



**CATEGORY:** urban / architectural.

**SITE FAMILY:** How to transform physical obstacles into new connections?

**LOCATION:** Palma, Mallorca, Balearic Islands, seafront promenade

**POPULATION:** 60,000 inhab. (immediate area) 400,000 (city)

**STUDY SITE:** 38,5 Ha. **PROJECT SITE:** 6,4 Ha

**SITE PROPOSED BY:** Directorate-General of Architecture and Hou-sing. Balearic Islands Regional Government

**OWNERS OF THE SITE:** Palma City Council and Harbour Authority

**COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION:** Preliminary Urban Studies

**REPRESENTATIVE OF TEAM:** architect/urbanplanner

#### HOW THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ADAPTABLE CITY?

The aim is to adapt Palma City to the changing needs and aspirations for quality lifestyles and tourist services through this operation on the urban frontage defined by the current Seafront Promenade. The city is adapting with a view to reconciling its current structures with trends in uses and practices, which have evolved in the eyes of citizens and tourists alike towards a need for physical exercise- cycling, water sports and the use of the seafront terraces. These uses should therefore be prioritized, while at the same time catering proportionally to local needs for mobility and encouraging access to alternative uses.

#### CITY STRATEGY

Arriving in Palma along the Airport highway, most of the traffic will be diverted not only along the ring road and the avenues, but also through the Levante social housing estate. This will give the current vehicle routes near Parc de la Mar, Sagrera Boulevard and the Seafront Boulevard a more local character. What has hitherto been a dual carriageway highway can thus be turned into a service street by using the current roadway in front of the buildings, part of which can be occupied by an expansion of today's narrow pedestrian pavement. The nearest roadway to the sea can be converted into a spacious promenade for pedestrians, cyclists and skaters, with space for playgrounds, fitness circuits and broad shady tree-lined zones.



## SITE DEFINITION

This is Palma's seafront, a 5.5 km long road from Manuel Azaña Street to the ferry terminal. Part of it borders the old town and the city walls, and another part runs beneath densely occupied districts with hotels, apartment blocks, restaurants, nightlife and nautical recreation facilities. The human scale presence and proximity of the sea is greatly diminished by access problems and conflicts with the traffic experienced by residents and visitors. We cannot restore the physical reality prior to the transformations that were brought about by the tourist boom in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but we can try to evoke it with a successful adaptation project.

## ADAPTABILITY: MAINS ELEMENTS TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT

The necessary transformations should aim to have a minimal or even zero cost for the public budget. This means resorting to collaboration with the private sector by various means. The potential improvements and increased profitability of hotel and leisure facilities may well compensate the private investment required for the renovation of their immediate environs through the promotion of "co-strategies". The trees on the current median strip in the most heavily built-up section (Gabriel Roca Avenue) will be kept, but they will no longer be cut off by the traffic. At certain points, some hotels and other establishments will be able to install new facilities for guests, passers-by and residents. The owners of some of the current pavement terraces alongside the buildings may choose to move to the quieter area with its improved views. In exchange, the beneficiaries of these improvements may help to fund the seafront renovation works.

In addition to the current moorings for private yachts and large excursion boats, floating docks can be installed for small craft boats to bring their passengers to the old harbour and continue their pedestrian route through the historic heart of Palma, or to the various swimming spots which would thus no longer need to be reached by land. It will also become possible to sit down for a drink and almost touch the water, and easier to go out rowing or sailing a dinghy without belonging to one of the heavily fenced clubs. The *Palma-Bike* rental facility might even be joined by *Palma-Canoe*. The aim for this competition site is to propose ideas for the renewal of the Palma seafront promenade. Participants must take into account the planning provisions, although they may present ideas for the development of these plans and also propose improvements and even alternatives. The open approach of the EUROSPAN 13 competition is considered to adapt best to the public participatory process being promoted by the Palma City Council as part of the revision of the urban master plan.

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