

Introduction

Marika Fior

BIO

- I was born in the Veneto Region in 1983
- I am an urban planner. I am a researcher at Politecnico di Milano — Dipartiment of Architecture and Urban Studies (DAStU)

SCHOOL

- PhD in *Government and Territorial Design* (2013 — Politecnico di Milano)
- Master’s Degree in *Urban Planning and Policy Design* (2008 — Politecnico di Milano)
- Bachelor's Degree in *Urban and Spatial Planning* (2006 — IUAV Venezia)

INSTITUTION

- Member of the National Institute of Urban Planning (INU)
- Member of the ANCSA’s Board (National Association for Historical-Artistic Centres)
- Member of the Commission of Landscape of Regione Lombardia

INTERESTS

- My interests are: in *urban planning* (plans of Vigevano, Rozzano; masterplans of a new neighborhood in Cairo);
- in *preservation and enhancement of the historic city* (PhD research; studies for the reconstruction after the earthquake in Emilia Romagna);
- in *landscape planning/design* (revision of the landscape plan of Regione Lombardia).

COURSE

- In this semester, my course will cover Urban Design.

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

Name _____ Surname _____ Age _____

BIO

- Where are you from? _____
- What are your previous studies? _____

COURSE

- Have you ever attended an Urban Design course? _____
- What do you expect from this course? _____

INTERESTS

- What is the most beautiful city you've visited? and why? _____
- What is the most interesting urban project that you know? and why? _____

GAME

- Try to give a definition of Urban Design _____
- Try to draw your own hometown.

- 1) Today, **urban systems are complex** because they cover the extension of a region from physical and relational point of view.
- 2) The general conditions of the contemporary city oblige to **look over the traditional organization** of urban systems (center/peripheries).
- 3) But **urban transformations assume a new role** for the wider urban systems.

IN THIS COURSE, IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE PROCESS OF **URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS**
CAN AFFECT THE LIVEABILITY OF THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

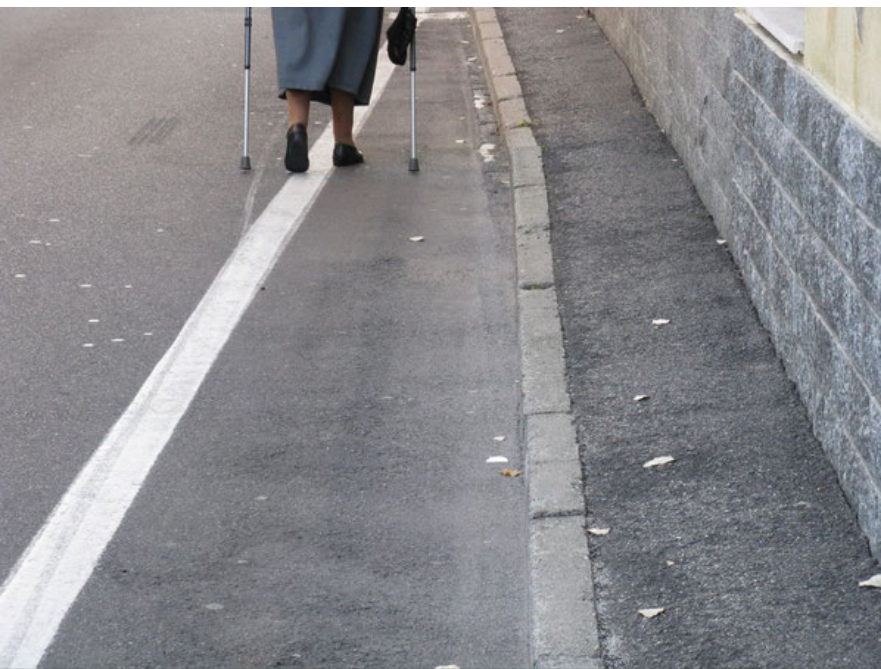
Some common behaviour of new transformations:

- They are not only **urban**, but always looking for new “**urbanity**”
- They are not only **central** but generating “**centrality**”
- They are not only **accessible** but necessarily as “**nodes**” of both infrastructural and environmental networks.

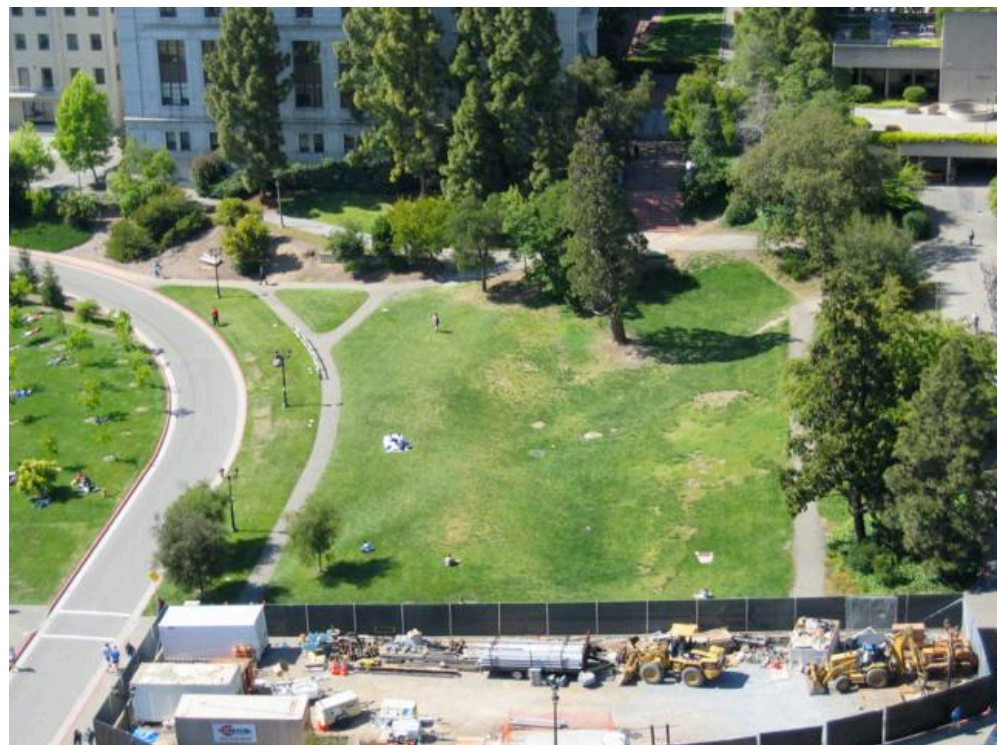
THE AIM OF TRANSFORMATIONS (SPACE) IS **CREATING PLACES**

The design of these “**SPACES**” does not lose its physical dimension even when it includes the definition of a “**PLACE**”.

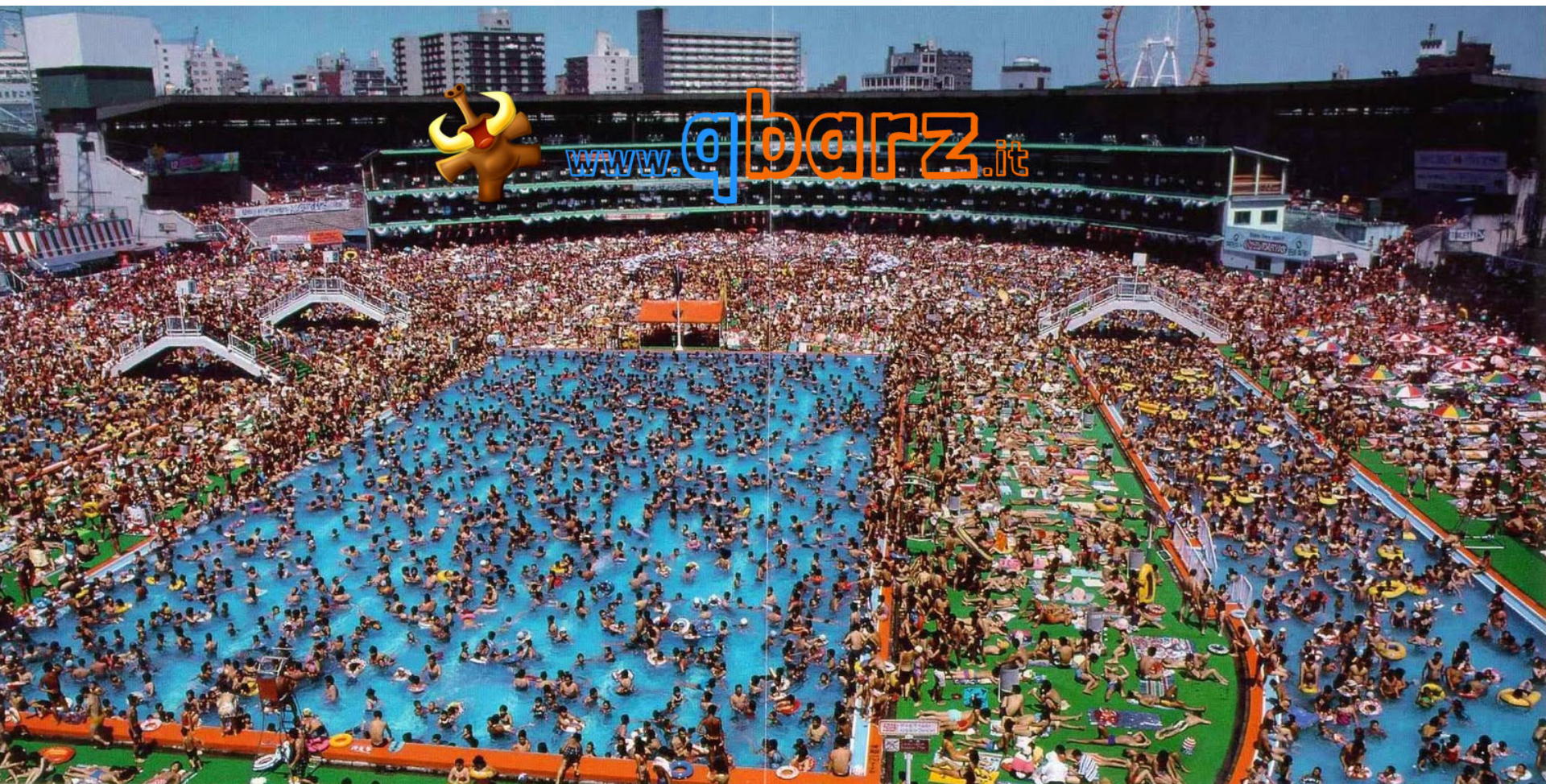
- a) Definition that usually entails the search for a “**physical comfort of the spaces**”,
- b) But also the need **to achieve high levels of “quality” in the intangible benefits of the spaces** (density of relations, dynamism and flexibility of uses; the sharing of the transformation process as a first input to avoid forms of social exclusion in the new neighbourhoods).



Physical comfort of the space



But, How do you measure the quality (success) of a place?



But, How do you measure the quality (success) of a place?

FROM HOW MUCH IT IS USED BY PEOPLE

Course content

- 1) **Urban projects** are often defined as **architectural interventions on a large scale**. At the same time, an urban project is defined **any time urban planning is concerned with the physical and morphological size** of the city and the territory.
- 2) Through the urban project **a culture of “public space”** was built based on the integration between open and built spaces and morphological design.
- 3) The public space **becomes “generator” of a sequence of different environments**, closely articulated with the fabrics that surround it.

Despite its shortness, the Urban Design course has two main goals:

- 1) First, to describe the **EVOLUTION OF THE PRACTICE OF URBAN DESIGN** (especially in the Italian context);
- 2) Second, to explain how **TO COMBINE THE PHYSICAL DESIGN OF A SPACE WITH THE DEMAND TO MAKE SENSE OF IT**, thus generating a place..

INTRODUCTION

1 lecture (October 10th)

What are urban planning and urban design?

The first lecture is useful to place the practice of urban design within the general urban planning discipline.

FIRST SECTION: THE SHAPE OF URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS

2 lecture (October 24th)

Urban design in Italy: from the Renaissance to the present

The second lecture tries to read the role attributed to the Urban Design within the Italian Urban Planning discipline.

3 lecture (November 7th)

The quality in the city and in the urban project

The third lecture concludes the “theory” of the course. We try to explain the criteria used to define the “quality” of a city or for a part of it.

SECOND SECTION: THE ROLE OF URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS

4 lecture (December 5th)

A process to define a role: Why and How to design public places in urban spaces?

In the fourth lecture the course concludes by offering a general overview of an urban design process which provides the involvement of the community to the best definition (not the only one) of a physical layout of the space.

Main Bibliography for the Course

- Laura **Burkhalter**, Manuel **Castells**, *Beyond the crisis: towards a new urban paradigm*, **2009**, The 4th International Conference of the International Forum on Urbanism (IFoU), Amsterdam/Delft
- Matthew **Carmona**, Tim **Heath**, Taner **Oc**, Steve **Tiesdell**, **2010 II ed.**, *Public Places - Urban Spaces. The Dimensions of Urban Design*, Architectural Press, Oxford
- Rafael **Cuesta**, Christine **Sarris**, Paola **Signoretta**, **1999**, *Urban Design - Method and Techniques (Urban Design)*, Architectural Press, Oxford
- Marco **Facchinetti**, **2011**, *Master Planning. The Adaptive City*, Pitagora Editrice, Bologna
- Marika **Fior**, Stefano **Salata**, **2012**, *Urban Plans Studio. Quaderni*, Maggioli Editore, Milano
- Jon **Lang**, **2005**, *Urban Design- A Typology of Procedures and Products*, Architectural Press, Oxford
- Sebastian **Loew**, **2012**, *Urban Design Practice. An International Review*, RIBA Publishing, London
- Peter H. **Jones**, *Systemic Design Principles for Complex Social Systems*, **2014**, Volume 1 of the Translational Systems Science Series, Springer Verlag, Social Systems and Design, Gary Metcalf (editor)
- Ali **Madanipour**, **1999**, “Why are the design and development of public spaces significant for cities?” in *Environmental Planning B: Planning and Design*, vol. 26, pages 879-891
- Bally **Meeda**, Neil **Parkyn**, David S. **Walton**, **2007**, *Graphics for Urban Design*, Thomas Telford Publishing, London
- Danilo **Palazzo**, **2008**, *Urban Design. Un processo per la partecipazione urbana*, Mondadori, Milano
- David **Walters**, **2007**, *Designing Community. Charrettes, master plans and form-based codes*, Architectural Press, Oxford
- Llewellyn-Davies **Yeang**, **2000**, *Urban Design Compendium*

What is Urban Planning and What is Urban Design?

Marika Fior

1 Lecture | 2016, October 10th

An interpretation of Urban Planning

- The Urban Planning is the discipline that **studies** the formation, transformation and functioning of urban systems.
- Furthermore, Urban Planning **designs** the facility, the growth and renewal of theme with a set of technical, administrative and economic measures.
- These activities **are aimed at the protection, development and improvement of the urban systems** from the aesthetic and functional point of view.
- The reason why Urban Planning have this goal is due to the need to make urban system more **adapted to the needs of the inhabitants**.

Its areas of theoretical research and practical application are three:

- 1) the **analysis** of urban phenomena;
- 2) the **design** of the physical space of the city;
- 3) participation in **political and administrative processes** regarding urban transformations.

This interpretation takes account of modern urbanism from its birth as a discipline in the nineteenth century to today. Through some scholars we can read this evolution.



Camillo Sitte
(Austrian, 1843-1903)

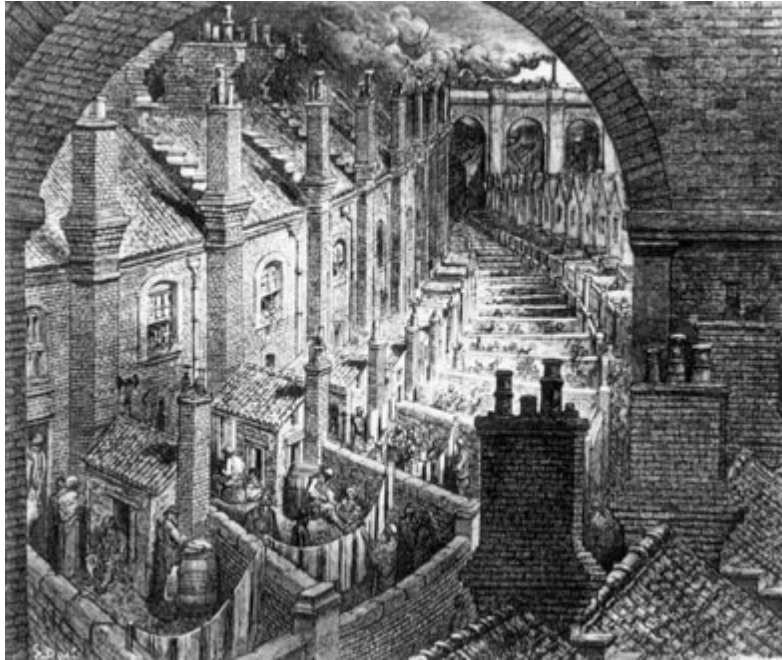


Giovanni Astengo
(Italian, 1915-1990)



Giuseppe Campos Venuti
(Italian, 1926)

The reason why the Urban Planning born



The Urban Planning was created **to deal with the diseases of** the modern city under the influence of the **Industrial Revolution** (in Europe since the end of the eighteenth century).

Cities grow rapidly for the **phenomenon of URBANIZATION**, a phenomenon hitherto unknown. It is the arrival of tens of thousands workers, who leave the countryside to work in the factories settled in the outskirts of cities.

The **conditions** of the city and its new inhabitants in the first stage of urbanization are **disastrous**.

This entails the need to:

- **new housing** for new residents of the city
- **new infrastructure** for the mobility of people and goods (roads, railways) and urban sanitation (sewers, aqueducts)
- **new equipment** and services (schools and parks).

Urban planning is therefore an essentially **PUBLIC FUNCTION**, with a strong social connotation, characters that still maintains, even if large investments that move will also encourage the private interests.

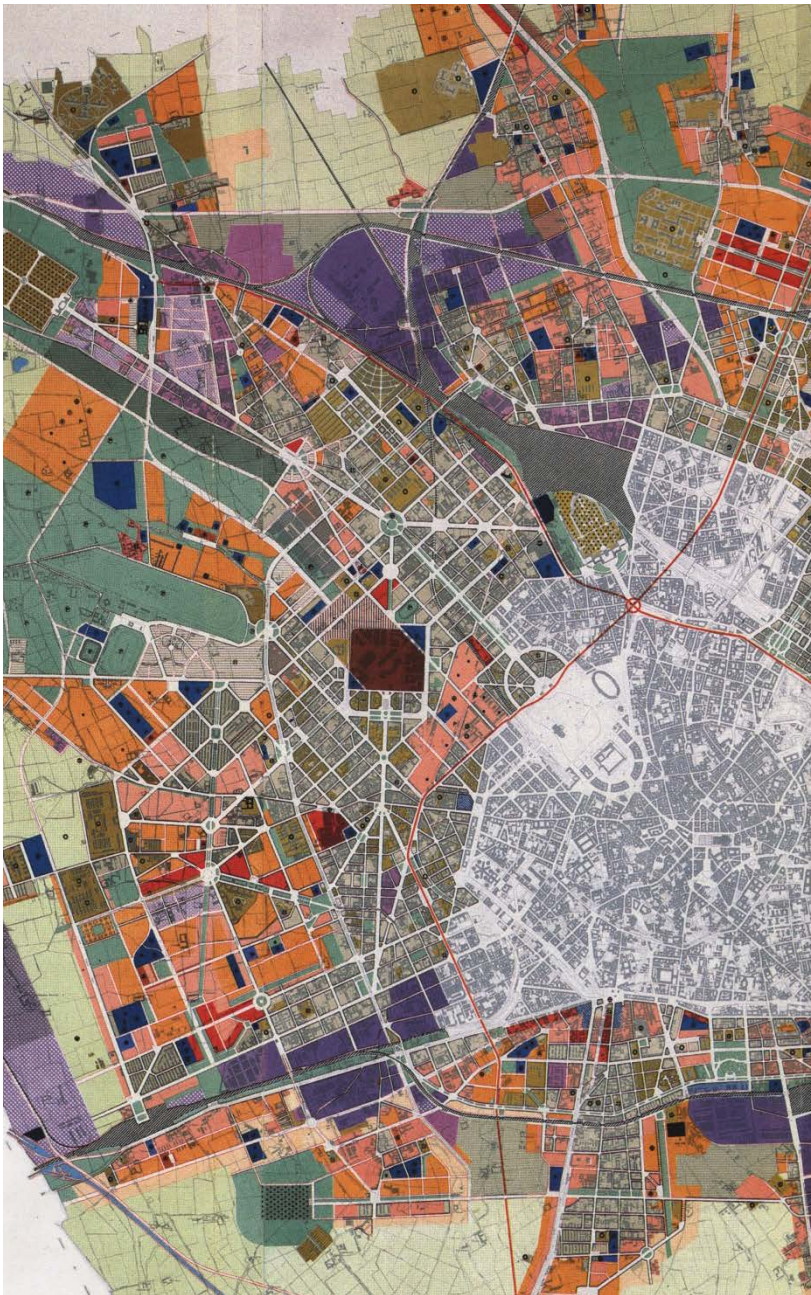
The main tool of Urban Planning, is the **PLAN**. It is a future project of a city, or a territory, usually drawn on maps.

In its evolution, Urban Planning has produced several types of plans **at various levels**:

- first related to the expansion or partial internal reform of a city (during nineteenth century),
- then the entire transformation of the city (**general plans/masterplans - PRG**)
- and then to address the problems of the larger territory (territorial plans).

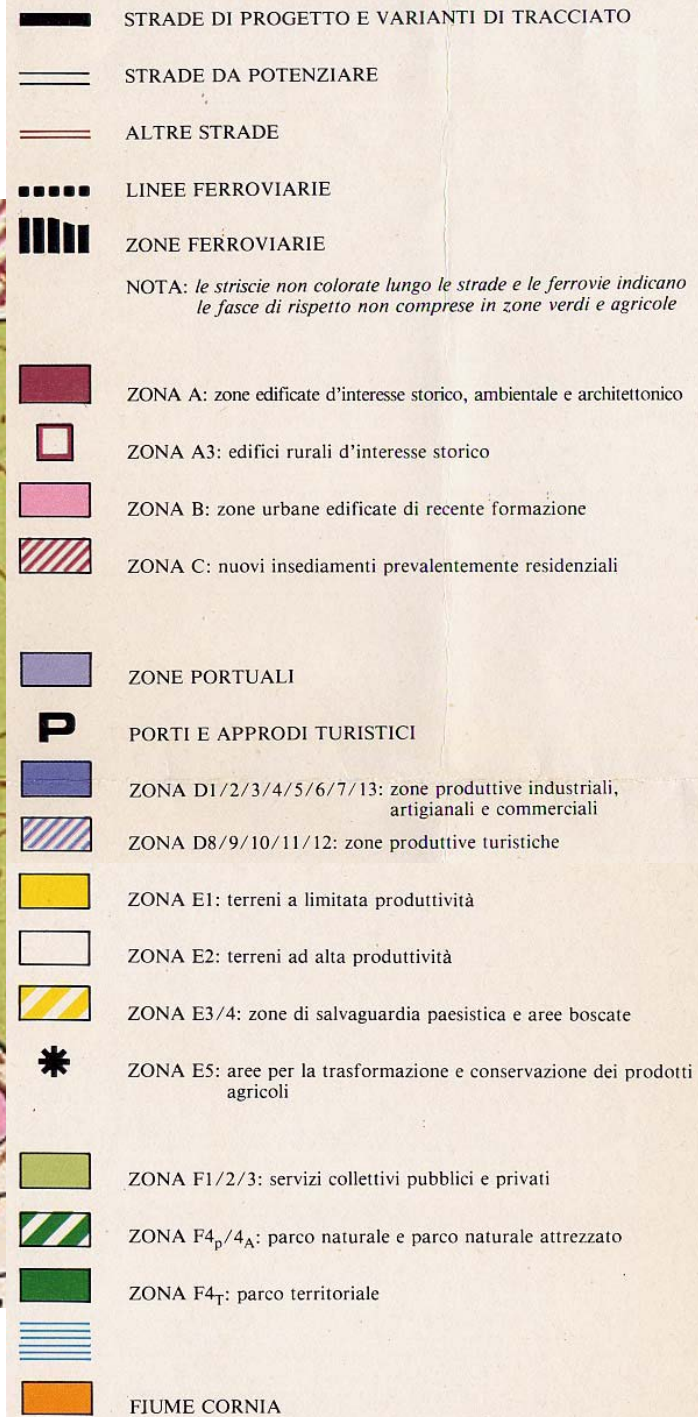
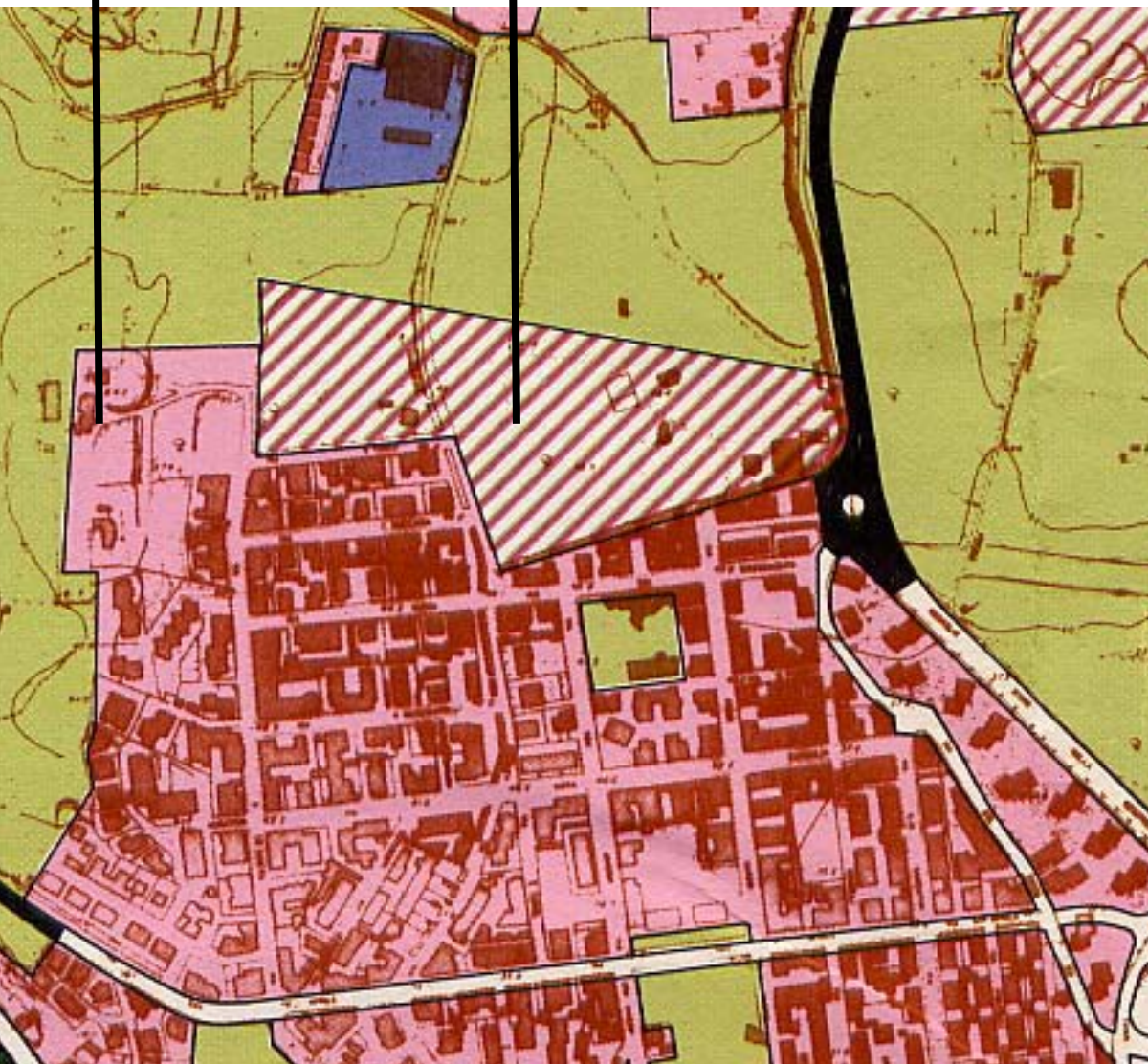
The PRG is essentially **implemented in two main ways**: the first is a **direct** mode, the second through indirect methods (**through a detailed planning**).

1. The first is the **direct implementation of PRG's rules** by the owner of the lots.
2. The second provides **an additional level of planning that specifies the general plan** (initially, it was a public initiative).



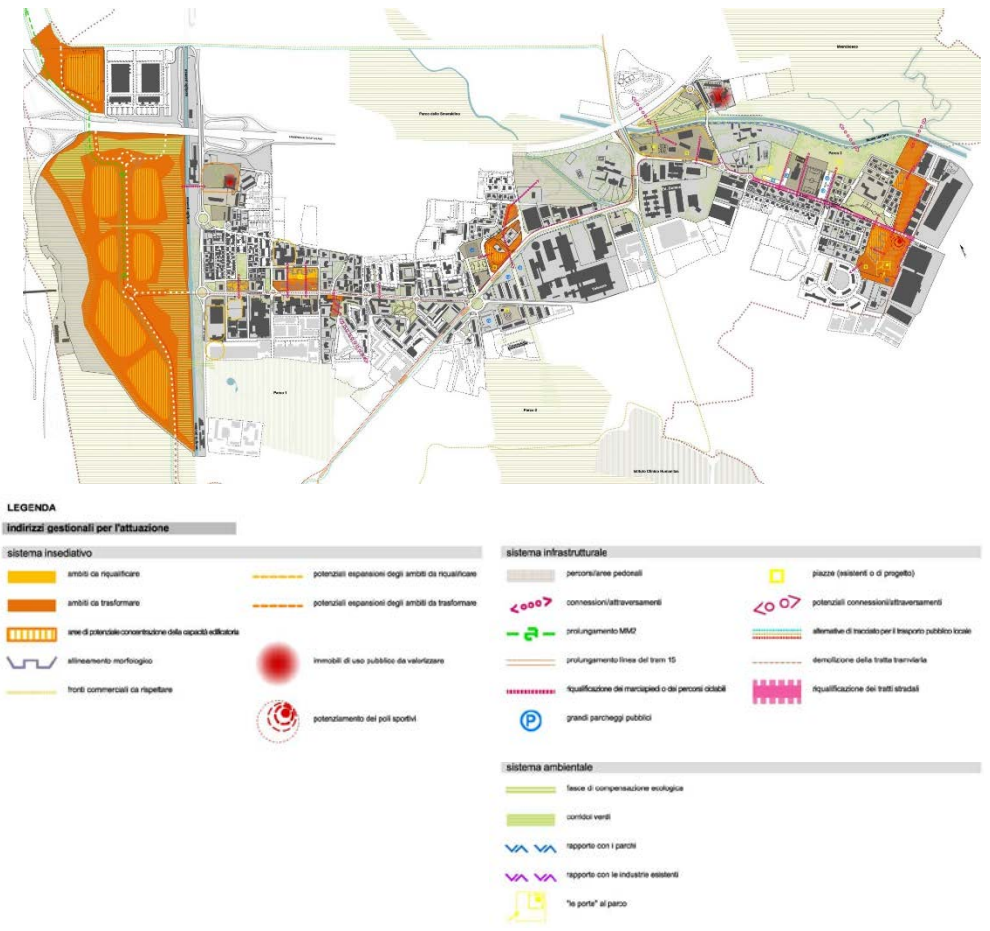
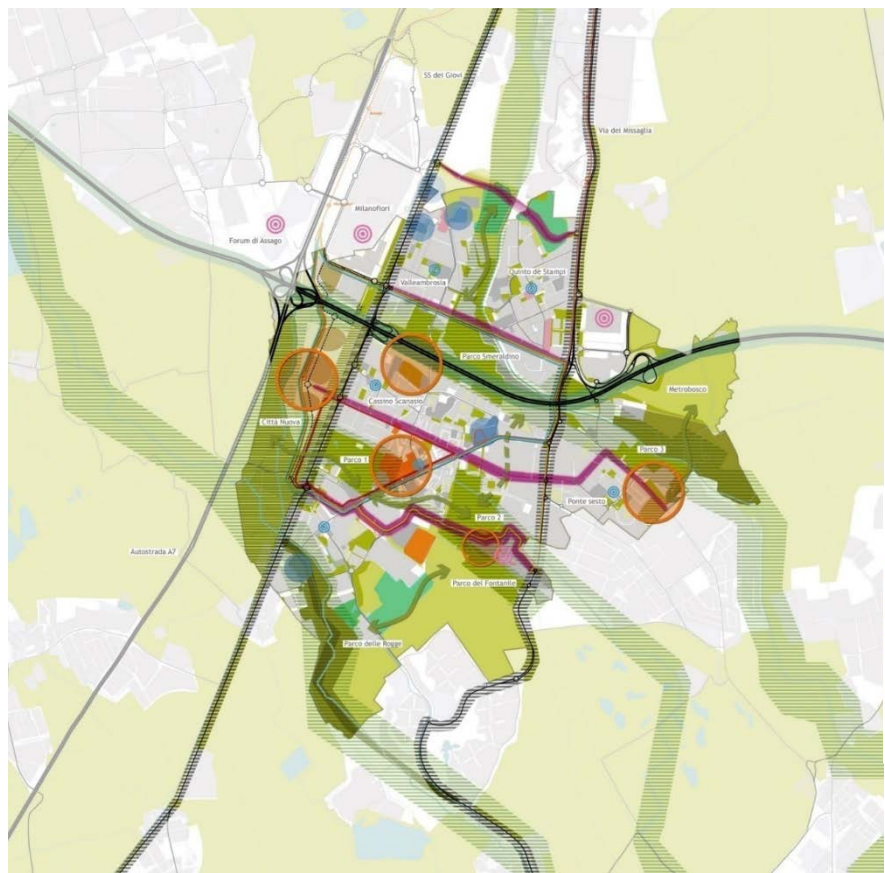
DIRECT

INDIRECT



Two ways to implement the General Plan

When finish the planning and starts the designing?



Somebody call MASTERPLAN the entire design of a city (and its surrounding).

Somebody else call MASTERPLAN the design of a part of the city, which one is developed by detailed planning tools.

Urban Design: architecture or planning?

1) Cities



Urban projects are often defined **as architectural interventions on a large scale**. At the same time, a urban project is defined **any time Urban Planning is concerned with the physical and morphological size of the city** and the territory.

The relationship of Urban Design with Urban Planning is presented in different ways: ranging from a tool for the implementation of plans, to the time when the planning choices are verified.

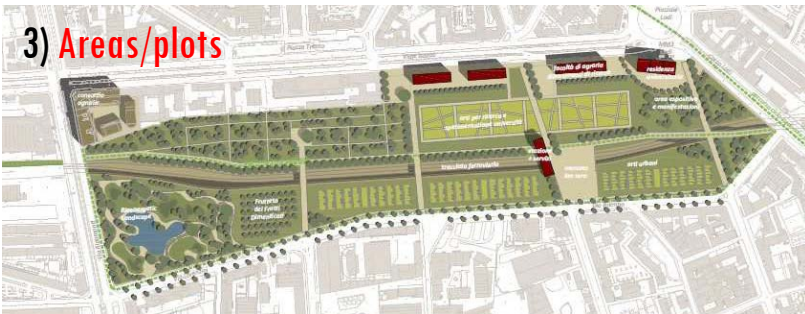
The **Urban Design** is presented as an autonomous operation, which can **either complement or contradict the general plan**.

2) Urban Systems



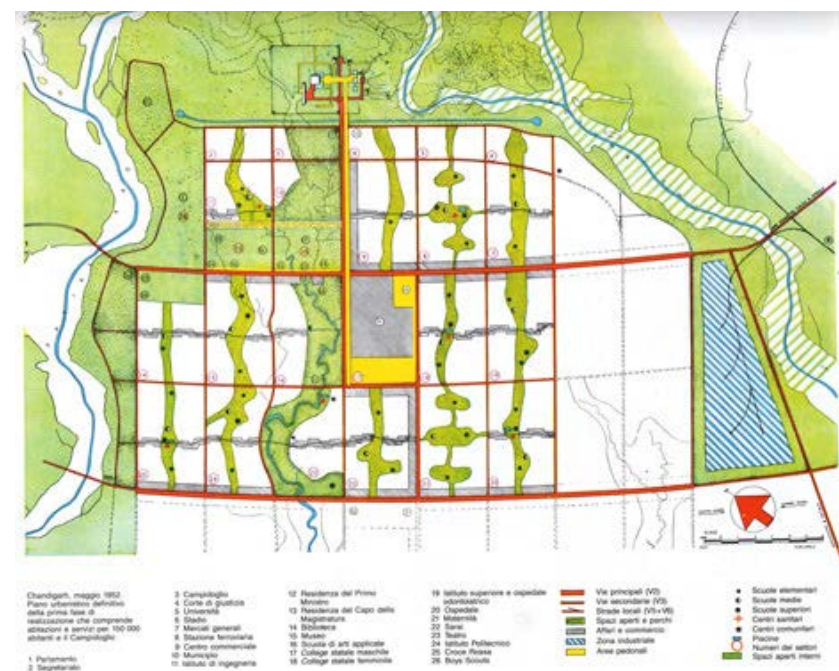
Through the urban project **a culture of “public space”** was built based on the integration between open and built spaces and morphological design: **no more urban standards (quantitative, Modern Movement), but “places” rooted in the contexts** where they are made (**qualitative**).

3) Areas/plots



[Obviously, the context to which we should refer nowadays is not the traditional one of the compact city but rather the city-region context (diffuse, scattered, enlarged and, in some cases, without identity)].

The (cultural) reason why the Urban Design born



Chandigarh, Le Corbusier, 1952-1965

Modernist ideas satisfied a need for mass building but did not achieve the societal goals expected.

Created **new problems**: in particular, the growth in **car use** had an unpredicted impact on urban development and urban form.

There were **2 points to the criticism** of the way Urban Design was carried out under the aegis of the Modernists. They were:

- 1) that the models of people, **human behavior and the way people experience the environment** used by designers were simplistic (worker,s inhabitants, etc);
- 2) that **the person-environment relationship was poorly understood (QUANTITY rather than QUALITY).**

Urban Design, as we know it today, has developed in response to the limitations of the philosophies and design paradigms, rationalist and empiricist, of the **Modern Movement** in architecture and city planning.

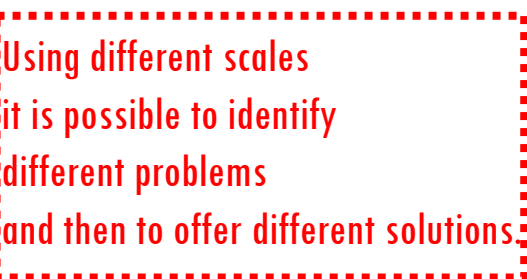
An interpretation of Urban Design

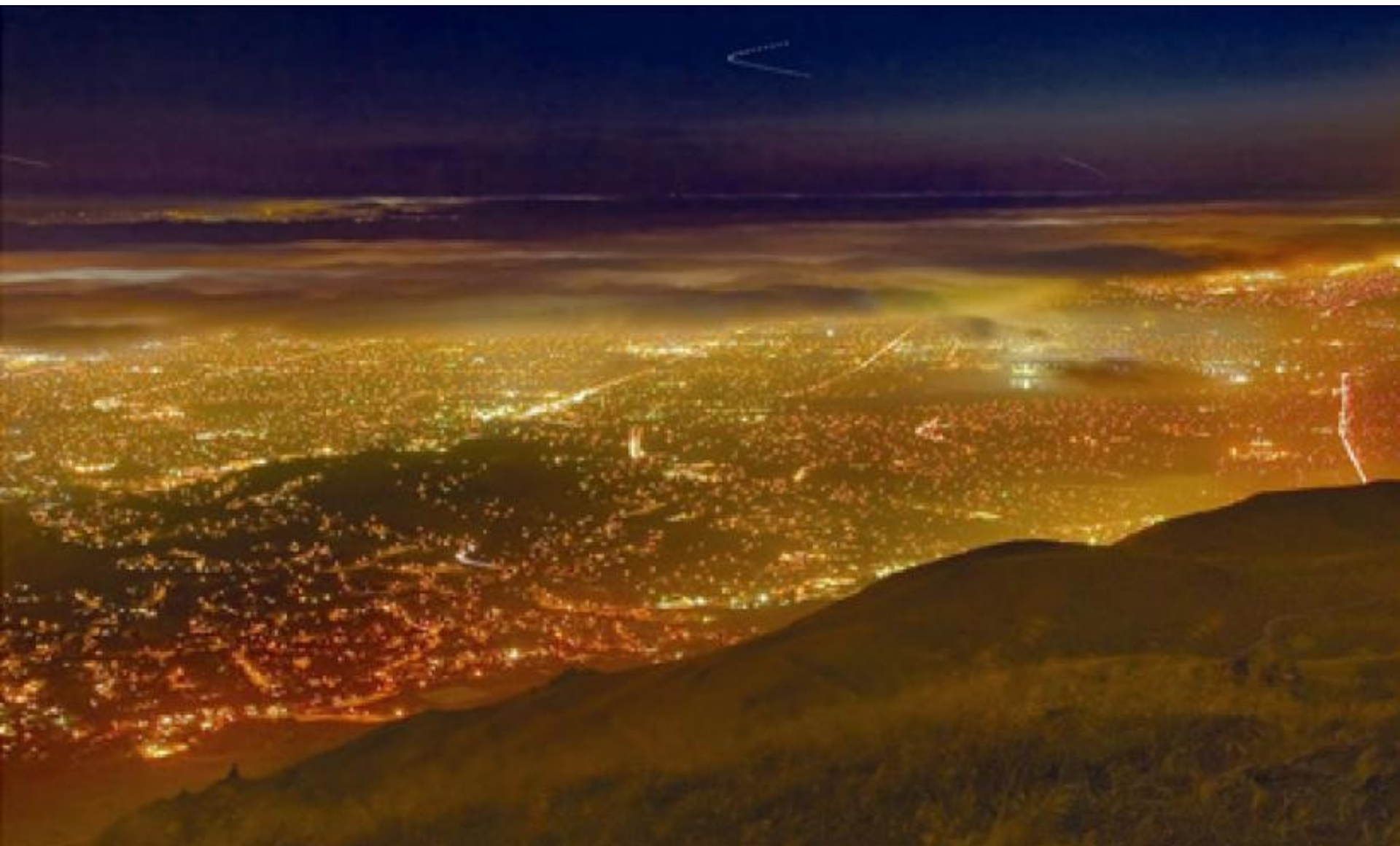
What follows?

The outcome of this cultural evolution is that

- if on one hand **there is a problem of defining the AREA OF INTERVENTION** (those involved in Urban Design proposes projects for the city or for a small part?), and then the **TOOLS** they have to use (general plans or implementation plans/programs);
- the other side, **it is clear the aim of Urban Design**: to improve the **QUALITY** of the place where people live, working mainly on the public space that is the main place where people can construct their identity.

The aim, in fact, is applied to all levels (territorial, local, urban systems, plots). **The ability of a good Urban Designer is knowing how to use DIFFERENT SCALES of project**, regardless of the subject of his/her project (is it a new infrastructure or street furniture for a road).





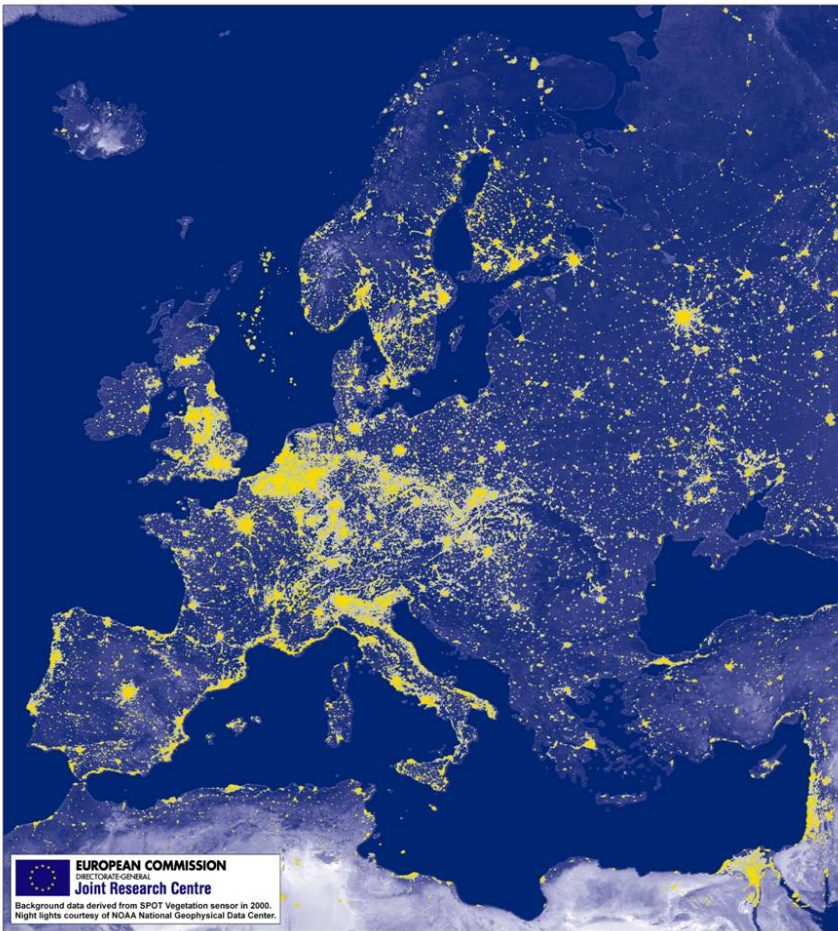
Milan's view from Alps

Contemporary city as an output of the metropolization of the territory (physical point of view)

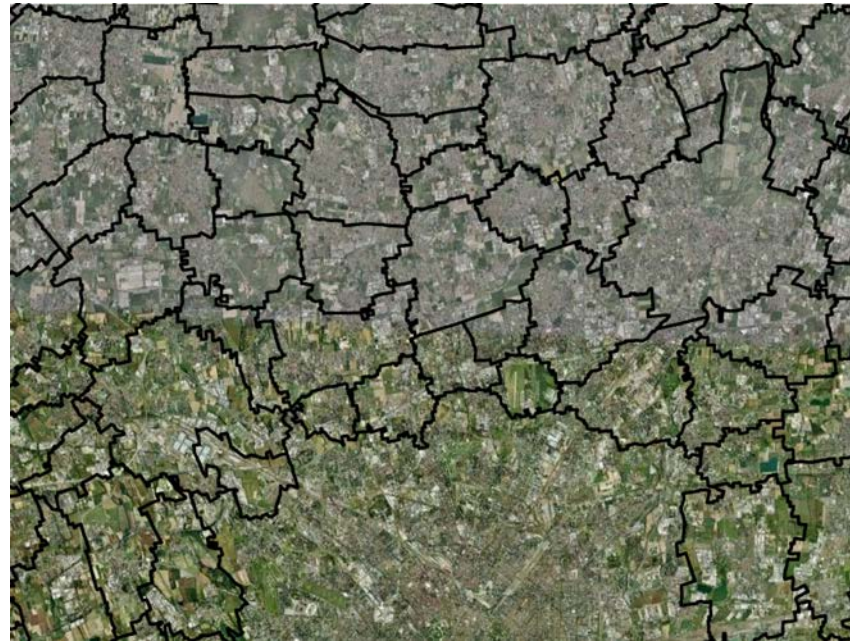
From the **late 90s** of the twentieth century, in Italy it has substantially changed the city's growth model:

- continues the phase of **urban transformation**, but **with less intensity**, because the opportunities for transformation, inside the compact city, decrease (disused and degraded areas);
- begins **a new phase of urban expansion**, very different from that which characterized the decades 60s -80s;
- cities don't grow by addition, adding new metropolitan suburbs to the old city suburbs and including the neighboring towns in vast conurbations. Besides the new suburbs, **new settlements are developed**, they generally have **low densities**, increasingly **distant from the old town and not necessarily characterized by a settlement continuity**;
- the new plants and **buildings come from old industrial areas** (the latter subject to tertiary and commercial transformations) to settle on a wider territory, without observing any town planning rule.

This new phase of growth of the cities, is defined as **METROPOLIZATION** of the territory and it is preceded, in different parts of Europe and North America, by a wide **dissemination process of settlement (or dispersion, or sprawl)**.



Behavior of contemporary city (immaterial point of view)

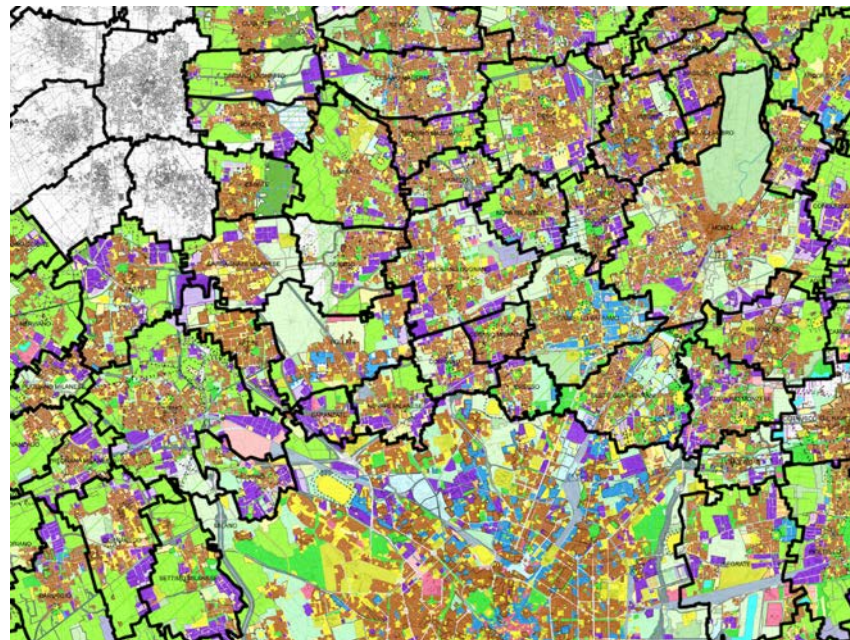


Metropolisation determines a “town character” severely unsustainable:

- because mobility increases incredibly. Numerous daily trips (due to work, study, shopping and leisure) are made only by car. The only transport, effectively, to make accessible to the low-density areas.
- because its growth determines a high consumption of land, namely the transformation of agricultural and natural soils in urban soils.

Metropolisation compromises the environmental system:

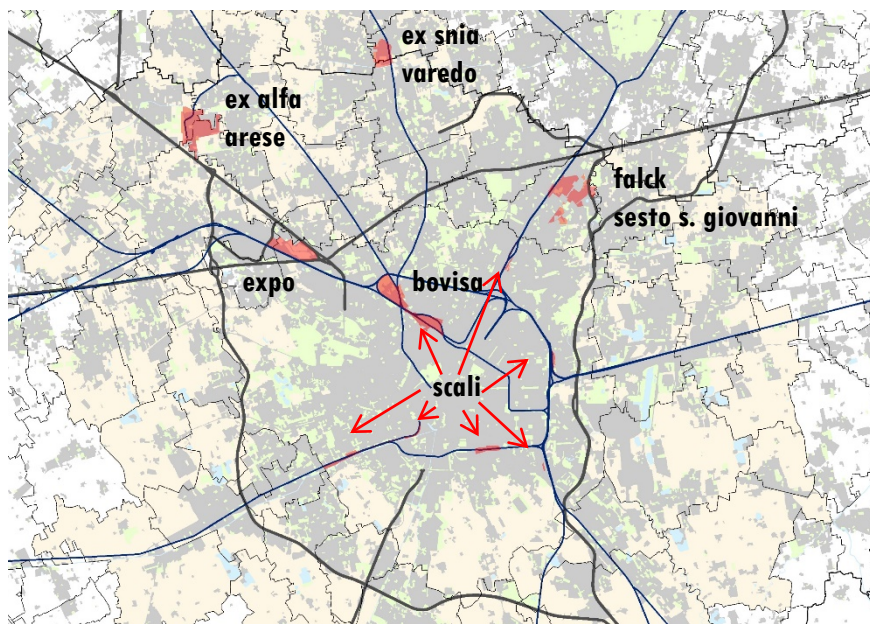
- fragmenting and breaking the continuity of ecological networks (the risk is the loss of biodiversity);
- configuring green areas with poor quality, for the purposes of the natural regeneration of the water and air (the loss of ecosystem services).



In contemporary cities the geographical dimension and the administrative dimension no longer coincide.

It comes the need for a new governance model of the city and for a planning scale that can no longer be local.

Urban transformations as occasions to establish a new code of access to the post-metropolitan dynamics



CONDITIONS

- Spaces to transform often are **in between** different municipalities.
- Spaces to transform often have problem of **identity**.
- Spaces to transform often are “**enclave**” (green fields/brown fields in between urban system).

GOALS OF THE PROJECT

Searching **the right size of transformation**:

- locational, *Why there and not in another place?*
- relational, *What is the role of this place? What will be?*
- social, *How involve local community?*
- economic, *How involve territorial investors?*
- environmental, *How improve landscape condition and the liveability of this place?*

EXPECTED RESULTS

- A new **centrality** (from space to place with identity) integrated in the context
- A new **place** without social exclusion
- A new **node** of a regional urban system (accessible, sustainable)

Why urban transformations are an Urban Design question research?



- Because Urban Design is about **creating a vision** for an area and then **deploying the skills and resources to realize that vision**.
- Because Urban Design draws together the many strands of **place-making** (environmental responsibility, social equity and economic viability) into the **creation of places of beauty and identity**.

WHERE PEOPLE CAN CONSTRUCT THEIR COMMON IDENTITY (AS A COMMUNITY OF A PLACE)?

ON **PUBLIC SPACE**!



Public space can be defined as a delimited area, recognized by the community as “public”, ideally open to all.

Based on this definition, referred to anywhere in the city (plazas, cinemas, bars, train stations,...), “public space” is:

- a **physical space** with its extensions and its limitations, which defines the image of the formal city differentiating it from the others,
- a **relational space** as well. A place of encounters and exchanges (a shared place of urban living) usable by and accessible to most people.

Urban Design action: deal with public space



The public space is any place in the city in which those who enter are not predefined (here, strangers meet and interact randomly). It is the **site of chance meetings and “serendipity”**: the ability that people have to turn unexpected or unpleasant encounters into opportunities, into new relationships, new projects, new ideas.

In English there are two words for the collective space:

- **Public Space**, that is the physical extension of the architectural space, measurable and **representable on the land use plan**;
- **Public Realm**, however, refers to the “social” space or the city users’ territory (**immaterial**).

The public space **can be seen, contemplated, measured and drawn on plans and projects**; but **at the same time it is an immaterial space (made up of relationships)**, thus non measurable.

In both cases **it is a symbolic representation of space**: a **coded representation** from plans and maps in the first case; a subjective (personal) **mental representation**, in the second.

As Oriol Bohigas wrote:

The **URBAN PROJECT** is neither an urban plan or an architectural project. It is a project that **defines the form and content of a city fragment, from public space to architecture, in fairly precise terms, from which you can proceed to the succession of projects until their execution.**

It defines the public space, **it determines the functional and symbolic features and designs some forms that offer flexible rules** so that other technicians can develop them in more detail. The urban project requires a morphological and functional decisive predisposition but, at the same time, leaves an open door to successive and overlapping projects.

It is a project half architectural and half urban, it is a very real tool with the possibility to directly implement its choices because it contains rules for its final management. [...] Of course, **the protagonist of an urban project is the public space**, that is the place where the collective reality of the city is produced.

THE CITY IS ESSENTIALLY ITS PUBLIC SPACE, BUT ONLY IF IT IS AN INTUITIVE SPACE, IN WHICH THE CITIZEN UNDERSTANDS THE MEANING OF THE ROUTES AND SETTLEMENTS, AND HE/SHE MAY DECIDE TO PLACE HIS/HER ACTIVITIES [...].