

Intermediate landscapes – a linear city between Bra and Alba

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The project tries to give some solutions to a recent and widespread problem who concern the urban sprawl along commercial roads.

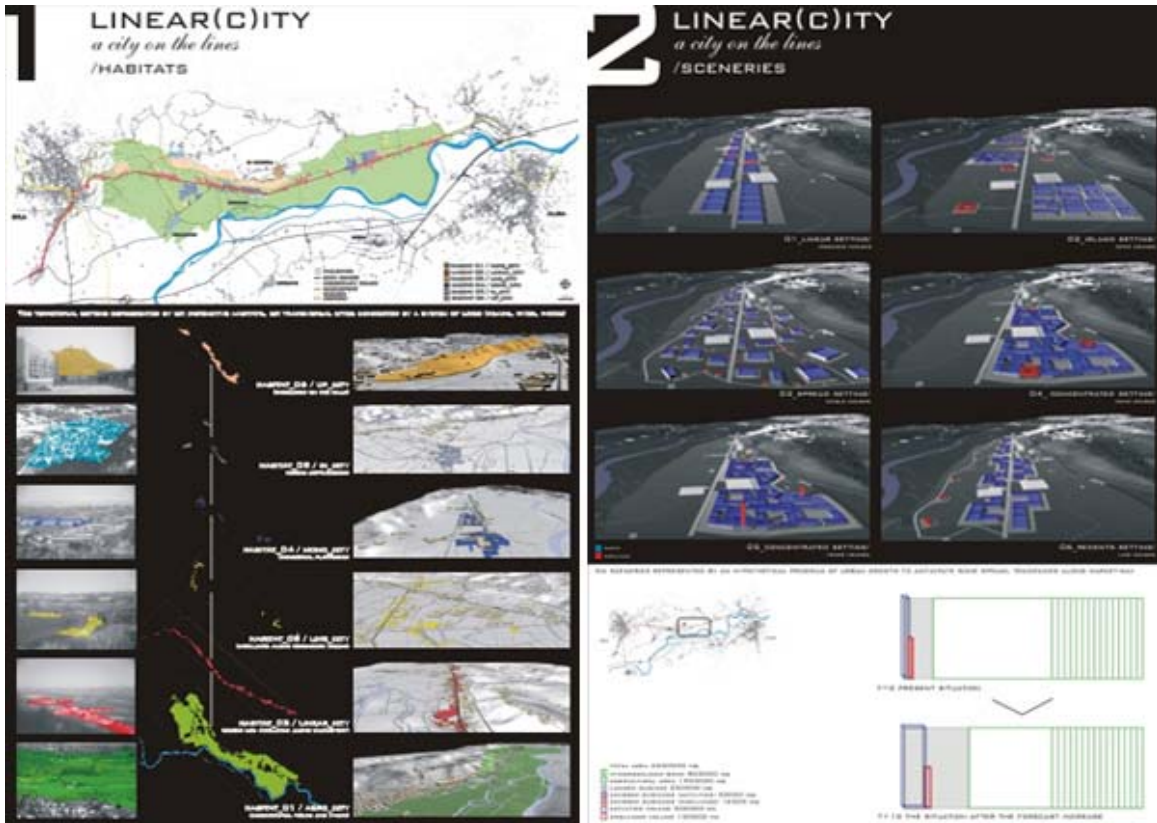
In the part of territory included between the cities of Alba and Bra in the north-east of Italy, urban dispersion was an originary condition. Until the middle of the last century farms and rural villages were individual entity linked by road network. Then, during the last 50 years, there was a progressive linear growth along statale 231, the main commercial road who links Alba and Bra.

To understand this new territorial setting we started to recognize some distinctive **habitats** through an eclectic interpretation.

This sort of eclectic atlas combines insider view with outsider one; objective data like functional analysis with subjective data like perceptive analysis and city users behaviours. So we represented six habitats, six transversal cities in this territory: *agro-city* (agricultural fields and farms); *linear-city* (sheds and dwellings along commercial strip); *mono-city* (industrial platforms); *line-city* (dwellings along secondary roads); *in-city* (urban settlements) and *up-city* (dwellings on the hills).

These six habitats are connected by a system of lines: a railway; a market-way; secondary roads; a river and streams.

The next step was to imagine some possible **sceneries** for one of these lines: the main road, the market-way. In the part still free of buildings we represented six sceneries – extremes, but probable – through an hypothetical program of urban growth to anticipate some sprawl tendencies.



This transversal approach brought us to imagine a **strategic project** for a new suburban linear system along market-way.

The project, in addition to give a solution to the suburban sprawl, tried to reconsider the whole territorial system cut by the road.

At first we reconnected ecosystems and paths with green bridges on the market-way.

Then we have tried to invent any systems of “weak” regulation; systems capable of handling the unexpected, the new and the reversibility of the process that the system itself sets in motion.

We renounce to overall control and comprehensive design.

We have implanted formal devices that are capable of adapting continually to unexpected conditions, of absorbing feedback and producing it in turn. But also capable of maintaining a certain structural and formal resilience.



We created **redents-alignment** for new sheds along market-way; a sinuous **parkway** parallel to the market-way with dwellings and sports, and transversal condensation **bands** characterized by a different mix of functions and density (commerce, production, agriculture, gardens, sports and leisure, dwellings).

The bands link longitudinal lines (railway, market-way, parkway and river) creating different transversal habitats.

These formal devices represent a flexible instrument to orient the growth without predetermine it.



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