The municipality of Os is currently facing a major challenge in its history: how to become a new regional and urban centre, while maintaining its own identity. This identity is mainly defined by its suburbia character (70% of households are single-family), in contrast to the nearby urban Bergen, the second most populated city in Norway.

Our proposal for europan 13 stands up for the idea that this identity should be preserved and enhanced, while it advocates a redefinition of the concept of "suburbia" in the context of a new scenario where its traditional meaning is no valid anymore. The foreseen population growth or the construction of new infrastructures in the area, coupled with the need to conceive our cities in more sustainable terms, urges the exploration of new physical and socio-economic ways of development. Through our proposal we attempt to provide an answer to those emergent conditions by suggesting a shift from 'SUBURBIA' to 'OSURBIA'.

LEARNING FROM OS

Our proposal explores the ideas behind the so-called 'suburbia' to understand the characteristics that underpin such a distinctive identity and unique way of living. To do so, five elements or types customarily associated with 'traditional suburbia' have been identified on the site:

1. THE SINGLE DWELLING
2. THE PARKING LOT
3. THE MALL
4. THE FILLING STATION
5. 'SUBURBIA BEYOND THE DWELLING'

A sixth type, 'THE STRIP', has been defined as the element providing unity and coherence to all the rest.

By exploring the characteristics traditionally associated to these elements, the project aims at understanding the complex symbolism behind the simple forms that form those types. Thereafter, the project seeks re-appropriating these complexities to produce new meanings, while maintaining their associated symbolism.

Existing elements in Os, such as the old train station and the hall for wagons, have been preserved and redefined to adapt to new uses (i.e. art gallery, workshop and exhibition spaces); as a consequence, they have become a fundamental part of Os' history, landscape and identity. Likewise, our proposal considers the six elements identified above as an asset rather than a constraint, in order to generate unusual meanings within a recognizable architecture. Those elements are re-appropriated and redefined within the frame of an overall urban strategy that provides unity, not only among those elements, but to the whole urban set (i.e. the existing commercial centre, the area around the Oseana culture house, existing areas of single family houses, etc.).
Adaptable City

Osurbia | Redefining suburbia

TRADITIONAL SUBURBAN DWELLING

TENDENCY TOWARDS URBAN UPRIGHT

PITCHED ROOF \nFENCED PRIVATE GARDEN

ADDITIONS (e.g. garage, outdoor storage, etc.)

EXECUTIVE HOME MONUMENTAL ARCHITECTURE

CHANGING NATURE, ADDITIONS OR MANIPULATION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PRAGMATISM

SUBURBIA BEYOND THE DWELLING

CAR PARK AT THE FRONT

PRIVATE CHEMISTRY

APPROPRIATED CHARACTERISTICS SUBURBAN DWELLING

VAST OPEN AREA AT GROUND LEVEL - PLAIN (high consumption of land)

DEVELOPED ON GROUND LEVEL - PLAIN

KEystREAMS TO REDUCE THE TRAFFIC SPEEDS AND URBAN BEYOND THE "CAR STRIP"" (e.g. smaller square)

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APPROPRIATED CHARACTERISTICS SUBURBAN DWELLING

VAST OPEN AREA AT GROUND LEVEL - PLAIN

DEVELOPED ON GROUND LEVEL - PLAIN

VAST OPEN AREA AT GROUND LEVEL - PLAIN (high consumption of land)

APPROPRIATED CHARACTERISTICS SUBURBAN PARKING LOT

APPROPRIATED CHARACTERISTICS SUBURBAN MALL

CAR ORIENTED

APPROPRIATED CHARACTERISTICS SUBURBAN FILLING STATION

APPROPRIATED CHARACTERISTICS SUBURBAN FILLING STATION

BUILDINGS WITH FALSE FRONT - GENERIC BOX BEHIND

(Like facade with applied symbols)

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Osurbia

Redefining suburbia

REDEFINED SUBURBAN DWELLING
[Osurbia Dwelling]

REDEFINED SUBURBAN PARKING LOT
[Osurbia Parking Lot]

OUTLOOK TOWARDS THE CITY

TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

REDEFINED SUBURBAN DWELLING

TOWARDS COMPACT CITY
MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING
HOMOGENEOUS POPULATION
PUBLIC ACCESS

REDEFINED SUBURBAN PARKING LOT

TOWARDS COMPACT CITY
DEVELOPED ON HEIGHT
PARKING LOT

REDEFINED SUBURBAN MALL
[Osurbia Mall]

OBRIS NEWS:
Music
Art
Theatre Workshops

REDEFINED 'SUBURBIA BEYOND THE DWELLING'

OSURBIA BEYOND THE DWELLING

REDEFINED SUBURBAN FILLING STATION
[Osurbia Filling Station]

THE LIGHTWEIGHT STEEL STRUCTURE - CONTAINING THE FILLING STATION

COMPLEX PROGRAM:
Local market, space for different events - theatre plays, concerts, etc.

THE ELEMENTARY STRUCTURE IS EXPANDED INTO THE EXISTING FILLING STATION

PENDANT ROOF AS SYMBOLIC SILHOUETTE TO RESemble THE DWELLING TYPE

CONTAINS BUSINESS AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE:
Office, cultural, educational, and art facilities (library, observatory, gallery, etc.), retail zones, etc.

PITCHED ROOF AS SYMBOlic SILHOUETTE TO RESEMBLE THE DWELLING TYPE

PREMITS AN INTERCultural AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF LIFE
Eg. encouragement of healthy lifestyles, care for elderly or for kids, etc.

PROMOTES AN INTERSOCIAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF LIFE
EG. ENCOURAGEMENT OF HEALTHY LIFESTYLES, CARE FOR ELDERS OR FOR KIDS, ETC.

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