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*Paolo Avarello*

If the plan...

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*edited by Piergiorgio Bellagamba  
Piergiorgio Bellagamba  
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Luisa De Biasio Calimani  
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## The city model

*Piergiorgio Bellagamba*

The objective of the plan is that of defining a unitary design of the town, which recognizes its central role in the province of Ascoli Piceno: situated by the sea, in the Parco Marino area, at the head of the Tronto Valley settlement system; the bridgehead of the Marche region towards the northern part of the Abruzzo Region; a centre of considerable productive activities in the industrial, handicraft and tourist services sectors, very dynamic and with noteworthy development potential.

The Masterplan proposal seeks to overcome the limits imposed by current law, with a number of innovations:

- introduction of the 'Structure idea-indications plan', having a structural content;
- construction of a unitary structure of the town of San Benedetto, placing the central parts in relation with the whole of the town;
- definition of designs of central localities, able to form the structure of the new town design and of linking the various parts;
- the free acquisition of the public areas necessary for the 'town planning standards'.

### *Landscape and urban structure*

The design of the new town stems from the interpretation of the urban landscape: the pattern of the places causes the elements of the landscape, natural ones, of waters and vegetation, of the guidelines and nodes of the inhabited fabrics, to become design elements. The landscape becomes architecture of the town.

The network of watercourses that characterizes the provincial territory becomes a design for the town and contributes

towards achieving the aims of sustainability: watercourses become urban parks, relational spaces, offering green areas, nurseries of palm trees, with amenities for sport and culture.

### *Overcoming the physical and functional fragmentation of the town*

The separation of the 'capacities' and the instruments of governance of the territory has caused the fragmentation of our towns and cities, attributing 'mono-functional' uses to the areas and seeking sectoral solutions for the design of the urban layout. Open spaces and parts of the built fabric, with their wealth of contents and relations, cultural and morphological, ignore each other and adapt themselves to being taken into consideration for single aspects and sectors.

The transformations of the territory of San Benedetto over the last few decades have led to a settlement pattern that has severed the cultural, economic, productive and landscape relations between the sea, the hills and the inland inhabited centres. The north-south connection has been encouraged, and this has led to dividing the town territory into strips bounded by the transport infrastructures running parallel to the coast (the A14 motorway, national road no. 16, the Adriatic railway line, other local infrastructures).

### *Overcoming the method of 'separate planning'*

The Masterplan of a town is not just one of the many plans that the law has made available to the various administrations, but is the key instrument for defining the design of a town, leading to a synthesis of all the interpretations and indications of the various plans which, from different viewpoints and at different levels, deal with the same

place.

This is a theme that should be taken into very close consideration, otherwise the planning process will be a failure: territory and town must be regarded in a unitary fashion, not as opposed elements in the definition of the designs of places, and it is essential to overcome the fragmentation of the planning and design process.

### *Unitary town system, network of urban places*

The physical and historical-cultural conditions of the provincial territory, exemplifying the features of the territory of the Adriatic regions, lend themselves particularly to overcoming the limits of the current settlement model, to arrive at a system of town networks. The absence of urban processes of strong concentration favours the construction of a pattern in which each urban centre finds a coherent setting, which recognizes the values and significance present in them.

### *Town governance and form of collective spaces*

The cultural gap between instruments for town 'governance' and control of 'form' and quality of collective spaces remains open.