

Ferry Terminal project is proceeding to Turku City Board

The massive Ferry Terminal project in Turku is proceeding to be decided on by the City Board. It is proposed to the City Board that convenes on Monday, 31 May that the Port of Turku can start the financial arrangements for the project valued at 172 million euros.

It is also proposed that the City redeem Viking Line's current terminal building for 17.5 million euros and commit itself to leaseback. The Ferry Terminal project is intended to be presented to the City Council on 14 June.

Once implemented, the project will reorganise the area and functions of the Turku passenger harbour and inner harbour located next to the Turku Castle. The plan is to build a new joint passenger terminal for use of both shipping companies.

In addition to the new passenger terminal, the project concerns the urban development of maritime Turku more broadly and will permanently open the waterfront areas of the currently closed harbour fields for use by the inhabitants of the city.

"The project allows for creating a new public space that reaches to the riverside in the Linnanniemi district and the expansion of the Linnakaupunki residential district all the way to the waterfront area of the inner harbour", says Deputy Mayor **Jarkko Virtanen** who acts as the presenter of Ferry Terminal project.

The project concerning the future of the passenger harbour and inner harbour in Turku got started in 2018. In the bodies of the City of Turku the matter was most recently discussed by the City Board's Concern Section on 17 May 2021. They had no remarks to make to the calculations presented by Port of Turku Ltd. Due to the significance of the matter, the Concern Section decided to forward it to be decided on by the City Board and City Council which have authority in the case.

Port of Turku Ltd is the City of Turku's strategic company which is wholly-owned by the City.

The project is intended to be forwarded to implementation phase by the end of the summer. If the financing can be arranged, the goal is to complete the project in full within the original schedule, i.e. by December 2025.

Both shipping companies that operate the Turku–Stockholm route, Viking Line and Tallink Silja, currently have their own terminals located on land leased from the City of Turku. Their lease agreements will expire at the end of 2025.

The future joint terminal and the infrastructure solutions related thereto have been agreed on orally with both companies.

"We reached a result in negotiations in good co-operation with both companies, although the decision-making was made more difficult by the uncertainty generated by the coronavirus crisis and the high cost of the project. The project will, however, provide a bright spot in these challenging times and take a direction towards an even better customer experience", says **Erik Söderholm**, Managing Director of Port of Turku Ltd.

Both shipping companies are satisfied with the development of the port area.

"We are happy to see that this major construction project is proceeding in co-operation and with mutual understanding. We have a common goal: even smoothly flowing passenger experience for cruise and car passengers as well as cargo. Silja Line's current terminal has served our customers for 50 years, and we are now eagerly waiting for the start of the construction project of the new joint terminal", says **Margus Schults**, CEO of Tallink Silja Oy.

"Turku is a very important city and partner for Viking Line. Two of our newest ships, Viking Grace and Viking Glory, which is currently under construction, have been designed with attention to the needs of the Turku route. We will develop and maintain the traffic on the Turku route in the coming decades, and we are grateful to Turku for investing in the development of the port area from the point of view of tourism", says **Jan Hanses**, CEO of Viking Line.

In addition to its size class and urban development, the project is also very significant from other angles. Regular ship traffic between Turku and Stockholm is the oldest route in Finland, and it is expected to

continue strongly. Passenger traffic and cargo transports between Turku, Mariehamn and Stockholm have continued for over a hundred years, excluding interruptions during wartime.

Now the Port of Turku and the shipping companies invest and believe in an environmentally sound mode of transport. The Port of Turku grants e.g. environmental discount to ships with low emissions.

The passenger traffic volume between Turku and Stockholm varies from 3–4 million passengers per year, excluding the coronavirus year 2020. Turku believes in the rise of travelling after the coronavirus, when the modern and interesting port areas with the emerging opportunities of the Linnanniemi district will be one of the advantages of the attractive city.

“The new potential joint terminal will increase the interest of the inhabitants towards the Turku–Stockholm route, and the fast One-hour Train connection to the Helsinki metropolitan area will give a chance for a larger volume of passengers to catch the evening ship from Turku after a working day”, says Deputy Mayor Jarkko Virtanen.

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