

VareseNews

A “Pedemontana for cyclists” linking Varese to Bergamo

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A large, 90-km cycle path that joins Varese to Bergamo, from Pineta Park to Brembo. The total investment will be €35 million. An additional €65 million will be used for related environmental projects in the various natural parks in the area affected by the arrival of the Pedemontana motorway. This is what the company Pedemontana Lombarda is going to invest on the environment and on slow mobility, while, at the same time, building the homonymous motorway that will connect Bergamo to Malpensa Airport, the work for which will almost certainly begin in 2010.

The name of the project is “A park for the infinite city”, referring to the fact that there are 4 million people who live in the area between Bergamo and Malpensa, where there are also 300,000 companies that produce 10% of the gross domestic product. As the company explains, “This area is at the limit of its ‘load capacity’, and the extraordinary density of housing, of companies, of installations and infrastructure, the result of the wild, unbridled economic development of the past, has partially ruined its natural landscapes and beauty.”

The project “A park in the infinite city” will be presented in detail on Tuesday 18 March, in Milan. Last year, on 22 February, the watchdog body for the program agreement of Lombardy Region, approved the Pedemontana proposal, and gave the go ahead to the construction phase of the preliminary project, starting with the proposal scheme developed by the Polytechnic of Milan’s Department of Architecture and Planning. Seventy eight councils, 4 provinces, 5 regional parks and Lombardy Region are involved.

In total, €100 million will be allocated by Pedemontana Lombarda for environmental compensation, which corresponds to 3.5% of the overall cost of the work. The project entails creating a “greenway”, that is, a large, hedge-lined cycle path that extends for 90 km, from Varese Province to Bergamo Province. “It will be a sort of transversal connecting backbone,” Pedemontana Lombarda explain, “and it will provide access to the system of parks in the area affected by the Pedemontana motorway.”

Five regional parks will be involved (Ticino, Pineta di Appiano Gentile, Groane, Lambro, Adda Nord), as well as 12 local parks (Rugareto, Medio Olona, Rile – Tenore – Olona, Lura, Brughiera Briantea, Brianza Centrale, Grugnotorto Villoresi, Colline Briantee, Cavallera, Molgora, Rio Vallone, Brembo). It will be a linear park that connects the towns crossed, the main services, and the train stations, and that comes into contact with the motorway in the service areas, which will be treated as points of access to the parks. Construction of the greenway will cost about €35 million. Another €65 million will be used for 50 local, environmental redevelopment projects, in urban

parks, agricultural parks, agro-environmental networks, urban woods, natural forests, ecological networks, green and slow mobility systems, all connected by the same greenway. “The projects will be of different types and sizes,” the company explains, “promoted and developed by the councils and park authorities; most can be completed before the construction of the motorway, and in short times.”

“The Pedemontana motorway must be built while paying the greatest attention to the environmental and territorial aspects,” the company conclude. “This is why the passage from Autostrada Pedemontana Lombarda’s preliminary project to the final one must undertake to keep the impact on the territory to a minimum and to improve the quality of the work. And for this very reason, we suggest looking at the motorway not as a necessary evil, but as an extraordinary opportunity to attempt to rebuild the environment and landscape.”

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