



# Waterfronts vs cities: Some urban and territorial considerations

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Univerza v Ljubljani  
Fakulteta za arhitekturo

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**WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT: IZOLA EAST**

24–28 September 2012, Izola, Slovenia



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**The waterfront concept**

## The waterfront concept

“A part of a town which is next to an area of water such as a river or the sea.”

*Waterfronts, the unique places where land and water meet, are a finite resource embodying the special history and character of each community.*



Alcácer do Sal-Portugal

## Crescent population concentration

Distribution of population at littoral zones From:

Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunidad Educativa.

<http://bibliotecadigital.ilce.edu.mx/>

<i>Continent</i>	<i>Distance to the sea and % population</i>				
	50 Km	50- 200 Km	200- 500 Km	500- 1 000 Km	+ 1 000 Km
Europe	29.1	25.8	30.3	11.9	2.9
Asia	27.1	20.2	21.9	19.9	10.9
Africa	18.1	27.0	18.6	23.5	12.8
North America	31.5	19.8	20.1	18.5	10.1
South America	24.4	38.4	27.9	9.0	0.3
Australia + Oceania	79.0	15.2	4.9	0.8	--

... more than half world population is concentrated in the littoral

## Crescent population concentration



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... Mediterranean Basin

## The relationship between city and port. Historical process

Port and City are two territorial realities who have been coexisting over their existences.

Functional relationship between port and city has always been changing over time

Mechanization of port activity and / or the absence of complementary activities (shipyards, shipbuilding, transportation, ...) has been a key factor for these changes

## The relationship between city and port. Historical process

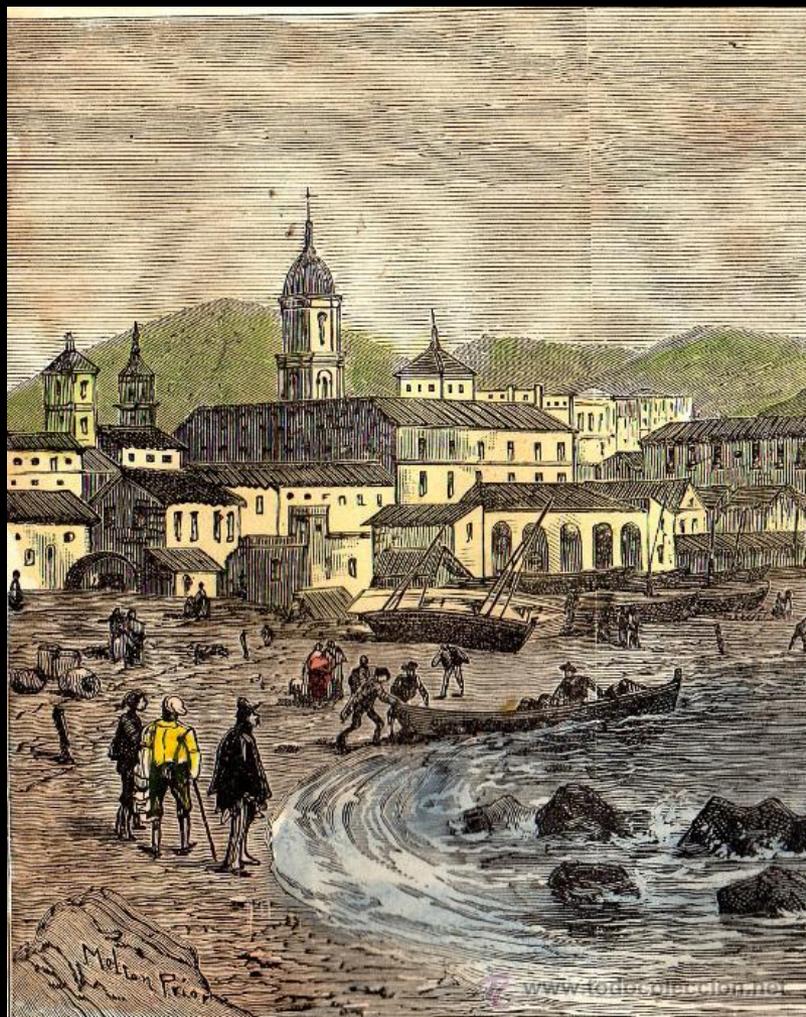
a) The unit of port and city.

b.-City and port are disjoining

c) Functional and formal separation between port and city.

d) Port and City are integrated.

a) The unit of port and city.



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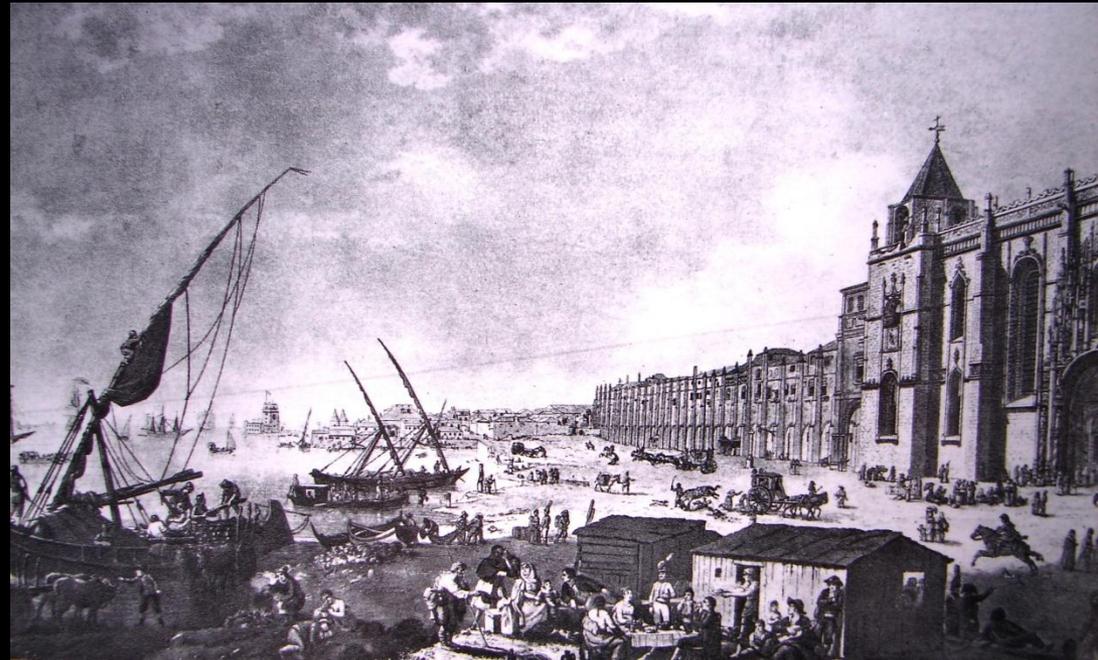
a) The unit of port and city.



Trieste - 1876



a) The unit of port and city.



Lisboa port



b.-City and port are disjoining

Beirouth



b.-City and port are disjoining

Setúbal port and city



## Sines port and city



## c) Functional and formal separation between port and city.

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c) Functional and formal separation between port and city.



Lisboa and Málaga

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d) Port and City are integrated.

2012-Málaga- Dock nr 2.

d) Port and City are integrated.

## Viiana do Castelo-Portugal



**Are ports / waterfronts part of the city or not?**

**What is the relationship between the waterfront and the city?**

**Which is (can be) the role of the touristic sector nowadays in specific waterfronts, especially in the Mediterranean Basin?**

## Promenades and waterfronts

### Promenade-Lima river-Ponte de Lima-Portugal



## Promenades and waterfronts

The promenade is an effective formal resource  
for the city to appropriate the waterfront

Promenade has run as an interface between  
the line of water and the city

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## Promenades and waterfronts



Moll de la Fusta-Barcelona

## Promenades and waterfronts



Le Corbusier-Plá Maciá-Barcelona  
1932

1905

Léon Jaussely—Master Plan-Barcelona



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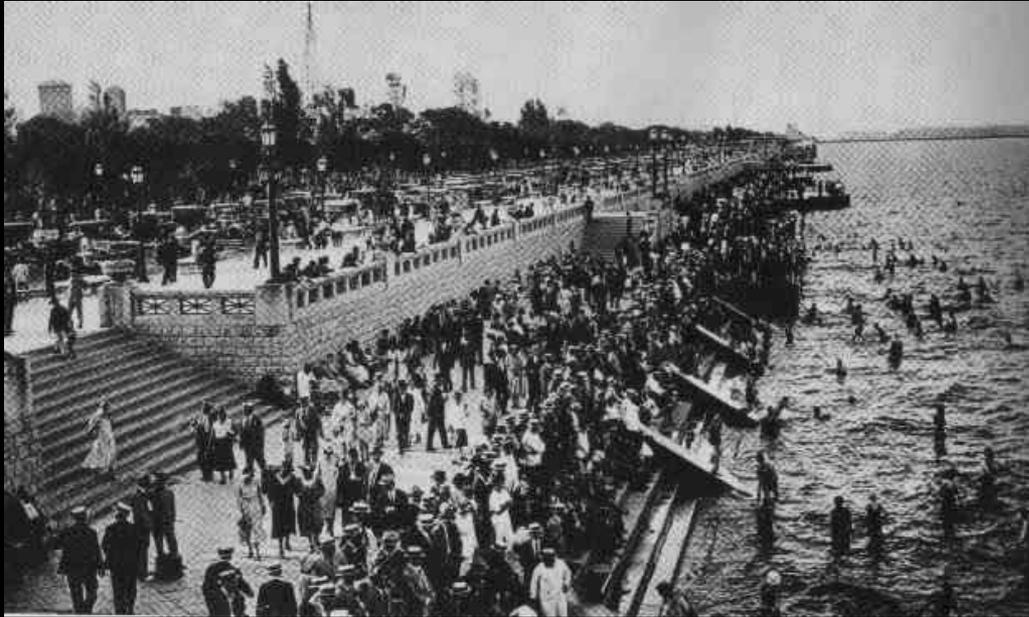
## Promenades and waterfronts



Costanera – Puerto Madero - Argentina

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## Promenades and waterfronts



**Costanera – Puerto Madero - Argentina**

## Characteristics for the ports

The port is an **ACCESS**: a place for docking and undocking of ships.

The port is a **part of the coast** **unrelated** to the rest.

The port has been taking industrial functions in recent years.

The port is an intermodal connection point.

## Characteristics for the waterfronts

The waterfront is a **new city gate**

The urban waterfront is a littoral area that relates to the set of **contiguous waterfront**

The waterfront industries can take perfectly compatible with the urban essence, collaborate in achieving the smart cities.

The existence of large areas with no apparent function in urban waterfronts, structures can be used to implement an urban scale transport that serve as links to larger scales.



**The port is a logistics and storage area**

**The port can generate leisure and recreational spaces for citizens.**

**The port is a work area for the tourist industry, the gateway for many tourists**

**The port is a large-scale shopping area**

**The port is a landscape element**

The waterfront can be a container for the historical memory of the city and its relations with the port

The waterfront should build new relationships with the city to become preferential space lazer for citizenship, setting greater permeability between waterfront and city.

The waterfront is a tourist resource improved by direct contact with the water, with no schemes for private exclusive use.

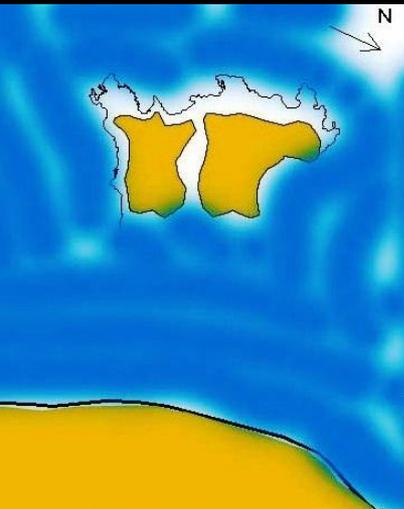
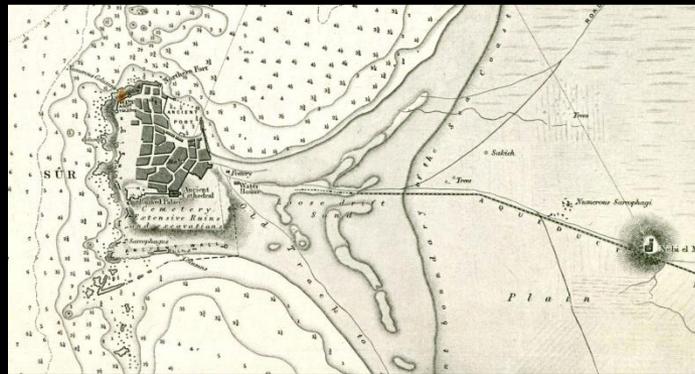
The waterfront area is a small-scale commercial or urban scale, becoming a major resource that helps social and economic recovery of the industry and the city.

The recovered waterfront must be an element of landscape scale integrated into the urban scale as a hinge between port and city.

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## Tyre



## Tombolo cities

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**Tombolo cities**



**Tyre 1934 - 2006**

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**Tombolo cities**



**cádiz**

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**Tombolo cities**



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Tombolo cities





## **Tombolo cities**

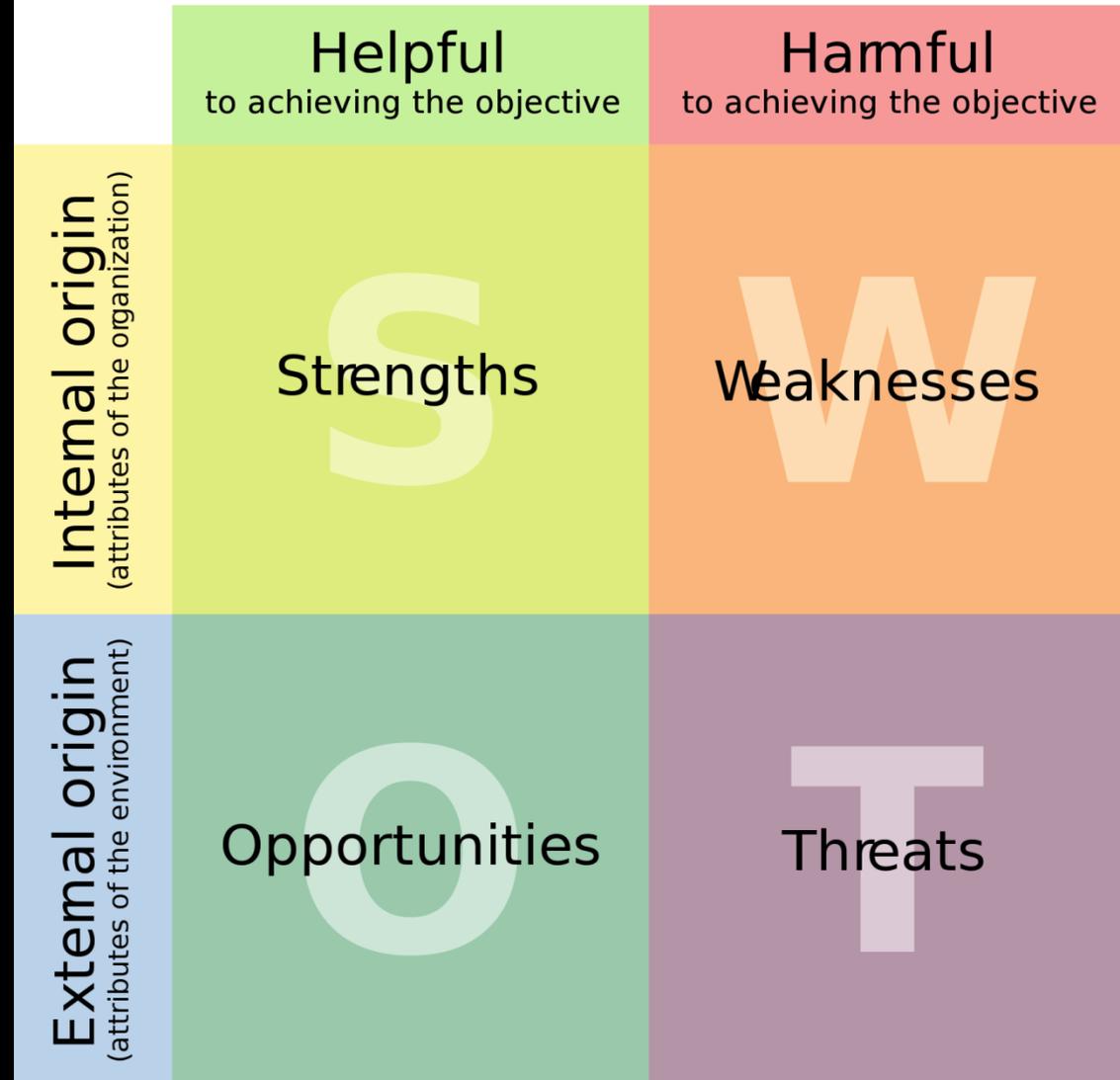
The future of these tombolo cities depends strongly of the waterfront

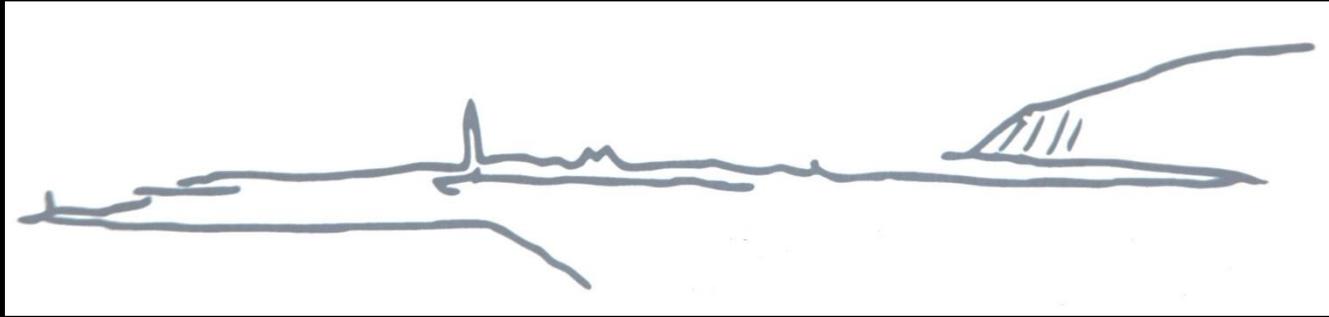
- The waterfront depends of the capability to link the ancient town (nucleus) with the water
- The waterfront was a container of the different memories of the town, in a strange situation, hating and loving the water at he same time

# SWOT ANALYSIS

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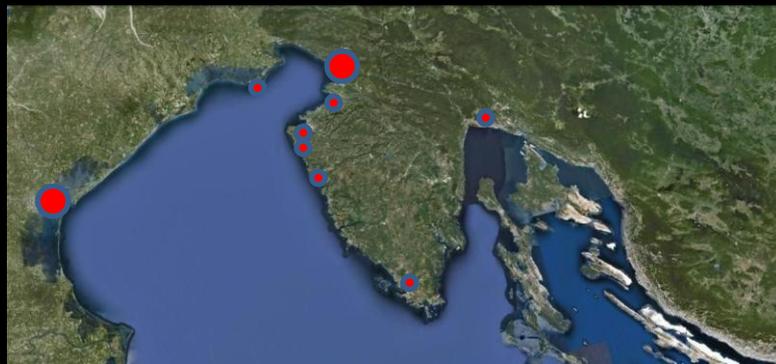




## S Strengths

- The **exceptional location** into the Adriatic coast
  - **Territorial Branding / mythical** condition as a natural territorial system
    - Existing and **balanced infrastructure & transportation network** according the territory: roads/airport/sea
    - **Historical sites:** industrial era/ food fish manufacturers/ landscape landmarks
- **Waterfront location** and regional position and skyline





Reduced spaces to can redevelop a detailed waterfront strategy everywhere except eastern sector

- Competition with other closed touristic spaces in Slovenia Croatia and Italy with most *mythical* names
- Extremely high density (510 inh./km<sup>2</sup>) and a heavy ratio (visitors/inhabitants = 5,39 times)
- Property structure of the coast line, in some points
- High density of car spaces in all the short reduced municipality area. (28,6 km<sup>2</sup>)
- Maybe we are arriving to the natural limit for a sustainable tourism



- Tourism: 78.000 visitors each year and “in crescendo”<sup>14</sup>
- Consensus from all players involved on making something happen?

Opportunities

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• Possibilities to mix archeology and tourism in the waterfront (Archeological sites, old industrial area, Museum of the memory of Izola?)

• Tourism: 78.000 visitors each year and “in crescendo”

?

- Tourism: 78.000 visitors each year and "in crescendo"<sup>14</sup>
- Consensus from all players involved on making something happen?

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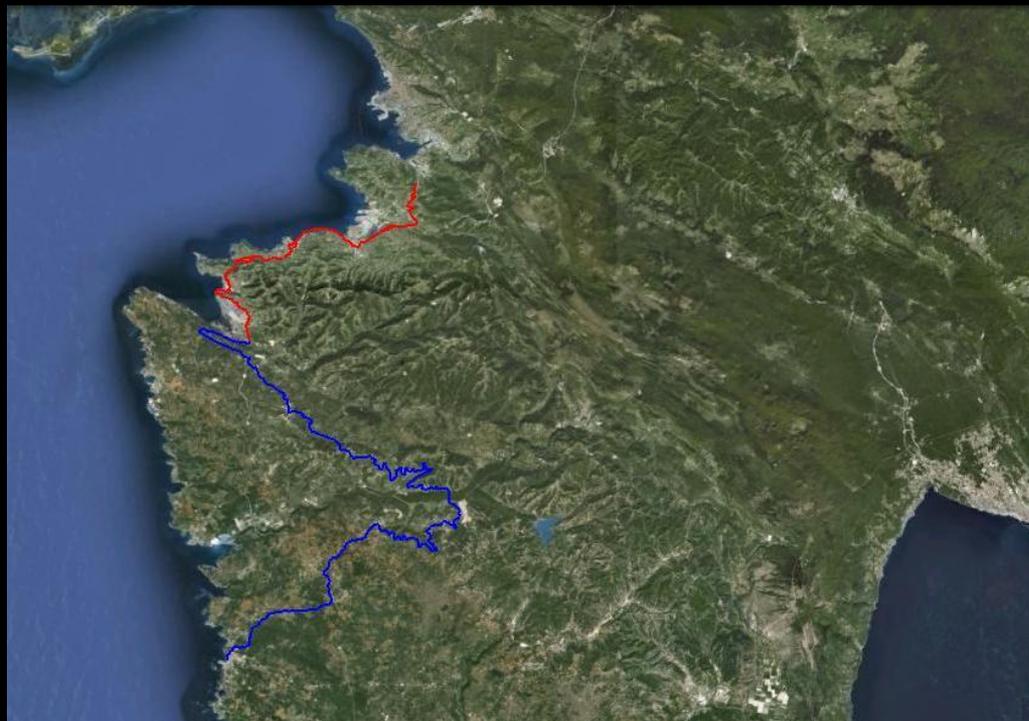
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Opportunities



- The **Parenzana** concept: Transnational path The narrow-gauge railway line connected the towns of Trieste and Poreč... (Trieste – Canfanaro / Kanfanar)



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- Competition from other neighboring cities/ regional priorities
- Too much importance on specific developments rather than the city as a whole
- Gentrification - displacement – relocation? Especially for the waterfront area and historical center.
  - Political timing vs. Developers interests
  - Out of scale proposals for developing
- Possible divorce between citizenship and users of this waterfront area



World is not Dubai, Dubai is not Izola

- Decadent spaces when tourists are going out

## Some conclusions

From a **strategic** point of view

The **public interest** about waterfront areas is related to the **public ownership** of water

**Meaningful community participation** is an integral part of waterfront planning and development.

The development of a waterfront work can be a **long-term task**. An **active participation of local communities** will help too much to achieve a successful end.

**Transversality and complexity** of these processes requires the **support of all**.

## Some conclusions

From a urban planning point of view

The improvement of **the maximum accessibility** to the waterfront, must be an identity signal of this kind of projects. **Permeability** would be joined to direct visual access to the **water, the real hearth of the project.**

A good **waterfront** proposal must be **absolutely joined to the nature and identity** of the place. Waterfront concepts and projects should flow from the nature of each place and embody its essential spirit.

## Some conclusions

**Mixed functions** are the only one possibility **to warranty a homogeneous** level of utilization during the several cycles.  
**Residential function with local inhabitants is essential** into the waterfronts with a strong touristic component.

**Waterfronts** present interesting **opportunities** for **interpretation** and education of natural values, **community history and culture**, including notably the industrial and transportation activities that often preceded today's developments.

Preserving and **interpreting** the **tangible aspects** of the history of the place provides **character and meaning to the proposal.**



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... I SEE U ...