

7.14 View toward Guanarteme, Las Palmas.



In Las Palmas, the continued fragmentation of decision-making in this zone means that the potential of the waterfront suffers. Other cities now aim to emulate the Genoa situation. In Genoa, the appreciation of the waterfront as a common territory, rather than a contested one, has changed the nature of decision-making between the Municipality and the Port Authority.

For planners and architects, the Genoa case is of particular interest for the role of “design thinking” in framing the discourse of development along the waterfront. The Port Authority Plan Agency’s employment of ideas from Koolhaas, Solà Morales and Smets, allows for the engagement of design thinking in the formation of policy decisions. Too often designers arrive in a process after major decisions are set. The Genoa example displays the potential for design to be informative as well as reactive. Design thinking used in this way can both open the possibilities and define the specifics. It can operate at a global as well as a local level. It can influence the process and reclaim a role in the generation of urban environments. The utilization of design concepts imagines the port as a series of complex places and integrates this territory into a complete idea of the city. The application of design thinking can act as a unifier of common beliefs and identities.

The Genoa case is, unfortunately, the exception rather than the rule. Las Palmas is more typical in this sense. In Las Palmas, the City and the Port