AMSTERDAM 2050
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For Zaanstad, the very spatial language that resulted in a disjointed urban profile inspired its solution – the issue of separation between Noord and the centre is addressed with a movement across the Ij, an ecological bridge connecting the two sides, allowing not only people movement but also that of fauna from the protected polder green in attempts to rehabilitate the polluted grounds of Petroleumhaven.

Along the Ij, the projects tackle various social and economic infrastructure needed in developing new urban areas. The interventions adopted by the research as well as the design of the group is centred creating supporting infrastructure, promoting amphibious lifestyles, urban efficiency within densification and finally the intentional act of designed vacancy.

Underlying the solutions to the problems on site is a greater goal of using blue-green buffers as design tools to create a connected ecology that grows outwards beyond the site of Zaanstad, to be part of a larger interconnected green strategy across the Amsterdam region.
Zaanstad

Future Model

The Ij is an important frame of reference in Zaanstad, acting not only as accessible public space, but also as a potential building site. The interventions, while belonging to different themes, all aim to create conditions for the water to act as a connector instead of a separator. The goal is to use the Ij as two perpendicular axes which then generates a pseudo structure for site organisation.

The axes of along and across the Ij will then guide and direct densification plans throughout the site, focusing on urban efficiency and quality improvement beyond numbers. The site as it stands has almost no amenities or services and hence is the perfect test bed for novel methods of approaching civic services and spaces such as greenery, waste, death, production and health.

In the end, it is an exercise in irony, embedding peripheral and formerly unwanted services into the core of the city – bringing back what was once banished to the peri-urban zones.
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