



PROJECT SCALES: XL + L + S (territorial and urban and architectural)
TEAM REPRESENTATIVE: architect and/or urban planner and/or landscaper
SITE FAMILY: From productive area to productive city
LOCATION: Metropolitan Toulouse, the cities of Balma, L'Union and Toulouse
POPULATION: Metropolitan Toulouse: 748,149 inhabitants
STRATEGIC SITE: 5.3 km² **PROJECT SITES:** Prat Gimont : 42Ha, Vallée de l'Hers : 38Ha, Montredon : 44Ha
SITE PROPOSED BY / ACTORS INVOLVED: Toulouse Métropole, the cities of Balma, L'Union and Toulouse, aua/Toulouse (Urban planning Agency of Toulouse)
OWNER(S) OF THE SITE: Toulouse Métropole, the cities of Balma, L'Union and Toulouse, private owners
COMMISSION AFTER COMPETITION: urban and architectural feasibility studies and/or project to initiate with the partners

HOW CAN THE SITE CONTRIBUTE TO THE PRODUCTIVE CITY?

The site includes a large concentration of business activities: commercial and artisanal spaces, a dynamic business district and high-quality services. There is also a large range of housing types: single-family residential areas, Balma Gramont ZAC - joint development zone (1660 units planned). The challenge is to upgrade a heterogeneous area rich in contrasts: uniting zones that have degraded with those that are emerging.

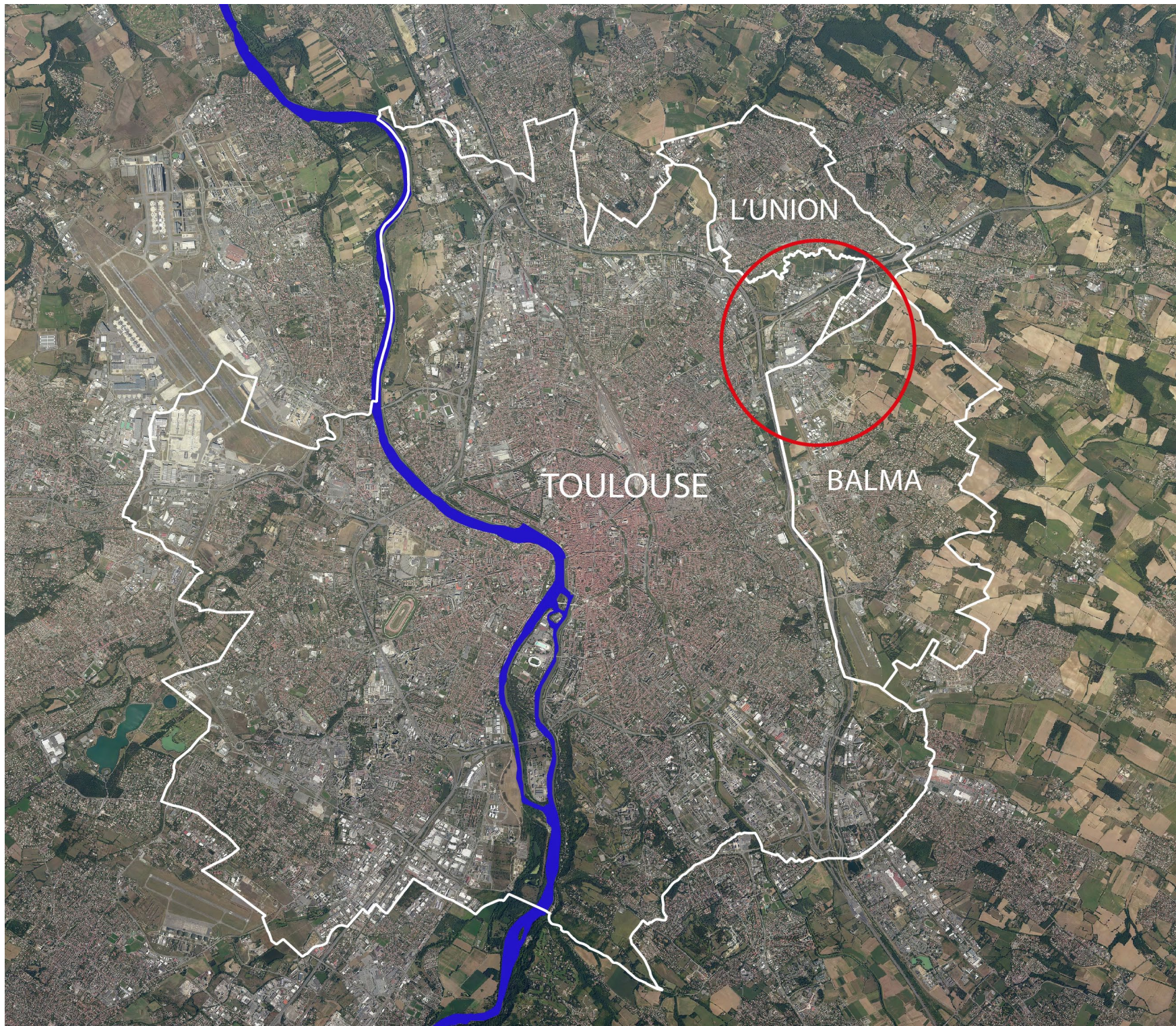
In a highly competitive environment (many projects are being developed in the metropolitan area), the site has to find new force.

The city and municipalities wish to guide the changes already at work on this site towards a variety of functions that would reinforce productive activity. What urban composition and mix of architectural typology should be proposed?

CITY STRATEGY

City : Establish a commercial and business role for Balma Gramont around a strong, mixed identity and thus maintain the site in the face of increasing competition. Highlight the quality of the landscape, sports and cultural facilities, form a symbol of identity. Extend the city from Argoulets as well as from the ZAC all the way to the metro station Balma Gramont. Work on the quality of entrances to the city or cities (RD 112).

Municipalities: In the town of Balma, find the right balance between two opposing centres: the small town centre and the metropolitan business centre. Solve the problem of isolation of the joint development zone ZAC. In the town of L'Union, establish the future of the southern edge, which is peripheral for the town and yet confronted by metropolitan pressures (property values). In Toulouse, find the right connection between Balma Gramont and Les Argoulets.



SITE DEFINITION

The site of Balma Gramont Porte Métropolitaine, the north-eastern entrance to metropolitan Toulouse, is a major economic and business centre reached by metro line A. It is next to the large joint development zone ZAC Balma Gramont (currently under construction). The study site extends over three communities: Balma, L'Union and Toulouse. This is the only part of Toulouse beyond the ring road, entrance north of Balma and south of L'Union. This territory brings together a topography, that becomes more distinct toward the east, of relatively impermeable urban islands and strong territorial cuts: highway, the ring road, the RD112, rail lines and waterways that form barriers and very few possibilities for crossing. The city and countryside meet here: the valley of the Hers, Garrigue creek and the Balma hills.

HOW IS PRODUCTION CONSIDERED IN THE URBAN DIVERSITY PROGRAM ?

Hers Valley, Urban doorway : The break in the landscape created by the Hers Valley and the fracture created by the ring road are on the threshold to the city of Toulouse. Although on the periphery, Balma Gramont is a peak of urban intensity between economic-commercial centre and transit hub. The great diversity of activities located there (building & civil engineering, semi-urban commerce, drive-in, small artisanal workshops) must find a clean way of operating and a relationship to the landscape. How to breach this infrastructure and find a complementary connection between Argoulets and Balma Gramont?

Prat Gimont, In between: This aging business subdivision separates the ZAC from the metro station Balma Gramont. A study of the urban fabric can lead to a way (public space, programming, typology) of responding to two opposing elements, the need for artisanal activity and connecting Vidailhan to the city via the metro. CEAT

(military research) delimits the neighbourhood. The Grainerie, a cultural facility within range of the metropol, is hemmed in and isolated: find a relationship with Vidailhan by going through Prat Gimont.

Montredon, Entrance(s) to the city: This sequential site poses the question of city entrances: accident-prone departmental road lined with plane trees, signage, businesses and artisan workshops. The housing (small apartment block) provides only a slightly successful break in the sequence. The hamlet of Gramont, a group of old houses linking two chateaux (Gramont and Thégra), punctuates this axis. The northern part of the ZAC connects here to the departmental road. What lifestyle (programming, architectural typology) is possible at this location dominating Balma Gramont from the hillside?

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Balma Gramont ZAC: the residential district of Vidailhan © Oppidéa



The commercial center and its parking silo, landscape of buysiness and commercial zone

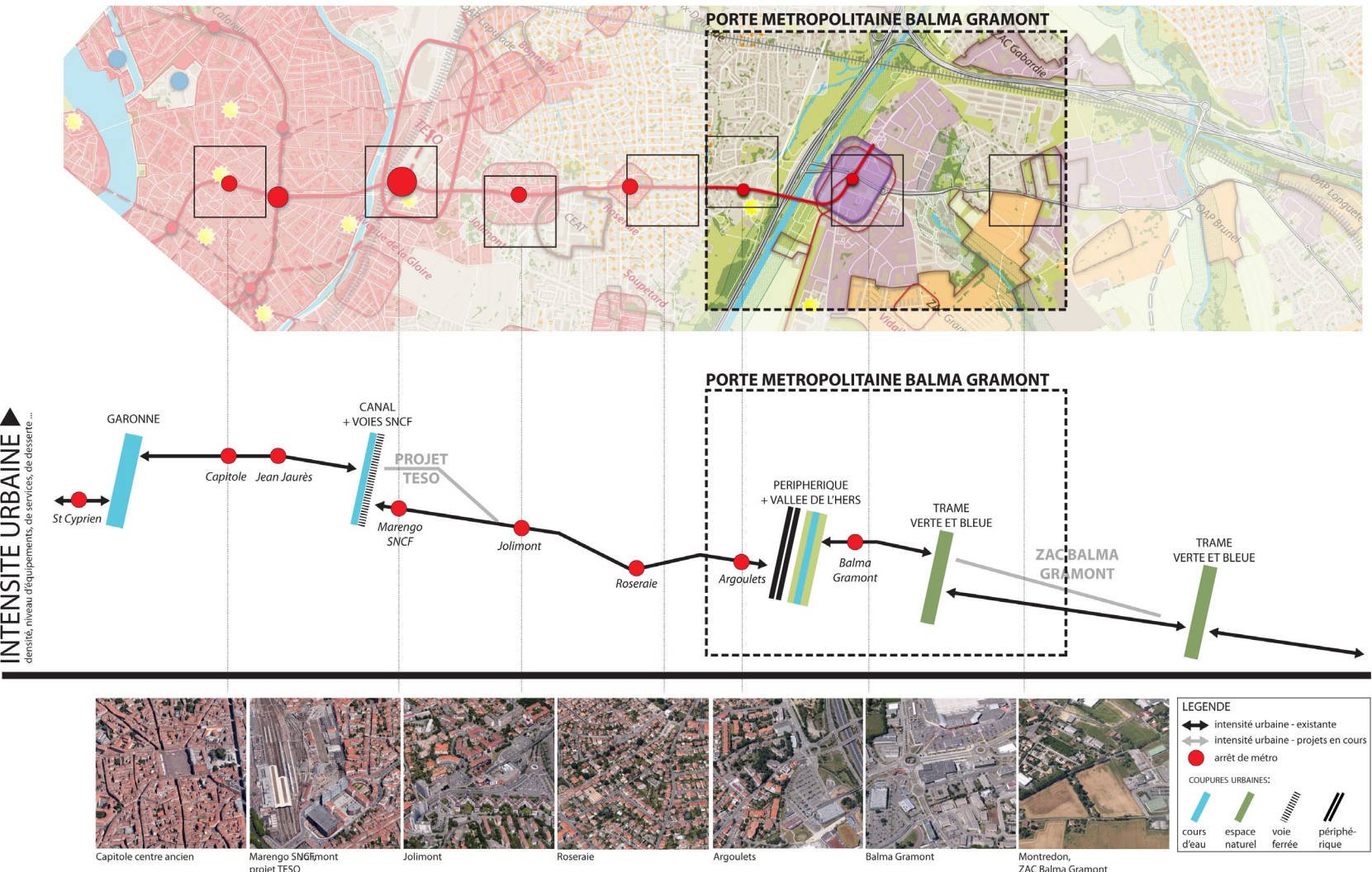


Hers valley, axis and landscaping potential structuring



Montredon area business : to the meeting between the slopes of Balma and the entrance of town

L'INTENSITE URBAINE, DE CAPITOLE A BALMA GRAMONT © aua/Toulouse



Balma Gramont ZAC © Oppidéa



Infrastructures: the site is crossed by a railway as well as by the peripheral way of Toulouse



Prat Gimont busines area



Thégra castle, some of the site's heritage features