



Book of Proceedings



7th ISUFitaly International Conference | Naples, 19-21 February 2026

CITY RENEWAL AND URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY

The morphological values of city traces



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BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS



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Naples and 7th ISUFItaly International Conference

ISUF Italy decided to hold its 7th International Conference in Naples, hosted by the Department of Architecture at the University of Naples "Federico II". The topic, *City Renewal and Urban Archaeology. The Morphological Value of City Traces*, has prompted a wide-ranging reflection on the role that traces – material but perhaps also immaterial – accumulated over time can play in the processes of interpretation, conservation and transformation of the contemporary city, understood as a space in which the various layers of history coexist and overlap.

The choice of this topic originates from the awareness that the challenges posed by our times – in which cities and territories are undergoing rapid and profound transformations driven by environmental, economic and social dynamics that are often indifferent to the values of the urban form – cannot be addressed exclusively through approaches focused on technological innovation, functional efficiency and the speed of intervention processes. Rather, they require a renewed focus on the historical and morphological complexity of urban and territorial contexts, reaffirming the value of a tradition of study to which Italian research has made theoretical and methodological contributions of the highest importance throughout the 20th century, and which regards the city as a complex historical organism, whose significance also lies in the capacity of its forms to preserve, transmit and reinterpret over time the traces of the transformations that have shaped its structure.

In this sense, discussing the *Morphological Value of City Traces* has meant not only addressing material remains of the past to be protected for their 'documentary' value, but interpreting such evidences as active elements in the construction of urban forms, whose 'monumental' value – that is, their formal value – should often be revealed through the project. The notion of 'trace' has proved, in the richness and variety of the contributions presented, to be a particularly fruitful interpretative category within the different theoretical and methodological approaches that characterise the field of urban morphology studies today. Road alignments that survive functional changes, land divisions that continue to guide the organisation of the built environment, typological continuities, settlement systems that maintain recognisable structural relationships with geographical forms, spatial configurations and relationships between the built environment and open space that

help define the identity of places were just some of the themes addressed during the conference.

The relationship between *City Renewal and Urban Archaeology* played a central role in the debate that unfolded over the three days of the conference. Whilst, on the one hand, the reference to urban archaeology was not interpreted exclusively in a disciplinary sense but was adopted as a thinking paradigm capable of guiding a stratigraphic reading of the city – in which the various temporalities that accompanied its formation emerge as essential components of its current structure – on the other hand, particular attention was devoted to the role of architectural and urban design in engaging with such legacies.

As the archaeologist Andreina Ricci observed, when fragments of the past emerge within the contemporary city, they often produce a sort of 'wound', as their morphological structure conflicts with the systems of order of the city on the surface. Furthermore, it is not uncommon that these remains do not appear because they are 'sought' through excavation, but resurface suddenly during infrastructure works, natural disasters or urban regeneration processes. In this sense, urban archaeology poses a question to the project that is as complex as it is urgent, concerning the composition of spatial systems belonging to different temporalities that are sometimes mutually in conflict. Precisely from this perspective, one of the most original aspects to emerge from the conference concerns the role attributed to the architectural project as a tool for knowledge and interpretation, as well as for the transformation, of the stratified city. Far from being regarded as a subsequent and separate phase from morphological and archaeological analysis, design was frequently presented in the papers as a critical tool capable of revealing latent relationships, recognising hidden continuities and constructing new forms of dialogue between different temporalities. Urban traces, in fact, never present themselves as mere objective data to be recorded or preserved but require an interpretative process that grasps their meaning within the city's overall structure. In this process, the project plays an essential role: it not only protects or enhances what remains but re-situates it within new systems of spatial relations that represent shared values. In this sense, the project does not take the form of an act of superimposition upon the existing but proves to be a practice of critical interpretation of duration, capable of transforming urban memory into an active resource for the construction of the city of the future.

The choice of Naples as the venue for the conference has lent further significance to these reflections. Few European cities, in fact, demonstrate with equal clarity the depth of the stratifications that characterise the relationship between urban form and history. From the Greek-Roman city to the processes of modern and contemporary expansion, Naples offers an emblematic example of how the traces of the past continue to operate within current urban configurations, influencing their spatial organisation, settlement dynamics and possibilities for transformation. In this sense, the city represented not only the physical venue of the

conference, but also a significant cultural reference.

The response from the academic community has been particularly significant. The proceedings bring together 182 papers, organised into the conference's three main thematic areas – *Theory, Reading and Design* – and their respective sub-sections, offering a comprehensive overview of the current state of research on urban form and the relationships between urban archaeology, morphology and design. The conference also confirmed the international dimension of the academic community associated with ISUF. Although the event was organised as part of ISUFItaly's activities, alongside the participation of scholars from numerous Italian universities, the volume brings together contributions developed within European and non-European contexts, demonstrating the network's ability to connect different research experiences, cultural traditions and geographical contexts around a shared reflection on urban form.

We entrust these Proceedings to the academic community in the hope that the reflections gathered here may help to stimulate further research into the morphological value of urban traces and their role in urban renewal processes. At a time in history when the pressure for change appears ever more intense, recognising and interpreting the forms of permanence represents not merely an exercise in knowledge, but an essential condition for building transformations capable of combining memory, identity and a responsible vision of the future.

The Conference Chairs

Giuseppe Strappa

Renato Capozzi

Federica Visconti



Urban Archaeology and Design

In recent years, the relationship between urban archaeology, urban morphology and contemporary design has returned to the center of international architectural debate. At a stage where the project mainly engages with the existing city – with its layered structures, permanences, and discontinuities – the material traces of the past no longer appear merely as testimonies to be preserved, but as active components through which the transformative possibilities of the contemporary city may be critically interpreted.

It is within this framework that the seventh ISUIItaly Conference, *City Renewal and Urban Archaeology. The Morphological Value of City Traces*, takes place, focusing on the morphological value of urban traces and on the role that archaeology and design may assume within processes of urban renewal. The proceedings collect contributions from different disciplinary, geographical, and cultural fields, united by a shared attempt to interpret the city as a complex organism shaped by permanences, fractures, superimpositions, and rewritings.

As Aldo Rossi wrote, “the city is in its history”, and its form coincides with the sedimentation of urban facts capable of traversing time and constructing permanences within transformation. From this perspective, archaeological traces are not merely residual materials belonging to concluded historical epochs, but elements capable of orienting new interpretations of urban structure, revealing deep continuities between the ancient and the contemporary city.

In this sense, the reference to urban archaeology takes on a central meaning. Not as a practice aimed at the enhancement of the individual artifact or of one historical phase prevailing over another, but as a design-oriented gaze directed toward the urban phenomenon as a whole, understood through the continuity of its transformations and stratifications. The city is thus interpreted as a processual organism, in which different temporalities coexist within a single evolutionary process, making archaeology not a separate field, but a structural component of reflection on the design of the existing city.

Many of the contributions included in the volume emphasize on the layered and processual nature of the city, on the dialectic between void and built form, between surfacing and concealment, between fragment and urban order. What emerges are readings that interpret ruins, substructures, historical infrastructures, ancient traces, and typological permanences

as matrices capable of generating new spatial configurations and new social relationships. The archaeological city is therefore understood not as a specialist *enclave* detached from urban life, but as an integral part of an inhabited and continuously re-signified environment. The archaeological issue, approached in terms of continuity rather than as the mere enhancement of the isolated fragment, may thus become an opportunity to orient directions of urban development capable of working through relationships between parts, structural permanences, and connections among different temporalities of the city, opposing logics of isolation and separation of urban materials.

Within this framework, the morphological issue takes on a central role. It is not simply a matter of recognizing the persistence of forms over time, but of understanding the processes through which such forms are transformed, reinterpreted, and reactivated. The morphological approach, recalled transversally in many of the studies collected in the volume, does not coincide with a static description of the city; rather, it constitutes an interpretative method capable of reading the relationships between settlement structure, topography, use, temporality, and transformation. Urban morphology thus becomes both a critical and a design tool: it allows latent continuities, resistant geometries, structural permanences, and evolutionary possibilities within historical and contemporary fabrics to be identified.

Research developed within the Italian typomorphological school has shown, in this regard, how the city may be interpreted as an organism in continuous transformation, within which typological processes do not constitute static elements but structures capable of adaptation, mutation, and permanence. Urban form therefore appears as the outcome of multiple and overlapping layers, in which erosion and deposition, continuity and fracture, absence and recomposition coexist within the same transformative dynamic. The contemporary city thus emerges as a complex morphological structure in which different temporalities coexist in conditions of reciprocal interference. Michel Foucault recalled how history does not proceed through linear sequences, but through "series of discontinuous depths", while Michel Serres described time as a "lacunary and sporadic" matter, composed of returns, suspensions, and accelerations. Urban traces therefore do not appear as fixed or completed elements, but as unstable materials continuously exposed to processes of transformation, reuse, and re-signification. Many of the contributions in the volume move precisely within this tension: between memory and design, permanence and mutation, continuity and discontinuity. The notion of the "trace" is continuously redefined: no longer a simple material residue, but an ordering principle, a latent figure, an invisible infrastructure, threshold, margin, urban void. In some cases, the trace guides processes of urban recomposition; in others, it acts as an element of resistance or as an opportunity to redefine the relationship between the consolidated city, landscape, and public space.

Through this plurality of positions, the proceedings convey an image of the contemporary city as an intrinsically stratified and

relational reality, in which architectural and urban design are called upon to engage not with not isolated objects, but with complex systems of permanences and transformations. Urban archaeology is thus removed both from a purely specialist dimension, confined to archaeological expertise alone, and from an exclusively technical one, to be relocated within a broader reflection on the social and spatial meaning of design.

As Vittorio Gregotti recalled, conservation without design risks becoming a form of immobilization of reality; on the contrary, design may restore an operative dimension to archaeological traces by reinserting them into the living processes of the city. What emerges is therefore an idea of design as an interpretative and processual practice, capable of operating through relationships between different times, between surfaces and subsoil conditions, between memory and contemporary use, between lost fragments and new forms of urban continuity.

In this sense, urban archaeology is not interpreted as a practice aimed at the simple conservation of the past, but as an integral part of a design reflection on the existing city, on its processes of transformation and on the continuities that can still be built between different urban temporalities and strata.

Bruna Di Palma
Francesca Coppolino
Valeria Defilippis
Salvatore Daniele Lombardi



Call and organization

City Renewal and Urban Archaeology The Morphological Value of City Traces

ISUFItaly, International Seminar on Urban Form, Italian Network, organizes its seventh Conference in Naples on 19-21 February 2026. The theme of the conference is "City Renewal and Urban Archaeology. The Morphological Value of City Traces". Following the previous ISUFItaly conferences themes, dealing mainly with the relationships between urban morphology, history and architectural design, the seventh Conference aims to pose the problem of the relationship between the emergence of urban archaeological traces and the often conspicuous morphological value that this formal legacy can potentially generate through urban design as tool to establish links between contemporary city and artefacts from the past: through the creation of large-scale urban archaeological parks or the construction of archaeological roofs; through establishing unprecedented relationship with infrastructures related to underground level different from those of the city 'in surface'.

The theme of urban continuity/discontinuity in the contemporary city and the role of urban architecture as a necessary intermediary, or condition of possibilities, between the historical city, the public space and possible congruent transformations in the contemporary age, are thus re-proposed.

The Conference Chairs
Giuseppe Strappa
Renato Capozzi
Federica Visconti

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Prenestina Linear System

Urban archaeology, climate-ready public space, welfare and housing dynamics from Rome to Gabii

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Abstract. Rome's eastern territories are characterised by a dispersed and stratified urban form, where archaeological traces, ancient routes and modern infrastructures coexist without producing a continuous fabric. Along the Via Prenestina, this condition has historically structured access to the city while remaining marginal in terms of public space and urban welfare, through an heterogeneous 18 km fabric spanning from Porta Esquilina to Gabii. This paper interprets the corridor as a persistent archaeological linear system, whose discontinuous traces generate morphological value for contemporary city renewal, while also shaping differentiated socio-spatial and real estate conditions along the west-east gradient. Drawing on urban morphology and urban archaeology, archaeological remains are read not as isolated heritage sites but as a spatial substratum capable of structuring accessibility, public space and everyday practices. Renewal is articulated through a node-based approach, focusing on locations where archaeological depth intersects with welfare-related infrastructures and mobility systems. Within this framework, real estate dynamics are addressed as an intrinsic component of urban morphology, reflecting existing spatial conditions and acting as a constraint for welfare-oriented transformation rather than as a driver of extractive valorisation. The paper further argues that climate adaptation in archaeologically sensitive contexts requires distributed, climate-ready public space rather than large peripheral green areas. Vegetation is therefore interpreted as an ecological and morphological infrastructure embedded within everyday urban spaces. The Prenestina corridor is proposed as a framework for integrating archaeology, public space and climate adaptation and non-extractive approaches to urban value in fragmented metropolitan contexts.



Figure 1. Prenestina Linear System. Keyplan, Themes and Structure.

Urban archaeology as morphological value

Rome’s eastern territories represent one of the most complex morphological conditions within the contemporary European city. Unlike compact urban systems structured by continuity and density, this part of Rome is characterised by a dispersed and stratified configuration, where archaeological traces, ancient routes, modern infrastructures, hydrological systems and heterogeneous settlements coexist without converging into a unified urban fabric. Along the Prenestina axis, this condition is particularly evident: successive layers – from the ancient road to modern mobility corridors – structure access to the city while producing a weak and discontinuous public-space system. Rather than interpreting this condition as a deficit or as an outcome of uncontrolled growth alone, this paper reads the Prenestina corridor as a persistent archaeological linear system. In this perspective, archaeology is not treated as a set of isolated sites to be protected or valorised, but as a material substratum that continues to structure accessibility, spatial relations and the distribution of open spaces. This approach builds on the urban morphological view that earlier spatial structures persist through transformation and remain legible in contemporary urban form (Conzen, 1968; Caniggia and Maffei, 2001).

Urban archaeology contributes to morphological interpretation by revealing spatial organisations – street patterns, civic spaces, infrastructural arrangements – that exceed the scale of the single monument. In historically layered cities such as Rome, archaeological traces are embedded in the living city and cannot be separated from contemporary urban dynamics. The key issue for city renewal is therefore not only protection, but integration: how archaeological traces can contribute to structuring public space, accessibility and everyday use in fragmented metropolitan territories.

Rome’s eastern sector underscores the limits of single-issue regeneration strategies and calls for integrated, cross-sectoral approaches. In this context, the Prenestina corridor illustrates how linear infrastructure can act as a strategic interface, reassembling fragmented urban fabrics, activating cultural and environmental resources, and fostering new forms of sustainable metropolitan development.

“City for young people”: Climate-ready public space in archaeologically sensitive contexts

The relevance of welfare-oriented renewal along Prenestina is also demographic. Official municipal statistics indicate that Rome’s registered population decreased from 2,810,024 (31 December 2023) to 2,797,266 (31 December 2024), a decline of 0.45%. This trend reinforces the need to interpret peripheral and semi-peripheral corridors not only as infrastructural spaces, but as environments where accessibility to services, public space quality and everyday liveability can influence residential stability and the retention of younger groups.

At the same time, national demographic evidence confirms long-term ageing dynamics and a declining share of minors, while migration partially reshapes age structures. In the Prenestina corridor, this means that renewal strategies should explicitly address the conditions that matter to younger residents and households: affordable mobility, accessible welfare services, usable and thermally comfortable public spaces, and the availability of housing options compatible with local incomes. Climate adaptation is an unavoidable dimension of contemporary urban renewal, especially in Mediterranean cities exposed to heat stress. In archaeologically sensitive contexts, however, climate strategies cannot rely on generic greening or deep excavation. They must be conceived as climate-ready public spaces, understood as morphological devices capable of enhancing habitability while respecting subsurface constraints.

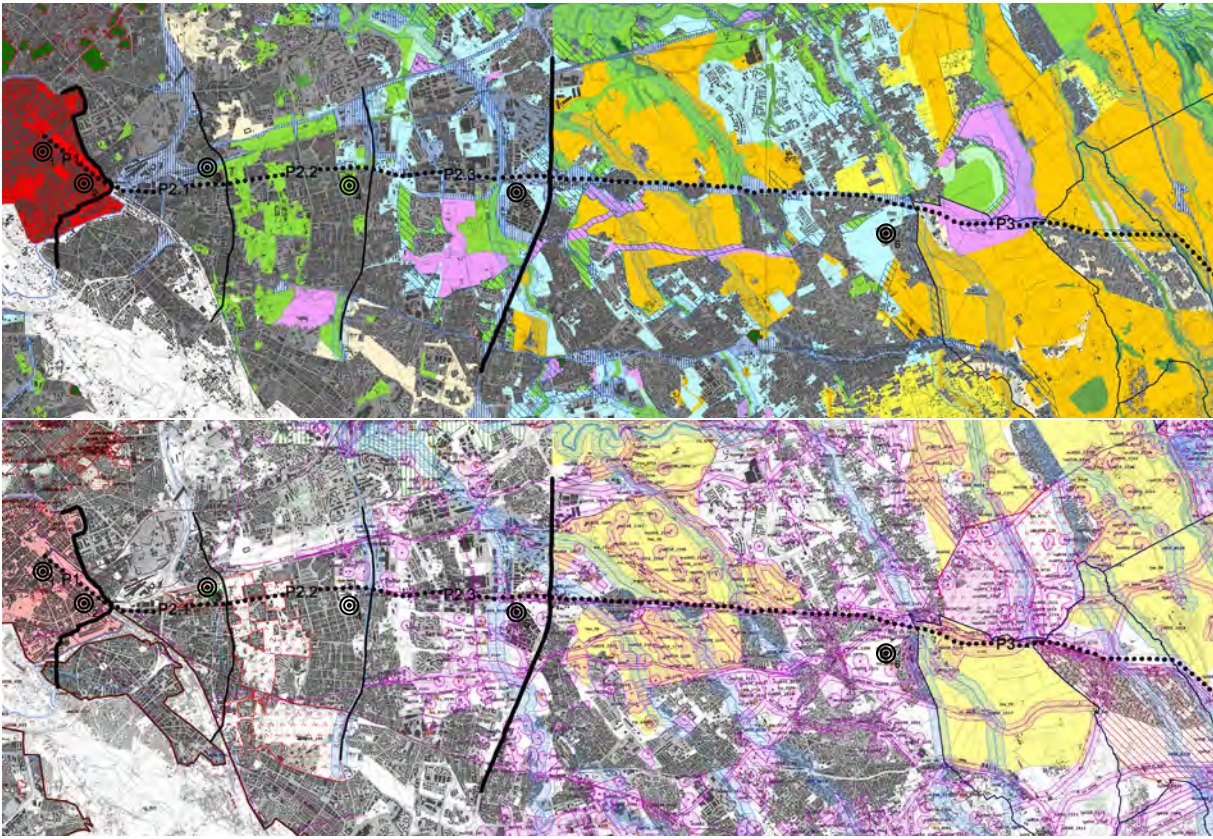


Figure 2. Prenestina Linear System on “Piano Territoriale Paesaggistico Regionale” (PTPR) del Lazio.

Recent ecological research demonstrates that urban trees and vegetation play a structural role in regulating microclimate and supporting biodiversity; this is particularly relevant in Mediterranean contexts (Caporossi, Sabatini and Blasi, 2025). In operational terms, climate readiness along the Prenestina system translates into: (i) shade-oriented design concentrated where people walk and wait; (ii) permeability and de-paving where compatible with protection; and (iii) reversible planting systems (e.g., container-based vegetation) where ground planting is constrained. European policy and technical guidance on nature-based solutions supports this approach, framing vegetation as functional infrastructure rather than ornament.

A node-based reading: archaeology, welfare and public space

Urban renewal along Prenestina cannot be conceived as continuous transformation. The corridor is structurally discontinuous; therefore the paper adopts a node-based approach, focusing on locations where historical depth, accessibility and welfare-related uses converge.

Along the western segment, archaeological traces associated with Porta Maggiore, Tempio di Minerva Medica and the Sepolcro di Marco Virgilio Eurisace articulate a dense gateway condition, where monumental remains coexist with intense daily flows. In this context, renewal should reinforce archaeology as a structuring component of public space, linking it to nearby cultural and welfare infrastructures (e.g., Biblioteca Goffredo Mameli, Ospedale San Giovanni Addolorata) and to climate-ready urban rooms.

Further east, an archaeological cluster embedded within dense residential fabrics is structured

around Mausoleo di Largo Preneste, Torrione Prenestino, and Villa dei Gordiani, accompanied by cultural and social infrastructures such as MAAM and Teatro Biblioteca Quarticciolo. Here, the key morphological move is integration: archaeological areas should operate as neighbourhood-scale public-space anchors, extended by shaded paths and everyday welfare connections rather than being isolated enclaves.

In the outer and peri-urban (Ricci, 2006) portion, the corridor intersects landscape and deep-time traces such as Necropoli di Osteria dell’Osa, together with educational and community facilities including Istituto Tecnico Agrario Emilio Sereni and Villaggio Prenestino. In this condition, the archaeological landscape and the welfare landscape overlap; renewal becomes a set of light, climate-responsive accessibility devices rather than a single “project”.

At the eastern edge, Università di Tor Vergata and Policlinico Tor Vergata form an institutional belt close to Gabii, reinforcing the reading of the corridor as a welfare-and-knowledge system rather than a purely infrastructural corridor.

Distributed Greening: A Node-Based Framework for the Prenestina Axis

Evidence from international practice suggests that the climatic and perceptual effects of urban greening depend less on the presence of large, distant green reserves than on the distribution, continuity and proximity of vegetation to everyday urban activities. As discussed in ecological research and public lectures by Carlo Blasi (22 January 2026 at Department of Planning Design and Technology of Architecture, Sapienza University of Rome), extensive green areas at the metropolitan edge – such as Castel Porziano – perform essential environmental functions but have a limited direct cooling impact on dense neighbourhoods beyond a few kilometres. This reinforces the need for distributed green infrastructures embedded within the urban fabric.

For a historically layered and dispersed corridor such as Prenestina, a quantitative framework can be constructed around sensitive nodes – archaeological sites, welfare facilities, schools, health infrastructures and mobility interchanges – rather than around continuous linear planting alone.

A widely adopted operational scale in urban climate design is a 200-400 m radius buffer, corresponding to the distance within which shading and vegetation most directly affect pedestrian exposure and everyday use. A buffer with a 300 m radius covers approximately 0.28 km² (28 hectares), a scale compatible with neighbourhood-level intervention.

Within each node buffer, international experience suggests that incremental increases in tree canopy and permeable surfaces – rather than wholesale transformation – can produce measurable effects. In Barcelona’s green axes (Eixos Verds), pilot interventions achieved increases in permeable surfaces from 1% to 15%, introduced hundreds of new trees, and expanded pedestrian areas by tens of thousands of square metres, generating significant improvements in thermal comfort and street-level perception. In Medellín’s Green Corridors, the conversion of approximately 70 hectares across multiple corridors – through the planting of thousands of trees and hundreds of thousands of shrubs – was associated with local temperature reductions of 2–3°C along key axes.

Translated to the Prenestina context, a plausible order of magnitude for each priority node would involve: targeting a +10-15 percentage point increase in canopy/greenness within the buffer (through street trees, shaded paths, school edges and small open spaces); prioritising shade continuity along pedestrian routes and waiting areas (transit stops, entrances to archaeological sites, welfare facilities); combining in-ground planting with reversible systems (large containers, raised beds) where archaeological constraints limit excavation.

Furthermore, considering the current demographic trajectory towards young people and the vast number of local associations distributed across this territory, a propitious environment exists

for the inception of bottom-up projects driven by the local communities for reversible greening and public space programmes.

Climatic, perceptual and socio-economic implications

Urban-climate studies indicate that cooling and comfort benefits are spatially concentrated, typically strongest within a few hundred metres of shaded and vegetated areas. This spatial scale corresponds to the everyday catchment of archaeological and welfare nodes along the Prenestina axis, where microclimatic comfort directly affects daily practices. While international studies indicate that long-term improvements in environmental quality and public-space usability may influence real estate dynamics, such effects are neither automatic nor homogeneous. In socially sensitive corridors like Prenestina, this reinforces the need to frame greening strategies as welfare-oriented infrastructures, prioritising accessibility and everyday liveability over market-driven valorisation.

For the Prenestina corridor – where housing values remain generally lower than in central Rome – this reinforces the importance of framing greening as a welfare-oriented infrastructure. The objective is not extractive valorisation, but the redistribution of environmental benefits through accessible, climate-ready public spaces that support everyday life around archaeological, social and institutional nodes.

A distributed greening strategy dimensioned around node buffers allows the Prenestina corridor to function as a linear climatic infrastructure, without relying on large-scale land consumption. By aligning quantitative greening targets with archaeological sensitivity and welfare priorities, environmental adaptation becomes a morphological project: one that enhances thermal comfort, perceptual quality and urban liveability while preserving historical depth and social stability.

Real Estate Dynamics as a Spatial and Welfare Issue along the Prenestina Axis

Real estate dynamics along the Prenestina corridor cannot be understood through aggregate values or single-area readings alone. The structural fragmentation of the corridor is also clearly evident from an analysis of property values, which show spatial discontinuities and significant differences along the axis. For this reason, the analysis was structured by dividing the corridor into three macro-areas, used as reference units for interpreting settlement and property dynamics. From an estimative perspective, real estate values are not conceived as objectives of urban transformation, but as indicators of existing socio-spatial conditions and as constraints within which welfare-oriented regeneration strategies should be framed. In this sense, the real estate market reflects a progressive transformation of urban conditions, closely linked to accessibility, infrastructural provision and the variable role of open spaces and archaeological contexts along the west-east gradient.

In the western segment, around Pigneto, real estate valorisation is primarily driven by proximity to central areas, transport interchanges and cultural amenities. Here, the Prenestina axis intersects consolidated urban fabrics where renewal processes tend to follow logics of incremental densification and functional upgrading. Archaeological traces and public spaces operate as symbolic and spatial assets, contributing to neighbourhood attractiveness but also exposing these areas to risks of displacement and affordability loss. In this context, valorisation is often selective and market-driven, with limited capacity to redistribute benefits at the neighbourhood scale.

Moving eastward, between the inner residential districts and the large infrastructural belt, the real estate landscape becomes more heterogeneous. Areas around Villa dei Gordiani, Quarticciolo and Centocelle display a hybrid condition, where relatively affordable housing coexists with underused open spaces, archaeological sites and fragmented public facilities.



Figure 3. Porta Maggiore and the Sepolcro of Marco Virgilio Eurisiace.

OMI-based quotations confirm a higher variability of values, differentiated across residential, commercial and tertiary uses, while productive functions display generally lower and more discontinuous values. In these areas, valorisation does not automatically translate into real estate pressure; rather, it depends on the capacity to integrate accessibility, proximity services and environmental quality. Urban renewal can therefore still operate through public-space-led strategies, in which archaeological landscapes and climate-adaptive spaces enhance everyday liveability without being immediately capitalised into market value. Approaching the outer territories and the metropolitan edge, near the Grande Raccordo Anulare, real estate dynamics are shaped by a different logic.

Housing values are more strongly influenced by infrastructural accessibility, land availability and institutional presence than by proximity to the historic city. In these contexts, archaeological and landscape assets – such as Gabii and the Fosso dell'Osa system – do not function as catalysts for immediate market valorisation. Instead, they contribute to defining a long-term territorial identity, where housing, education and health infrastructures intersect within a low-density and environmentally sensitive framework.

The lower real estate values recorded in these macro-areas confirm a condition of perceived marginality, while simultaneously highlighting opportunities for social housing policies and experimental residential models consistent with welfare and climate-adaptation objectives. Across this west-east gradient, the Prenestina corridor reveals a fundamental tension between valorisation and welfare.

Where real estate dynamics are already strong, archaeological and public-space improvements risk reinforcing exclusionary trends.

Where market pressure is weaker, the same assets can support inclusive renewal by improving accessibility, climate comfort and everyday use without producing immediate displacement.

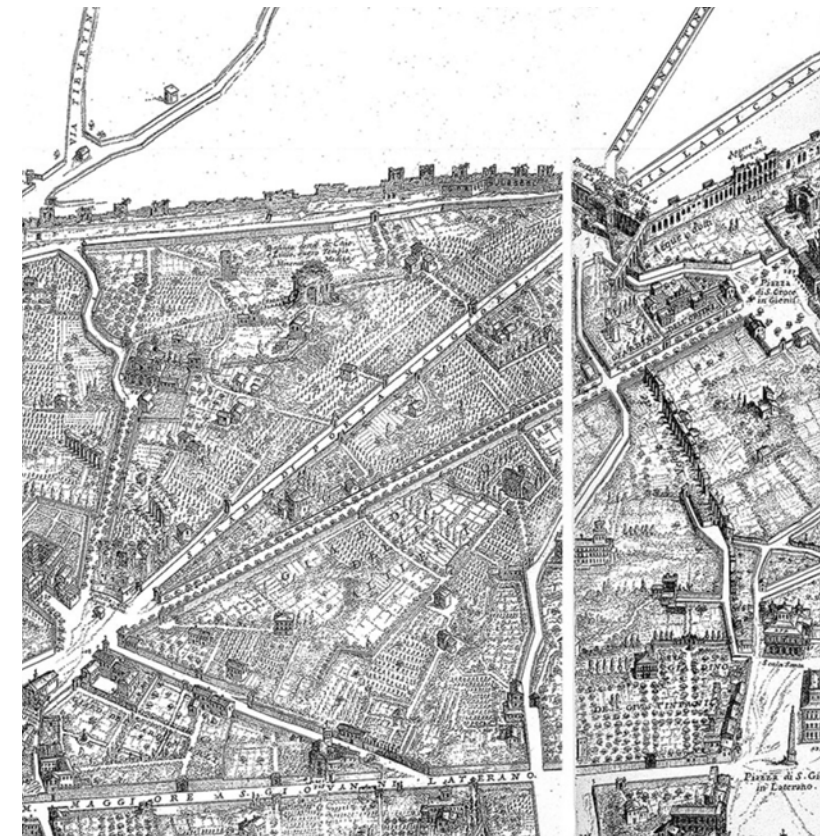


Figure 4. G.B. Falda, *Nuova pianta et alzata della città di Roma*, 1676.

This differentiation highlights the need to interpret real estate not as an external constraint, but as an intrinsic component of urban morphology, shaped by spatial structure, infrastructure and historical depth.

From this perspective, the Prenestina archaeological linear system offers a testing ground for a non-extractive model of valorisation, where increases in spatial quality are not automatically translated into market uplift. Instead, value is redistributed through welfare-oriented infrastructures, climate-ready public spaces and accessible archaeological landscapes. Such an approach aligns with ISUF debates on the relationship between urban form, socio-economic processes and long-term transformation, demonstrating how real estate dynamics can be addressed as a spatial and morphological issue rather than as a purely economic one.

Gabii as outer civic gateway: archaeology, form and welfare

Gabii is the outer gateway of the Prenestina archaeological linear system. Archaeological scholarship over the last two decades has highlighted the planned character of Gabii's urban form and its relevance to debates on early urbanism in Latium, offering evidence that is directly usable within a morphological argument (Terrenato *et al.*, 2014; Johnston and Mogetta, 2020). This makes Gabii more than a "site": it is a legible urban structure embedded in an open landscape, capable of functioning as a civic and welfare-oriented public space if accessibility, climate comfort and everyday usability are addressed. Within the node-based framework, Gabii can be interpreted as a metropolitan-scale welfare landscape, connected conceptually

(and potentially physically) to the corridor’s schools, cultural facilities, health infrastructures and public spaces. The aim is not to turn archaeology into a consumption enclave, but to position it as an inhabitable public environment within a fragmented city.

At the eastern edge of the Prenestina system, Gabii can be interpreted as an outer civic gateway, where archaeology, landscape and welfare-related infrastructures converge. In this context, the archaeological landscape does not operate in isolation, but in relation to a constellation of educational, healthcare and community facilities distributed across the surrounding territory. Accessibility, climate comfort and everyday usability become central criteria, enabling archaeology to function as a metropolitan-scale welfare resource rather than as a specialised heritage enclave.

Within this framework, the presence of social infrastructures plays a crucial mediating role. The Santa Maria Josefa Church (1997-2001), designed by Garofalo Miura Architects and located near the Fosso dell’Osa, exemplifies how community-based architecture can operate as a welfare anchor within an archaeologically and environmentally sensitive landscape. Rather than functioning solely as a religious building, the church supports everyday social practices, youth-oriented activities and proximity welfare, reinforcing the continuity between archaeological space and contemporary life. Integrated with the Gabii landscape and the broader Prenestina system, such social infrastructures contribute to redefining archaeology as an inhabitable public environment, embedded within networks of care, education and social interaction.

Conclusions

The Prenestina corridor can be read as a territorial structure composed of archaeological and welfare nodes rather than as a continuous fabric. By concentrating interventions at points of morphological significance, it becomes possible to balance archaeological protection, climate adaptation and everyday accessibility, while explicitly acknowledging demographic and housing-market constraints. In this sense, archaeological traces generate morphological value that can guide city renewal in dispersed metropolitan territories – an approach that directly supports ISUF debates on urban archaeology and contemporary urban form.

Notes

¹ If the paper argues for welfare-based, climate-ready accessibility, it must also acknowledge real estate dynamics as a major driver of change. Market indicators show that, in January 2026, the average asking price for residential sales in the municipality of Rome was €3,715/m². Along the Prenestina-related areas, values are generally lower but rising: for Centocelle–Tor de’ Schiavi, January 2026 asking prices averaged €2,926/m² (+6.83% year-on-year). For a micro-location on Via Prenestina (00177), January 2026 values are reported around €2,638/m² (with an OMI-referenced range). For Piazza del Quarticciolo, December 2025 values are reported around €2,550/m² (OMI-referenced range). These gradients matter for two reasons. First, they indicate that the corridor retains a degree of relative affordability compared to central and semi-central markets, making it critical for residents and younger households. Second, they suggest that mobility upgrades, public-space improvements and heritage accessibility – if not aligned with welfare safeguards – can accelerate rent and price pressures. The paper therefore treats real estate dynamics as a constraint that reinforces the need for renewal strategies explicitly oriented to public accessibility and welfare, rather than to extractive “uplift” logics. At a regional scale, official reporting by the real estate observatory of the Agenzia delle Entrate indicates a slight increase in average quotations in Lazio’s capital municipalities (and provides the monitoring framework used nationally). This supports the inclusion of housing-market monitoring as part of an integrated renewal framework for the Prenestina system.

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Figure 5. Tempio di Giunone Gabina. Detail from the drawing by S.Pomardi and etching by P. Parboni.

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