

LCLA
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THE RIVER THAT IS NOT

Category: urban plan
Location: Medellin, Colombia
Surface: 150.000 sqm
Project Year: 2013
International public competition

in collaboration with
Camilo Restrepo (Agenda)



dms - 6° 15' 17" N / 75° 35' 28" W

elevation - 1,487 m / 4,878 ft

“Medellin’s “river” is not a river any more and this condition is not reversible.”

“Medellin’s “river” is not a river any more and this condition is not reversible.” This project departs from this provocative statement to ensure that an urban renewal of this scale rests in a clear understanding of what this investment should expect. Informed by the historic engineering of the Rio Medellin rooted in over 70 years of transformation, from a meandering water course to a channelized flow, this projects plots its course of action in a radical and pragmatic statement: “Re-naturalizing the river is naive and impossible “

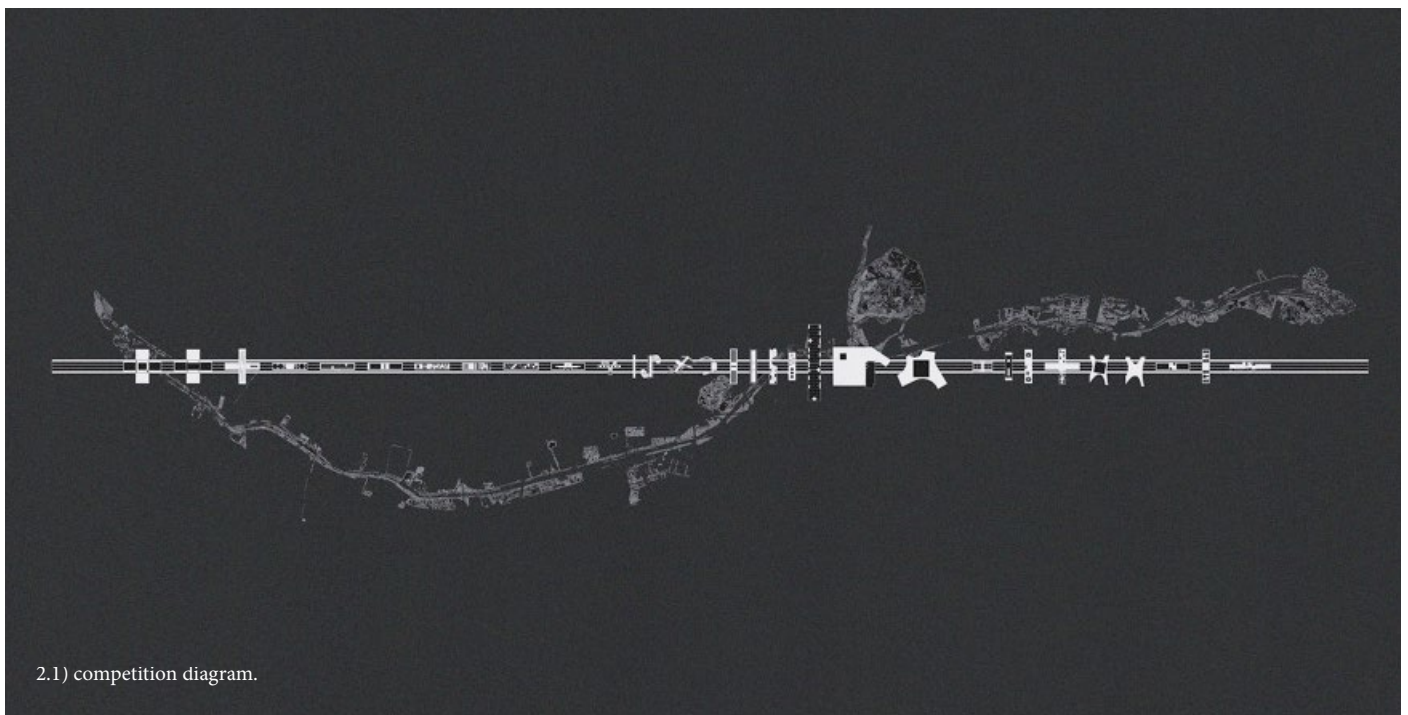
In terms of water flow, this

project identifies that the volume of the river’s discharge is subject to seasonal rainfall, therefore making it a river with low flow of heavy of water and heavy penetration of pollutants. Considering that the 56 streams that feed the river represent and assorted pallet of hydraulic conditions and water qualities, this project proposes to divest towards the establishment of this streams as “the backbone of the city’s hydric landscape.”

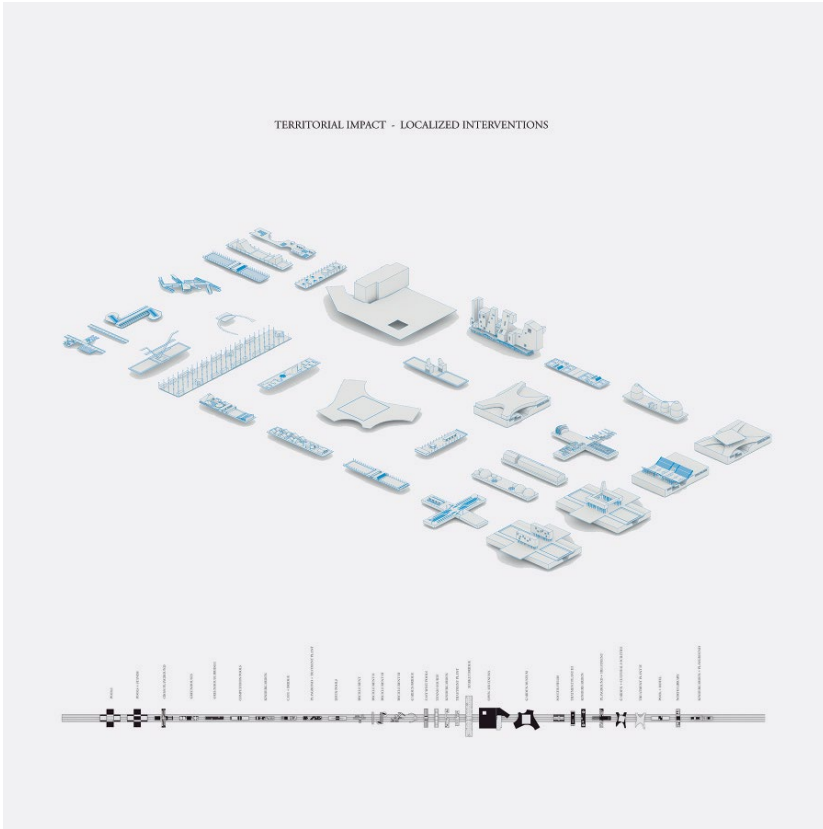
This divestment means a dislocation of regenerative efforts from the river to the streams as a first approach to extend the investment into a network of public space associated with

the topographical conditions of the valley and the neighbourhoods that inhabit the slopes.

In the interstices between the Medellin River and the streams, the strategy concentrates its efforts to a series of public platforms atop the channelized river. “These platforms will host programs that are traditionally contained in public buildings (like Libraries, kindergartens and sport facilities) and will be located exactly at the point where the streams meet with the polluted river, triggering the encounter of civic public occupation exactly at the points where it is still possible



2.1) competition diagram.



2.2) competition diagram.
axis and nodes.

to provide meaningful landscape interventions along the canal.”

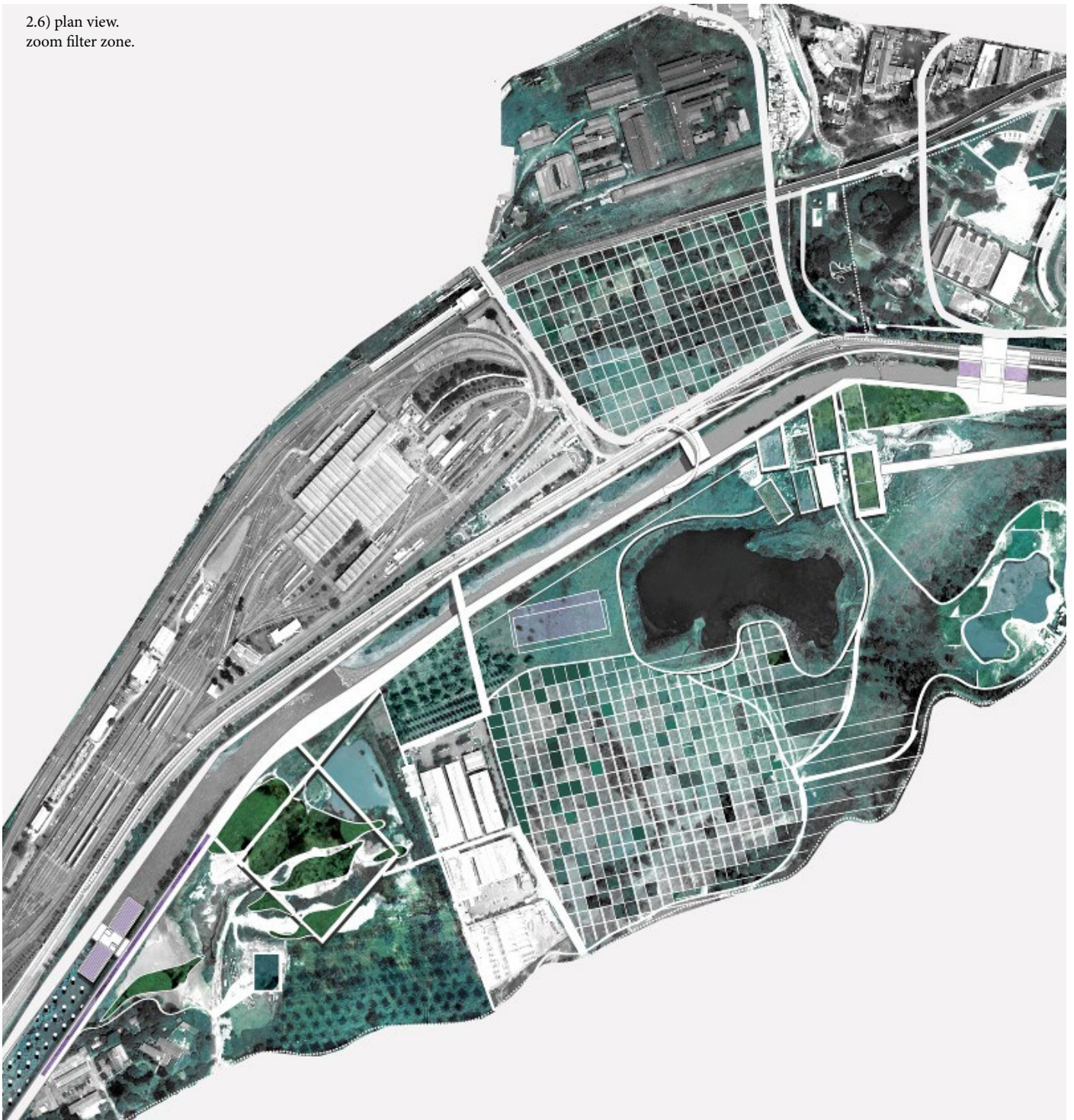
This strategy allows for the intervention to be gradual in time and open ended in relation to the programmatic capacities that it can host. The localized interventions in the intersections would not only frame a point of contact between the hydraulic system, but would also reconfigure its perimeter into landscape architecture projects that would extend upwards to the mountains. Each of these interventions was thought to be additional public competitions that would bring other designers into the conversation of repurposing the way in which not only the streams, but also the citizens encounter the river. By opening this question to an array of designers, the river would be reconfigured by a collection of different

scenarios where architecture and landscape reconfigure the geometries in which a city threads into its hydraulic system.

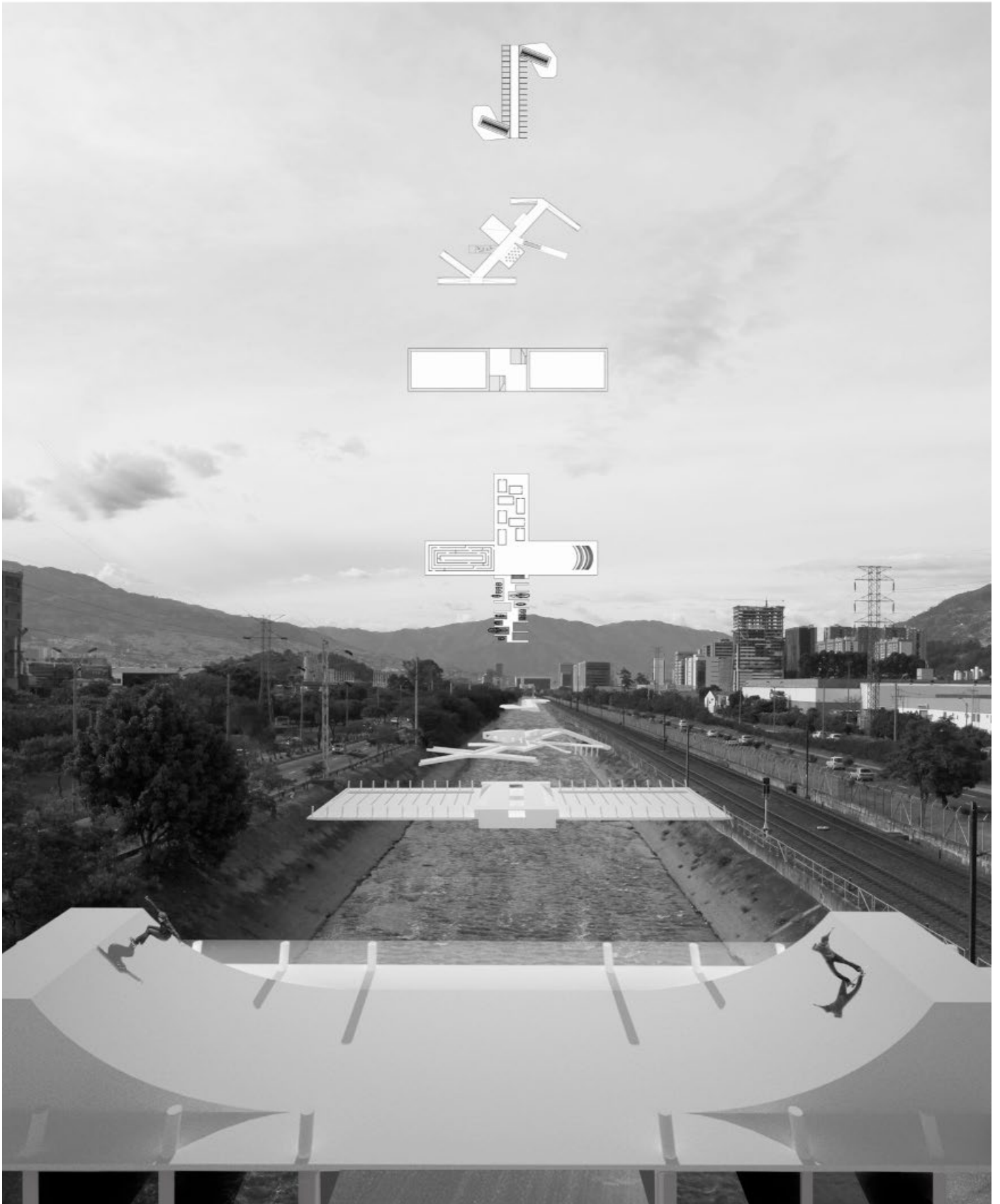


2.3) plan view

2.6) plan view.
zoom filter zone.



“On the other hand Medellín’s river is fed by 56 small streams that come from the mountains that define the valley.”



2.7) photomontage.
localized interventions over chanelized riv