



LOCATION OF THE PROJECT SITE AND STUDY AREA IN RELATION TO THE CITY OF GENEVA



THE SCALE OF THE STUDY (YELLOW) AND THE SCALE OF THE PROJECT (RED)

CATEGORY: Urban/architectural
SITE'S FAMILY: HOW TO INTEGRATE VACANT SITES IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT?
LOCATION: ONEX-BERNEX-CONFIGNON (SWITZERLAND)
POPULATION : 1'240 inhabitants
STUDY SITE: Territories of the Onex, Bernex and Confignon municipalities
PROJECT SITE: 54.8 ha
SITE PROVIDED BY: Republic and Canton of Geneva
OWNERS OF THE SITE: Private Owners and State of Geneva
COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION: Mandate to study and assist the transformation process of the suburban single dwelling area
REPRESENTATIVE OF TEAM: Architect - Urban Planner - Landscaper

A real challenge for research in urban-strategy and multi-professional interdisciplinary!
HOW CAN THE SITE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE «ADAPTABLE CITY»?
The proposed site is part of a suburban fabric made of "villas". In the late fifties, increasing the density in that type of urban environment became a strategy that contributed to densify substantially the number of housing units in the Geneva territory. First, large expanses of free land were used to develop quality neighborhoods. In recent times, densification had to be carried out on plots of land that were smaller and already built, based on a development procedure favoring the replacement of villas by land reorganization and the construction of collective housing. However, many villas are still inhabited by their owners who are afraid that housing developments will threaten their home-owner lifestyle,

their social ties or their moving and shopping habits. Another blocking factor comes from the use of complex planning tools, which create significant constraints, particularly in terms of land-price control or minimum density. This led to a patchwork of small development projects, based on land acquisition opportunities, without any overall urban project or coordinated land-use strategy. Therefore, the objective is to suggest a transformation of the suburban fabric based on a method that could better reflect the aspirations and interests of the existing stakeholders, while promoting a rapid emergence of new densely populated neighborhoods (land-use index 1.2 minimum). The transformation should breed social and morphological diversity structured around public spaces and facilities, in order to create a vibrant and high quality urban life.

European 13 - Switzerland - Onex-Bernex-Confignon



THE PROJECT SITE

CANTONAL STRATEGY

In the proposed site, the State of Geneva wants to test a new type of territory planning, less centralized and more flexible, with the aim of making the whole territory planning process and housing production more efficient. Used as the guideline to a progressive urban transformation, the project will help define new operating procedures, while revisiting the role of the stakeholders or the approval process by local authorities. However, for urban density issues and public access to open green areas we expect results similar to those obtained with the use of existing tools.

DEFINITION OF THE SITE

The site involves three suburban municipalities, whose links to the heart of the metropolitan area were recently strengthened with the opening of a tramway line. The area is also very well connected to the road and motorway networks. There are a few dead ends which is not unusual in a suburban

environment. Soft mobility will not be easy to implement throughout the site considering the break created by Chancy road, one of the main thoroughfares of the urban area.

Even if the site is located far away from the centers and public facilities of the Confignon and Bernex villages and loosely connected to the neighboring town of Cressy, it will be close to the future Bernex north neighborhood with the creation of a new downtown area and a future agro-urban park.

FUTURE OF THE SITE IN RELATION OF SITE'S FAMILY AND ADAPTABILITY?

Some small parts of the site have already been the object of a progressive densification, resulting in a significant fragmentation of the land plots, the construction of non-detached homes and the development of social heterogeneity. Large estates with few buildings – legacy of ancient large agricultural properties – are still present, especially south of Chancy road.

The site morphological and social diversity must be used as the basis of the

transformation process considered. The challenge consists in reconciling social realities with densification and land use constraints.

The project will have to deal with a lack of open spaces, public facilities and an absence of diversity. De-compartmentalization and a better accessibility of the site will be needed as well. That means upgrading the road network and improving the connections with soft mobility networks, particularly with public transport stops and communal centers. Parking issues will be treated in sync with the successive development stages, but they must minimize soil sealing and the use of the land surface.

Emphasizing existing green structures and a selective preservation of existing trees will contribute to the future identity of the neighborhood. The existing greenery and plants are very representative of current residential areas, with a strong presence of mixed hedges and a wide range of plant species. However, some wooded hedges - a legacy from the past - can still be seen on the southern slope, close to the agricultural area.

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PROJECT SITE IN THE TOWN OF CONFIGNON, NORTHERN BOUNDARY



IN THE CENTER OF THE PROJECT SITE (TOWNS OF CONFIGNON AND ONEX)



URBANIZATION WITH LOW DENSITY COLLECTIVE HOUSING



LOW DENSITY COLLECTIVE HOUSING

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RENOVATED VILLAGE HOUSE



VILLAS BUILT IN A CONTIGUOUS PATTERN



VILLA DISTRICT AMBIANCE



REGULAR ACCESS TO A GROUP OF VILLAS