

Cities and Situations

after 20 years a new Plan for Bologna

Twenty years after the last general urban plan, Bologna has commenced the programme for the approval of a new instrument governing the territorial area.

This period has been marked by important changes in the city and territorial area and by a new urban planning law that has radically changed the relevant institutional framework. The proposal for the new urban plan is an **important event in the history of the city and of urban planning in Bologna.**

A PSC integrated with POC and RUE

The new instruments governing the transformation of the city territory, which substitutes the old General Development Plan (Law 20/2000) consists of the Structural Plan (PSC), the Operational Plan (POC) and the Urban Building Regulations (RUE). The three instruments are in the process of being developed in an integrated form. In relation to the PSC there will be launched a more general discussion as to the lines of territorial protection and development, which will then be developed and set out in detail in the other two instruments.

The **PSC consists** of a collection of documents: an illustrative report, three series of tables (“Figures of redevelopment”, “Strategies for quality”, “Regulations, Legislative framework, Outline survey, Strategic Environmental Evaluation (ValSat).

in seven cities, the PSC strategy

“Bologna metropolitan city” and “Bologna city of cities” are two images which briefly set out the approach that resulted in the *Outline Survey* and the enquiry process that was concluded with the *Preliminary Document*.

These two images have drawn attention to the **multiple nature of urban forms that are the distinguishing features of Bologna and its territory today**, expressing the desire to make best use of them.

In the work of developing the Structural Plan these images, which were still vague, have been translated and linked to specific parts of the territory in which projects, policies and actions are concentrated – areas upon whose transformation the redevelopment of the city and the surrounding metropolitan area depends. **The 7 Cities are territorial figures that seek to identify differences that are already present and to highlight the strategies** that guide various different actions which are described in terms of space, time and the people involved. **They represent the general project which links and animates the individual policies of the PSC**, reinterpreting also past ideas and proposals, **bridging administrative divisions beyond municipal level and those of the neighbourhoods of Bologna.**

The 7 Cities, of the **Railway**, the **By-pass road**, the **Hills**, the **River Reno**, the **River Savena**, the **Western Via Emilia**, and the **Eastern Via Emilia**, each inextricably linked

with the other, but each distinguishable through their history, characteristics and future strategies, identify as many series of spaces, developed and open, where various populations and social practices prevail, **where the way of living changes**. In these differences the richness of the city of today can be recognised and in their development is measured the utility of a structural plan which does not involve the territory in a uniform manner, but concentrates and diversifies interventions.

The City of the railway

The new image of Bologna

The City of the Railway identifies the series of urban spaces (new railway station, airport, expo centre, business centres) that are centres for international relations, where maximum accessibility and concentration of high quality functions come together with the many, varying populations that distinguish the contemporary demographic mixture. It is the city where over the forthcoming years there will be the most important transformations, where there will be a re-composition of the building developments that have grown up both before and after the urban and industrial revolution - historic Bologna and the district of Bolognina, separated by the railway track. It is the urban figure that stands at the centre of the redevelopment projects that the PSC seeks to oversee, which will provide a new image for Bologna in Italy and in the world.

The City of the by-pass road

From great barrier to link road

The City of the by-pass road identifies the sequence of developments that lie on either side of the great barrier to the north of the city. They suffer all the inconveniences and their habitability can only be improved through a system of links (intersections, car parks, cycling and pedestrian ways) and open spaces (green landscaping, areas of mitigation and agricultural wedges). The progressive inclusion of the by-pass road, destined to become a metropolitan road, occurs with the multiplication of the places directly linked to it – areas of new urban development and places to be re-developed which, overall, represent the range of metropolitan uses and practices.

City of the hills

A new statute

City of the hills seeks to give a new identity to a part of the city area that has been subjected to a process of progressive reduction and privatisation in its uses (almost entirely residential), breaking taboos (hill areas to remain as they are now) and establishing a new “habitability statute”.

Therefore: reconstruction of a system of connections and focal points (corridors, footpaths, stations, car parks) that diversify and qualify urban and metropolitan

accessibility; the identification of places to be developed as park links with areas that are heavily urbanised; creation of a mosaic of ecological, agricultural and semi-urban environments that are available for various uses by metropolitan inhabitants.

The City of the Reno

The construction of a landscape

The City of the Reno identifies the landscape of the river that flows westwards as a unifying element in a discontinuous metropolitan city, consisting of urban developments that are mainly residential. It is a city to be recognised as such and to be improved by working above all on the pedestrian and cycle links across it, on the centrality of the existing districts and on relations with the other Cities.

The City of the Savena

A residential and productive city-park

City of the Savena once again takes the theme of the double river park (to the east as well as the west) which is already a part of Bologna's urban layout. Here, however, the emphasis is shifted to the building development of the park, highlighting the difference between the environment of the Savena and that of the Reno, and therefore the differing role that open spaces can play in the two different contexts. To the east, the new Lungo Savena road, the high speed railway, the areas of new urban development in the Bologna city area and neighbouring districts constitute a real metropolitan city, where residential areas, quality manufacturing and services areas are developed together, interspersed by open parkland and agricultural spaces.

The City of the Western Via Emilia

Another metamorphosis

The Via Emilia links together places of historical importance with firmly rooted identities, but has also seen more contradictory developments: pollution, physical and functional decay, the significant presence of immigrant populations. In the PSC it becomes the focus for redevelopment and an occasion for reconstructing transversal links with neighbouring areas that have been interrupted for some time, by introducing a new public transport system, reducing private traffic, improving public spaces along the road, and restoring links with neighbouring urban centres. Differences in the transport systems and differences in the buildings that have been developed to the east and the west suggest different planning strategies.

A metropolitan transport service to the west, both above and below ground, will connect the Roman and medieval city with the first concentrated eighteenth and nineteenth century development, the old industrial centre of Santa Viola, the old district of Borgo Panigale developed with the creation of the public housing districts of the fifties, sixties and seventies .

Some urban episodes, different and autonomous, which may become a system restructuring the road and introducing a new public transport.

La City of the Eastern Via Emilia

Another metamorphosis

The Via Emilia links together places of historical importance with firmly rooted identities, but has also seen more contradictory developments: pollution, physical and functional decay, the significant presence of immigrant populations. In the PSC it becomes the focus for redevelopment and an occasion for reconstructing transversal links with neighbouring areas that have been interrupted for some time, by introducing a new public transport system, reducing private traffic, improving public areas along the road, and restoring links with neighbouring urban centres. Differences in the transport systems and differences in the buildings that have been developed to the east and the west suggest different planning strategies.

To the east a new automatic trolleybus, named Civis, will link the Roman and Medieval city with the eighteenth and nineteenth area of expansion through the garden city, with the modern Due Madonna and Fossolo districts, and with the new area planned by the PSC in the Savena area. This succession of interventions, each with green areas and services, will find as their common point of reference the redeveloped road.

Situations for local guidelines

The identification of **37 Situations, 22 of which are densely populated, identified with the names known to the inhabitants** in order to aid recognition of the places concerned, has the purpose of building up a suitable **agenda of actions** for the Operational Plans, the Implementation Plans and the Urban Building Regulations, in part entrusted to the initiative of the Districts. In this case the PSC has looked for a way of translating into urban planning language the indications that have emerged during the detailed programme of analysis, consultation and discussion that has led the experts, citizens and district institutions to bring their experience together in order to decide upon the importance of the problems and reach **possible solutions in the “micro-cities”**. Knowing that the quality of the relationships between space and society are not divisible and that a series of sector interventions, which are individually virtuous, do not guarantee tout-court the excellence of the overall outcome, and knowing also that the development of integrated urban policies is essential, the PSC is seeking to play its part by providing for the different implementing instruments a sort of *pro memoria* with reasoned priorities.

The Situations

The objective of spreading urban and environmental quality over the entire municipal territory has led to the identification of 37 Situations – aggregations of areas defined by

the PSC which have been identified by the presence of spatial, functional, environmental or landscape features that require each of them to be treated as a single unit.

22 of the Situations are in areas where the city is more densely populated, 6 have special functions (the airport, the CAAB, the expo centre, the station) and 9 are to be found in the rural territory of the valley or in the hills.

The question of quality is obviously posed in different ways and, whereas for the special and rural situations they are dealt with through specific agreements and projects, or with guidelines that specify the indications of the three systems, for the 22 situations in the typically urban and “mixed” areas of the territory a particular form of regulations has been put together, which contain “figured” recommendations (the schedules introduced in the Framework Regulations).

The objective of the Plan to improve local habitability has produced indications of a project nature (consistent with the strategic choices for the 7 cities and for the 3 Systems) which offer, for the 22 Situations, solutions to the difficulties and opportunities identified during the phase of consultation and discussion with the citizens. These indications together provide an agenda of actions, ordered according to criteria of priority, which assists the continuation of the process of construction/implementation of the PSC in order to produce actions aimed at integrated and sustainable accessibility, at ecological and environmental quality and at social quality.

Integrated and sustainable accessibility

- Safe pedestrian movement
- Presence of a safe network of cycle paths, which guarantees access to public places (schools, gardens, sports areas, parks)
- Accessibility with efficient forms of public transport to the main urban destinations
- Presence of car parks that make it possible to change between private and public forms of transport
- Increase in the availability of spaces for short and long stay parking
- Elimination or reduction of interference between slow transport routes (pedestrian and cycle routes) and fast transport (cars).

Ecological and environmental quality

- Presence of usable green spaces
- Increase of permeable open spaces
- Elimination/mitigation of electromagnetic pollution
- Mitigation of problems relating to the vulnerability of the water table.

Social quality

- Presence of an adequate network of services to meet the needs of both permanent and temporary inhabitants
- Integration of the network of services with green spaces and business structures
- Protection and restoration of historic features.

Systems and Contexts for extending quality

If the 7 Cities enable us to interpret the choices operated by the Structural Plan on certain parts of the territory that are judged to be strategic, it is in the Systems and in the Contexts, on the other hand, that we find the ways in which the PSC seeks to guide the interventions and the policies that involve the entire territory, pursuing the objective of spreading quality, bearing in mind the different conditions at the outset.

The planning of the three Systems - mobility, the public city, environment- is aimed at guaranteeing facilities and services that are regarded as essential for habitability. In the PSC it has been sought to highlight the objectives followed for each system and to set out the criteria for the choices made, examining also guidelines and planning choices beyond local level.

The Contexts – belonging to the Territory to be Developed, the Developed Territory, the Rural Territory - translate the project for the Development Plan into the form set out in Regional Law 20/2000 in order to dictate the regulations, defining for each part of the territory the urban and functional characteristics, the social, functional, environmental and morphological objectives and the relative service requirements.

Interpreting the logic of the legislation, which configures the context as a minimum unit for the regulation of the structural plan, the Bologna PSC proposes a level of disaggregation that is sensitive to the characteristics of the territory and makes it possible to give completeness to the redevelopment operations. This means contexts that are sufficiently broad, portions of territory recognisable for their urban characteristics, state of conservation, level of facilities, functional mix.