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Federico Oliva The new plan

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**A city to look after,
like a garden**
*Virginio Merola**

The process of urban planning that is changing, and will change, Bologna over the next fifteen years has assumed a definite character. The underlying idea is that of identifying the city of Bologna as a meeting place, a place for dialogue, a European city of moderate size, but large enough to have the capacity for accommodation, accessibility and attractiveness, exercising its role in a metropolitan and regional context. It is a city where development is seen as being based on the economy of knowledge, which rediscovers the multiple aspects of its culture. It is a city that stakes its future on the possibility of an urban context founded on quality, social cohesion, solidarity and innovation. It is a city that chooses to compete by cooperating in the global economy, through a network of regional, national and international relationships. The urban programme takes the form of specific redevelopment strategies - the 'seven cities' - and of 'situations' at neighbourhood level, each of which is identified with specific actions and objectives. The seven cities are conceived as a way of restoring value to the various aspects of the urban context, in order to highlight the various ways of living in Bologna and to develop urban quality as a means of reconciling different peoples, genders and generations. The three systems of transport, community facilities and environment are the framework that provide an unvarying context for guaranteeing sustainable development for the city. The choice of role for the city is clear and precise: we

are proposing Bologna as centre of the metropolitan city and capital of the regional urban system. The Municipal Structural Plan anticipates the strategic directions which provide the starting point for defining the Regional Territorial Plan in its discussion stage. Bologna's role can be seen as providing a driving force and a service to the cities of Emilia-Romagna as a whole, within the context of policies on transport, trade exhibitions and production, business and tourism - as a gateway to the regional territorial system that can give added value for a polycentrism which finally succeeds in operating as a system. In this Plan, the objective in its various forms - the city of encounter and dialogue - is to provide support to the citizen, meaning the person who lives in the city and who carries out various roles over the course of time and within the city area. Until now the plan has achieved wide support and participation - over 190 public meetings of different kinds, including Forums, neighbourhood meetings and urban planning workshops over three years of work - and seeks to continue in this way. It is an experience that is changing the way in which the city's Urban Planning department operates and is strengthening motivation and skill. This Plan assumes the concept of limitation and environmental value as a culture tout court. It seeks to limit territorial consumption and is accompanied by great attention towards architectural quality, energy saving, the development of alternative energies and consumption methods that do not produce waste but are conceived in a context of urban ecology. In this way public transport is regarded as a general

condition for the living standards of the city in its various forms and as a driving force for environmental recovery. Urban planning equalisation is an instrument for developing the public use of the city, for acquiring areas and contributing towards the creation of services and public works. The housing policy envisaged by the Plan provides for the creation, over a maximum period of fifteen years, of 8,000 residential units of which 2,000 are destined for social housing. Green fields transformation is limited to three territorial contexts, whereas the other interventions are for the transformation of brown field. Urban planning equalisation will serve to give more opportunities to all owners of land and to define the use of places according to the public objectives to be achieved. This administration is making decisions that have been awaited for more than twenty years: the new station, the redevelopment of the abandoned military areas, a new plan for the university, the creation of new public transport systems, the completion of the trade fair district, all carried out with projects and funding that are now operative, approved or undergoing approval. With this Municipal Structural Plan the City Administration is demonstrating its determination, following the example of the gardener, as the sociologist Bauman describes in his book *Modus Vivendi*, to strive in order to make Bologna a comfortable and attractive place in which to live.

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