



**Urbanistica n. 125**

September-December 2005

Distribution by [www.planum.net](http://www.planum.net)

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### Three questions to Jaime Lerner

*Elio Trusiani*

*Elio Trusiani:* Curitiba 40 years later: what were the conditions that led to the success of the planning process?

*Jaime Lerner:* The success of the planning process was due, without doubt, to the organization, management and choice of targeted strategies. There have however been some complementary aspects which may be regarded as the secrets of its success. The city adopted an adequate unitary strategy rather than isolated alternative solutions, in other words it took up proposals and solutions targeted on the life of persons. This choice corresponded to a practical vision of how to operate in one's own city and, on the basis thereof, solutions compatible with the life of the inhabitants were created and adapted. Another decisive factor was the type of development prefigured: a planning process that gave shape to a spatial structure that materialized project intentions in real space, which gave all the chance to participate, and which conferred an identity to the city's own culture.

*E.T.:* You have spoken about solutions targeted on the life of persons: what for example?

*J.L.:* One of the great measures carried out in Curitiba was thinking of a city based on persons and not on the automobile: I can guarantee that more than forty years ago it was not easy to adopt such a strategy and, above all, it was not a fashionable practice, indeed it was quite the reverse. Thinking that we drive so as to live and not live so as to drive. Moreover, I believe that the great merit was that of

understanding the necessity for an urban policy that would generate transformations immediately and not after decades of waiting. At the root of the great transformation there is the small transformation; it is fundamental to make things happen now and then to perfect and aim the process according to the changes in contemporary reality, following a flexible approach to urban planning according to an equation of co-responsibility.

*E.T.:* What do you mean by equation of co-responsibility?

*J.L.:* Financing a city should be thought out on the basis of the responsibility of each one of the actors/agents who define its life. It is necessary to recognize clearly the functions of the governments at the various levels, of the metropolitan organs, of the entrepreneurs, of the inhabitants. This means building an equation of co-responsibility. This optimizes the use of the resources and strengthens efforts. Creating a society with clearly defines responsibilities, in which private investment, used for producing infrastructures and services, is fundamental for attaining the goal and quality. Public transport brings this situation very clearly into focus. When it is wholly payable by the public, normally it does not respond to the express need. It cannot be wholly private because the return/earnings on the investment is very delayed and therefore it is not a factor of attraction for entrepreneurs. Hence, the ideal is for the public power to establish the planning strategy, the infrastructures and the management modalities, leaving the operative and practical aspects to private enterprise, as is the case in Curitiba. The same thing

can happen for many other services that can involve private operators, provided responsibilities are clear and well defined. This is not just a vision of administrative rationality, but rather one of solidarity. For each situation there is a co-responsibility. At times this implies collaboration between the public authority and the private sector, while other times it can contemplate the participation of an entire part of the population; that is what happens when a city proposes a practice that has to be followed by all, as for example the household separation of wastes.