



# Chiva (ES)

Scale  
L/S

## Urban water route. The urban and natural regeneration of Chiva's ravine.



**Team representative:** Architect, landscape architect.  
**Location:** Ravine of Chiva (Rambla del Poyo) in its course through Chiva.  
**Population:** 16,285 inhabitants.  
**Reflection site:** 37,6 ha.  
**Project site:** 2,2 ha.  
**Site proposed by:** General Directorate of Ecologic Innovation in Construction, Regional Government of Valencia

**Actors involved:** Chiva City Council + Watershed of the river Júcar Confederation.  
**Owner of the site:** Public.  
**Commission after competition:** Drafting of the execution project, works management and health and safety coordination of the works.



### INHABITED MILIEU'S CHALLENGES

The ravine of Chiva is a watercourse known as the Rambla del Poyo, a 40 km route through the Region of Valencia, which flows into the Albufera of Valencia. As it passes through Chiva, it crosses the city centre, splitting in two the old quarter of Islamic origin located on the water's banks, an element that brings people together and gives a unique character to its environment. The buildings in the urban area of the ravine have their rear facades overhanging the ravine, creating an amalgam of disorderly but harmonious volumes.

Currently, the issues arising from industrial water pollution seem to have been resolved and the constant flow through the gully has allowed for a significant recovery of the fauna and flora. However, in a Mediterranean context such as this, water floods are a threat that must always be considered.

The potential of this blue but also green infrastructure lies in the landscape it generates and in the great environmental, agricultural and forestry value it confers on its surroundings, which it manages to bring into the centre of the municipality, imbricating a natural ecosystem in the built environment that is a symbol of Chiva.

However, the evocative nature of the place contrasts with the perception of neglect and the lack of opportunity to enjoy the magic of the place.



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## Can this infrastructure be a real dynamizing element for the municipality?

## How can the management of this corridor enhance the value of the natural and built landscape that shapes it by transforming its condition of vulnerability into a strength for the city?



### QUESTIONS TO COMPETITORS

The ravine of Chiva has historically been perceived as a natural wound that fractures the urban fabric. As a result of the vulnerability implied by the unpredictable course of its waters, the ravine has not been accorded its intrinsic environmental and landscape value as a corridor of biodiversity which, moreover, could have a positive impact on the dynamisation of the municipality.

The challenge is to enhance the value of the ravine as it passes through the city centre. This could be accomplished by means of an intervention and/or landscape management project that promotes the re-urbanisation of its immediate surroundings; it would cease to turn its back on it, adapting its course and connecting it with the town centre so that both function in synergy.

In this way, the ravine could be made accessible in its broadest sense, promoting its ecological and natural values and bringing it closer to the citizens, thus making it function as a truly structuring and identifying element of the municipality, to be enjoyed by the citizens.

The challenge is to promote the reformulation of the treatment of the bridges that cross it and that are designed exclusively for mobility. This work requires a larger scale observation, as it is a green and blue infrastructure that forms a natural corridor whose source is at an altitude of 800m and ends in the Albufera of Valencia. Likewise, it must contemplate and attend to the scenes close to the citizens, as the centre of Chiva is a space full of everyday life.

All in all, the aim is to regenerate an inhabited environment, with a high cultural value as it configures the layout of the traditional historic centre of Chiva and, at the same time, to reinterpret a natural element to increase its social recognition and its environmental value.

