



EUROPAN
AUSTRIA

E18 Re:sourcing

Bregenz • Hard • Fussach • Höchst

Take a walk on the wayside

Welcome

Dear architects, urbanists and landscape architects!

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the international ideas competition that focuses on the topic of *Re:sourcing* as a new paradigm for designing our built environment.

As planners in the 21st century, the theme of *Re:sourcing* is central to our work. It calls upon us to shift our focus beyond building anew but rather think in redesign, emphasizing care for the built and natural environment already in place. Through this approach, we can foster meaningful social, ecological, and cultural transformations. This requires us to act with a heightened sense of responsibility and cultivate a mindful, respectful relationship with the environment, the communities we serve, and the generations who will inherit the cities and landscapes we shape.

In this European session, we are delighted to be partnering with Switzerland! Together, we have assembled an exciting potpourri of four sites: Vorarlberg and its stretch of the Magistrale L202 in Austria, alongside St.Gallen, Lucerne and Geneva in Switzerland. Each of these locations presents challenges at different scales, all calling for holistic solutions aligned with the principles of *Re:sourcing*.

In Vorarlberg, the Magistrale is a key transport route connecting Switzerland, Austria, and Germany, driving regional prosperity. However, heavy traffic disrupts village life, conflicting with pedestrian needs and active mobility. Planners and mayors seek a Re:Sourcing-based strategy to enhance its potential while fostering sustainable solutions, creating an opportunity for a shift toward active mobility.

In Lucerne, the Littauerboden is a largely undeveloped area with hardly any spatial planning and urban development ideas to date. With the planned train-stop, the location is moving closer to the city and opening up for a spatial reorientation. The aim is to use, reinterpret and further develop existing structures and conditions in line with the competition theme of *Re:sourcing*.

In St.Gallen, the Ruckhalde gained historical significance for rail travel through the “Ruckhalde curve”, the narrowest cogwheel curve in the world. With the closure of the old railroad line, there is now an opportunity to redefine the vacated terrain and its surroundings. By reactivating existing resources, a diverse neighbourhood for different population groups - human and non-human - can be negotiated.

In Geneva, the canton seeks to implement a new strategy for its urban public spaces: a procession of trees and events scheduled for each resettlement site aims to change civic practices and redefine the meaning and use of the urban landscape with a view to its climate resilience.

As young professionals, you have a unique perspective and an opportunity to shape the future of our planet. Your ideas, knowledge and eagerness to think outside the box can inspire and transform the way we design our built environment. This competition is a platform for you to showcase your talents, collaborate with other disciplines for a broad range of perspectives, and make an important contribution to the global conversation about the future of our planet.

Push the boundaries of what is possible and challenge conventional design thinking. We encourage you to approach this competition with an open mind, a spirit of curiosity and a commitment to excellence. Be bold, be creative and above all, be thoughtful and caring about our shared future.

We wish you all inspiration and persistence in tackling this creative challenges. We look forward to seeing your innovative proposals and working with you after the competition.

Kind regards,
the team of European Austria and European Switzerland

General information

Site Representatives / Actors Involved

Stefan Übelhör, Mayor of Höchst

Thomas Fritz, Mayor of Fussach

Rosalie Schweninger, head of Planning Department, Hard

Andrea Krupski von Mannsberg, head of Planning Department, City of Bregenz

Lorenz Schmidt, head of Planning Department, Federal State of Vorarlberg

Team Representative

architect, urbanist and landscaper (architect in the team is mandatory)

Expected skills with regards to the site's issues and characteristics

Teams are encouraged to form collaboration of urban planners, architects and landscape architects, along with traffic planners.

Communication

Communication after the announcement of results on the European website

Jury: 1st + 2nd stage evaluation

- Regula Lüscher (CH), jury president, architect and urban planner, former Senatsbaudirektorin/ Staatssekretärin für Stadtentwicklung Berlin
- Sascha Roesler (CH), Theory of Urbanization and Urban Environment, USI Mendrisio
- Anouk Kuitenbrower (NL), architect and urban planner, KCAP Zürich
- Anne Femmer (DE), architect, SUMMACUMFEMMER
- Marco Rampini (CH), landscape architect, Atelier Descombes Rampini
- Lina Streeruwitz (AT), architect and urban planner, studiovlaystreeruwitz
- Felix Brüssow (DE), landscape architect, La Comète, winner European 16
- Charlélie Michel (FR), architect urbanist, winner European 16
- Alice Hollenstein (CH), urban psychology, CUREM

Prize selection

Ranked selection: with Winner (€12.000), Runner-up (€6.000) and Special Mention (no reward)

Equal Selection: maximum 3 Runners-up without any hierarchy of reward (€6.000 each)

Post-competition intermediate procedure

Presentation of the rewarded teams to the site representatives, followed by a discussion/workshop.

Important dates

Questions & Answers / Update of Material

Please see and check the forum online

[->>www.europan-europe.eu<<](https://www.europan-europe.eu)

03 March 2025 **Launch of Competition**
on-line

26 April 2025 **Site visit by bike**
10:00
Livestream link: announcement on website [->>www.europan.at<<](https://www.europan.at)
and instagram europan_austria
Meeting point: Bregenz train station
Registration: Please confirm your participation via email to office@europan.at at least one week in advance so we can organise a bike for you

29 June 2025 **Deadline for entering submission**
23:59 (Paris Local time)

17 November 2025 **Announcement of results**
on the European and national EUROPAN website

Spring 2025 **National award ceremony**
will be announced online [->>www.europan.at<<](https://www.europan.at)

Legal Framework

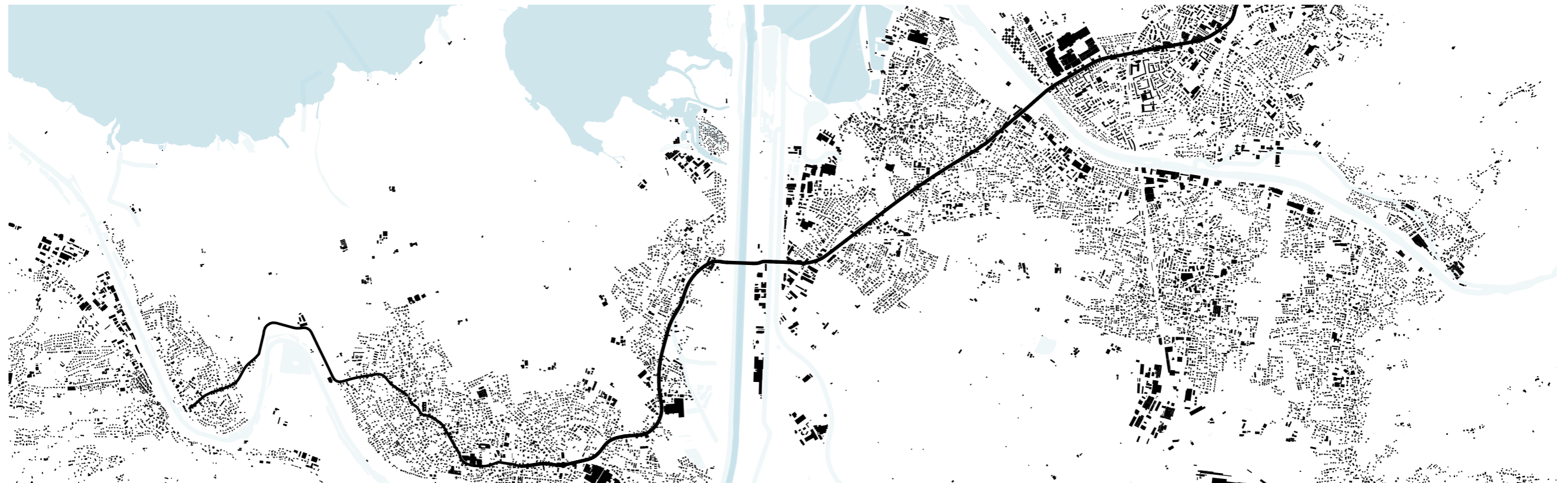
Disclaimer: As the rules are subject to change at the time of publication of this document, please refer to the European website for the full and updated rules for EUROPAN18:

[->>www.europan-europe.eu<<](https://www.europan-europe.eu)

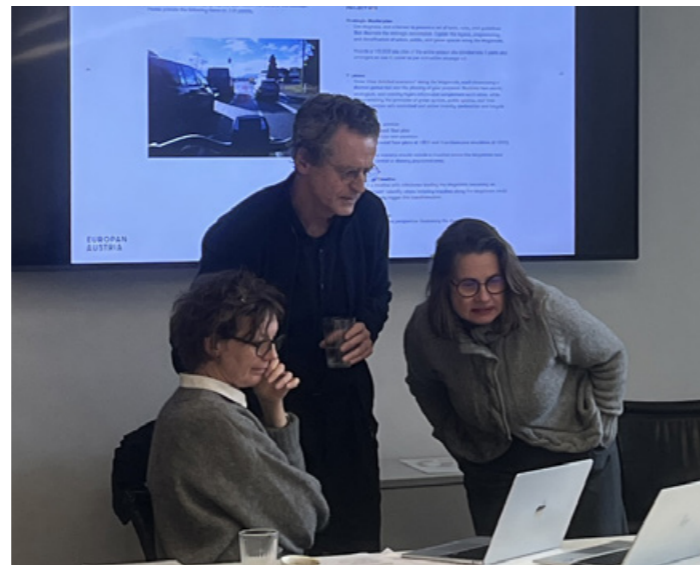
Europan Austria is being supported by the Federal Ministry of the Republic of Austria for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sports.

Content

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I Introduction



European Workshop with city representatives Stefan Übelhör (Mayor of Höchst), Thomas Fritz (Mayor of Fussach), Rosalie Schweninger (Head of Planning Department, Hard), Andrea Krupski von Mannsberg (Head of Planning Department, City of Bregenz), Lorenz Schmidt (Head of Planning Department, Federal State of Vorarlberg), and European Austria representatives Bernd Vlay (President) and Iris Kaltenegger (Secretary General). Viviane Feichtinger (Planning Department, Federal State of Vorarlberg) and Hannah Nusser (European Austria) were also part of the workshop, but are not in the picture.

Welcome to our region!

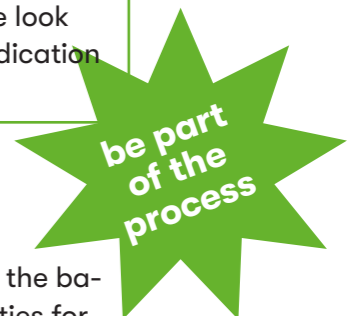
In Vorarlberg, the L202 or “Magistrale” is a crucial logistical artery linking Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. It drives economic growth by enabling trade and supporting local industries. However, this prosperity comes at a cost for villages along the route, where heavy car and lorry traffic disrupts daily life, creating noise, pollution, and safety concerns. The contrast between high-speed transit needs and the slower rhythms of village life highlights the urgency for solutions that balance mobility with livability.

This brief calls for a concept that formulates a strategy for reimagining this heavily frequented motorized street, which cuts through villages and sensitive landscapes. What tools and actionable guidelines can address the entire length of this corridor to gradually transform it into a space of potential and a forward-thinking approach to infrastructural corridors like this?

At the core of your strategy lies a pivotal question: How can this route be transformed into an open space of possibilities—one where neighborhoods, green areas, and active mobility can thrive alongside motorized traffic? Can this very infrastructure, which supports economic prosperity, evolve into a system of synergy, fostering an “Erlebnisraum” that benefits all who interact with it?

From your initial thoughts to the acts of creating, designing, writing, and drawing, the principle of *Re:sourcing* should be woven into every decision, ensuring a holistic and sustainable approach at every step.

The communities along this route warmly welcome your engagement with this challenge. „Your ideas and visions are invaluable to us, as they have the potential to shape a better future for our villages. We greatly appreciate your willingness to take on this task, which is not only about improving mobility but also about enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. We look forward to seeing your innovative approaches and thank you for your dedication to reimagining the L202!“



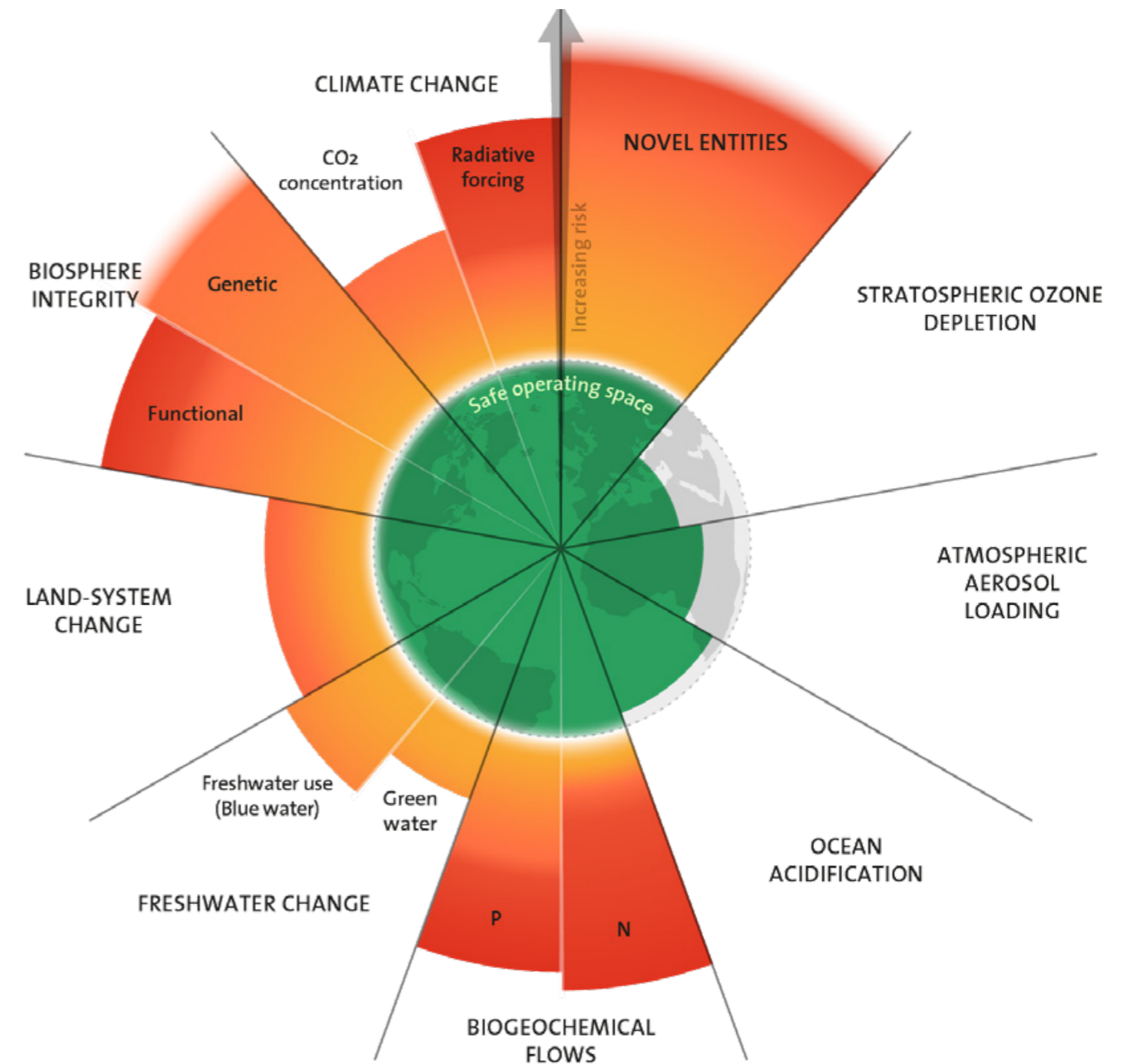
Commission after competition

The result of the European-competition serves as urban strategy providing the basis for a phased transformation over time. The aim is to explore opportunities for involving the selected team in workshops and to consider integrating the expertise of the awarded team in the broader development process, whether at the urban planning level or in an advisory capacity.

II Relation to the E18 topic

As planners, we not only bear a tremendous responsibility for the well-being of our planet, but we also have a unique opportunity to shape a more resilient future through our daily work. The European meta-theme Re:sourcing encourages you to embrace this potential and explore new ways of thinking and acting.

On the opposite page, you will find the nine planetary boundaries and their current status, as defined by the Stockholm Resilience Centre, a leading research institute for sustainability science and global environmental change.



RE:SOURCING

regenerating landscapes

Meta theme – Amplifying the Positive

Transforming our living environment is most effective when we perceive the existing as a foundation to build upon—something positive and valuable. This competition brief is, therefore, a call to approach the urban challenges at hand from a position of potential. Adopting this mindset is crucial, as we are often trained to focus on deficiencies rather than possibilities.

Re:sourcing invites us to shift our perspective. It highlights that our existing spaces, structures, and systems are not merely remnants of the past but valuable resources that provide roots and strengths for the future. By embracing this concept, we can unlock opportunities to enhance what already works. At its core, Re:sourcing embodies a deep sense of care for the environment, the ecosystems it supports, and the delicate balance of our planet.

In this context, the landscape is not just a backdrop but a dynamic force shaping the transformation ahead. It acts as a sphere in which infrastructure, local life, and human and non-human beings are embedded. As both a mediator and a driver of change, the landscape plays a crucial role in fostering environments that inspire innovation, empower communities, and sustain life for generations to come.

Re:sourcing in terms of identity

The Rhinedelta (territorial site) and the Rhinetal region represent one of the most densely urbanized areas in Austria. This landscape is characterized by fragmentation—a sprawling urban environment where the boundaries of villages have become nearly indistinguishable. As a border region encompassing areas of Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Austria, it forms a polycentric network of interconnected villages and cities. The „Vision Rhinetal,“ a major regional planning initiative, seeks to better understand and organize processes on a larger scale, portraying this area as a landscape punctuated by clusters of various functions concentrated around logistical hubs.

The L202, or Magistrale as we will refer to it throughout this text, is one of these logistical arteries, now fully integrated into the fragmented urban fabric. However, its historical roots tell a different story: the Magistrale once connected distinct villages and hamlets scattered along its route. While much of this past has been subsumed by modern development, subtle remnants endure.

Occasional bends in the road or houses that seem „awkwardly twisted toward the street“ serve as quiet witnesses to these historic structures and alignments.

Thinking through the lens of *Re:sourcing*, how might we reinterpret and leverage these historic traces to address the challenges of fragmentation? Rather than attempting only to „close“ the gaps by further densifying the built fabric along the street, one could instead rediscover and reestablish focal points embedded in the hidden historic layers. These elements hold the potential to enrich the street’s meaning and identity, transforming it into more than a functional artery.

By reconnecting with these historic traces, we could foster a renewed sense of place, helping to strengthen and diversify identities across the urban landscape. This approach invites a reconsideration of the Magistrale not as a dividing line but as a thread linking past and present—a thread capable of weaving together distinct yet complementary identities.

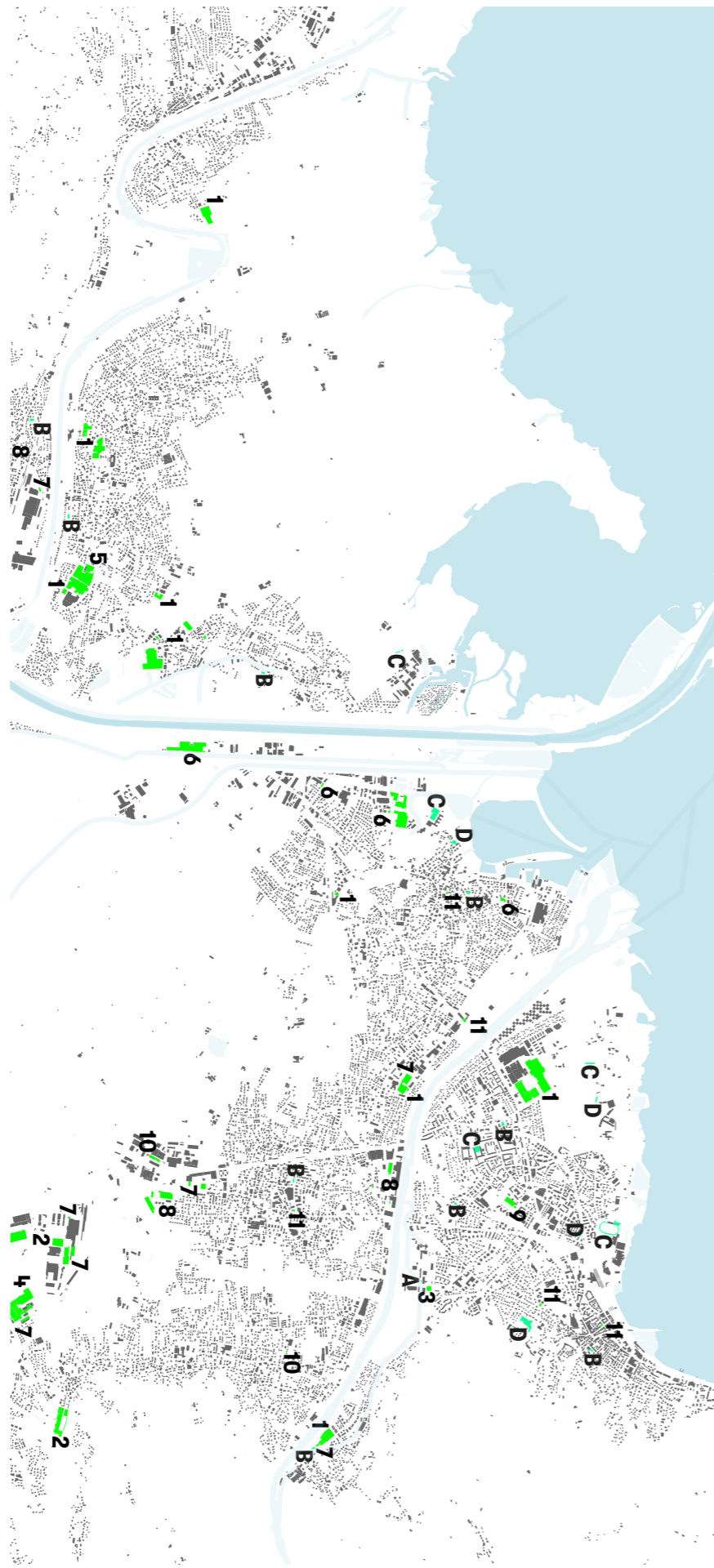
Re:sourcing in terms of connections

The Magistrale was originally a Lebensader—a vital artery connecting villages and countries. In its earlier days, this „vein“ followed the contours of the natural landscape, shaped by physical barriers and perhaps less efficient by today’s standards. Running from point to point, and sequence to sequence, it served as a lifeline that connected people and commodities, fostering exchange and interaction.

Over time, the Magistrale evolved into a streamlined, highly efficient transport route. It still connects people and goods, but now operates on a vastly different scale and at much greater speeds. This efficiency, however, has come at a cost: the route attracts significant volumes of car and lorry traffic, which often conflicts with the slower pace of pedestrians, local needs, and safe pathways for active mobility. Vulnerable groups—such as children, the elderly, and animals—are particularly impacted under these conditions.

In Austria, nine out of ten car journeys involve only a single occupant.¹ This statistic highlights the pressing need for a transformative approach to mobility along the Magistrale. Through the lens of *Re:sourcing*, the road can be reimagined as a catalyst for innovative, sustainable connections. This requires going beyond incremental solutions like dedicated bike lanes or shaded pedestrian paths. Instead, the task demands bold strategies that redefine how infrastructure serves people—integrating shared mobility hubs, dynamic public transport systems, and adaptable spaces that evolve with future needs. The urgency of the moment calls for visionary actions that not only address current issues but also anticipate and shape a more inclusive and sustainable mobility landscape.

¹ VCOE factsheet: “implementing the circular economy in mobility”, <https://vcoe.at/publikationen/vcoe-factsheets/detail/implementing-the-circular-economy-in-mobility>, last accessed January 15, 2025



overview industries and services ©openstreet map/EUROPAN austria

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| <p>INDUSTRIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Blum Group 2 Doppelmayr Holding SE 3 Illwerke vkw AG 4 Meusburger Georg GmbH & Co KG 5 Gross GmbH 6 Alpla Group 7 Gebrüder Weiss 8 t+r Gruppe 9 Rhomberg Gruppe 10 Jäger Beteiligungs GmbH | <p>COMMUNAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A hydroelectric power station B fire department C sports facility D hospital |
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Re:sourcing in Terms of production

The Magistrale (L202) runs through a region that has long been synonymous with industrial production and technical innovation. Along its route, the company Blum for example, operates five manufacturing facilities, employing 2,400 people in the village of Höchst alone. This area, deeply rooted in production, is also home to globally renowned firms like Doppelmayr, known for its cable car systems. Historically, the Rhinedelta and Rhinetal have been shaped by a strong tradition of manufacturing, from textiles to engineering, and a legacy of workers migrating from southern regions in the 1960ies to fuel its industries.

Production here is more than an economic activity—it is a cultural identity. For generations, families have been tied to specific factories, fostering a deep connection to the production processes that define the region. However, this reliance on large corporations brings vulnerability; when „big fish“ falter, entire villages that depend on them are at risk.

Through the lens of *Re:sourcing*, production in this region can be reimagined as an opportunity to diversify and strengthen economic and social resilience. The deep-seated knowledge of production processes, paired with the community’s identification with their work, represents an untapped potential for innovation.

How might we broaden the concept of production along the Magistrale, moving beyond traditional manufacturing to integrate more varied and inclusive approaches? For instance, *Re:sourcing* could steer this economic understanding toward clustering material production with social production—encouraging collaborations that blend industrial output with community-oriented initiatives.

The Magistrale itself could become a symbol and catalyst for this shift, embodying a new, broader understanding of production including the aim to minimize resource consumption, reduce waste, and lower the environmental impact of products and materials by extending their lifespan and transforming their usage. It could serve as a platform where ideas are shared, spaces are allocated for experimentation, and smaller enterprises are nurtured with support from their „bigger siblings.“ Such an approach would not only safeguard the region’s industrial legacy but also create pathways for sustainable, community-driven economic models.

This vision challenges us to think of production not just as the creation of goods but as a generator of social and cultural value.

Re:Sourcing in Terms of Nature

The Rhine Delta, the largest wetland on Lake Constance and the oldest nature reserve in Vorarlberg, stretches from Höchst to Hard. This area is defined by its extensive shallow water zones, reed beds, hay meadows, and floodplain forests. It is celebrated far beyond national borders for its exceptional birdlife and ecological significance.

Water is a constant presence here—flowing through the Rhine and its numerous arms, as well as along the nearby shores of Lake Constance. Adding to this natural richness, the majestic mountain ranges close by create a uniquely idyllic setting, where people spend a significant amount of time immersed in nature.

Historically the landscape has undergone dramatic interventions. In the early 20th century, the Rhine was regulated to mitigate flood risks, a significant intervention that reshaped the landscape. Today, the Old Rhine in the northern part of the reflection site is confined within a riverbed flanked by dams. Alongside this, the Magistrale—commonly referred to as the „concrete road“ (Betonstraße)—runs boldly through villages and picturesque landscapes, its stark presence appearing disproportionate and intrusive. Despite the clear human imprint on the area and the economic focus given to the Magistrale, it still holds significant potential for transformation.

Re:sourcing challenges us to rethink this landscape as a an underlying force that shapes new relationships, heals existing spaces, and reimagines the entire strip as a connected entity of possibilities. Rather than existing as a rigid boundary, the Magistrale can become an integrated thread within the landscape, balancing infrastructure with ecological and social needs.

A renewed approach could weave nature back into the built environment by introducing shaded pathways for active mobility, green corridors that enhance biodiversity, and spaces where plants and wildlife can reclaim their place. Equally important is the creation of transversal connections—pathways that open up selective sightlines to the surrounding landscape, establishing visual and spatial relationships that anchor the road within its broader natural context. By strategically punctuating the corridor with openings to the landscape’s horizons, new perspectives emerge, fostering a sense of place and connectivity. Preserving sightlines and open vistas while ensuring safe crossings for both people and animals would transform the road from a divisive barrier into a unifying element.

By embracing Re:sourcing, we can see landscapes not as fixed spaces, but as dynamic environments at multiple scales—where infrastructure, nature, and human life coalesce. The transformation of this region is not just about adapting to change but about actively shaping an interconnected and regenerative future.



Rheineck and the rhine estuary, painting by Max Bach

III The region and its villages



MAGISTRALE

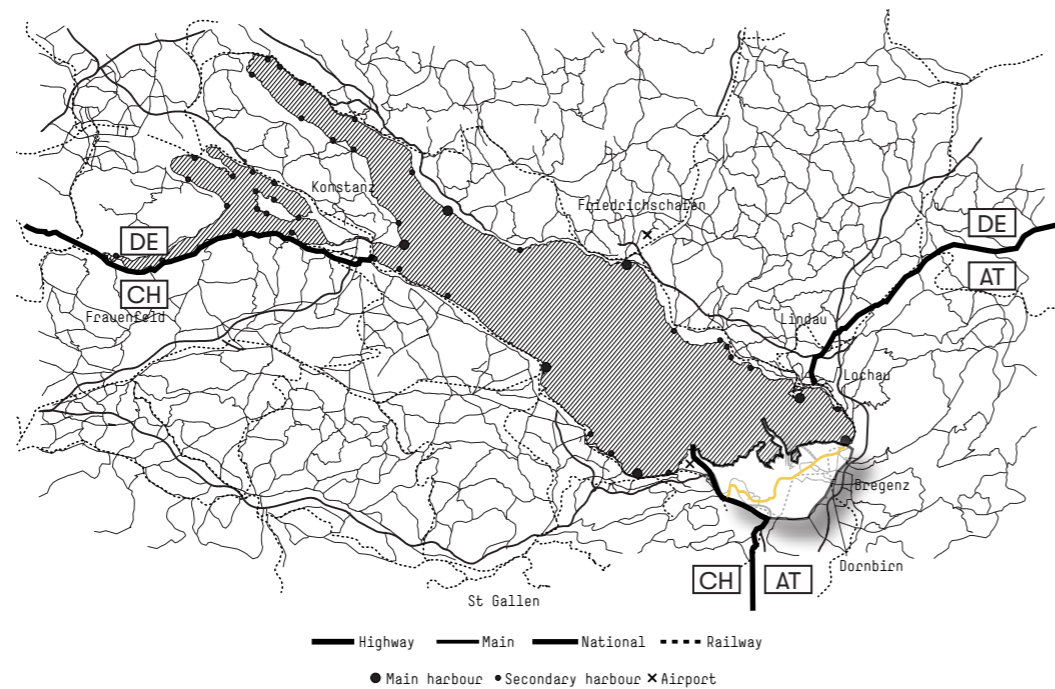
the region and its villages

Regional context

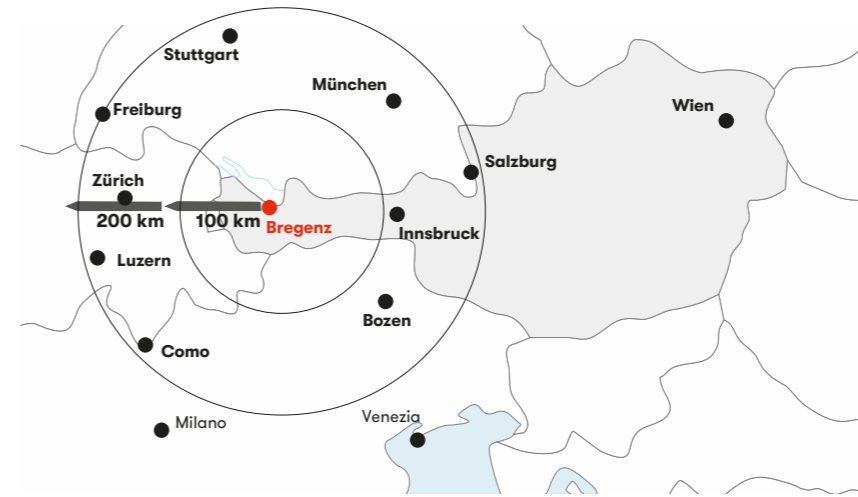
The E18 site is located in Vorarlberg, Austria's westernmost state, nestled on Lake Constance and bordering Switzerland. The region lies on the crossroads of the Swiss border to the southwest, the Rhinetal to the south, Lake Constance to the north and the Laiblachtal to the northeast. Major cities like Innsbruck, Zurich and Munich are just two hours away.

This brief addresses a spatial sequence along the Magistrale, a highly frequented transition road connecting Switzerland, Austria, and Germany. The segment in focus passes through three villages – Höchst, Fussach and Hard – and the city of Bregenz. The region, defined as the Rhinedelta is located at the northern end of the Rhinetal, both are renowned for their economic significance. Together with the Walgau (the area around Bludenz), they form the most densely populated area of Vorarlberg, with approximately 80% of the population living on just 35% of the total land area. And the majority of jobs in the commercial sector are concentrated here.²

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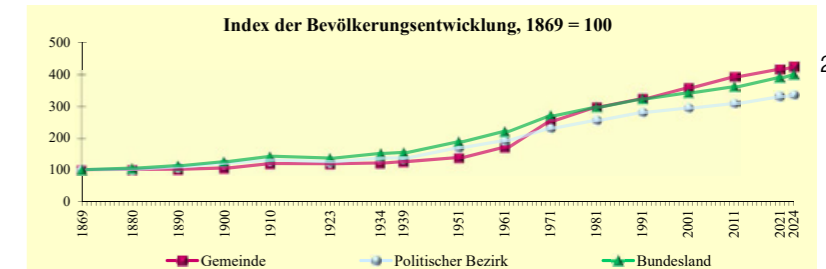
Graphic ©University Liechtenstein, Department for Architecture and und spatial development; Studio 2017 coordination Prof.Philip Lutz, Georgia Papatthasiou, Julia Kick



L202 + Bregenz's geographic position in the european context

	Population	Workplaces	Employees
Höchst	8.381	564	5.663
Fußach	3.977	248	1.414
Hard	13.787	1.034	6.115
Bregenz	29.643	2.401	20.790
Total	55.788	4.247	33.982

Table on population, workplaces and number of employees © Statistik Austria <https://www.statistik.at/atlas/blick/?gemnr=80207>, last accessed Feb 02, 2025



Map depicting rapid population growth in Höchst over the past 150 years, compared to the overall growth of the federal state © Statistik Austria

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Economic context

For centuries, the textile industry dominated Vorarlberg, shaping the region's identity and economy. Factories were established along streams and rivers, including one in Hard, where a textile manufacturing plant opened in 1794 with a dye works. This facility grew to become one of the largest textile producers in the country. The prosperity generated by the textile industry led factory owners to invest in energy production, making them pioneers in harnessing electricity. Initially developed for their own needs, the surplus energy was supplied to other areas, such as the city of Bregenz. However, the rise of cheaper labor and production costs overseas led to a steady decline of the textile industry.

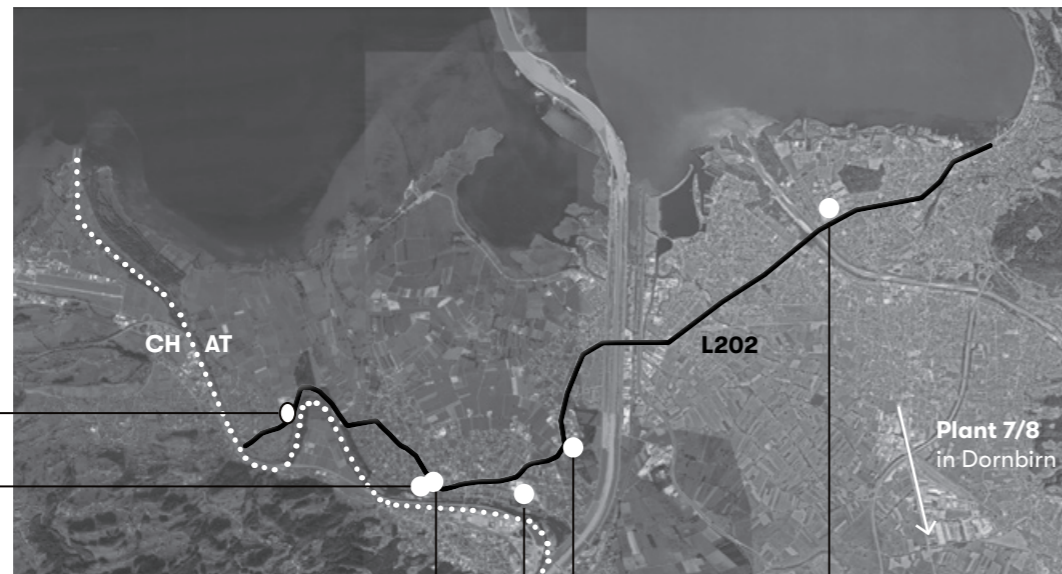
Since the 1980s, this transition has seen industries like machinery, metal, and electronics rapidly rise in prominence. By 2021, these sectors employed 51% of the workforce, up from just 22% in the early 1980s, contributing 40% of Vorarlberg's total economic output.³

³ DerStandard: „Vorarlberg: Das Land, das vom Spinnen zum Dimmen kam“, <https://www.derstandard.at/story/3000000182566/vorarlberg-das-land-das-vom-spinnen-zum-dimmen-kam>, Last accessed January 18, 2025

² Source: <https://www.wko.at/vlbg/zahlen-daten-fakten/grafik-2-regionen-anteil-flaechen---arbeitsplaetze.pdf>, Last accessed January 19, 2025

Global leaders, such as Blum, a renowned fittings manufacturer, Alpla, Doppelmayr and Zumtobel have their headquarters in the region. Blum, with eight production facilities in Vorarlberg – five along the Magistrale – is the largest employer of Vorarlberg providing over 6,600 jobs.⁴ The company is a critical economic pillar for the Rhinedelta and its villages, offering essential local employment. Höchst, one of Vorarlberg’s fastest-growing municipality reflects this prosperity.

plants of „Blum“, leading employer in Vorarlberg © LandVorarlberg



²⁴ **Plant 6**
Production, coating and assembly of various parts for the modular systems

Plant 1
former main plant today: technology department

Plant 3
technology + research, development, design, tooling, special engineering, apprentice training

Plant 2
former main plant today: technology department

Plant 5
zinc/plastic die casting and injection moulding processes

Plant 4
Production, coating and assembly

Plant 7/8
in Dornbirn

⁴ vorarlberg ORF.at: „Blum sorgt sich um Wirtschaftsstandort“, <https://vorarlberg.orf.at/stories/3280378/>, last accessed January 18, 2025



3.LA (1871 -1872) Rhinedelta with already existing connecting road (today L202) ©LandVorarlberg

Historic context

Höchst and Fussach were forcibly merged into a single municipality called Rheinau between 1938 and 1945. Historically, these areas have shared a deep connection. As early as 881, the “hosteta marcha” or “Höchster Markt” was documented, encompassing smaller hamlets, the villages of Höchst, Fussach and Gaißau, as well as the settlement of St. Margarethen, which now lies on Swiss territory. This area has long functioned as a „Doppeldorf“—a twin village spanning both sides of the Rhine—with the Zollhaus serving as a vital and active border crossing, a role it continues to play today.

Fussach played a significant role in the Middle Ages as one of the most important trade hubs in the Lake Constance region. However, with the construction of the Bregenz harbour and the Lindau-Bludenz railway line in 1850, as well as the Arlberg railway, Fussach’s economic importance declined. The



Bridge over the Old Rhine
Gaißau (A) - Rheineck (CH) (1950 - 1970)
©Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek



Hard / Gerbesiedlungsgebiet (1954-65)
©Vorarlberger Landesbibliothek

realignment of the Rhine further reduced its direct access to Lake Constance, though agriculture has remained vital to the village's economy. Today, Fussach hosts the newly built Rhine Bridge connecting it to Hard, marking the final bridge before the Rhine flows into Lake Constance.

Hard, on the eastern bank of the Rhine, was first mentioned as early as 700 AD. It became a prominent centre for textiles, housing one of the region's most significant dye works. Together with Höchst and Fussach, Hard shares parts of the Natura 2000-protected Rhinedelta, as well as the Mehrerau lakeshore, a Natura 2000 site it shares with Bregenz. Located within the urban area of Bregenz, the capital of Vorarlberg with 28,000 inhabitants, Hard benefits from its proximity to the city.

Bregenz itself has a rich history, with archaeological evidence of settlement dating back to 1500 BC. The town was officially mentioned in 800 AD, and by 1250, the city was founded on the plateau of the Oberstadt, which remains its historic centre. Today, Bregenz is a popular tourist destination, renowned for its picturesque lakeside setting and the internationally acclaimed Bregenz Festival, first held in 1946, which adds significantly to its appeal.

Today's Magistrale has long functioned as a key connection linking Switzerland, Austria, and beyond, while also serving the villages west of Bregenz. Originally a winding country road, it was progressively streamlined to enhance efficiency. A key milestone in this transformation was the Rhine's realignment, creating a direct channel to Lake Constance by bifurcating into the Old Rhine and the main Rhine before entering Höchst. Further efficiency was achieved through the straightening of the bend in Hard's centre and the construction of the Fussach-Hard bridge.

Map 1894:

Bregenzer Ach, Dornbirner Ach and Alter Rhein (north towards south-west) still run in a natural course towards Lake Constance. A connecting road (now the L202) runs through the town centres of Bregenz, Hard, Höchst and Gaissau. Fussach is not connected by this road. Bridges in Hard-Rieden, Höchst and Gaissau

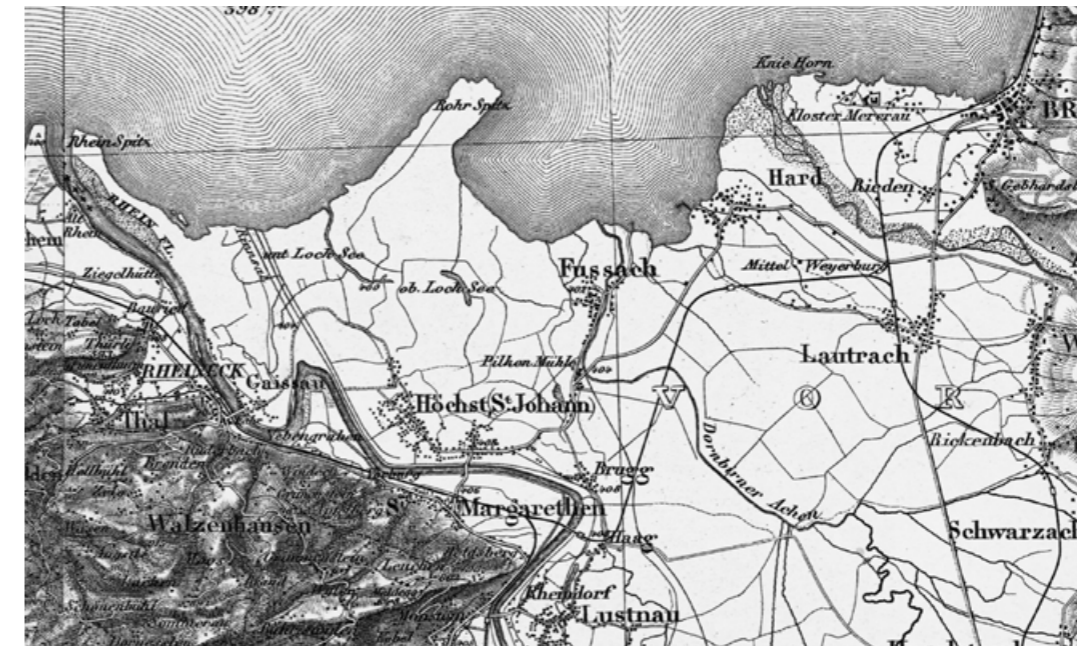
Map 1930.

The Bregenzer Ach still follows its natural course towards Lake Constance. The Dornbirner Ach and (Old) Rhine were shortened and straightened and now run parallel to the east of Fussach. Relocation of the L202 in the Fussach area through the town centre. 1899: Construction of a new bridge in Fussach.

Map 2022.

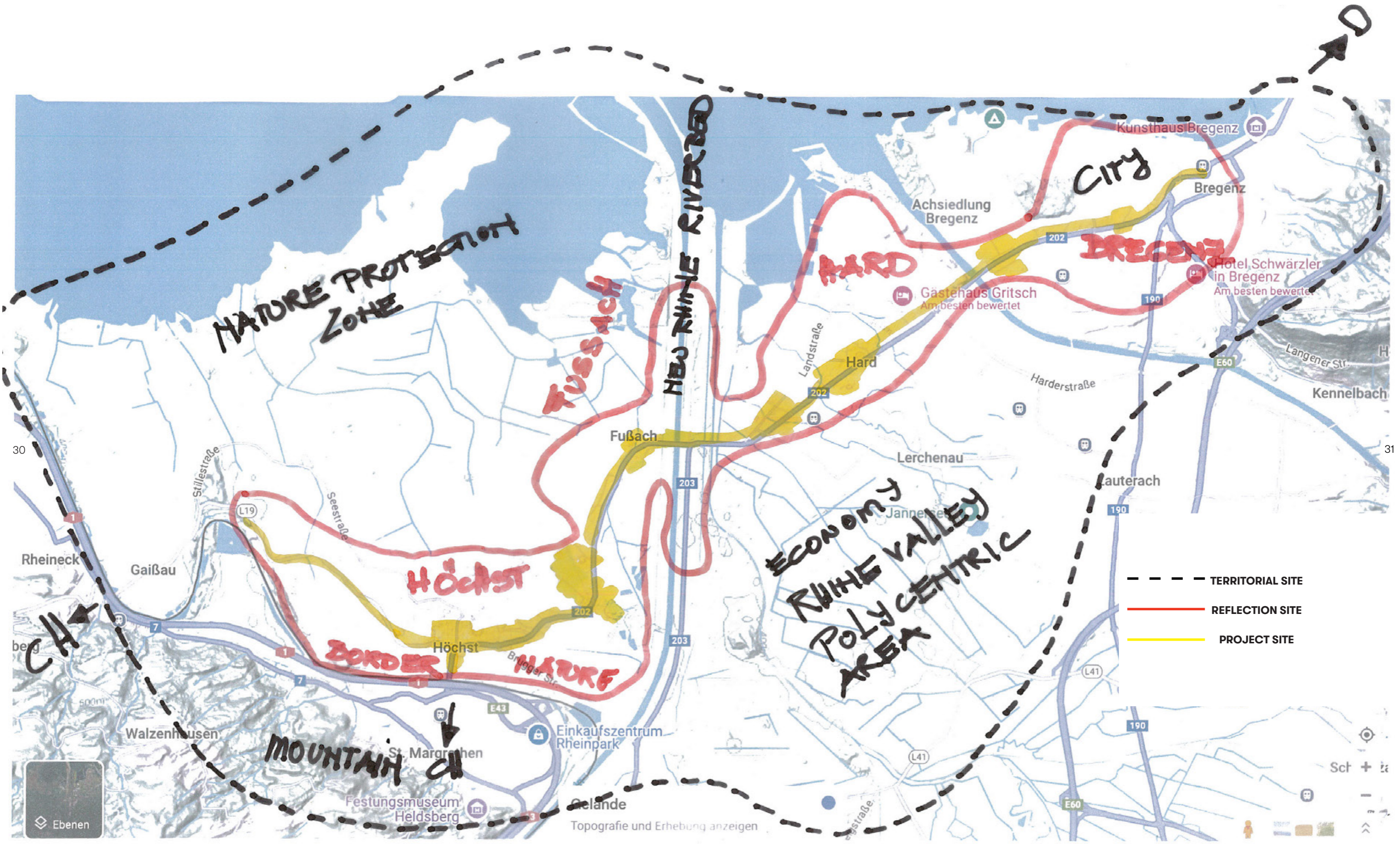
The morphology of the town shows an almost continuous development from Bregenz-Hard-Fussach to Höchst. Today's L202 crosses the Bregenzer Ach a little further north and runs further south through Hard. The Hard-Fussach Rhine bridge has been rebuilt since 11/2022.

Source + Copyright: swisstopo



IV Territorial site





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Existing framework and it's potential

The territorial site connected to the Magistrale encompasses an area of approximately 4,500 hectares. Within this expanse, about 2,220 hectares are designated as nature protection zones, highlighting the environmental significance of the region.

Natura 2000

The area along the Magistrale is set against a stunning natural backdrop. Its proximity to Lake Constance, with Hard and Bregenz located directly on its shores, and the nearby mountains make it an attractive destination for tourists seeking relaxation, outdoor activities, and cultural experiences in Bregenz. Two European protection zones, known as Natura 2000 sites, are part of this territorial area. These zones were established under the European Union's Birds Directive (1979) and Fauna-Flora-Habitat Directive (1992) to counteract the decline of wild species and natural habitats, safeguarding biodiversity across the EU. The directives mandate the designation of protected areas to create a transnational conservation network for species and habitats of European interest.

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Natura2000 conversation areas: Rhinedelta + Mehrerauer Seeufer ©openstreetmap

Mehrauer Delta

One of these Natura 2000 sites is the Mehrauer Delta, a Fauna-Flora-Habitat area located around the river delta of the Bregenzer Ach near Hard and the natural water bodies near Bregenz. This delta is subject to early summer flooding and sediment dynamics, creating conditions for a unique plant community found only at Lake Constance. The Mehrauer Delta is the largest river estuary delta in Central Europe, covering an area of 118 hectares.

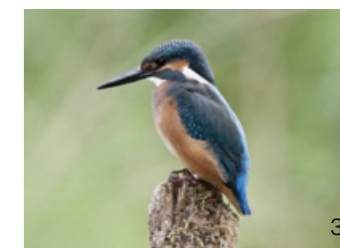
Rhinedelta

To the west of the Mehrauer Delta lies the much larger Rhinedelta, covering 2,065 hectares, including areas in Lake Constance itself. This Natura 2000 area spans the municipalities of Gaißau, Höchst, Fussach, and Hard and is renowned for its rich bird populations. The region is characterized by extensive shallow waters, reed beds, wet meadows, and riparian forests, providing critical habitats for numerous rare plant and animal species. The conservation measures in these areas do not exclude agricultural or forestry use. In fact, traditional management practices, such as the extensive cultivation of wet and nutrient-poor meadows, are often essential for maintaining the ecological value of these habitats.

Agriculture in the Rhinedelta

Agriculture plays a significant role in the communities of Höchst and Fussach. The Rhine Delta has been used for agriculture for centuries, with the management of wet meadows making an important contribution to preserving the unique cultural landscape—often under challenging conditions. This interplay of traditional agriculture and conservation underscores the region's unique balance between human activity and natural preservation.

In conclusion, the territorial site surrounding the Magistrale is not only a vital economic and infrastructural zone but also a critical area for biodiversity and sustainable land use. Its dual role as a hub of human activity and a sanctuary for nature highlights the importance of integrating ecological considerations into regional development strategies.



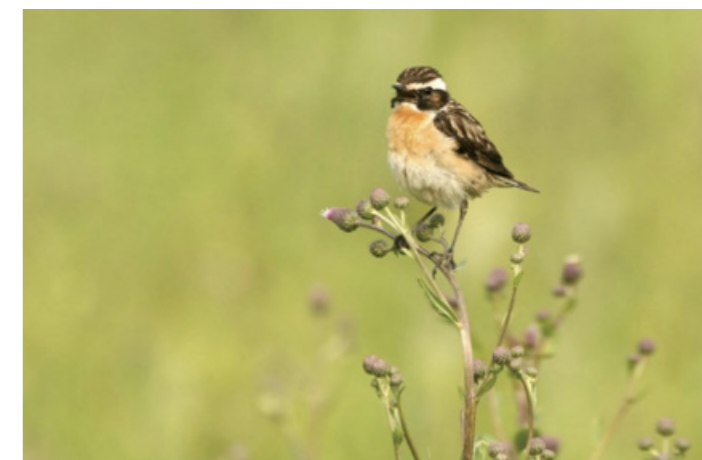
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from top to bottom :
Strandschmieie ©UMG
Kammolch ©Dietmar Huber
Eisvogel ©Heinz Bänninger
spelt cultivation ©WISTO



Bodensee-Vergissmeinnicht ©UMG



Braunkehlchen ©VOLGAS/shotshop

Water as a constant Presence und human Intervention

The region has long been shaped by its relationship with water. Between 1956 and 1963, the Rhine Delta was diked to prevent the annual summer flooding caused by the rising waters of Lake Constance, which flooded large areas. The 8 km-long polder dam stretches along the lake's shore from the Old Rhine to the New Rhine and includes three pumping stations that have since maintained lower water levels on the landside of the dam. Supporters of the diking project praised it as the „conquest of a significant breadbasket,“ while conservationists highlighted the negative impact on the area's groundwater balance.⁵ After the last major flood in 1999, the polder dam was further reinforced and widened. Today, it serves as a popular cycling route.

The Rhine Bifurcation

A far more extensive intervention was the bifurcation of the Rhine, known as the Fussacher Durchstich (cut), at the river bend south of Höchst. Here, the Rhine was split into the Old and New Rhine. This effort, carried out between 1895 and 1900, aimed to regulate the „largest wild river in Europe“ and protect the valley it crosses. Two devastating floods in 1888 and 1890 led to the Austrian-Swiss Treaty on Rhine Regulation, which laid the groundwork for this transformative measure. The original course of the Rhine was shortened by seven kilometers through this intervention. Since then, the New Rhine has flowed in a completely new riverbed directly into Lake Constance over a five-kilometer stretch from Höchst towards Fussach/Hard and the lake beyond. The intervention shortened the Rhine's original course by seven kilometers.

The original course, now known as the Old Rhine, remains south of Höchst with its lush rivershores serving as a recreational area featuring sports fields and facilities for local residents.

Continuing Modifications

Further interventions after 1900 included additional cuts and the construction of various hydraulic structures along the Rhine. A notable example is the Rhine Bridge on the L202, a key infrastructure project completed in 2022.

All these engineering works were instrumental in enabling a positive development of the Rhine Valley as a residential and economic hub. As climate change intensifies, the sophisticated system of Rhine regulation and its long-term planning becomes ever more essential to ensure the continued safety of the population and infrastructure.



Rheindurchstich 1900 (engl. Rhine perforation) ©Internationale Rheinregulierung



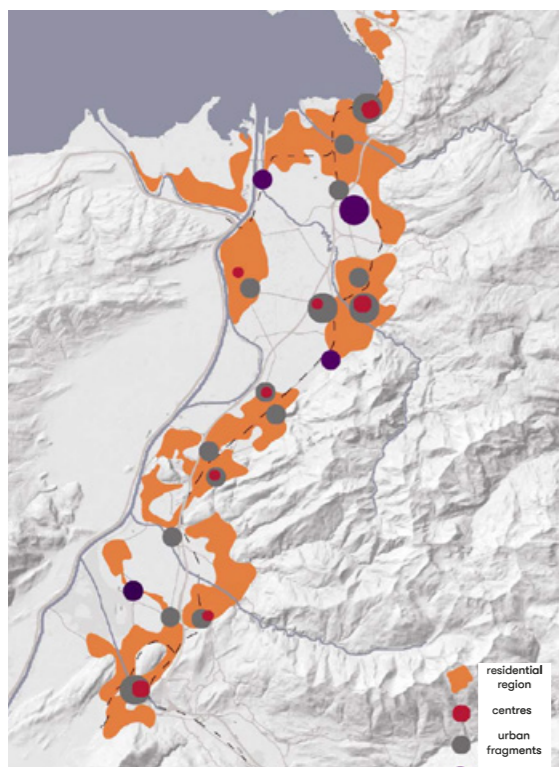
View from the north onto the crossing at Hard-Fussach. (1954)
©Internationale Rheinregulierung

Polycentricity and mobility

The growing demand for larger spaces for housing, work, transportation, and recreation has transformed individual municipalities into a unified settlement area within the Rhine Valley, including the Rhine Delta⁶. Major natural features, such as Lake Constance with its protected nature zones and the surrounding mountainous landscape, both shape and enclose this region. These natural elements not only define the physical boundaries of the area but also provide essential spaces for leisure activities, epitomized by the local saying: “Skiing in May in Montafon, then swimming in the lake.”

The Rhine Valley functions as a polycentric urban landscape, where institutions and infrastructure typically concentrated in cities—such as cultural venues, educational facilities, and healthcare services—are distributed throughout the region. A well-developed mobility network connects these urban agglomerations and fragments, fostering integration and accessibility.

The people of the Rhine Valley primarily identify with their individual villages while also understanding their place within the broader regional framework. This dual sense of belonging underpins the region’s polycentric nature. With abundant opportunities for work, education, and leisure, mobility is intrinsic to daily life. Villages strive to strengthen their centres, ensuring short distances for daily errands and reducing traffic congestion.

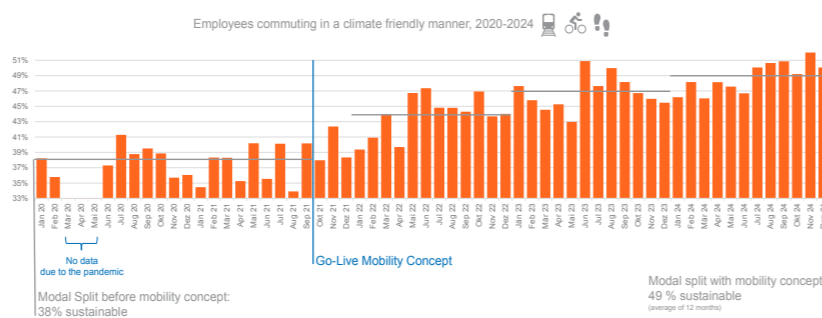


Centers and urban fragments p.7 ©Rheintal Vision, Geli Salzmann + Settlement

Success story of „At Blum we ride bus & bike“



Results of the monthly vehicle count at Blum Austria



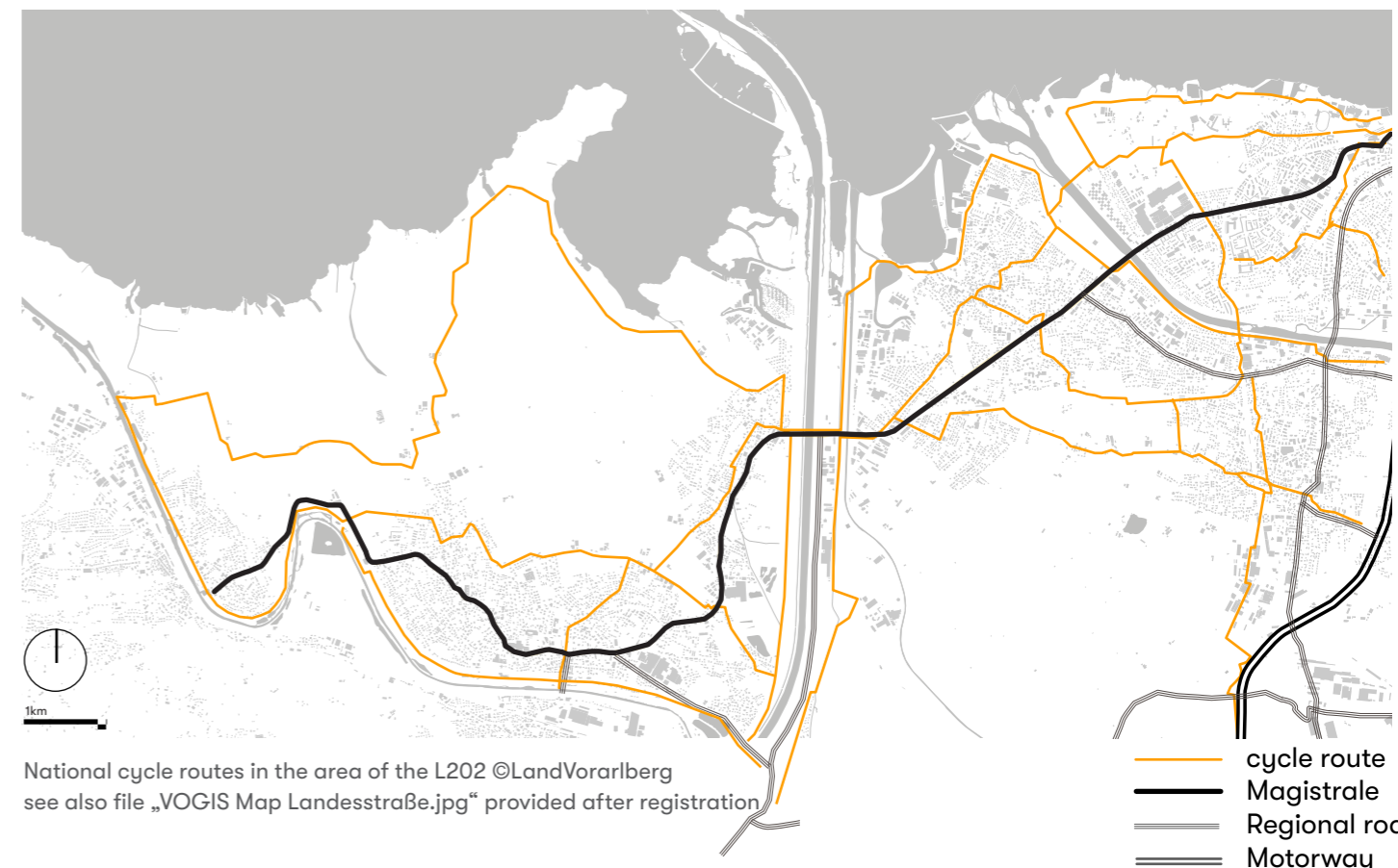
Mobility concept company Blum © Blum | Katharina Schön

In addition to motorized transportation, public transit is well-developed, and cycling infrastructure plays a significant role. The Rhine Delta and Lake Constance regions are renowned for their scenic leisure cycling routes. However, there is substantial potential to enhance cycling infrastructure for daily commuting by creating direct and efficient bike connections.

Historically, the Rhine Valley has been closely connected with neighbouring countries such as Switzerland, Liechtenstein, and Germany. This has fostered a tradition of cross-border commuting, which remains prevalent today. Paired with a strong local culture of outdoor activity and a commitment to sustainability, the region is ripe for a transformation toward greener mobility.

For instance, if direct, safe, and appealing cycling routes are established, they could serve as viable alternatives to car travel. Companies like Blum have already recognized this potential, introducing initiatives to encourage cycling among their employees—such as providing e-bikes, access to showers, trial tickets for trains and public transport, the Klimaticket (free ride with all public transport facilities in Austria), and incentives for exchanging parking spaces for mobility subsidies.

By enhancing the Magistrale beyond its current role as a heavily motorized route, it could become a key component of daily cycling infrastructure. Such a development could include direct connections and multipurpose uses, significantly contributing to the region’s goal of sustainable and active mobility.



National cycle routes in the area of the L202 ©LandVorarlberg see also file „VOGIS Map Landesstraße.jpg“ provided after registration

⁶ Source: Geli Salzmann, Vision Rheintal, Zentren und urbane Fragmente, 2005, page S2

IV Reflection site



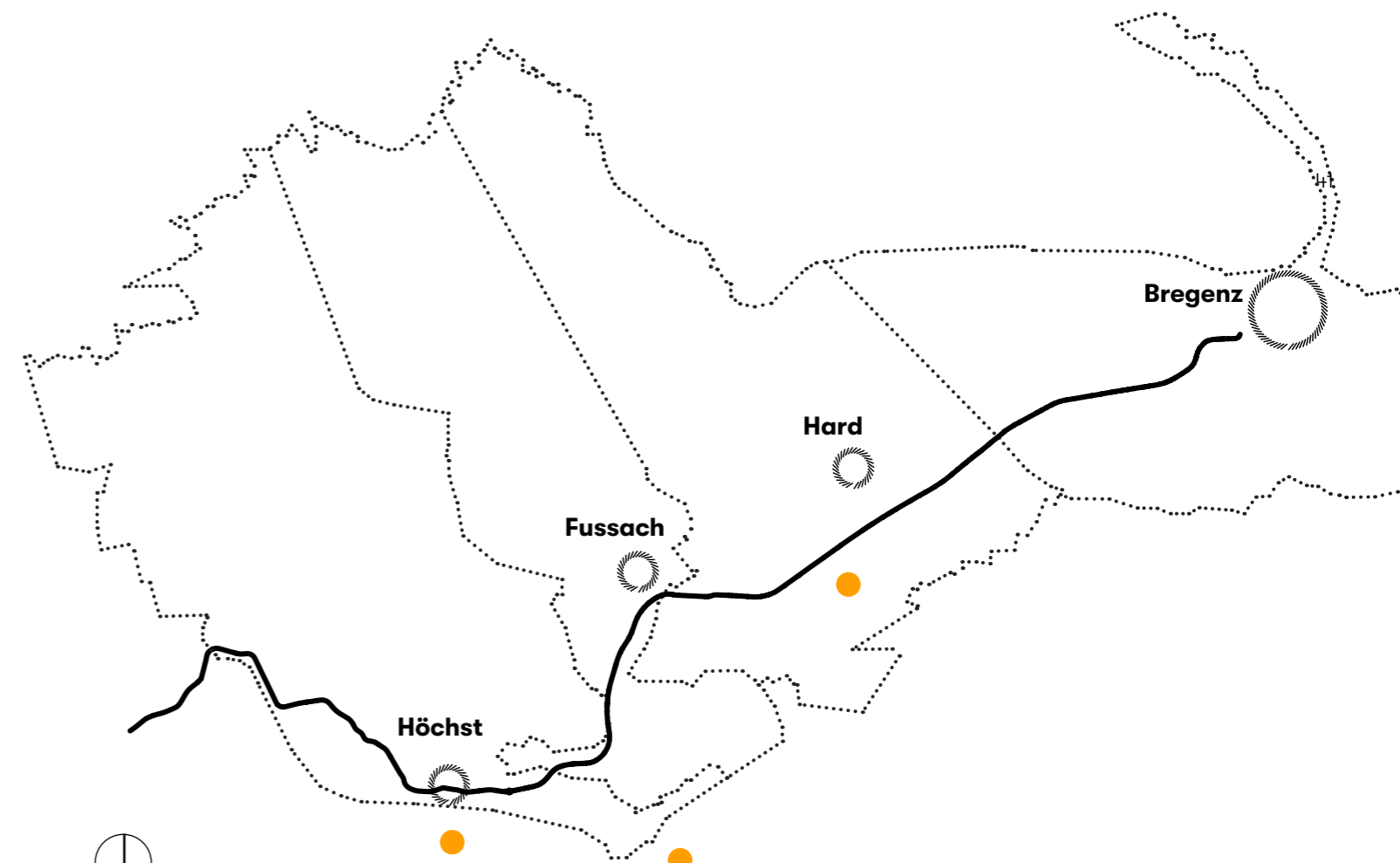
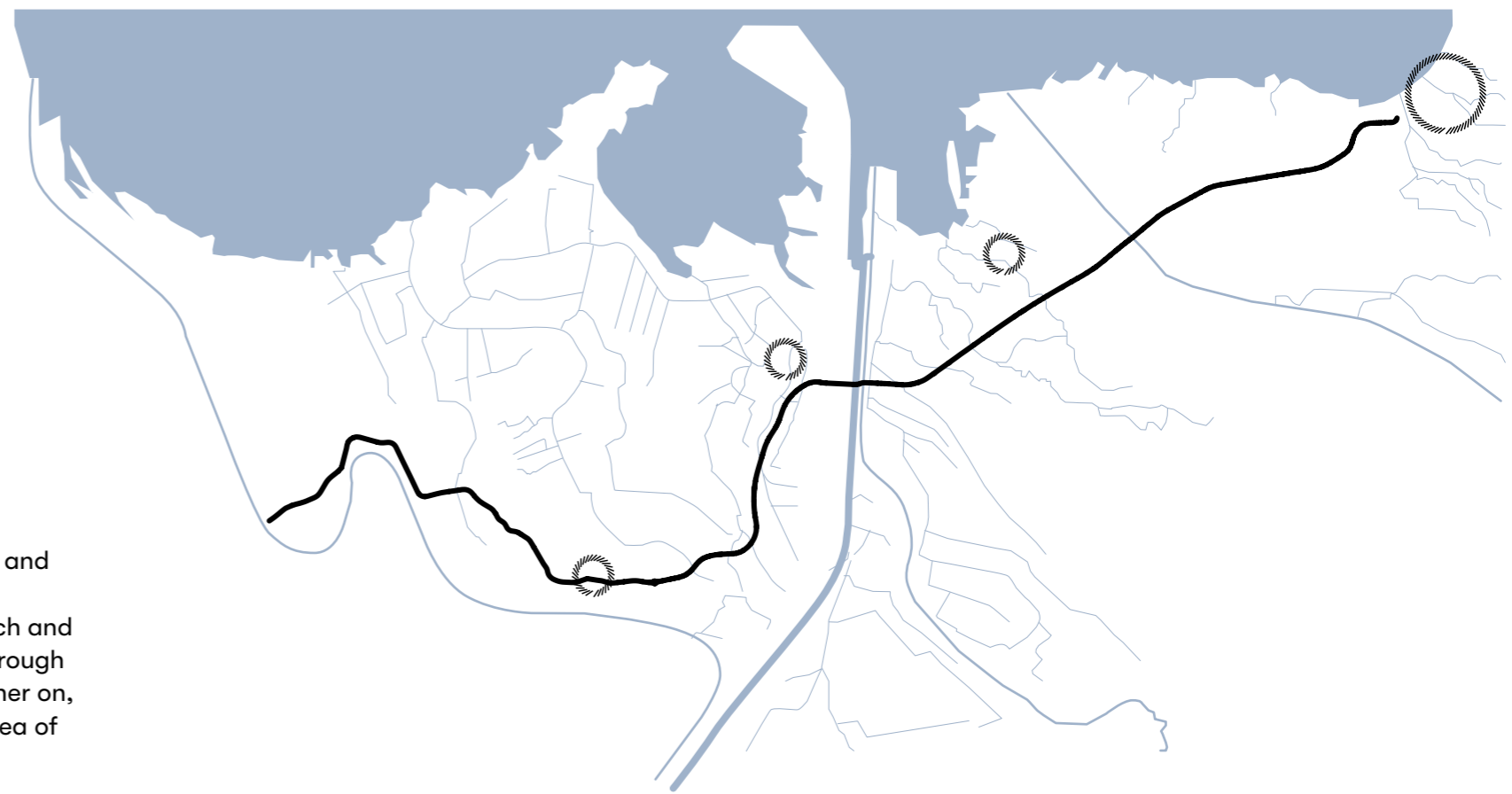
Reflection Site Situations

The reflection site encompasses the zone directly connected to the L202, spanning from east to west through the villages of Höchst, Fussach, Hard, and Bregenz.

In Höchst, the L202 runs directly through the village center, while in Fussach and Hard, it bypasses the central areas. In Bregenz, the road enters the city through a fringe zone. Although it intersects with the city center at some point further on, the section of interest for this brief lies within the peripheral or entrance area of Bregenz.

This variation in centralities, pivoting around different radii along the L202, creates a range of spatial situations and atmospheres. Adding to this complexity, the green and blue infrastructure—such as natural landscapes and waterways—intersects with the L202 as it weaves through the reflection site. Nearby mobility nodes, such as local train stations, introduce additional magnets within the reflection site, further shaping its dynamics and contributing to the need for a coherent, integrated whole.

The L202 can thus be seen as a string of pearls—an economic spine, a ribbon punctuated by nodes and atmospheres, each contributing to the unique character and opportunities of the region.



- municipal borders
- Magistrale
- ⊙ village centres
- train stations
- water/blue infrastructure

Crossing/Corridors
↔



Weave
▨▨▨▨



Central areas
⊙



This chapter aims to explore and highlight recurring spatial characteristics and situations found along the stretch of the L202.

Crossing / Corridors

This situation is defined by natural elements that intersect the reflection site. These elements, whether prominent or subtle in presence, create crossings and corridors that connect the area to a broader regional context.

Weave

This situation is characterized by loosely arranged buildings located along both sides of the road. The lack of spatial cohesion between the two sides results in an undefined and fragmented area, with no clearly articulated or distinct identity.

Central Areas

Central areas are defined by a denser, more cohesive spatial structure along the road. These areas typically host key village infrastructure, such as schools, grocery stores, churches, banks, and other essential facilities for daily needs. In this context, the central areas are also marked by historical fragments that reflect the origins of the original village settlement.






Transition

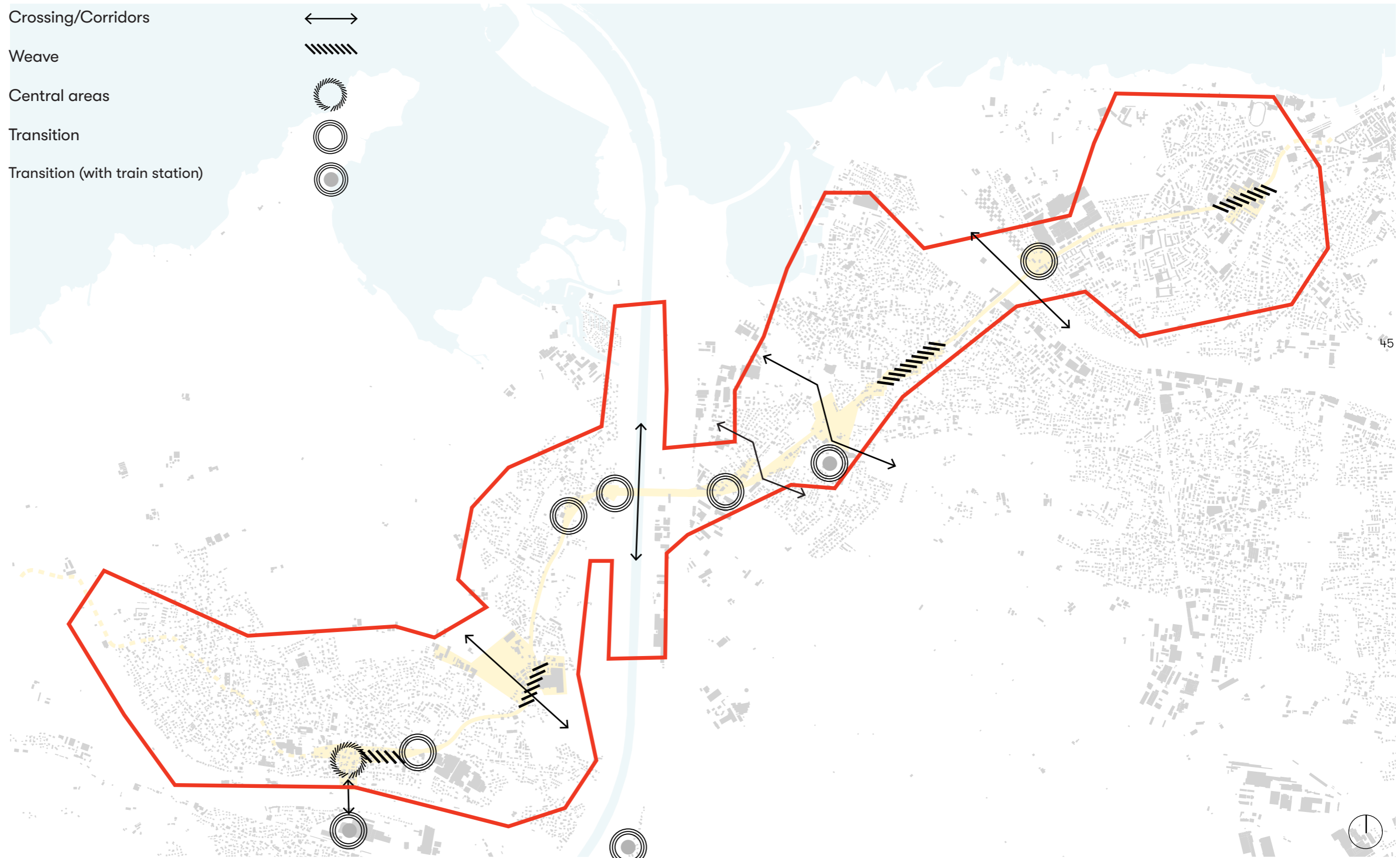
The L202 functions as a string of pearls, with distinct situations transitioning from one to another. Transitions are characterized by spatial cues or articulations that signal a change in atmosphere. This includes the entrance zones to village centers, even when these centers are not directly located on the main thoroughfare. These zones serve as key points of transition and “announcement” of the approaching context.

Transition
⊙



Reflection site

- Crossing/Corridors 
- Weave 
- Central areas 
- Transition 
- Transition (with train station) 



V Project site

Train frequency:
S3 (Bregenz - Hard/Fussach - St. Margrethen SG) every 30 minutes

Bus frequency:¹
Bus 130, Bregenz-Hard, every 30 mins
Bus 140, Bregenz-Gaißau, every 30 mins
Bus 141, Bregenz-Höchst, every 30 mins
Bus 160, Gaißau-Höchst| Lustenau, every 30 mins
Bus 163, Höchst-Lustenau, every 30 mins
Bus 165, Gaißau-Lustenau, every 30 mins

cars/lorries per day:²
up to 14065 vehicles in 24 hours (counting point: 9054_3; Höchst in september 2022)

speed limit:³
on L202 generally 50 or 60 km/h, partially limited to 40 km/h

¹ source: <https://www.vmobil.at/bus-bahn/das-vvv-liniennetz>

² source: https://vogis.cnv.at/webgis5_api/datalinq/report/t-zaehlstellen@query@view?zst_nummer=9072_1&jahr=2022&monat=9

³ source: <https://atlas.vorarlberg.at/portal/map/Transport%20und%20Verkehr/Verkehrsinformationen>

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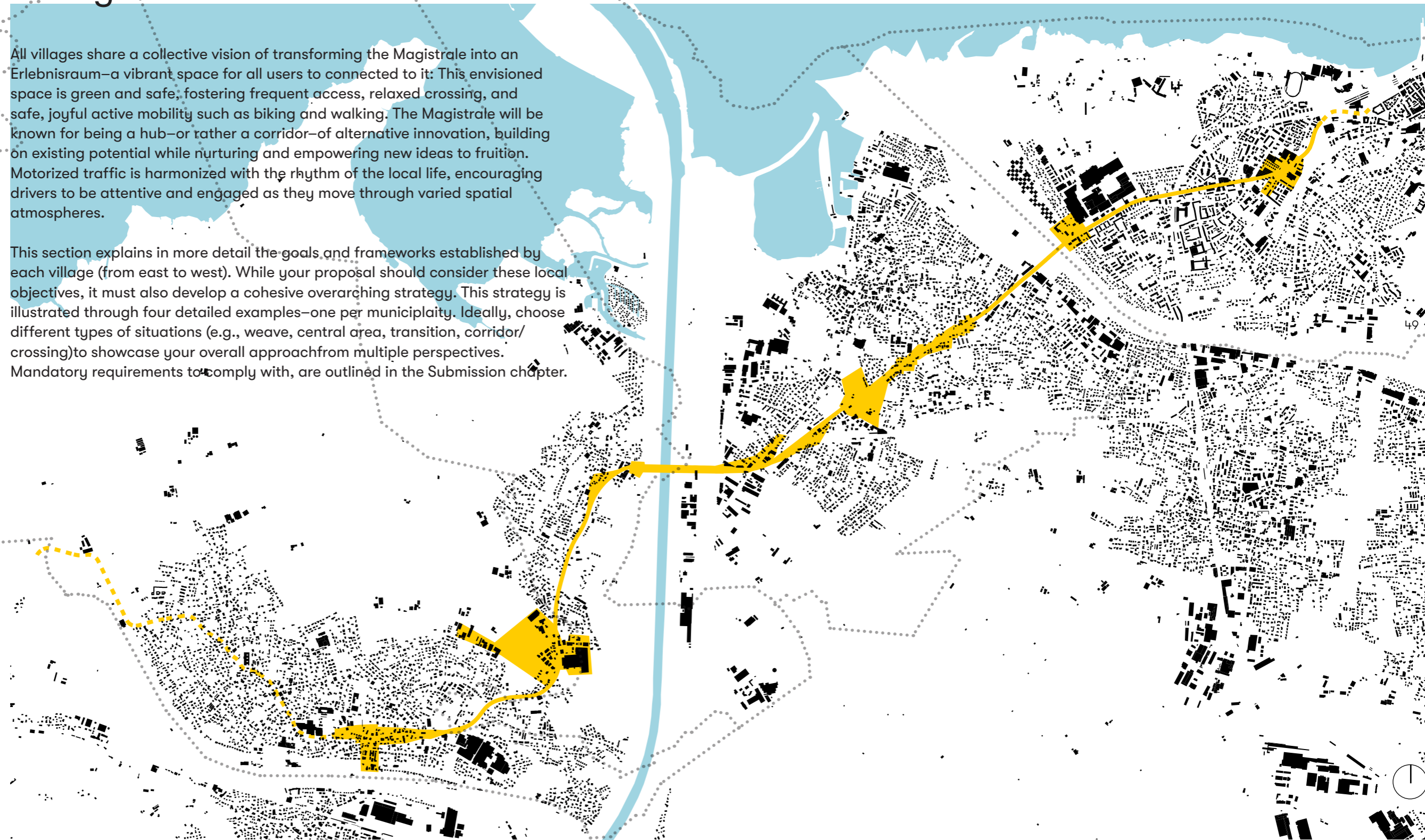


Project site

Protagonists

All villages share a collective vision of transforming the Magistrale into an Erlebnisraum—a vibrant space for all users to connected to it: This envisioned space is green and safe, fostering frequent access, relaxed crossing, and safe, joyful active mobility such as biking and walking. The Magistrale will be known for being a hub—or rather a corridor—of alternative innovation, building on existing potential while nurturing and empowering new ideas to fruition. Motorized traffic is harmonized with the rhythm of the local life, encouraging drivers to be attentive and engaged as they move through varied spatial atmospheres.

This section explains in more detail the goals and frameworks established by each village (from east to west). While your proposal should consider these local objectives, it must also develop a cohesive overarching strategy. This strategy is illustrated through four detailed examples—one per municipality. Ideally, choose different types of situations (e.g., weave, central area, transition, corridor/crossing) to showcase your overall approach from multiple perspectives. Mandatory requirements to comply with, are outlined in the Submission chapter.



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focus area: entrance zone , view from the bridge



focus area: crossing L202 and Mariahilferstraße
© 2025 Google, Date:Sep 2023

Bregenz

The L202 serves as a major artery running through Bregenz. This brief focuses on a westward stretch, beginning approximately 300 meters beyond the main station, with particular attention to two key areas: a poorly defined crossing and the city's entrance zone.

Currently, this area is an unattractive and poorly designed streetscape, dominated by motorized traffic. It features unappealing green buffer zones and buildings that feel disconnected from the street. The environment is largely unwelcoming to active mobility: bike lanes are inadequately narrow, separated from traffic only by a painted line, and run dangerously close to a four-lane road. Pedestrian connections are sparse, further exacerbating the issue.

Please note that east of the project site, the L202 is part of the *Bregenz Mitte* urban development project, which will reroute and transform the road into a green boulevard.

The City of Bregenz has already commissioned a study that identified the following key goals:

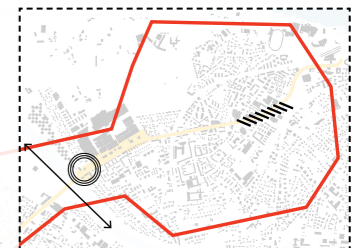
Urban Goals

- Create and emphasize points of orientation.
- Enhance the design by integrating the first row of buildings and surrounding open spaces.
- develop a precise urban proposal that responds directly to the specific context

Traffic Goals

- Ensure safe and attractive infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Retain existing public transport routes while prioritizing them through traffic light control.
- Increase the number of bus stops and make them more appealing.
- Improve the safety of pedestrian crossings.
- Maintain current capacity for motorized traffic
- Include parking spaces within the street design to enhance access to small-scale businesses.

Please choose one of two areas, that are outlined on the left page marked with „focus area“, in order to showcase your overall strategy in more detail. The icon which indicates a corridor situation, in this case the Bregenzer Arch, is an important atmospheric asset and eventually crucial for your overall strategy. For the detailed description please keep to one of the two focus areas.





focus area: entrance to Hard village centre
© 2025 Google



focus area: green corridor and nearby trainstation



focus area: residential mixed zone

Hard

The Leitbild for Hard identifies the area along the L202 as a zone for densification and consists of three parts, such as the commercial Zone (east) with the focus on retail, the residential mixed-zone and the industrial park in the south. In the European context, the focus lies on the residential mixed-zone, where there is no connection and spatial definition towards the L202. The entrance situation into Hard coming from Höchst, that overlaps with the industrial zone, mentioned above is another focus. It has no announcement, you'd just pass by, without realising the entrance to the village centre. Unused potentials seen in this context are the cross-connections of major green corridors and their enhancement, as well as the train station in close proximity to the L202.

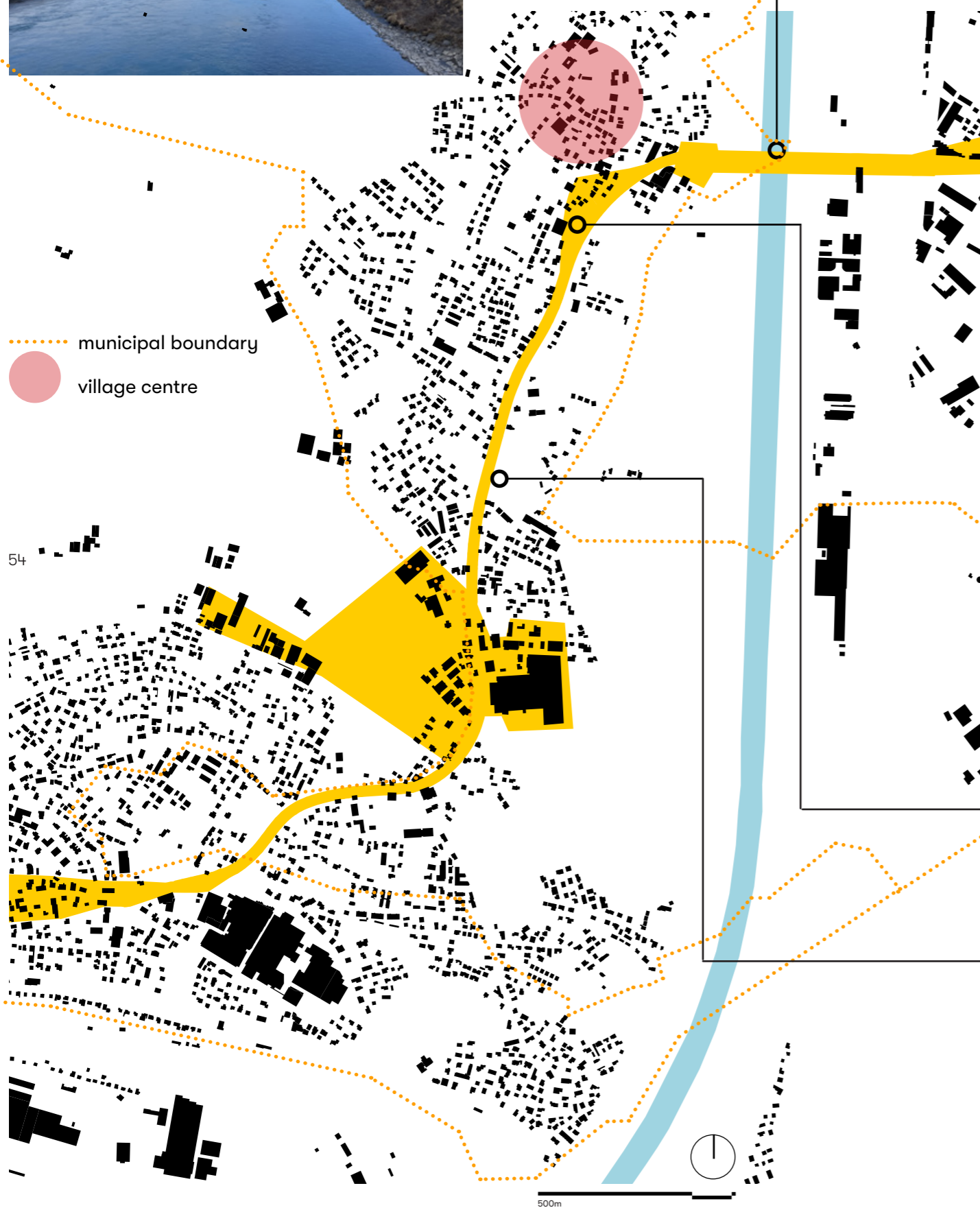
The municipality of Hard has already identified the following key goals for the area along the L202:

- Create defined spaces and shape the area to enhance its spatial coherence.
- Minimize the barrier effect and improve crossing opportunities.
- Enhance the streetscape by incorporating trees, green spaces, and a connected green infrastructure while creating safe spaces for active mobility.
- Ensure that densification does not increase residential development in areas already heavily affected by traffic noise. Higher building utilization rates along traffic corridors should depend on noise mitigation measures.
- Maximize residential quality along the L202 to the greatest extent possible.
- Building Heights:
 - Maximum of 4 stories as a general guideline.
 - Up to 5 stories permitted only in justified exceptions
 - Minimum building height of 8 meters for the first row of buildings along the L202.

Please choose one of the three „focus areas“ indicated on the left, in order to showcase your overall strategy in more detail.



- ⋯ municipal boundary
- village centre



Fussach

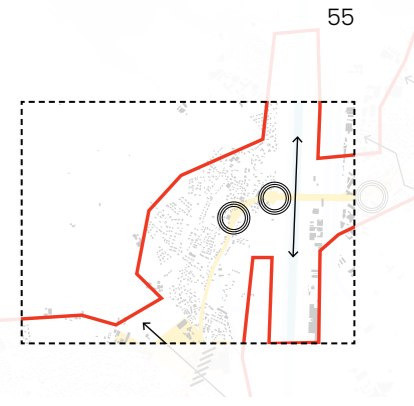
As shown on the map to the left, the municipal border between Fussach and Höchst is unusually intertwined, leading to unclear spatial allocations. On one hand, the close connection between the two municipalities is beneficial, as they almost merge in certain areas. However, for some parts officially belonging to Fussach, the connection to their own village center is barely tangible, as it is farther away than Höchst's center.

Similar to Hard, Fussach's village core is not directly located on the L202 but slightly removed. This creates two main concerns:

Visibility of village entrances: As in Hard, the entrances to Fussach's center branching off from the Magistrale are barely recognizable. One entrance is integrated into the ramp of the Rhine Bridge, while the other—one of our focus areas—is located at the Spar grocery market when approaching from Höchst. This entry point requires special attention in the planning process.

Connectivity for dispersed areas: The municipality aims to ensure that all inhabitants have easy access to the village center. Currently, the L202 acts as a significant barrier, both spatially and mentally. Fussach still retains several large open green areas along the Magistrale, which could be thoughtfully integrated into the overall strategy to create safe, engaging, and varied pathways and crossings toward the center. It is important to highlight again the close proximity of the Hard train station, located adjacent to the L202, as it presents a key opportunity to enhance overall connectivity.

Please choose one of the two „focus areas“ indicated to the left and below, in order to showcase your overall strategy in greater detail. In the case of „connectivity for dispersed areas“, choose points of crossings according to your strategic concept. The point indicated here, is merely an example and not a preferred location.



focus area: connectivity for dispersed areas



focus area: entrance to village centre



Höchst

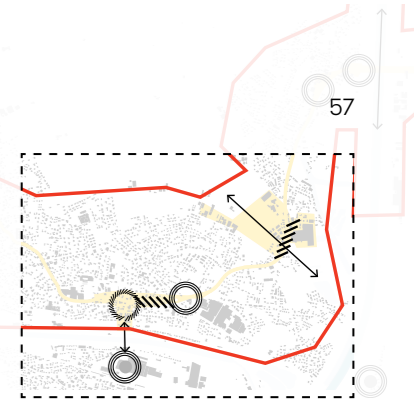
In Höchst, the Magistrale passes directly through the village centre. This is quite charming, as the area is characterized by numerous old buildings with original wooden claddings, a prominent church, and other public facilities lining the street. The road's winding course reflects the organic growth of the settlement, contributing to a strong sense of place despite the heavy traffic that flows past the often quaint and small houses.

Three of the focus areas are spatially closely connected: approaching from Fussach, the sequence starts with the roundabout - a faceless entrance situation, followed by the „sandwiched“ stretch leading to the central crossing, where the L202 splits towards the swiss border or continuous as the L19 through the elongated municipality of Höchst. The fourth focus area is located in an industrial zone, characterized by varied scales and loosely arranged urban fabric. Plans for densifications are envisaged.

Höchst has developed a Leitbild with the following key aspects and goals:

- Building heights along the L202 four stories as a general guideline.
- Mix of uses where possible and sensible. In the center, the ground floors of buildings (especially street-facing) are used for center-promoting facilities.
- Increased focus on public space – Public space is the „stage“ where community interaction takes place.
- Creation and preservation of attractive, green, public walking and cycling paths to improve connectivity and network formation.

Please choose one of the four „focus areas“ indicated to the left and below, in order to showcase your overall strategy in greater detail. Although three of the four focus areas are spatially close and form a sequence, please select only one from the list.



focus area: centre ©2025 Google



focus area: between centre and roundabout



focus area: transition - roundabout



focus area: industrial area

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. At the top, a river flows through a wooded area. Below it, a large green field is visible. In the middle, a road runs horizontally, with a small house on the right. Below the road, there are several long, covered greenhouses. The bottom half of the image shows a large field with rows of crops, possibly corn or soybeans, in various stages of growth. The text 'VI Task & Submission' is overlaid on the top left of the image.

VI Task & Submission

Task Reflection site

The reflection site calls for a concept that formulates a strategy for reimagining a heavily frequented motorized street that cuts through villages and sensitive landscapes. What tools and actionable guidelines can address the entire length of this stretch to gradually transform it into the envisioned space?

At the core of your strategy lies a pivotal question: how can this route be transformed into an open space of possibilities—one where neighbourhoods, green areas, and active mobility can thrive alongside motorized traffic? Can this very infrastructure that supports economic prosperity evolve into an infrastructure of synergy, fostering a socially and ecologically resilient “Erlebnisraum” that benefits all entities connected to it?

From your initial thoughts to the acts of creating, designing, writing and drawing, the principle of Re:sourcing should be woven into every decision, ensuring a holistic and sustainable approach at every step.

Clear, Straight, Steady, and Flexible

Given the significant timescale of this endeavour, it is crucial to design a tool that is simple and accessible, ensuring it can be understood and applied as it transitions through many hands. The strategy must be clear and unwavering in defining red lines and absolute priorities—non-negotiable elements that anchor the vision. Simultaneously, it must incorporate flexibility, adapting to changing circumstances and welcoming new contributors who will enrich and carry the story forward.

Engaging and Compelling

The challenge at hand is to transform deeply ingrained habits, such as defaulting to car use over walking, and long-held beliefs, such as prioritizing economic growth above all else. To achieve this, your vision must captivate and inspire. Highlight the tangible benefits and demonstrate how much better life can become. Show that this transformation is collective and grounded in the potential we already possess. Aim to include everyone—children and seniors, car owners and cyclists—and everything: bees, plants, frogs, trees, earth, and asphalt. The plan must spark curiosity and commitment in every corner, creating a shared sense of purpose and possibility.

Project site

While this is primarily a challenge on a regional-scale, it has a profound local dimension that anchors the strategy and articulates its essence through four key scenarios.

Imagine the Magistrale as a “string of pearls” with a range of different situations along its course. Your proposal will reframe its identity and tell a new unified story. To translate your concept into action, focus on four pivotal scenarios (one for each municipality) that demonstrate how your vision unfolds in specific contexts. Provide a step-by-step explanation—think of it as a manual— that clearly outlines where critical decisions must be made and the reasoning behind them.

In this process, adopt a Re:sourcing mindset: your narrative, concept, and manual should act as a foundational source, capable of guiding the application of your idea across other situations along the Magistrale, ensuring its essence is adaptable yet consistently impactful.

Re: synergize

The historic development of hamlets and villages has long been intertwined with the streets that served as lifelines for settlements. Along the Magistrale, remnants of these connections remain visible in village centres, although contemporary village life has often shifted to more favorable locations or become dispersed across smaller residential areas. To reclaim the former significance of these spaces and harness their potential, a synergy must be re:established between “mobility corridors”, public spaces, programs and buildings. These synergies should reflect new priorities, where interventions create safe zones by integrating movement in the daily life of the villages. Drivers should naturally sense that they are passing through spaces where community and everyday life flourishes.

Re:rhythm

Engaging with the rhythm of local activities and the entities connected to them allows for tailored interventions that create not only safe spatial zones but also temporal zones. This requires attentiveness to the pulse of daily life, responding with programmatic adjustments, prioritizing local opportunities, and reinforcing safe, active mobility. Empowering communities to lead initiatives towards a healthy environment and fostering their potential builds upon what already exists, strengthening connections and creating a responsive, grounded framework.

„Must-Have“ Lens

The Magistrale encompasses a wide range of contexts, including village centers, expansive parking lots in front of supermarkets or factories, scenic views, natural corridors, major structural elements like the Rhine crossings, gas stations, and various intersections. Each community along this route also has distinct priorities and challenges, adding layers of complexity. It is therefore critical to carefully select the four scenarios—or “lenses”—that best capture the full scope of your concept.

Framework

We encourage participants to develop high-quality urban and functional solutions without being overly constrained by regulations and norms from the outset. While road and building regulations exist, they are often complex and challenging to apply. We strongly recommend maintaining the current road widths! Additionally, participants should follow the guidelines and objectives outlined in the municipal descriptions in the „Project Site“ chapter (pages 52–59).

Recommendation to collaborate with traffic engineers!

Submission

IMPORTANT: The following list of documents is a proposal by EUROPAN Austria; your submission documents need to comply with point 4.4 “Items to submit” of the EUROPAN 18 rules, available online.

All plans, sections and elevations shall be provided with a scale bar. Diagrams and concept drawings should correspond to the necessary scale of information and do not have to be to any particular scale. The detail of the drawings and illustrations should thoroughly express and match the focus of the concept. Please provide the following items on 3 A1 panels.



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Territorial site + Reflection site

Concept Idea

- Show how the site impacts and connects to the wider territory. Create a diagram highlighting and explaining significant characteristics and potentials you have selected as anchors for your overall concept.

Projecte site

Strategic Masterplan

- Use diagrams and schemes to present a set of tools, rules, and guidelines that illustrate the strategic masterplan. Explain the layout, programming, and densification of urban, public, and green spaces along the Magistrale.
- Provide a 1:10,000 site plan of the entire project site (it will be necessary to divide the plan into parts, according to your layout)

4 Lenses

- Show four detailed scenarios along the Magistrale, one from every village, each showcasing a distinct genius loci of your proposal. Illustrate how social, ecological, and mobility layers inform and complement each other, while demonstrating the principles of green spaces, public spaces, and their interconnection with motorized and active mobility (pedestrian and bicycle routes).

For each lens, provide plans, sections and elevations, sketches or visuals as necessary to fully understand your proposal.

Phasing Map/Timeline

- Present a timeline with milestones leading the Magistrale becoming an “Erlebnisraum”. Identify where initiating impulses along the Magistrale could most effectively trigger this transformation.

Spatial Visualization

- Include at least one perspective illustrating the design.

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