

COAC

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The Architects' Association of Catalonia, through its Barcelona branch, has joined local traders and residents in calling for a remodelling of Via Laietana to make it a civic hub for Ciutat Vella.

Under the slogan *Per un nou eix cívic, humanitzem la Via Laietana* [Let's humanise Via Laietana as a new civic hub], the campaign already enjoys the support of 115 collectives, associations and professionals calling for Barcelona City Council to get rid of one of the traffic lanes and restructure the avenue to recover space for pedestrians, increase the

width of the pavements and improve the general situation.

Via Laietana was built at the start of the 20th century with the aim of linking the city centre with the port, a vital area for Barcelona's economic activity, but instead it evolved into something completely the opposite: a physical barrier that divides Ciutat Vella in two. Thus, over the years, the increase in traffic levels has generated high levels of carbon dioxide emissions and the pavements discourage human interaction, undermining the district's potential and provoking the progressive abandonment of its magnificent buildings.

The remodelling has been put off for more than a decade, but now that renovation work has been carried out on other thoroughfares such as the Diagonal, Passeig de Gràcia, Balmes and the General Mitre ring road, it is felt that the recovery of Via Laietana as one of Barcelona's great axes and a benchmark for harmony, progress and citizenship can no longer be postponed.

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