



POLITECNICO  
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# Honors thesis

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COURSE OF MASTER DEGREE IN  
ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION CITY

*Abstract*

**Chamois Eco-Tech comprehensive plan:  
Helicocenter for**

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This work is part of the thesis "Chamois Eco-Tech comprehensive plan", a project that involved twelve students of the Politecnico di Torino in the elaboration of design hypotheses aimed at foreshadowing possible future scenarios for the village of Chamois (AO).

The Atelier was divided into several phases: a study trip in the Aosta Valley and France (17-19 March 2017), a design workshop (March-April 2017) and three meetings with the Chamoisian community. The aim was to collect ideas and proposals for the definition of a broad knowledge framework essential for the start of the subsequent project phases. Chamois has been chosen as a field of design experimentation that looks at an approach linked to eco-tech design, in which contemporary and technological language is combined with the search for "green" solutions. This village in the Aosta Valley qualifies today as a popular destination for mountain tourism and it has been for years at the forefront in supporting initiatives linked to the theme of sustainability and to the transport alternatives to the car (Chamois, in fact, can only be reached by cable car). Despite the excellent premise, Chamois is currently experiencing difficulties related to the limits of a small village that fails to attract a different tourism from the daily one, a tourism that can be homogeneously distributed throughout the year. This is not due to its geographical isolation, but rather to the lack of accommodation facilities and the lack of a variety in the touristic offer. The work of this thesis, through an exploratory approach, aims to start a regeneration program based on a coordinated system of activities and services related to the issues of accessibility, loisir and reception. The shared goal is to revive the local economy, through the strengthening of the touristic attraction of the site, with the consequent creation of new jobs and the possibility of a repopulation of the area. The strategy is based on the creation of new and renewed central points, through interventions from scratch. This choice, that appears in contradiction with the now common practice of working on the recovery of historical pre-existences, was dictated by the possibility of using the unexpressed cubages provided by P.R.G.C. of Chamois.

"Helicocenter for" focuses on the proposal of a project for a new settlement able to strengthen and give value to an already existing activity, the Chamois high-altitude railway, the first built in Italy. This peculiarity, combined with the role that the altiporto (small airport at a high altitude) area plays as the second main access to the village, has represented, from the early stages of the "comprehensive plan", an opportunity to revive Chamois' economy. The design strategy tries to investigate a type of alternative tourism linked to the aviation sector ("avioturismo"). This area, still not well-known in Italy, is based on the possibility of taking advantage of the receptivity potential of small flying centers, in particular of airfields (category to which the Chamois' airport belongs), by supporting them with hotel facilities, catering activities and other services. The goal is to create complexes that act as touristic catalysts; some virtuous French airfields in France are for instance: the Courchevel, Megève and Meribel airports.

On the model of these experiences, the attempt was to work on the upgrading of the Chamois' airport, imagining the construction of a hangar for the aircraft shelter together with support activities, such as a reception service for tourist flights, a restaurant, a bar, a museum, a flight school and an accommodation facility. On a spatial level, the project is divided into two main buildings and a secondary structure for a medical clinic (to support helicopter rescue activities); these interact ideally with each other thanks to a partially covered pedestrian path, equipped with rest areas and panoramic points.

The project reinterprets tradition, working on the theme of large-scale volumes, which, introduced in a still virgin and uncontaminated territory, are well related to the context increasing its value and allowing its fruition.

The project wanted to investigate a field, that of the pleasure yachts, still little known and exploited; it is hoped, however, that it can be a model for the development of similar activities in the Italian context.





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