Considerations from tools of territorial planning at municipal scale

PaRID, Research and International Documentation for Landscape (Dep. A.B.C. Architecture, Built environment and Construction engineering), Politecnico di Milano, Italy

G. Matteo Mai, Andrea L’Erario

Urban plans in Lombardy: the P.G.T. (Piano di Governo del Territorio)

Lombardy introduced, with the Regional Law 12/2005, the new Urban Plan for municipalities called “Piano di Governo del Territorio”, which includes three documents: the General Masterplan (Documento di Piano), the Plan of Services (Piano dei Servizi) and the Rules Plan (Piano delle Regole).

The General Masterplan contains analysis and strategies for the economic and social development of a municipality. It identifies goals and methods in order to valorize the environment and the cultural landscape, for 5 years from the publication; it also identifies the urban expansion areas. Another document, called V.A.S. (Valutazione Ambientale Strategica, Strategic Environmental Assessment), helps the General Masterplan to ensure the correct integration between the decisions on urban planning and the environmental components.

The Plan of Services ensures the provision of public facilities, public green areas, and public housing. It also ensures the quality of settlements and services for a good life of the inhabitants. It is not subject to expiration.

The Rules Plan monitors the urban and environmental quality of construction projects of new settlements and buildings in a town. It is not subject to expiration.

Opportunities and threats at the municipal scale

The paper is a summary of the different activities for meeting with local people, organizations and public institutions (i.e. parks, neighboring municipalities, service providers, Province of Milan, etc.). The analysis of strengths and weaknesses helps to rank the local issues in a global context. In this way it is possible to divide the problems we can solve thanks to the PGT, i.e. by the Municipality and the local community, and the other problems that will be solved by the Province of Milan or by Region Lombardy (for example the theme of big infrastructure).

The “Landscape Map” represents the final summary of the reading/assessment path of the actual landscape

Positive aspects of this part of PGT:
- Useful details and completeness of the analysis;
- Great contributions of the PGT to increase the municipal databases;
- Hierarchy of the values and hierarchy of the landscape elements.

Negative aspects of this part of PGT:
- Few links between the three documents of the PGT;
- Transposition of requirements from higher-level urban plans (Lombardy and Province of Milan) without working on them to specify some peculiarities according to the municipal scale.

What can we do to improve the quality of a PGT?

The “Landscape Map” must be not only the line drawing on the landscape but a set of different maps, tools, etc.
They must be useful to communicate the landscape structure in a simple way not only to the municipal architects or to the mayor but also to the citizens.

It is possible to improve this part of the PGT dedicated to the landscape through:
- 3D cartography to communicate in a simple way the landscape elements (mountains, plains, rivers, etc.);
- the use of specific symbols to indicate elements and landscape systems in order to a more realistic representation;
- the use of photographs of the landscape to help in the choices of urban planning and later in the choices in the designing of spaces;
- the McN evaluation of interventions and acts of valorization of the landscape.

Conclusions

After ten years from the issue of the Regional Law 12/2005, there are both bad and good news. Now it is possible to find the idea of “Landscape” in PGTs more frequently than in the past.
In urban planning in Lombardy now is usually present a policy conservation of the landscape, but there are not enough rules on its valorization.
This can be considered as a contradiction. The “Landscape” appears now in a great number of PGTs but it is not considered as a fundamental element yet.
The European Landscape Convention principles are sometimes mentioned in PGTs, but they are not used to help in the decisions on urban planning and in decisions about interventions on landscape that are effectively economically achievable.

There are, of course, great expectations regarding landscape.
The Regional Law, issued in 2005, and the European Landscape Convention, ratified by the Italian Government in 2006, have the merit to create a cultural debate (both technical and institutional) that we can find in Lombardy both in the academic world and in the reality everyday.