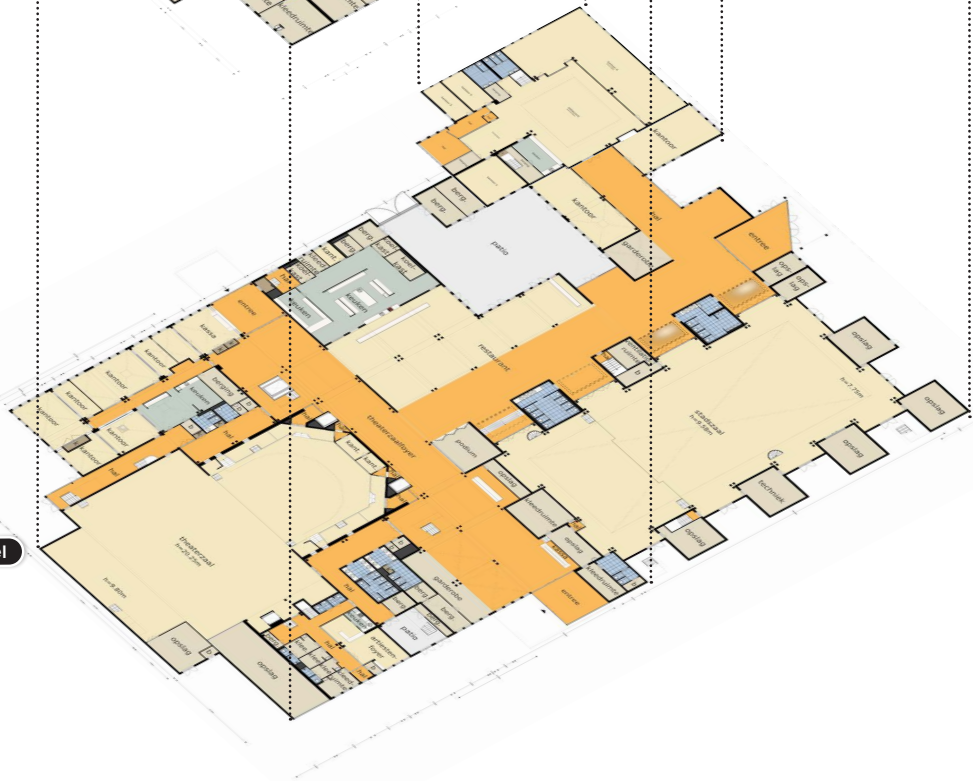
TheaterHall upper levels



TheaterHall First level



TheaterHall Ground level



Current Challenges

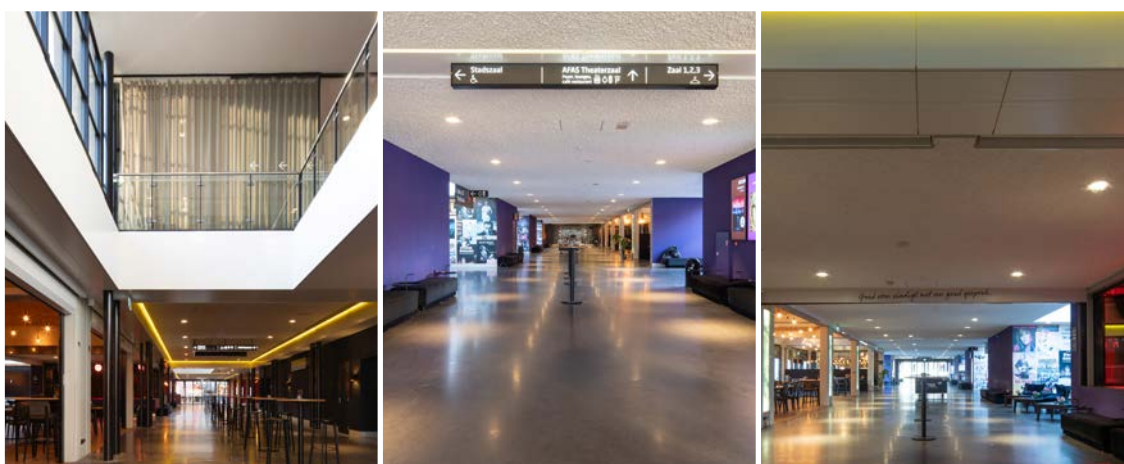
Flint faces ongoing challenges related to its aging infrastructure, requiring phased maintenance and sustainability upgrades. Efforts to modernize key areas, such as foyers, halls, and technical systems, are essential to ensure the venue meets contemporary standards while preserving its cultural and architectural significance.

Spatial limitations impact the adaptability of Flint for diverse events. Some areas, such as the Stadszaal, have fixed layouts that make it challenging to accommodate modern shows and corporate functions. Additionally, backstage facilities and the main theater hall require upgrades to meet current acoustic and technological standards, ensuring a seamless and high-quality experience for performers and attendees alike.



Entrance Accessibility and Visibility

Flint Theater in Amersfoort features multiple entrances designed to facilitate visitor access. However, some of these entrances are less prominent, which can affect their usage. Notably, the entrance adjacent to the Flintplein parking garage, located directly behind the theater, is often overlooked by visitors. Additionally, the entryway at Flintplein is seldom utilized, possibly due to its inconspicuous placement or lack of clear signage. Enhancing the visibility and accessibility of these entrances could improve the overall visitor experience.





Volumes and Architectural Structure

Flint's single-floor volumes exhibit an original and innovative structural design, characterized by a split-column framework supporting pyramidal roofs for each repeating grid. These spaces house inner connecting streets, a restaurant, and the multifunctional Stadszaal, a 10-meter-high hall featuring balconies and a flexible seating arrangement. The adaptable design allows the space to transition from a tiered seating layout to a completely open floor plan, accommodating diverse events and performances.

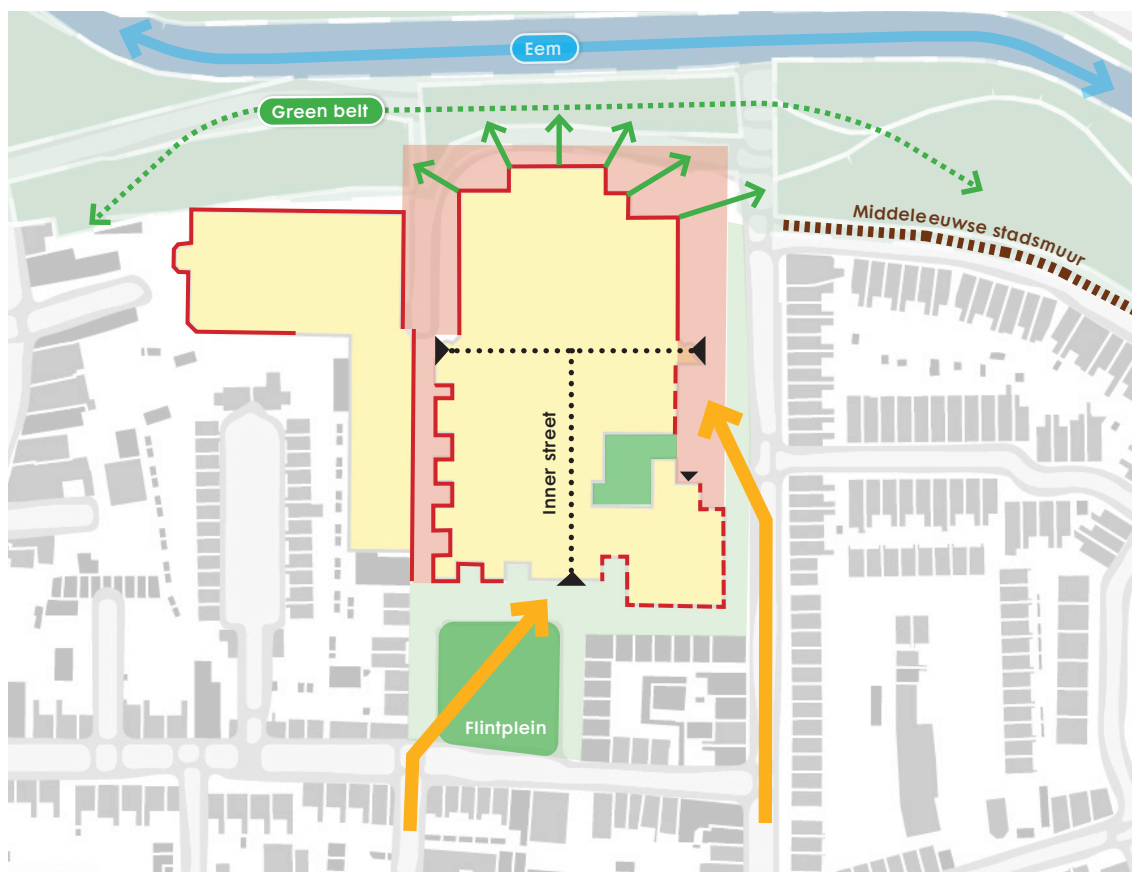
The two-floor section of the building features its own entrance and a central double-height space, creating an open and inviting atmosphere. The ground floor currently functions as an art gallery and a hub for community-driven activities, while the upper level is dedicated to offices and studio spaces, fostering a creative and collaborative environment.

The main theater hall stands as a defining element of Flint, rising to an impressive height of 24 meters. This grand performance space is complemented by a circulation volume that includes three lobbies, bars, rest-rooms, and other essential amenities, reaching approximately 14 meters in height. A distinctive semicircular dome crowns the structure, enhancing its visual impact, further cementing Flint's role as a premier cultural venue in Amersfoort.



Introverted and Disconnected

One of the key challenges Flint faces is its introverted nature, which restricts its engagement with the surrounding urban fabric. The absence of vibrant public spaces around the building limits its role as a cultural hub. Many of the surrounding areas remain disconnected and underutilized, reducing opportunities for social interaction and community engagement.



Blank Facades

A key aspect of addressing this issue involves rethinking the materiality and transparency of the facades. Strategic openings, glass elements, or interactive installations could create a stronger visual and physical connection between the building's interior and its surroundings. Enhancing lighting design and incorporating art could also bring life to the facades, making them more inviting and engaging.

Parking Building

The adjacent parking facility is a functional split-level structure with an efficient layout, accommodating approximately 350 vehicles. However, its design lacks a welcoming interface, and the entrance fails to serve as an inviting gateway to the cultural center. Given its prime location by the water and the greenbelt, there is significant potential to reimagine its role in enhancing the visitor experience.

As the parking primarily serves Flint visitors, moving it could free up valuable

space for more engaging, pedestrian-friendly developments that better integrate with the cultural center and its surroundings. In future relocating parking facilities to nearby areas within the neighbourhood is thinkable. Parking facilities needed



for the new proposed program however need to be realized as much as possible within this project area.

Flintplein

Originally envisioned as an outdoor theater space surrounded by artists' residences, Flintplein was designed to host open-air performances and cultural activities. However, over the years, this vision has never fully materialized. Today, the surrounding spaces, particularly Flintplein, remain underdeveloped and lack clear identity and purpose.

There is an opportunity to transform Flintplein into a more vibrant and inviting public space. By incorporating green areas, seating, and flexible event spaces,



the area could better serve as an extension of Flint, offering a welcoming environment for both planned performances and spontaneous cultural gatherings.

Community Engagement - Financial Constraints - Flint operates under financial pressures due to reduced subsidies. This necessitates maximizing revenue through diversified uses, such as corporate events and community programs.

Adapting to Changing Needs - Attracting a broader demographic, particularly younger audiences, is a challenge. Spaces need to evolve to cater to both traditional performances and contemporary cultural events.

Re-programming and Opening Up

The structuralist foundation of Flint offers a unique opportunity to enhance its openness and strengthen connections with its urban surroundings. By reimagining its spatial use, the venue could evolve into a more dynamic space, transforming underutilized areas into lively and interactive zones would significantly enrich the city's cultural landscape.

A renewed program could integrate diverse functions, such as start-up incubators, collaborative workspaces, creative workshops, and interdisciplinary hubs for science, education, and the arts. A curated thematic focus—ranging from technology and sustainability to culinary arts and public discourse—would position Flint as a key driver of creativity, knowledge-sharing, and innovation. Other ideas are very welcome as well, as long as its adding to the local ambitions for this place.

Blending commercial and social elements within this framework would ensure a balanced and sustainable ecosystem. The original vision of Flint aimed to weave cultural experiences into everyday activities, engaging visitors naturally through indoor market, dining, and leisure. By embracing innovative programming and flexible usage strategies, the venue can amplify its appeal, reinforcing its status as a vibrant, multifunctional space that fosters artistic expression, learning, and community interaction.





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F i n t
Reinvent the Theater



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EUROPAN18

Location: Flint, Amersfoort
Population: 160,000 / 285,000 inhabitants
Strategic Site: 3.35 hectares
Project Site: 1.49 hectares
Scale: L/S
Owner(s) of the Site: Municipality Amersfoort



F i n t

Reinvent the Theater



Plantsoen road along river Eem



View from Coninckstraat



View from Parking area along Teut



Rear side of the Flint along Plantsoen



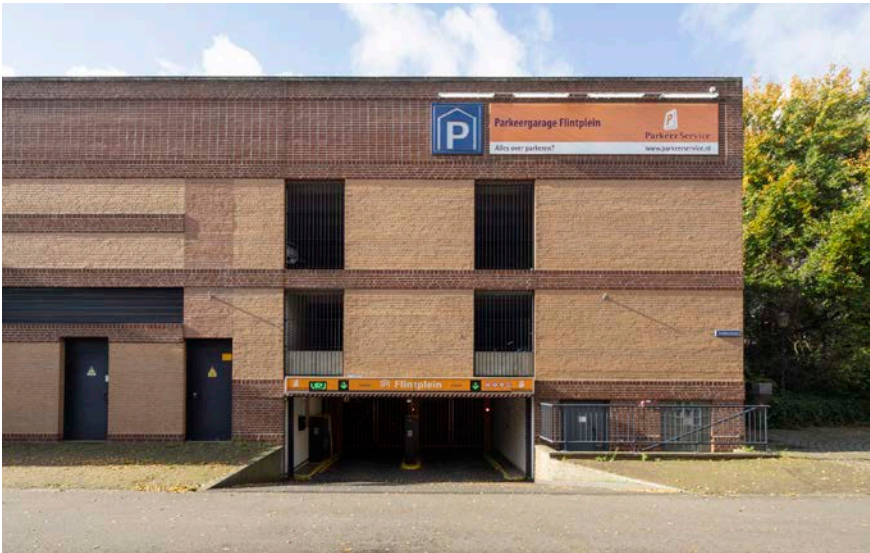
Internal spaces within Flint



View from Walikerstraat



on road



Parking building view from Walikerstraat



Flint interiors



Competition Assignment

The City of Amersfoort is re-imagining urban life at Flint, transforming this currently inward-facing building into an open, dynamic, and locally integrated space—a welcoming “central living room” for all. A space where individuals from diverse backgrounds can come together, fostering connections through a wide range of cultural, social, and recreational activities.

This transformation prioritizes multi-functionality, adaptability and a meaningful relationship with its urban environment materially and socially. By aligning the building’s functionality with contemporary needs, Flint seeks to position itself as a landmark that stimulates creativity and encourages collaboration. Think of a new and strong program for this location that can contribute to a vibrant city and be a meeting-place for a wide range of users and visitors.

Follow-up process

The Municipality of Amersfoort owns Flint and its adjacent parking structures. Currently, the building remains in active use; however, the theater’s operations are gradually declining, with a planned relocation to a new venue within the next years. Concepts, typologies, and approaches developed through the competition could lay the foundation for future initiatives. The municipality of Amersfoort envisions the potential for commissioning further feasibility studies and/or architectural design studies to transform the Flint location.

1 **Redefining the Program**

Re-imagine the program with a unique identity that attracts a diverse, multi-generational community while seamlessly connecting with the local community and appealing to a broader audience. The new program could feature start-ups, co-working spaces, workshops, science, education, culture and inspiration, (a hotspot for a certain theme e.g.; debate, food, AI, art, nature etc.), fostering innovation, creativity, and collaboration. The program could be a mix between commercial and social functions. The original design aimed to engage people through everyday activities, such as shopping, subtly introducing them to cultural experiences. Explore other innovative programs or profiles, broadening its appeal and functionality. Its goal is to establish an inclusive multi-functional space that serves as a dynamic place within the city.

2 **Transparency and Openness**

Leverage the building's unique characteristics, such as its internal street, flexible grid, and multi-purpose spaces, while embracing and enhancing the principles of its structuralist design to foster adaptability and sustainability. Develop a transparent and welcoming ground floor that exudes vitality, invites visitors.

Employ design strategies to open up the building in creative and inviting ways, but without losing original design Principles. Foster connection with its immediate small-scale inner city context by incorporating features such as large openings, glass facades, and flexible layouts to strengthen the indoor-outdoor connection.

3 **Connecting to Green Spaces and City**

Flint currently presents an uninviting facade facing The monumental green belt around the city. The building should be reoriented to establish a dynamic relationship with the adjacent green city park (north). Flint lack of visibility from the city center necessitate creating stronger connections with the urban core in size, scale and appearance. Allow room for exceptional architecture and innovative solutions to give the building an iconic presence, harmonizing with its surroundings and historical context ensuring its role as a visible and accessible cultural landmark.

4 **Rethinking building and its surroundings as unity**

Re-imagine the building's surroundings by transforming the rear parking area and adjacent square into vibrant, functional public spaces. Transform the square into a vibrant, multifunctional space for performances, markets, or festivals, fostering interaction an gathering for locals ans visitors. Aim for a cohesive program in- and outside the building that together creates a lively atmosphere throughout the week, day and night.

5 **Program and Space Allocation**

Currently, the building includes 6,400 m2 dedicated to the theatre and cultural house, along with additional parking building (350 cars) offering opportunities for integration with adjacent structures. Formulate innovative design solutions to re purpose these structures into valuable spaces that enhance functionality, foster community-centric programming, or drive economic activation, without significantly increasing building volume. The parking facility can be partially re purposed to suit the program's profile, as long as parking needs are sufficiently met.

Flint

Reinvent the Theater

INFORMATION

Relevant documents

Facts and Rules

The jury

Organization

Relevant documents

Most of the documents provided here under are in Dutch language, please do use on-line translation services to help you understand the content. We excuse any inconvenience caused.

*** We strongly recommend reviewing the listed documents for a thorough understanding of the competition site, its historical development, conceptual evolution, and ambitions. Please note that some ideas and decisions across various documents may conflict or have been superseded.

Flint Masterplan versie.pdf (2013)

A detailed revitalization plan for Flint Theater, focusing on modernizing the facility to accommodate cultural, theatrical, and event-related activities while promoting financial sustainability and reducing environmental impact.

De regionale ruimtelijke visie regio amersfoort.pdf (2018)

A regional spatial vision addressing challenges of growth, resource management, and environmental sustainability while ensuring a high quality of life and economic strength for Amersfoort and its surrounding areas

Ontwikkelbeeld regio amersfoort.pdf (2021)

A comprehensive vision outlining strategic priorities for sustainable growth and spatial development in the Amersfoort region, focusing on balancing urbanization, mobility, green spaces, and economic vitality by 2040.

Flint40.pdf (2017)

A retrospective on the 40-year history of Flint Theater, detailing its cultural impact, key milestones, architectural evolution, and the community's relationship with this iconic venue.

Woondeal.pdf (2023)

A housing agreement aimed at tackling the housing shortage in the Amersfoort region through collaborative efforts to build 27,000 homes by 2030, focusing on affordability, sustainability, and efficient urban planning.

Groeien in nabijheid - Ontwikkelperspectief 2040 NOVEX-gebied Utrecht-Amersfoort.pdf (2023)

An integrated perspective linking the Utrecht and Amersfoort regions, emphasizing healthy urbanization, sustainable energy use, effective mobility solutions, and environmental resilience with a horizon set for 2040.

FleHITE 2024 56-81 Flint.pdf (2024)

A study exploring the historical and cultural significance of Flint, tracing its development as an architectural landmark and community cultural hub, reflecting broader trends in cultural center design.

Facts and Rules

Facts

Site representative / Actor(s) involved

Municipality of Amersfoort
Flint

Team representative / Lead member

Architect and/or Urban designer

Expected skills

With regards to the site's issues and characteristics we are looking for design proposals which mainly requires good Architectural and Urban Design skills. In addition it might be useful to also have Public space / Landscape Design skill with in the team.

Rules

Participate / Register

For registration and other information please visit
<https://www.europan-europe.eu>

Competition Rules

For more complete competition rules and other information regarding Europan18 session please visit: <https://www.europan-europe.eu>

Evaluation

Jury

All jury sessions are conducted by our professional jury, comprising 7 to 9 members. Site representatives may attend these sessions but only as observers.

Award

The ranked selection includes a Winner, awarded €12,000; a Runner-up, awarded €6,000; and a Special Mention, which does not carry a financial reward.

Post-competition

Intermediate procedure

A meeting will be held to introduce the rewarded teams to the site representatives. This may be followed by an on-site workshop involving the winning team(s), runner(s)-up, and special mention(s).

Commission given to the selected team(s) for the implementation

The selected team(s) may be commissioned by the municipality and/or private partners for a follow-up design or research-by-design assignment aimed at implementation. This assignment will take place at the project site or a location with similar characteristics.

Communication

Anonymous publication online after the 2st jury round
Publication in book and potential exhibition after the competition

The jury

The Jury

The E18 Session will feature a professional jury comprising 9 main members, supported by 2 substitutes, making a total of 9 to 11 participants. The jury process is divided into three parts: Technical Committee Analysis (Pre-Jury review), First Jury Session (20% of received projects, Shortlisting entries) and the last Second Jury Session (Final Selecting of winners).

Kristiaan Borret (BE)

Bouwmeester Maitre Architecte (BMA) at Brussels Capital Region (<https://bma.brussels>)

Jeroen de Willigen (NL)

Urbanist and partner / De Zwarte Hond, Chairman BNA, Supervisor Amsterdam Amstel, Healthy Ageing Campus. (<https://dezwartehond.nl>)

Eric van der Kooij (NL)

Chairman BNSP, Concept development at BPD Amsterdam (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/eric-van-der-kooij-a18469ab/>)

Oana Rades (NL)

Architect / Partner at Shift architecture urbanism (<https://www.shift-au.com>)

Wouter Veldhuis (NL)

Urban planner / State advisor for the physical living environment, Director MUST Ambassador, Platform Space for Walking (<https://www.must.nl>)

Cécilia Gross (NL)

Architect Partner / Director at VenhoevenCS architecture+urbanism (<http://www.venhoevencs.nl>)

Nathalie van Hoeven (NL)

Concept development at Eigen Haard (<https://www.eigenhaard.nl>)

Rob Meurders (NL)

Architect / Partner diederendirrix architects, Chairman Advisory Committee on Environmental Quality Eindhoven (<https://www.diederendirrix.nl>)

Tom Avermaete (CH)

Professor for the History and Theory of Urban Design at ETH Zurich (<https://www.nsl.ethz.ch/en/professur/prof-dr-tom-avermaete>)

Oliver Thill (NL) *Substitute Jury

Owner of Atelier Kempe Thill architects and planners (<https://www.atelierkempethill.com>)

Cristina Gamboa (ESP) *Substitute Jury

Cristina is co-founder at Lacol (<https://www.lacol.coop>)

Technical committee

The technical committee is tasked to advise the jury on the contextual sensitivity and the feasibility of the competition proposals. The technical committee checks the completeness of the entries while categorizing the entries to reflect the ambition of competition location. The goal is to help the Jury members dive deep into the content as quickly as possible.

The technical committee is composed of: two European NL board members; two launching partner representatives; a private partner representative for each committed party; one site specific stakeholder representative per site; both jury substitutes (unless tasked to act as an active jury member).

Organization

Project coordination

Madir Shah

Director, Secretariat European NL/ E18 Project leader

Arno Goossens

Senior Strategic Advisor Spatial Development at the Municipality of Amersfoort

Maricke Hiddink

Architect - Advisor Spatial Development at the Municipality of Amersfoort

Agnes Galama

Spatial Development Strategist at the Municipality of Amersfoort

Pre-competition working group

Flint, Amersfoort (NL)

Agnes Galama, Esther van Son-Kock

Amicitia, Amersfoort (NL)

Agnes Galama, Esther van Son-Kock

Scheltus Flat, Amersfoort (NL)

Agnes Galama, Esther van Son-Kock

Stadhuisplein, Amersfoort (NL)

Maricke Hiddink, Esther van Son-Kock

Kop van Isselt, Amersfoort (NL)

Maricke Hiddink, Dirk Hölzer

Koppelbrug, Amersfoort (NL)

Maricke Hiddink, Dirk Hölzer

European NL

André Kempe (Board member)

Architect / Urban Designer / Co-founder / Director at Atelier Kempe Thill

Jonathan Woodroffe (Board member)

Architect / Urban Designer / Co-founder / Director at Studio Woodroffepapa

Sabine Lebesque (Board member)

Architectural Historian Land and Development, Municipality of Amsterdam

Anouk de Wit (Board member)

Program manager Spatial Quality, Municipality Amsterdam

Arnoud Gelauff (Board member)

Architect / Co-founder / Arons en Gelauff architecten

Madir Shah (Director)

Architect / Urban Designer / Co-founder / Director at URBANOFFICE Architects

Isha Joshi

Architect / Urban Designer / Team European NL

Dear European competitors,

In line with the **RESOURCING** theme, European Netherlands and the Municipality of Amersfoort are pleased to present **SIX STRATEGIC LOCATIONS** for European 18. We warmly invite you to explore these sites in detail, as each location offers unique opportunities and challenges to help shape Amersfoort's future in sustainable, innovative, and community-driven ways.



Flint Reinvent The Theater

How can we, reinvent the program for inward-facing theater building Flint into a inclusive multi-functional hub that fosters creativity, connection to the neighbourhood and urban vitality for all, a new urban destination for Amersfoort?

Register @ www.euopan.nl



Amicitia Restore The Fabric

How can we, restore the underutilized Amicitia location into an iconic gateway to Amersfoort's historic centre seamlessly blending housing, commercial, semi-cultural and green spaces to revitalize the urban fabric?

Register @ www.euopan.nl



Otto Scheltus Reconnect City

How can we, reconnect Otto Scheltusflat as an urban hotspot bridging the central station and historic centre, creating innovative residential typologies and dynamic public spaces to create an inclusive new city landmark?

Register @ www.euopan.nl



Stadhuisplein Rebuild Culture

How can we, rebuild Stadhuisplein into a dynamic Cultural Quarter which integrate performance venues, honours heritage and create a pedestrian-friendly design, bridging the historic core and river-front redevelopments into one harmonious urban experience?

Register @ www.euopan.nl



Kop van Isselt Reintegrate Old

How can we, re-purpose Kop van Isselt's industrial heritage buildings into a vibrant mixed-use identity establishing new homes, creative industries, and lively green public spaces to foster a dynamic, sustainable urban ecosystem for Kop van Isselt?

Register @ www.euopan.nl



Koppelbrug Rethink Health

How can we, rethink Koppelbrug as a mix-use building complex combining indoor/outdoor sports, housing, and parking so it becomes a landmark for health, community well-being, and inclusive urban living along the River Eem?

Register @ www.euopan.nl



Amersfoort

R e s o u r c i n g



How can we, reinvent the program for inward-facing theater building Flint into a inclusive multi-functional hub that fosters creativity, connection to the neighbourhood and urban vitality for all, a new urban destination for Amersfoort?

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AMERSFOORT is thriving and embracing significant growth. Over the next decade, the city is dedicated to improving the quality, energy efficiency, and sustainability of its existing built environment, with a strong focus on prioritizing the needs and well-being of its residents.

In line with these ambitions, European Netherlands and the Municipality of Amersfoort are proud to present **SIX LOCATIONS** for European 18. These locations are strategically significant for the municipality and aligns closely with this session's theme of **RESOURCING**, highlighting Amersfoort's search for innovative approaches to urban transformation.