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Santa Cruz moves towards its model of the future with the Second City Forum

Together with the knowledge of Fundación Metrópoli and the support of the strategic ally Fundación Moeve, this space for meeting and reflection within the Santa Cruz City Project has made it possible to gather feedback from more than 90 local stakeholders.

Based on the methodology developed by Fundación Metrópoli and with the support of the strategic ally Fundación Moeve, today, the Santa Cruz de Tenerife City Council held the Second City Forum as part of the Santa Cruz City Project. This forum has established itself as a meeting place for reflection and participation, making it possible to continue strengthening a shared vision for the future of Tenerife's capital city.

While the First City Forum, held last March, focused on identifying and prioritizing the major issues associated with defining the future of Santa Cruz, the purpose of this second participatory meeting was to gather participants' feedback on fourteen strategic project proposals identified by Fundación Metrópoli. Each of these proposals will serve as a basis for guiding the content of the final version of the Santa Cruz City Project.

During the Second City Forum, representatives from government agencies, political groups, neighborhood associations, professional groups, universities, and companies from the public and private sectors actively participated by contributing their own perspectives. To this end, each participant completed a questionnaire, and these results will be used to provide an idea of the level of acceptance of the proposals presented, as well as adjust and enrich them with nuances and new ideas. Their participation in this discussion space, which brings together technical knowledge, social sensitivity, and institutional commitment, plays a key role in continuing to strengthen a shared vision of the dream city.

The strategic project proposals presented to the participants are grouped around five fundamental pillars, aiming to position Santa Cruz as a more sustainable, innovative, competitive, cohesive, and inclusive city that is fully connected to its natural and maritime environment, integrating local identity with a global vision of smart urban development.

These five areas and the associated initiatives are: Comprehensive planning (Tenerife ecoisland / Metropolitan project), Mobility and transport (Metropolitan beltway / Tram extension), Urban integration and environment (Ecological corridors. Los Barrancos / Central ecoboulevard / Coastal ecoboulevard), Economy and innovation (Buenos Aires innovation district / Selective renovation of industrial estates / Port-city project / Tenerife Intelligence), and Urban and heritage

regeneration (Urban renewal of the historic center / Neighborhood hearts / The villas of the Park).

The mayor of Santa Cruz, José Manuel Bermúdez, stated that "what we have done today at the Second City Forum is to move forward in a process that combines specialized knowledge, citizen participation, and political will to coherently define the city model we want for Santa Cruz" and praised "the role of Fundación Moeve as an essential driving force that has made this project economically viable and played an active role in consolidating a model for the city of the future."

The Councilor for Public Services, Strategic Planning, and Environmental Sustainability, Carlos Tarife, indicated that "the Second City Forum marks a fundamental step in building the model of the city we want Santa Cruz to become. Today, together with local stakeholders, we have been able to review a series of strategic projects that will help design a more sustainable, cohesive, and innovative city with a higher quality of life, all through a participatory and open process."

The mayor emphasized that "this project will drive urban transformation and development and enable the capital of Tenerife to tackle the challenges of the 21st century. Following the diagnostic phase, we can now prioritize and finalize strategic projects using this input from all stakeholders."

The director of Fundación Moeve, Teresa Mañueco, highlighted that "the Second Forum shows this project's progress and maturity, and also represents a decisive step forward towards strategic projects that can make Santa Cruz an international benchmark, transforming vision into action." "Public-private collaboration and citizen engagement are the driving force behind Santa Cruz de Tenerife's transformation into a benchmark of sustainability, innovation, and quality of life, and this is being achieved through collaboration and consensus," she stated.

The president of Fundación Metrópoli, Alfonso Vegara, emphasized the importance of this new participatory phase, stating that "the strategic projects that have been debated are the result of a rigorous process based on data, territorial analysis, and international comparisons." After recalling that this project is based on participation and combines technical rigor with active listening, he stated that "now is the time to incorporate our collective vision of the city to jointly define the path it will follow."

Institutional support

The Santa Cruz City Project also has the institutional backing of the Tenerife Island Council, the Port Authority of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, CEOE Tenerife (Tenerife Confederation of Business Organizations), the University of La Laguna, CitiES and Asinca (Industrial Association of the Canary Islands), the Tenerife Tourism Board, Metrotenerife, PCTT (Tenerife Science and Technology Park), and Titsa (Interurban Transport of Tenerife). These entities not only support the initiative but also

contribute their knowledge, experience, and commitment to a competitive sustainable development model that is aligned with the challenges of the 21st century.

Proposals

In the Second Forum, the 14 working proposals that originated during the First City of Santa Cruz Forum were presented and framed within the five aforementioned strategic pillars.

The first of these, **Tenerife ecoisland**, is an island-wide ecodevelopment strategy that aims to promote sustainability, energy self-sufficiency, sustainable mobility, circular economy, and climate resilience. The ecoisland project will be led by the Island Council and have a direct impact on the urban and territorial quality of the entire island.

The second proposal, the **Metropolitan project**, presents a comprehensive urban development plan for Santa Cruz de Tenerife, La Laguna, and their functional environment, addressing mobility, housing, and employment in a metropolitan area with more than 600,000 inhabitants.

The **Metropolitan beltway** proposal includes a strategic road infrastructure for Santa Cruz and La Laguna that aims to improve mobility on the island, facilitate the connection between airports, and enable a transition area for logistics activities and a future "Agropolis".

Regarding the Tram extension, this proposal extends the tram network to improve coverage of this mode of transport. This approach would eventually make it possible to connect the airport with the city and central areas of Santa Cruz and La Laguna with various districts, large facilities, and places of economic activity.

The Ecological corridors (Los Barrancos) proposal aims to restore the ravines as a green infrastructure that integrates the city and nature, improves the landscape, absorbs CO₂, and prioritizes the connection between areas of the city and the surrounding territory.

The **Central ecoboulevard** and **Coastal ecoboulevard** are part of the Great Beltway that will enable the creation of a system of *ecoboulevards* in the metropolitan area. The objective is to transform urban roads and main axes into ecoboulevards that promote active mobility, collective transport, renaturalization, and urban renewal. The *ecoboulevards* will have different characteristics depending on their location.

The **Buenos Aires innovation district** proposal details the renovation of the Buenos Aires industrial estate as an urban hub that will drive innovation and technological development on the island in the area known as the Blue Economy, a hybrid, mixed-use district for living, working, leisure, and education.

The **Renovation of industrial estates** proposal includes a program of selective modernization of central industrial areas to improve urban image, productivity, and connectivity, promoting mixed use, productive diversification, and environmental regeneration in the metropolitan area.

The **Port-city project** involves strengthening the relationship between the port and Santa Cruz through new public spaces, cultural and touristic uses, and urban improvement, consolidating the progress made in the integration of the port and city and its economic impact.

Tenerife Intelligence proposes a project to promote artificial intelligence and cutting-edge digital technologies with the aim of optimizing the design, coordination, and implementation of various urban transformation initiatives, such as mobility, security, water and energy consumption, public space, environment, etc.

Urban renewal of the historic center addresses a plan for the regeneration of the historic center with criteria related to heritage conservation, improved livability, and activation of residential and commercial uses.

The **Neighborhood hearts** proposal details a program to rebalance Santa Cruz and its metropolitan area through the creation of living hubs in neighborhoods, each with their own identity, personality, and urban character, improving public spaces, services, social cohesion, and sense of belonging.

The last proposal, **The villas of the Park**, reflects a comprehensive intervention in the villas of Anaga Rural Park to renovate the urban fabric; improve accessibility, services, and viewpoints; and strengthen the relationship with the landscape and local identity

Subsequent phases of the process

The results of the Second City Forum will be very important in guiding the next steps of the project. As the next milestone, Fundación Metrópoli will tackle the conceptual design of strategic projects, drawing up the final version of the most highly rated initiatives. This step will include aspects regarding location, justification, characterization, urban integration, structure, and management suggestions, forming a comprehensive, endorsed, and shared vision of the future of the territory.

The various stakeholders agree that the Santa Cruz City Project will help the capital of Tenerife continue progressing towards a model based on public-private collaboration and participation, combining technical knowledge, citizen vision, and institutional commitment, to ultimately create a resilient, sustainable, competitive, and innovative city that is open to the world.

Background of the project

In the first phase, an exhaustive analysis of the territory was carried out, from planning and urban design to the environmental system and productive structure of the city, among other aspects. The current state of Santa Cruz and its strengths, opportunities, and challenges were studied in order to identify the components of excellence that could drive transformation.

The initial diagnosis was used as a springboard to define a set of key ideas, which were discussed at the First City Forum held last March, an open space where more than 80 local stakeholders contributed their opinion on the city model to which the municipality should aspire. Thanks to this joint effort, the basic document was presented today at the Second City Forum, which, with these contributions, will establish the roadmap for the future of Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

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