



PROTECTION OF THE HISTORIC TOWN CENTRE

Bypass for La Orotava

La Orotava's mayor Francisco Linares will shortly meet with Canary Islands president Ángel Torres to discuss the bypass project that has been on hold for many years and is now finally to be revived.

This is an ambitious project that will significantly slow down traffic in the town centre of La Orotava, and will act to protect it. The bypass initiative involves improving the TF-21 and constructing a road that will direct traffic to the Las Cañadas del Teide National Park so that it no longer has to pass through the town centre. The budget for the project is estimated at around €30 million. "This construction has absolute priority for us because it is the access to one of our most important tourist attractions, Mount Teide National Park. This national park is one of the most visited in Spain and receives more than three million visitors every year" argues

Linares. Many people use the access via the north and thus via La Orotava.

In addition, the historic town centre as a whole is to be recognised as a world cultural heritage site. To achieve this, the centre would have to be better protected and partly declared a pedestrian zone. According to the mayor, this would only be possible, however, if the influx heading towards Las Cañadas was routed past the town. Narciso Pérez, the local Councillor for Heritage and Territorial Planning, explained the route of the bypass. It would run from the TF-5 motorway at Risco Caído parallel to the Barranco de La Arena. Then it would go north of La Charca past the Paseo de las Araucarias to the districts of Cruz de la Cebolla, Los Frontones and Las Dehesas until the bypass meets the TF-21 there again. That would be near the Santo Tomás de Aquino school in El Recodo.



↑ A bypass would improve protection to the centre of La Orotava

The project for this bypass was already discussed at the end of the 20th century and included in the 2003 Spatial Plan. The plan was suspended in 2006

because of the steep gradient of over ten per cent. In the meantime, corrections have been made in cooperation with the Island Council to eliminate the

technical problems. Both administrations had at that time budgeted for partial financing. For various reasons, however, the project came to a standstill.

"It's clear to us that the project as a whole is very complex, but it could be divided into sections that would make the bypass feasible and at least make it possible to avoid the town centre. The section between Paseo Las Araucarias and the TF-21 alone would significantly reduce the flow of traffic through the town centre. Equally important would be the section between the Colegio Santo Tomás de Aquino and the intersection at the San Antonio district. This would also remove the traffic pressure from the historic centre and the Villa de Arriba district" explains Pérez.

The current Francisco Linares administration believes that a town like La Orotava, which has such an important historical heritage in its midst, which is attractive to tourists and works sustainably, deserves a bypass. This alternative would at the same time increase traffic safety and protect the town centre. ■

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