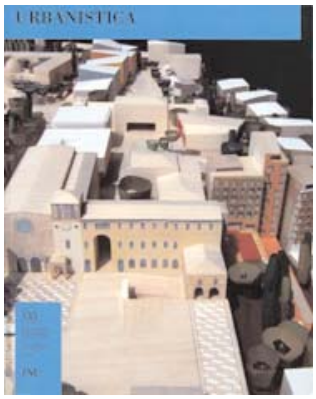

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The contents of the plan: the three dimension of sustainability
Marco De Bianchi

Sustainability, as advocated by the regional legislation, has been considered extensively in the Grosseto structure plan.
In addition to environmental sustainability, the plan considered also economic and administrative sustainability.

The terms of the environmental sustainability
The compatibility between development and environmental conservation is probably the most important element of the plan.
The progressive salinity of the aquifer has dramatically damaged agricultural production.
Among the planned measures, the most important is certainly a dual system for water supply (drinking and not drinking) through the creation of small reservoirs.
A second strategic choice relates to the rigorous protection of areas on the left bank of the Ombrone river despite the strong local expectations of residential settlements and tourist resorts. On the contrary, the importance of maintaining areas for prestigious wine production was emphasized.
A further conflict was represented by the pressure for residential development on the coast.
On that respect the forum of Agenda 21 were extremely useful to bring about a direct debate between environmentalists on one side and developers on the other side even though the substantial block to any development by the plan encountered a strong opposition.
Other important choices related to the location of residential development in the town in areas partially damaged.
The need to limit the penetration of cars in the town centre, in favour of public transport was emphasized, also with a coherent network of cycle ways and by redetermining the boundaries of the town with a ring road.
Finally great importance was placed on landscape conservation, with a strong link to the provincial plan.

The economic sustainability
In the past the Grosseto municipality met enormous problems to implement compulsory purchase for infrastructures and public housing. The structure plan introduces the possibility to get and additional betterment contribution (around 10%) through negotiations with the developers able to cover land acquisition for public housing and infrastructure costs.
It was then necessary to evaluate the betterment value (around 500 million euros). Even though the evaluation will vary with estate market trends, an early evaluation has had an important pedagogical role for those who considered that Grosseto was a minimalist plan.

The administrative sustainability
Plan implementation is one of the main features. To build up the planning office was not a simple task as in september 2000 it could rely only the head of the office (with other additional tasks) and two technicians. The final configuration of the office has a flexible structure but with different roles.
The chosen 'incremental' approach implies and requires an effective monitoring system; the annual 'planning conference' organized in a sort of Agenda 21 style. The main objective is to organize data collection and plan updating so that future plan making can be a progressive and continuous process.