Paris Rive Gauche

3rd Millennium area of culture, research and education?

Learning from a mega project
1. Paris Rive Gauche, outstanding project

2. *Before* PRG

3. The Concept

4. Implementing the Plan

5. Living, working and creating in PRG

6. Some lessons from the PRG project
1. Paris Rive Gauche: an outstanding urban development project
Ambition: creating a parisian district with regional, national & international dimensions

« The Seine Rive Gauche project concerns the whole Paris region. It has to do with the position the region will take tomorrow in Europe and in the World. Beyond the Latin Quarter, will emerge a cultural area of international dimension »

Jacques Chirac, Mayor of Paris, 1990

« The Bibliothèque de France will be one of the largest and most modern libraries in the World, covering all fields of knowledge, open to everyone, using the most advanced technologies and connected to european networks »

François Mitterrand, French President, 14 July 1988

A municipal project, meeting with State interests and prepared by years of studies and planning
Paris in the XVIIth Century

Carte des Chasses du Roy

Where is PRG?

The location paradox

Outskirts of Paris City

From XVII Century until the 1990's

1840 Austerlitz Station and cargo terminal
Where is PRG?
The location paradox

Still on fringe of City

But:
Central position in the Paris Region

2 km from Notre-Dame
Connections

Good road links
- *Periphérique* Ring Road
- Access to regional/international networks

Improving public transport accessibility
Automatic metro line 14 (2000)
- 5’ Lyon TGV Station
- 10’ to Golden Triangle
- 20’ to La Défense

But:
- 30’ to Orly Airport
- 40’ to Roissy-CDG Airport

Plans for TGV Station + Orly Express
The river: physical and symbolic link to the parisian history & landmarks

Eiffel Tower

Notre Dame

SEMAPA - Ville de Paris
(Not only) A 2,7 kilometre waterfront project

(But) An opportunity to reconnect local communities to the river
The scale of project: large (not oversized), « parisian » density, mix use

**Paris Rive Gauche** [data 2006]

Area: **130 ha** *(26 ha covered railyards)*

Floor space 2015: **2 200 000 m²**

- Offices: **700 000 m²**
- Housing: **430 000 m²** *(about 5000 units, )*  
- Facilities: **662 000 m²** *including:*
  - National Library: **250 000 m²**
  - University: **210 000 m²**
- Other commercial uses: **405 000 m²**
- Public parks: **9,8 ha**

Gross floor area ratio: **1.7 (net: 3)**

People 2015: **15,000 residents, 30,000 academics & 60,000 jobs**

Time scale: **1990-2015**
The scale of project: large (not oversized), "parisian" density

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**Time scale:** 1990-2015

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**Paris La Défense [data 2006]**

- **Area:** 160 ha
- **Floor space:** approx. 3 900 000 m²
  - Offices: 3 000 000 m²
  - Housing: 600 000 m²
  - Shops: 210 000 m²

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**Time scale:** 1958-2020 *[+ 950 000 m²]*
The scale of project: large (not oversized), « parisian » density

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Time scale: 1990-2015

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**Amsterdam Zuidas (2004)**

Area: **275 ha**

Floor space: **2 750 000 m²**
- Offices: 1 172 000 m²
- Housing: 1 092 000 m²
- Facilities: 485 000 m²

Time scale: 1997-2020
2. *Before* Paris Rive Gauche: planning, redevelopment strategies and opportunities

The area in 1989: cargo terminals and decaying industries
Regional Plan 1976: a need for a more balanced development East Side

Bercy-Tolbiac
Implementing the Eastern Paris Regeneration

The Plan-Programme de l’Est Parisien (1983)

2 major sites:
La Villette
Bercy-Tolbiac
New ideas emerge from major-event led projects

**1981-83:**
1989 Universal Exhibition: idea of moving the Left Bank Tolbiac Freight Station
Launch of the Right Bank Project (Ministry of Finance and Bercy area)

**1985:**
1992 Olympic bid: Recognition by politicians of huge potential of area
Idea of transfer of Austerlitz Station to the suburbs

**1989:**
Idea of covering the railway tracks
Regional Plan 1994: strategic regeneration areas on the Paris rim

- La Défense Nanterre
- Plaine Saint-Denis
- Paris Rive Gauche
- Boulogne
- Seine Amont
3. The Concept

an integrated parisian district, not an urban island
Bridging the railway tracks with an artificial grid of streets 9 m above ground level (central spine avenue)
Building on a new level: offices on platform, housing on embankment
The spine: a large avenue built on top of the compacted railtracks

Fluids, cables and tree roots concealed in slab

Underground car parks

Limited land acquisition

Difficulties arise after the approval of Plan (1991)
Impacts of “urban slab solution”

- cost = large office programme
- technical constraints limit flexibility of planning
- physical: artificial ground, complexity of a 2-level city concept, pedestrian and road links
The framework of Project: Concerted Development Zone (ZAC) & Area Development Plan (PAZ)
The developer (SEMAPA): public partnership, private status

- Ville de Paris: 57% of shares
- SNCF French Railways: 20%
- French State: 5%
- Ile-de-France Region: 5%
- Other: 1%

Tasks:

- Buying the land & creating infrastructure
- Master planning + architectural projects
- Selling the building rights

[www.parisrivegauche.com]
Financial Balance 1991-2005 ( Millions € VAT excluded)

<table>
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<th>Dépenses (charges)</th>
<th>En million € HT</th>
<th>En %</th>
<th>Recettes (produits)</th>
<th>En million € HT</th>
<th>En %</th>
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<td>Acquisition et démolition des terrains</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Cession des terrains (droits de construire et cession emprises publiques)</td>
<td>2395</td>
<td>78%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travaux (VRD, couverture, SNCF...)</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>Autres produits (participations, cession SNCF,....)</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<td>Dépenses accessoires (dont études/frais financiers/...)</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>Université</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3075</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3075</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Quarters of different character, each around a major facility

Austerlitz
- Business
- TGV Station

Tolbiac
- Housing
- Public Facilities
- National Library

Masséna
- Shops
- University

APUR - SEMAPA – Ville de Paris
Different levels of accessibility by public transport

Lyon Station
(TGV, RER, M)

Austerlitz Station
(RER, M, future TGV)

Quai de la Gare Sta.
(M)

Bibliothèque Sta.
(RER, M)

Massena Sta.
(Future Tram)
4. Implementing the Plan: public debate, market crisis and political change

- 1991: approval of Development Plan after public inquiry

- 1993: coalition of associations win case in courts against Project

Arguments: too mono-functional, too car-friendly, lack of green space, destruction of most pre-existing buildings, lack of public consultation…

Manage to create a real public interest: residents, artists, architects…

- 1995: National Library delivered in a "no mans land"
- 1996: private investors not interested, financial crisis of SEMAPA

New mayor, new urban policy: "urbanisme à visage humain"

- 1997: approval of a new Development Plan after public inquiry

Major changes: no expressways, more preservation, more University,…

Public participation process: Comité Permanent de la Concertation
1998-2006 : Project takes off

- 1998 : Tolbiac area completed, 1st business moves in (Sanofi-Synthélabo)

- 2000 : metro line 14, financial and hi-tech businesses decide to come

- 2001-2003 : new Mayor, new Development Framework for Project

Major changes : less office building, more University and R&D, more public housing (50%) and more sustainability…

Constructive dialogue between playors

- 2006 : State / Municipality conflict about a new location for the Paris Courts
Where do we stand now? About ½ way from completion

Delivered or underway July 2006 (Building Permit)

- 63% Office (440,000 m²)
- 80% Facilities
- 35% Residential (2000 units)
- 16% Other Commercial

5000 existing residents (1/3)

20000 existing jobs (1/3)

3 areas yet to be developed
5. A walk on the Eastside
Living, working & creating in Paris Rive Gauche today… and tomorrow
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter: around the Library
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter: around the Library

The National Library: urban mistake, cultural engine

“4 vertical books open to the World” Arch. D. Perrault

Decided 1989, open to public 1996

Physical ignorances of its environnement
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter: around the Library

The National Library: urban mistake, cultural engine

Bad connections with the street grid and with the River

Unhospitable esplanade

But: virtual and concrete Library (10000 visitors/day)

In local networks
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter : around the Library

The MK2 Cinema : a real public space
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter: around the Library

Residential development: predominantly social
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter: around the Library

New footbridge and swimming pool reinforce cultural and leisure functions.
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New footbridge and swimming pool reinforce cultural and leisure functions
5.1. Tolbiac Quarter: around the Library

Future redevelopment on South side of Av. de France awaiting decision: mixed-use quarter with Arts Center or the Paris Courts of Justice?
5.2. Austerlitz Quarter: around the Station
5.2. Austerlitz Quarter around the Station

Monotonous office-use along Av. de France (financial services, telecom, public sector, …)
5.2. Austerlitz Quarter around the Station

A major issue: East-West link around Austerlitz and opening-up of La Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital

Architectes-urbanistes: Ch. de Villers & F. Seigneur (1996)
5.2. Austerlitz Quarter around the Station

A major issue: East-West link around Austerlitz and opening-up of La Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital

- A very large hospital (9000 staff, incl. 2000 MD)
- A biomedical research center
- Not fully integrated in PRG
5.2. Austerlitz Quarter around the Station

River front: Docks of Paris reconverted into a “Fashion and Design City” (2008)
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

A blend of old & new and a real mix of functions

2003
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

Office and retail development around Metro-RER Interchange

A major cross-roads & a focal point of development, but:

• lack of a major public space
• lack of shopping facilities and housing
• large monofunctionnal blocks
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

An open-block concept becomes an urban Campus: density, variety, integration
5.3. Massena Quarter : around the University

Public and free market housing, University in reconverted Mill and Flour Granary
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

A New Latin Quarter in 2008? 4 universities split up into urban scale buildings

- Paris 7 Diderot: Physics, Chemistry, Bio-Sciences, Humanities
- Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations
- School of Architecture, Univ. Of Chicago
- 20000 students by 2008

**Common Facilities:** libraries, services & shops, start ups incubator, ...
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

Paris Bio-Park (2007): industrial ‘hotel’ reconverted into a Center for mature biotech businesses
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

Les Frigos: an artist squat becomes a cultural focal point of Project

250 artists
Creation and production site
15,000 visitors/year
5.3. Massena Quarter : around the University

A major issue : how to connect Paris Rive Gauche with Seine Amont Area?

The end of Avenue de France in 2006

Regeneration Area of Seine Amont : synergies needed to develop in the biotechnologies and health industry
5.3. Massena Quarter: around the University

A major issue: how to connect Paris Rive Gauche with the Seine Amont Area?

The Massena Brunesseau Project (2004): a medium-rise development awaiting decision

Arch. Y. Lion
6. Some lessons from Paris Rive Gauche
1. Planning perspective: PRG = a ‘Megastructural project’ but is it a *Dinosaur*? Public control, flexibility and long term evolution

2. Strong political and financial backup (Municipality & State) needed along development process to ‘Point of no return’. What about the Regional level?

3. Public debate: fierce opposition better than a lack of interest. Participation has greatly improved the Project. But could an early participation have killed the project?

4. ‘Metropolitan Centrality’ or ‘Urban Quarter’? Mix-use integration or ‘Mega-blocks’? Large-Scale Projects = strong contradictions. Street grid, land division, vertical mix of uses…

5. Is PRG a “3rd Millenium area for Culture, Research and Education”? Too early to tell, some ingredients are there (such as pro-active players)