



*Photo Jaak Nilson*

## Architectural competition for the Tamula lakeside area

**Architectural Competition brief for the spatial planning  
of the Tamula lakeside area  
April - September 2008**

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## 2. Annex 1 - Technical Description

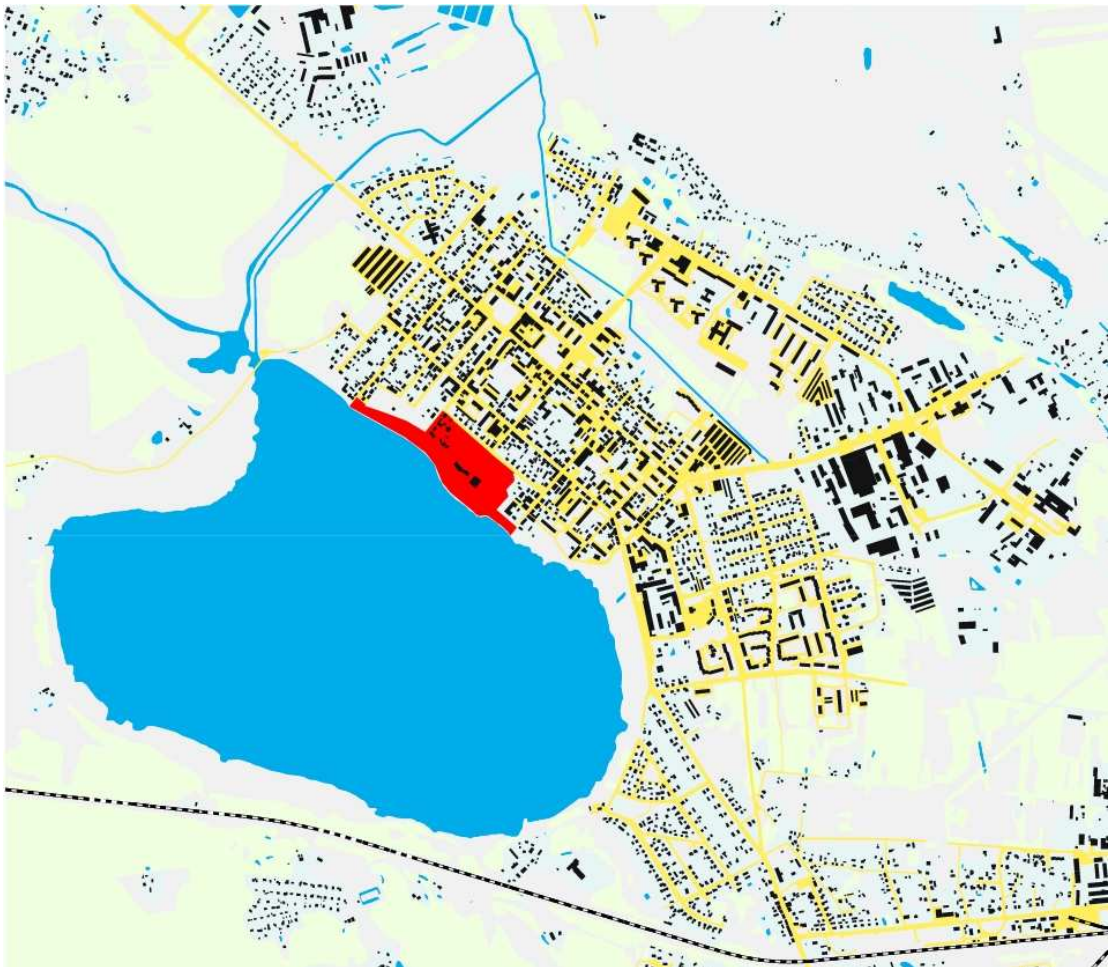
### 2.1. COMPETITION ASSIGNMENT

#### 2.1.1. COMPETITION AREA

The competition area is situated in the city of Võru (coordinates N 57 50 and E 26 59) and the total area to be planned is 8.24 ha. The competition area is located in the downtown area and is a part of the Tamula lakeside area. The competition area is bordered in the northeast by Vee street, in the southeast by the Liiva street residential zone, in the southwest by the Tamula lake and in the northwest by Tartu street and the Fr.R.Kreutzwald park.

The competition area contains a beach area of 750m, state owned property that the city is applying for (suggested border runs along Vee street 2, 4a, 4b, 4c, 6a and 8), the properties located on Vee street 4 and 6 (commercial property) and private properties along Tartu street: 49,51a/51,53a,53,55,57,58 (residential property). Also within the area are the extensions of Tartu and Vabaduse streets (traffic area).

The total area that can possibly be allocated to new buildings is approximately 3.0 ha, the competition area is 8.24 ha and the study area that should be functionally connected to the competition area is about 25 ha.



*Scheme 1. Location of the competition area in the city of Võru*

### 2.1.2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMPETITION

**SITUATION AND POPULATION.** The town of Võru is located near the Estonian southeast border, in the valley that runs between the uplands of Otepää and Haanja. The total area of the city is 13.2 km<sup>2</sup> and it includes five beautiful lakes - Tamula, Kubija, Kubija artificial lake, Kubija mill-lake and Mustjärve. Võru is bordered in the north and northeast by Võhandu, the longest river in Estonia. Võru county has 38 271 inhabitants (01.01.2007, ESA).

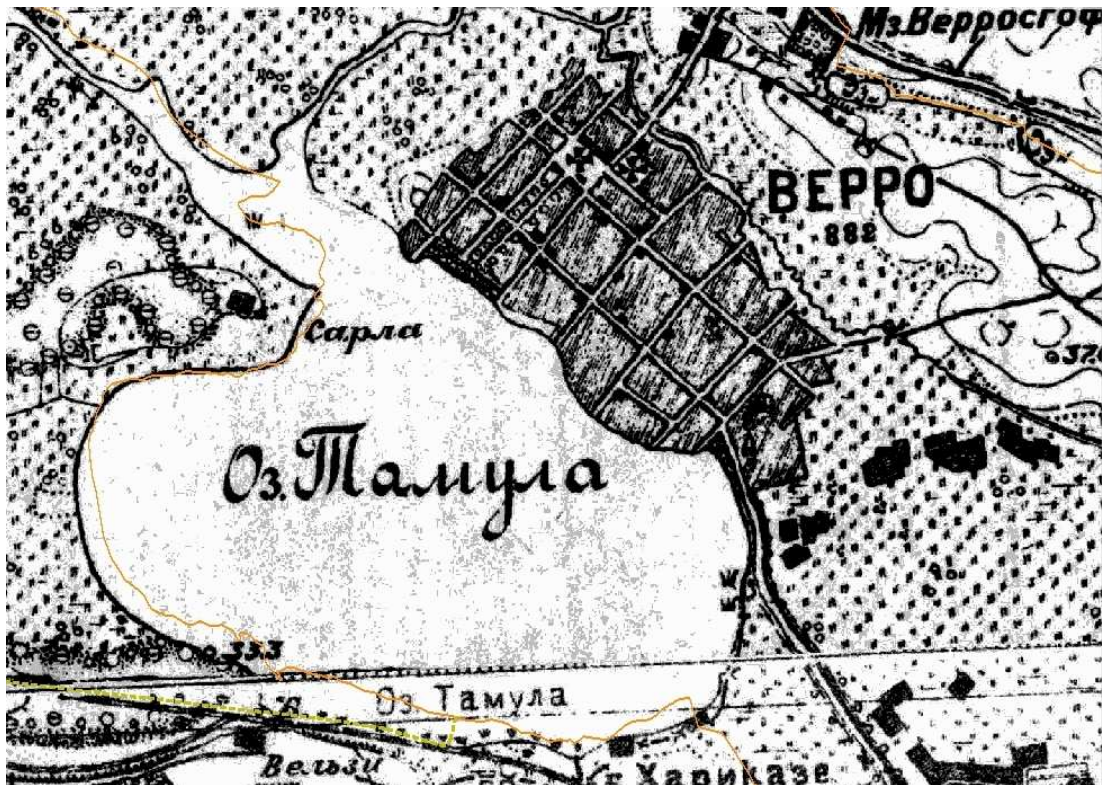
The town of Võru is the center of the southeastern Võru county. In the town and county of Võru, population has slightly diminished since the year 2000 mainly due to a lack of employment opportunities. In 2005, 14,487 people lived in the city of Võru. That makes up about 40% of the entire population of Võru county and means that among the other 33 Estonian towns Võru is 10th in size according to its city population and 11th in size by population density.

Another reason behind the declining population is the low birth rate. The new millenium brought a yearly decline in the number of births until the year 2005, when the number of births was again greater than the previous year. In addition to the low birth rate, the population of Võru town is determined by an exodus that is greater than the number of people moving in. At the same time, the population of Võru continues to age (65% of the population are of working-age).

**HISTORICAL HERITAGE AND CREATION.** The first reports about a manor neighboring the Kirumpää castle – the Võru manor (Veremoiza) – date back to 1590. In 1783 the empress Catherine II ordered a new county to be formed in the south and southeast part of Tartu county, with a center in the state manor of Vana-Koiola. Some time later, Catherine II gave permission to buy the private manor of Võru in order to create a town. The birthday of Võru town is considered to be August 21st, 1784, when a decree came from the general that it will bear the name Võru.

In 1785, the size of the town was determined as 307 ha. Plans were approved to build town streets using a grid system and it has remained the same until today along with the single story wooden buildings that dominate in the older constructions. The system of streets and the interesting wooden architecture have become Võru's character and assets. A further reminder of the founding years of the city are the Lutheran (1793) and Orthodox (1804) churches in the city centre.





*Scheme 2. A historical map. Source: Database of the Estonian Land Board*

During the 19th century and the first decades of 20th century, the economic life of Võru developed on the basis of small-town entrepreneurial activity. In 1889 Võru was connected by railway to Riga and Pskov. In the 1930s, more attention was paid to recreation and tourism in the Kubija region. By 1940, the population of Võru had grown to 6600 people. During soviet times, the population of the city tripled. Several concrete apartment building complexes were built. As a result, the cityscape of Võru changed – a lot of people moved to the city from the country, bringing with them a new culture and identity. A small wooden town transformed into a more modern city made of stone.

Today's Võru is characterized by its language, culture and traditions that have survived centuries. Among the traditional sports and culture events there are, for example, the Võru Folk Festival and various traditional music events. There is a Võru Institute that works for the preservation of Võru language and traditions. Preserving traditions is one of the city's strengths also from the point of view of tourism, which needs further development.

**DEVELOPMENT PLANS.** There are four areas that the town has outlined in its development plans that will locally be focused on most: the habitat, the identity of the residents, education, and tourism.

In future developments, favorable conditions will be provided for entrepreneurial activity (industry, available land for development activities, support structures for enterprises, proximity of Russian and Latvian borders, available workforce). Tourism and recreation is a growing economic resource in Võru county as well as in the town of Võru. The number of tourists housed in Võru county has consistently risen. In 2006, the number of tourists that

stayed in Võru reached 43,437. The majority of those continue to be Estonian tourists. Each year approximately 100 000 - 120 000 people visit the town of Võru. The greatest rise is among visitors who attend recreational events, but do not stay in the area.

According to the Tourist Information Centre, the most popular tourist destinations were the memorial museum, the park and monument of Fr.R.Kreutzwald, and the suspended bridge to Roosisaar. The main deficiencies in the tourism area are the lack of tourist attractions and the poor state of architectural landmarks, as well as a lack of infrastructure that would support tourism. Tourism in the Estonian countryside is increasingly disproportionate and seasonal. In the summertime, all tourism housing is occupied, but out of season these facilities are mainly used for business and conference tourism. For greater stability it is necessary to attract tourists around the year and to promote new offers and possibilities (which would entail adding new functions and attractions).

Priority for development as a tourism attraction has been given to the Võru Orthodox Church of Catherine and the Church of Catherine, the Tamula beachfront and the Tamula lake, and the recreational area between the Võhandu canal and the Antsla highway.



*Photo 1. Aerial photo. Photo Jüri Kuusk*

**URBAN SPACE.** In the future, it is important to connect the historic cityscape to the modern urban space and that would in turn provide the town with a favorable habitat that has a good atmosphere, that is functional and prompts a healthy lifestyle. As mentioned in the development plans, the main strengths of Võru are its "tranquil atmosphere, safe and green environment and a lack of mass tourism, because our friendly small city is a refuge for those who wish to escape the noise of big cities."

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According to the general plan, the development of the town centre will first and foremost focus on developing public space (recreational areas and plazas, light traffic areas), changing the traffic patterns and at the same time keeping the city centre multifunctional. Recreational areas will be connected to each other and to areas outside the town by creating a network of light traffic roads. Võru is one of the so-called green towns with its many parks, three lakes and the Võhandu river that borders it on the north and northeast side. The largest lake is the Tamula lake (299 ha). It is connected to lake Vagula (519 ha) by the river Vahejõe. The beachfront at Tamula lake is a great place for recreation in the summer for locals as well as tourists. There are several parks that give Võru its green atmosphere. The exact time that Kreutzwald park, the oldest of these, was created is unknown, but the age of the trees (birches and linden trees) is estimated at more than a hundred years.

The developed area in the centre is bordered on three sides by areas that form a "green belt" that functions as significant recreational area. The development of the beach area in the centre will be resolved as part of the whole solution.



*Photo 2. Fr.R.Kreutzwald park. Photo Jaak Nilson*

### **2.1.3. IMMEDIATE VICINITY**

The most important objects in the immediate vicinity of the competition area are the Fr.R.Kreutzwald park and monument. There is a walkway/boardwalk on the beachfront in this area.

There are private properties located in the competition area at Tartu street 49, 51, 51a, 53, 53a, 55, 57 and 59. At the Vee street 4 address, there is hotel Tamula, a 2-story building (built in 2000. Architecture firm Eek&Mutso). The hotel faces the lakeside, as do most of the rooms. Originally, this building was used by coastguards. At Vee street 6, there is a dilapidated beach house/restaurant. The building is on private property and will be demolished. At Vee street 6a and 8 there have been carnival rides and fairgrounds during the summer. Vee Street 4a has 4 hardcourts for tennis. On Vee st. 4c there is an unguarded parking lot.



*Photo 3. View of the beach. Photo Jaak Nilson*

#### **2.1.4. GEOLOGICAL CONDITIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION**

The town of Võru is situated on a moraine elevation that mostly consist of gravel, pebbles and boulder clay morain that contains gravel. Underneath the boulder clay there are places where there is very fine sand that contains pressurized water and has qualities similar to quicksand, mainly in the southern part of the elevation. Due to a slow drainage of sediment, the city of Võru and its surroundings are rather boggy, especially the shores of lake Tamula and the Roosisaar area.

The geological conditions for construction are poor because of the unfavorable geotechnical qualities of the glacial lake deposits of clay: it is porous and collapsible, humid, has low load-bearing capacity and is prone to landslides. West of Võru (on Roosisaare) there are low swamplands. (Source: Võru General Plan)



### 2.1.5. LANDSCAPING AND BODIES OF WATER

In the competition area there is landscaping along Tartu, Vee and Vabaduse streets and by the private properties along Tartu st. The competition area is bordered by Kreutzwald park (1.7 ha) and the Catherine promenade hemmed by parkway of large trees (0.75 ha). Creation of the park, which is now an area of historic preservation, started in 1838. The trees in the park are estimated to be over a hundred years old. The trees are mainly birches and lindens, but there are also evergreens such as firs and spruces. At the center of the park, there is a bronze statue of Kreutzwald that was erected in 1926 and financed with private donations. The park is connected to the center of the city by a tree-lined promenade parkway. A well maintained Jewish park is located southeast of Kreutzwald park.

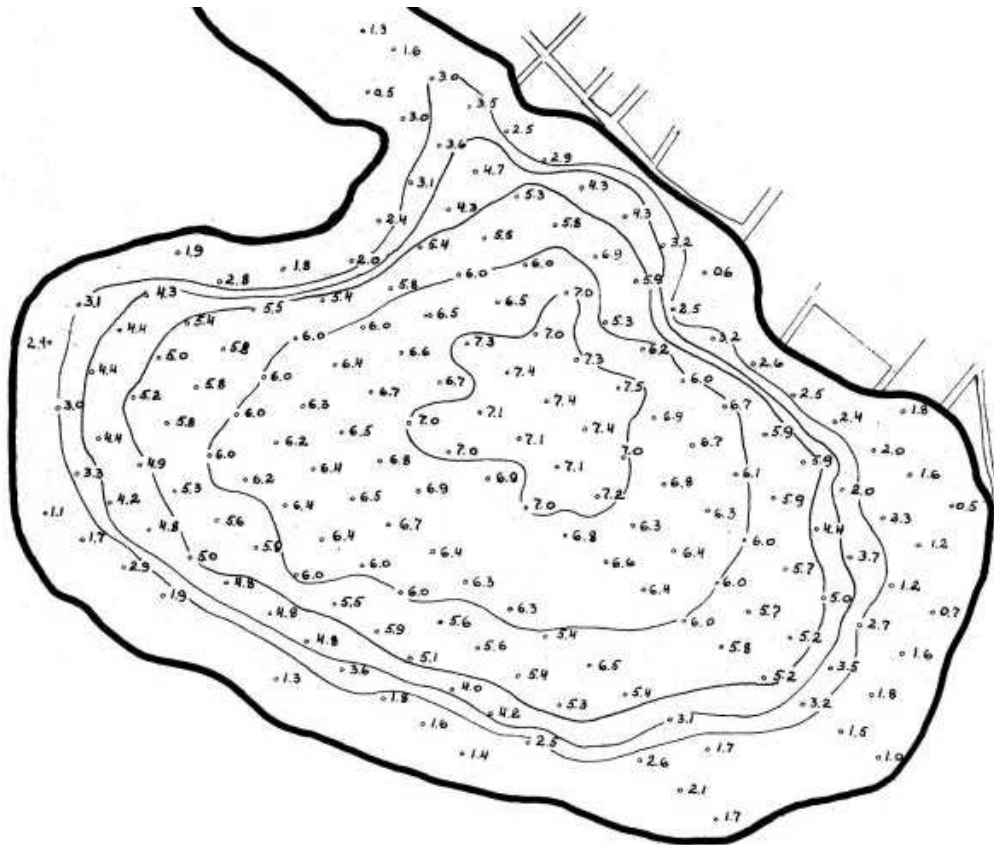


*Photo 4. Tamula beach. Photo Jaak Nilson*

The lakeside area of Tamula is part of a wider green belt system. The green belt is planned as a green area meant for public use that would connect the green areas and recreation areas to the beach and thus create a unified network. The main task of landscaping in the town is to gather the town into this network of interconnected green areas that would connect different parts of the town and provide alternative routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

The walkway along the beach can be used as a connecting route within the town, but also as a hiking or skiing trail that would also be connected to the green belt around the town.

The shores of lake Tamula (210,5 ha, average depth 4,2 m) are low and muddy, with sandy areas only within the city. Tamula is a public body of water that is also protected by Natura 2000. The southeast part of the beach has not been maintained and has partly grown over. There are streams that run to the lake through the beach and the borders of these have also become grassy.



*Scheme 3. The depth of lake Tamula. Source: Fishing information*

#### **2.1.6. ROADS AND PARKING**

Roads in the area there are two-lane divided streets with asphalt covering. In the general plan for Võru, Vee street is planned to be a light traffic road. Parking lots are along Vabaduse street, near the recreation area: at about 120 places (Vee st. 4c) and about 130 places (Vee st. 6a). Carnival grounds have been set up on the Vee st. 6a property in past summers.

#### **2.1.7. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DESIGN CONCEPT TERRITORY AND BUILDINGS**

The main goal of the architectural competition for the lakeside development of Tamula is to find the best solution for the plan and the space (a draft) that takes into consideration the ground conditions, landscaping, location of functions and buildings.

##### **- CONSIDER THE PLAN OF RESTRICTIONS**

The competition area will consist of the Tamula lake beach area and, therefore, the area to be planned will partly overlap the following zones of preservation: a sloped path 10m, water

preservation area 20m and a building restriction zone of 50m from the regular waterline of the lake. The height of the planned buildings must be in accordance with the detailed plan.

- **CONSIDER THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONDITIONS**

The competition area is located in the historic preservation zone of old town Võru. The following restrictions apply in the preservation zone: when building in the preservation zone, one should avoid sharp contrasts in the size of buildings in the preservation zone and adjacent to it and guarantee to not obstruct the view of the old town from significant points in the city, from streets that head in the direction of old town and from lake Tamula. (Statute of the Võru old town historic preservation area)

- **PROVIDE A SPATIAL SOLUTION FOR THE AREA**

Plan Spa/Hotel to a new lots Vee street 6 and 6A. Propose functions and/or buildings that would support the complex at Vee street 2, 4A, 4B, 4C and 8. (see also DETAILED TASKS BY AREAS)

Present an architectural concept design for the planned building complex that:

- is innovative,
- is suitable to the city's atmosphere and to the landscape of the competition area,
- follows the principles of energy efficiency,
- complies with the functional requirements of the buildings,
- lends itself to building in phases. The order of the phases has not been precisely set. Essentially, after each phase of construction, what is already built should visually form a whole, i.e. the buildings should be finished to a certain extent,

- **PROVIDE A DESIGN SOLUTION FOR THE AREA AND SOLVE ITS CONNECTIONS TO SURROUNDING PUBLIC AREAS**

Present a complete vision of the design and function of the beach area and the water park. Consider the existing natural environment, urban environment and restriction plans.

Public space requirements:

- The participants should draft a complete solution for the public space that would connect the beach, the beach promenade, the green belts, the Fr.R.Kreutzwald park, the streets of old town, the incline, the docks, jetties, and all other spatial elements that influence movement.
- Show the active spaces, plazas, recreation and exercise areas that are meant for general use within the competition area. Attention should also be paid to making the space unique and diverse.
- The public space and landscaping have to lend themselves to use during all seasons and to city residents as well as visitors.

- **PROVIDE A SOLUTION FOR TRAFFIC AND PARKING**

Parking has to be resolved within the properties, ensuring that the number of parking spaces is suitable to the function of the buildings (parking lot or garage). Underground parking should not be planned (unfavorable hydrological and geological conditions for building).

Recommendations for effective parking resolution:

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- keep the number of parking spaces at about the same amount as they presently are in the competition area and its immediate vicinity;
  - reduce the number of vehicles parking on the streets and increase parking in designated parking lots that are off the streets;
  - find ways of making the parking solution more environmentally friendly.
- DETAILED TASKS BY AREAS
    - Spa/Hotel. Swimming pool at the centre 25m / 6 lanes. heights: Vee st. 6A 3. floors, Vee st 6 **up to 8** floors. Location Vee st. 6, 6A, 4C.
    - Multifunctional building (commercial/business/offices/apartments). Heights similar to those of Vene st. 6 and 6A (**up to 8** floors). Location Vee st. 8.
    - Tennis hall. Stationary, i.e. not inflatable. Size the same as the existing tennis courts (4 courts). Location Vee st. 2, 4A or 4C.
    - Beachfront. In the direction of Vabaduse street, a boat dock/pier with a spatial dominant (ex. fountain, sculpture, pavilion, or the like). Mark perspectives from other streets and promenades towards the lake (boat docks, fountains, small forms, or the like). Seasonal volleyball courts and bleachers near the Fr.R.Kreutzwald park. Show the location of a children's play area on the beach.