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The urban design and planning operation: documents produced and actions taken

Jesi is a composite operation configured as such because of the desire and need to accomplish a burdensome process of developing urban policies that encompass important actions.

The main documents produced and the activities put into operation are briefly illustrated below in order to show the technical range of the process.

The *Piano idea* (approved by the Commune Council in March 2005) is the first of the new Commune of Jesi town development plan's two components. Its name (together with that of the second component, the *Progetto del suolo*) comes from a Marche Region legislative bill passed in April 2003 (Regulations for sustainable development and territorial management). This law defines the *Piano idea* as the "document that ... defines a participative and equitable strategy of sustainable commune territory development, evaluating and addressing the morphological needs of the settlements and the territory ... is a planning type of document forming the reference framework for the commune's policies regarding, for example, the environment, transport, public construction works, and social services. It does not accord with land rights and neither does it confer building rights". The *Piano idea* therefore has a marked communicative nature, summarising structural-strategic and operational values and functions. The *Piano idea* is essentially a "schema" for the plan and the qualifying choices in the new *Variante generale* (General Zoning Variance): a group of schemes contained in 18

manifesto-tables (in A0 format), with a report (in A3 format) and supporting 13 dossiers (A4 format with attached tables in A3 format) in which the results of specific investigations and studies are enclosed. This specific documentary form expresses the belief that the methods of schematic representation are the most useful and suitable for identifying and substantiating the problems, selecting and establishing aims, putting interpretations forward, and formulating planning hypotheses to be communicated and subjected to review and discussion.

From the beginning the *Strategic plan* has worked in a differentiated manner, activating several fronts of activity: organising talks with numerous subjects and themed *approfondimento* (investigative) meetings in order to analyse local questions together with those of the territory, activating an investigation into the life environments, collecting evidence on specific themes from selected people at round tables based on facts and figures emerging from previous phases.

The plan has therefore grown out of a listening process in which all the territory's active subjects participated fully. The *Strategic plan* acts like a draft agenda for more or less mature future operations, and, where there is sufficient need, it defines several projects which can be fulfilled within specific time periods. New characteristics emerged during the formulation of the *Strategic plan* from which a possible vision of the future can be formulated. These not only focussed on studying current trends and phenomena in relation to the environment found in the territory of the commune of Jesi, but also on the aims and places in the

government of a much larger area.

The *Strategic plan* was presented to and adopted by the Commune Council on 23 July 2004.

The process of *Local Agenda 21* was formally activated by the Commune of Jesi in 2000 and was integrated into the urban planning operation in the revision of the Prg (town development plan), and provides for the preparation of several documents.

Report on the state of the environment. This activates the local Agenda 21 process, presents a brief study of the state of the territory, and points out the relationships between environmental, social, and economic aspects. The Report was adopted by the Commune Council in July 2004.

Strategic environmental evaluation. An evaluation of the environmental effects of the choices made in the *Piano idea*, or rather, a constant check on the results of the plan and how coherent they are compared to the objectives initially adopted. The Vas (strategic environmental evaluation) was approved by the Commune Council in March 2005.

Local action plan. The Pal (Local Action Plan or Local Area Plan) for the Commune of Jesi (consigned in December 2005) is a concrete program composed of the actions required to achieve the objectives. In context, it identifies the actors responsible for activating these actions, for the financial resources, and for the support instruments.

Through the "*Abitare il Centro antico di Jesi*" project the Commune Government tendered a bid for the Marche Region's "Neighbourhood Contracts 2" (deadline April 2004): this is an initial result of the social attention and the values accorded to the city's

historic centre by both the *Strategic plan* and the *Piano idea*.

The environment affected by the project coincides with the original Roman nucleus of Jesi, the oldest and most stratified of the historic city, which the *Piano idea* identifies for the first time as a unified environment composed of nine parts. Preparation of the neighbourhood contract tender application was based on the recognition that today this part of Jesi is affected by the following limiting factors: phenomena of abandonment as yet not evident, physical decline, and social hardship; these could rapidly become difficult to manage. The application therefore presented an opportunity to re-launch the city's historic centre based on the re-introduction of residential use, the planning of service activities, and the recovery of collective spaces: an organic group of programs and projects affecting both the social and physical space.

The project tendered was ranked first in the Marche Region, and received financial support totalling 23,236,715 Euro.

The Laboratory of participative planning "*Let's Design Prato*" is an integral part of the new urban design and planning process adopted by the city, and is at the same time the instrument of the "Historical suburbs" renewal program already partially activated by the Commune of Jesi Aldermanry for Public Works, and is therefore the first point of contact between the complex strategies for restructuring mobility, the public spaces identified in the *Piano idea*, and the historical city renewal programs promoted by the Council. The Laboratory's work (November 2004-March 2005) focussed firstly on restoring and constructing new character to the Prato

neighbourhood and the places which define it, the problems affecting it, the qualities with which it is marked, by starting from the point of view of those who live there. Therefore, the social character and spatial orientation was interpreted by identifying several crucial planning nuclei, after which a few but relevant hypotheses of transformation were formulated, distinguished by their feasibility and urgency.

The *Approfondimenti del Piano idea* are the result of operations aimed at articulating and favouring the decision making process. In responding to the requirements of the mayor's Resolution that accompanied the approval of the *Piano idea*, they revolve around studies and verifications that refine the degree of planning definition and are relevant to the zoning revision. So in this sense they "anticipate the *Bozza del Progetto comunale del suolo*". The first *approfondimento* concerns The public city and confronts several questions: the degree of activation of the Prg in force with regard to the progetto del suolo which has guided the zoning and the standards initially expected; the effective substance of the public services and facilities (not necessarily public property) of general and local interest present in commune territory; the recognition of "service systems" on an urban and neighbourhood level which, when taken as a whole, constitute the city's framework; and review of the social demand. The second *approfondimento* is dedicated to mobility and focuses attention on several hypotheses to systematise the layouts indicated in the *Piano idea*. The series of checks carried out, and the new operations outlined, redefine several nodes and elements in the mobility

system, which were originally presented in the *Piano idea*. The third *approfondimento* is housing policy that forms a point of recognition in the potential tender, distinguishing it by its specific characteristics and localisation, being evaluated in terms of housing scenarios and the market. After discussion and sharing, the three *Approfondimenti* have been united in a single technical document, which was presented to the Commune Council and approved on the 22 July, 2005.

The *Bozza del Progetto comunale del suolo* is the second of two intermediate plans (the first being the *Approfondimenti*) connected by two instruments that in turn compose the *Variante generale* of the Commune of Jesi Prg (town development plan): namely the *Piano idea* and the *Progetto comunale del suolo*. The document arose out of the Commune Government's need to follow a timely and transparent course of review to produce the definitive version of the new town development plan after discussion of relevant choices. The *Bozza* completes the framework for the transformations provided for in the new plan: it verifies previously formulated hypotheses and carries out several planning explorations oriented towards identifying the requirements which will produce irrefutable quality, explores alternatives, and provides initial suggestions for operating methods. Furthermore, for the purposes of urban planning, there is a proposal to subdivide the commune territory into five different "macrozones": the existing urban territory, the territory of urban transformation, the agricultural territory, the non urban territory, and the territory of infrastructure and

services. This is partition and denomination whose orientation in the design is expressed so that it conforms to the new national urban planning laws approved by the Chamber of Deputies on 28 June 2005 entitled "Principles of territorial management". The *Bozza*, by constructing a "Values map" of the city, also activated the first step in applying urban planning equalisation to the new Jesi plan. The *Bozza* was consigned to the Commune Government on the 30 November 2005, and was being discussed at the time of writing.

The Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure are promoting an initiative called "*System project - territorial complexity*" in order to reinforce the connections between large infrastructural networks and city systems in 11 "target-contexts" in central-north Italy. The Commune of Jesi is identified as leader for the Esino Valley in the Marche-Umbria channel, which according to the Ministry represents the main articulating interchange between the Adriatic coastal system and the system penetrating inland to the Appennines. The System project explicitly recognises the attention already given to the "Esino Corridor" in the *Piano idea* and the *Strategic plan* in their attempt to develop a new interpretative character for the city within the framework of a broader system of territorial relationships connecting Jesi to, and in the context of, a large area. The executive Program for the System project was sent to the Ministry during February 2005, and was approved. It contains the specific objectives that the policy of integrated development in the Esino Corridor must pursue. This territory therefore has three

groups of actions provided for it, and some of them have already been activated.