

## CICATRICE

### Healing Torrelavega's Urban Fabric

#### 00. Introduction

In the tapestry of Torrelavega, there lies a beautiful scar, a reminder of a moment when the city triumphed over adversity. It tells a story of healing and resilience, how a wound once tender and painful transformed into a symbol of strength.

As time passed, the scar faded, but its significance only grew. It became a cherished memory etched onto Torrelavega's urban fabric, a mark that is preserved with pride. For it represents not just the physical healing, but the emotional and mental fortitude of a city seeking for a brighter and greener future.

When the citizens walk over its traces, they can experience a connection to the past, the city that was before and the city that it has become. It is a gentle reminder that the urban fabric is an overlap of layers, and that even in the face of challenges, it has the capacity to overcome and emerge stronger.

This lasting impression, shows that wounds may leave a mark, but they also remind us of our resilience, courage, and the beautiful way the city heals.

#### 01. Geographical and urban context

Torrelavega, the capital of the Besaya region, is **strategically located** near two nationally significant highways: the Cantabrian Motorway A-8 and A-67 (East-West and North-South axes).

The intervention area is situated next to one of the **main entrances to the city**, yet it suffers from forced isolation, encapsulated by the railway layout. Adjacent to the river and the Cantabrian motorway, it enjoys **excellent accessibility**.

The underground railway project undeniably presents an **opportunity to connect** the northern zone of the city, establishing a new dialogue with the central city.

The intervention area holds the potential to become the **new gateway to the city**. How does Torrelavega welcome citizens arriving by rail?

#### 02. Project ambitions

Among the ambitions of the project are:

1. To recover and enhance the **natural environments**.
2. To preserve and celebrate the **cultural/industrial heritage**.
3. To optimize **water management**.
4. To create a **mixed, compact, and inclusive** new type of neighborhood.
5. To ensure the **quality** and universal accessibility of **public spaces**.
6. To create a **clean, healthy, and climate-neutral** circular city.
7. To prioritize **human-centered accessibility**.
8. To **reduce waste** and minimize environmental impact.

### 03. Urban approach

The urban intervention is based on creating a **green axis** on what were once the old railway tracks, while also establishing a series of **pedestrian connections** perpendicular to the tracks, allowing both sides of the city to be connected.

Furthermore, efforts are made to **preserve and revitalize** all elements with potential for new uses, proposing a series of new structures that **complement the urban fabric** and provide the green axis with a new facade.

These new structures aim to maintain and **emphasize typological variety**, understanding Torrelavega as a diverse and complex language that the project seeks to embrace and continue.

The intervention in the 'Antiguos Talleres Obregón' is part of the **strategy of transformation and re-use** of the industrial and railway heritage. It has the potential to become a landmark for the area's post-industrial future.

### 04. Mobility

**Existing road axes** are preserved, and **new pedestrian axes** are proposed. These consist of a **north-south green corridor** and two **east-west green corridors** that connect the city. Additionally, other secondary axes prioritize pedestrian movement. A vision is proposed for the **bike lines**. It is considered key that they become part of a **general network** for the city. The intervention seeks to be a driver to foster and improve this bike network.

An access for **taxis and passenger loading and unloading** is proposed on the northern side of the station.

Furthermore, an underground **multi-mobility hub** is envisioned on the southern side of the station, beneath the proposed residential blocks. There is also a proposal for an **above-ground parking layer**, considered flexible parking. As private vehicle usage decreases in favour of new mobility options, this above ground parking could be transformed into other uses.

### 05. Water

The intervention integrates **drainage systems to collect rainwater** and excess irrigation water for reuse, resulting in minimal water consumption. This, combined with irrigation through the underground channels, translates into a vast surface for air purification and increased biodiversity, restoring a natural condition to the urban environment.

To maximize **soil porosity** and facilitate **water absorption**, native vegetation adapted to the local water conditions is chosen, along with **pavements made of sand, gravel, and clay**. This approach achieves both **rainwater harvesting** and **defense against torrential downpours** and floods.

These natural soil elements also prevent the depletion of **underground aquifers** and effectively **reduce the urban heat island effect**.

Capturing, managing, treating, and regenerating used water to irrigate parks and streets, and returning it clean to nature, holds significant importance.

## 06. Biodiversity

The project stands as a beacon of hope for biodiversity, embracing nature as an integral part of urban life. With the inclusion of **pollinator species**, the very heartbeat of nature quickens, ensuring the cross-pollination essential for thriving ecosystems.

Delicate habitats take root within the cityscape, as **bird nests, bat boxes, and insect hotels** offer refuge to diverse wildlife, forging a harmonious coexistence. The nurturing embrace of local plant species weaves a tapestry of colors and scents, enticing creatures to find solace and sustenance.

In the face of a changing climate, the project boldly welcomes **local and climate-adaptive plant species**, resilient guardians against environmental shifts. By bringing the river corridor closer to the city center, we reconnect with nature's pulse, fostering a symbiotic relationship between urban dwellers and the natural world.

This profound commitment to biodiversity aims to create a haven where life thrives, awakening a collective responsibility to cherish and protect the precious web of life that surrounds us.

## 07. Economical vision

The project's economic vision revolves around sustainability and resource optimization. Emphasizing **reutilization and recycling**, it minimizes expenses on new elements and waste management, fostering an eco-conscious approach.

By striking a harmonious **balance between private use and public spaces**, the project creates a cohesive urban fabric, welcoming diverse activities within a vibrant community.

Furthermore, the focus on sustainability translates into the creation of sustainable jobs. Attracting local businesses committed to climate neutrality, the project seeks to provide affordable retail spaces for **local companies and producers**, fostering economic growth while preserving the community's identity.