

# **A LARGE GARDEN FOR GREATER BILBAO**

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The road infrastructure has finally been opened to traffic most expensive so far in Euskadi, with permission from the AVE. Around 900 million euros invested in cement. It is the southern variant of the Bilbao metropolitan area. A high-capacity motorway created after years of sound analysis and demand forecasts. The fact is that it seems that, once opened, it has to find its place in the metropolitan road network, because its reception is not being as favorable as those responsible for the Provincial Council thought.

Users are known to approach with droppers. It has a toll and there are competitive alternatives such as the first ring road that runs parallel to the new variant and that zigzags, like a horrible scar from those that were made before, for a good part of the urban fabric of metropolitan Bilbao.

The suggestion is the following: why doesn't the Provincial Council take advantage of this magnificent work recently completed to reconvert the current section of the A8 into a large linear park and let Nature flow from now on through the current cement river that forcefully attack any model of sustainable human development that you want to do in this city?

In the same way that the terrible Sabino Arana viaduct (in the heart of the city) is about to pass away, what is there to wait to blow up the monstrous road that wounds the heart of Rekalde?

The residents of Zorroza, don't they deserve their famous "curves" that have experienced so many traffic jams to disappear and the cement beach that divides the neighborhood in two to become a green blanket?

Do the residents of Cruces or Retuerto have to pay forever some kind of historical debt for which they agree to be penetrated by an immense cement stake?

The truth is that it would be exciting to have a true green ring around the city and also be leaders in this type of metamorphosis of which there are already some valid experiences to refer to.

A city that has been physically built in galloping pieces of its tumultuous history has done an impressive job of regeneration recognized halfway around the world based on the Guggenheim effect. But whoever knows this city a little will immediately understand that developmentalism was so implacable with it that there are still enormous wounds to heal and many spaces that are looking for their moment to be reinvented.

There is an incredible sheet of water that the sea introduces every day into our houses; there are privileged and enormous urban spaces today in a state of semi-ruin waiting to be reconquered by Nature (before man fills them up again with cement, industrial buildings and apartment blocks); there is a surrounding nature that overflows with fullness right at the gates of the city; there are immense amounts of cement wishing to be dyed green.

Bilbao is the city of the Guggenheim, of design, of avant-garde architecture. But Bilbao is also still part of its plot a museum of ecological horrors or, at least, of urban horrors. Bilbao, I am convinced, will sooner rather than later be the green capital of the world. It has to be because it is to that world that we are heading. Our friends from my beloved Vitoria saw it many years ago and today they enjoy a formidable urbanistically impeccable city from an ecological point of view. And Vitoria has done all this without being an anchor favored precisely by Nature. Bilbao starts with a great advantage: it enjoys the sea, rivers, mountains and a mild climate that allows one to dream of a city where Nature finds its home.

Maybe now is the time to think differently again. I humbly believe that in this city we need a huge push (cultural, social, values, vision, for the moment...) when it comes to conceiving an ecologically complete metropolis. This one about the Great Garden is nothing more than a happy idea but perhaps it makes more than one think that Bilbao still has an opportunity (or perhaps it is a duty) to

fully reconcile with nature.

PS: I have stolen a link to the < a href="http://www.smartcitiesglobal.com/">Smart Cities Conference mentioning [large recovery projects](#) for urban life of large obsolete infrastructures. There are beautiful examples of similar dreams come true.

**There are no comments yet.**