

18 RIEZ (FR)

Revitalizing heritages

Scale
XL/L

Team composition: Architect mandatory

Location: Riez (04), France

Population: 1,683 inhabitants (3,000 in summer)

Reflection site: 1 km²

Project area: 10000m²

Site proposed by: Ville de Riez

Other participant: Direction Départementale des Territoires des Alpes de Haute-Provence (DDT 04), Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (DRAC PACA), Unité départementale de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine des Alpes de Haute-Provence (UDAP 04), région Sud, département des Alpes de Haute-Provence, PNR

du Verdon, Fondation du patrimoine PACA, Villages et cités de caractère du département des Alpes de Haute-Provence, Conseil Municipal des Jeunes de Riez.

Owners(s): Ville de Riez / private owners

Competitors output: Opportunity and feasibility studies, guide plan, urban and landscape project management, architectural project management, signage study.



SITE / CONTEXT

Riez is located in the south of the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence département, at the foot of the Valensole plateau and in the heart of the Verdon Regional Nature Park. The commune is part of the Durance Luberon Verdon urban community. Close to the Gorges du Verdon and Lac de Sainte-Croix, Riez enjoys an exceptional natural environment, attracting large numbers of tourists in summer. However, its distance from major urban centers and its rural setting mean that Riez is in an intermediate position, marked by a certain loss of attractiveness.

With its rich Gallo-Roman past, Riez makes the most of its ancient remains, such as the Baptistery and the Ancient Columns, as well as its Monuments Historiques heritage and Provençal landscapes. The old town center, surrounded by 14th-century ramparts, features two gates, Sanson and Ayguière, as well as a corner tower.

Riez is a beneficiary of the French government's "Petites villes de Demain" (Small Towns of Tomorrow) program, in which the revitalization of the old town center is a major priority.

Grand Rue, the central axis of the medieval town, is lined with old 17th-century mansions, including the emblematic Hôtel Mazan. However, Grand Rue site has suffered from numerous demolitions and today presents a heterogeneous urban fabric, alternating between residential buildings in varying states of preservation and urban wasteland.



How can we regenerate a city center by building on and enhancing the area's natural resources and heritage?



The commune of Riez is planning to revitalize its old town center, focusing in particular on the blocks south of the Grand Rue, through an ambitious urban requalification project. According to mayor Christophe Bianchi, the challenge for the future is to “revitalize the town center by creating more links and diversity”.

How can we restore the desire to live in the old town? At a time when houses with gardens are still the preferred housing model?

How can we promote new forms of housing, develop new ways of living and encourage intergenerational exchanges?

How can we strike a balance between preserving architectural heritage and integrating new forms of housing?

How can we link the typological particularities of the medieval center (alleyways, backyards, built density, etc.) to the process of producing a contemporary city?



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