Since the 17th century, the fertile agricultural areas of marshes (Marais in French, at the origin of the world-famous Parisian neighborhood) were overtaken by the first movements of urban expansion. Pushed towards the periphery of Paris, the vegetable gardeners found space in the humid lands from the Plaine des Vertus, in Aubervilliers, to La Courneuve, or towards the hills of Montreuil and Vincennes, making up a vegetable belt around the city.

Along the 20th century, these farms and gardens almost disappeared under the pressure for urbanisation and the construction of large housing projects, such as the Cité des 4000 in La Courneuve. One may also explain their almost extinction due to technological advances, such as refrigeration, that allowed bringing fresh products farther away without jeopardising conservation Agriculture in Île de France is nowadays essentially oriented to the mass production of grains for exporting. With the exhaustion of oil resources in the next three or four decades; the Parisian metropolis will once again have to face the challenge of seeking local fresh products.

We are all conscious that every viable energy option to substitute the oil industry today will have catastrophic outputs to nature and global warming in the long run. The city is not in a position of rethinking its economic model without taking in consideration that it has to overhaul its exchange system. To fulfill local needs implies reintegrating the agricultural process within the city and its own making.

As Paris aspires to conquer its roofs by trying to transform 100 hectares of it into urban gardens, we think that it is imperative to conceive any peri-urban expansion by taking into consideration the existent fields and by integrating the new vegetable gardens as food supply parks of the future. We do not wish to propose a nostalgic form of conservatism, on the contrary, with a lot of respect and consciousness, we propose to reconsider agriculture not as an element that blocks the growth of the city, it should be the real axis that inspires this expansion.

The transformation of the A186 into an urban boulevard that integrates the extension of the T3 tramway line is the ideal occasion to rediscover the connections between North and South by complementing the 3 great axes formed by boulevard Aristide Briand, avenue du président Salvador Allende and avenue Edouard Brany.

The liberated area constitutes an enormous potential that should be preserved by creating a large linear forest, as aligned woods, a clear gesture that unites Montrouge’s topography, between the plateau and the suburb. This former barrier thus becomes the heart of a new centrality, less than a 20 minutes walk from the metro stations Mairie de Montrouge and La Dhuys, from the new ecological public swimming pool, the Montreau park and Parc des Beaumonts.
The first landscape extends its scale over the city of Montreuil. It is the Linear forest, that arise from the opportunity created by the destruction of the highway. Above this former barrier that segregated the highest part of Montreuil we plant a pine tree forest that extends from Romainville to the parc de Monceau.

The second landscape, which takes the scale of the Haut Montreuil neighborhood, is the Nature corridor. The North-South axes are already in place all over the site, and they allow to separate the car traffic originated in E. Brailly and Pdt S. Allende streets from the smooth circulations within the corridors. The natural shape of the north-south inclined topography gives place to a swale that irrigates with rainwater the gardens and fields all the way towards the Linear forest.

The third landscape takes the scale of the city blocks, the Crossing fields, infiltra the existing buildings and end up structuring the distributions of the plots for future constructions. Conviviality is engendered by a culture that favors local markets. The crossing fields are a local solution that proposes new possibilities for cities within the greater scheme of the Grand Paris.

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Relocation of the company Montreuil Matériaux (1) to the Roches neighborhood.
- The flexible plot on the Northern section of this area may host the first relocations of activities.
  - In the core of the area the abandoned ground floor building is demolished. The soil will be decontaminated via phytoremediation.
  - To the Eastern section, the building in dire conditions is demolished and can host in the future the company TCB.
- Spring 2019 - the first neighborhood party to celebrate the harvest of the vegetable gardens and orchards.
- Spring 2020 - enlargement of rue Edouard Branly, with an enhanced open space from 8 to 15 meters in order to ensure there is enough space for parking lots on the street, and the creation of green spaces in this potentially major north-south axis.
- Creation of a green axis that allows connecting avenue de la Boissière with the new metro station via an Nature corridor (smooth connections such as walkways and bikeways).
- The plots over avenue de la Boissière are built according to the large market structures HP Ville Evrard between Haut Montreuil and Bas Montreuil. It will also have an impact on neighboring cities due to the successive operations rue Jean Baptiste Lamarck.
- The liberated space, joined with plot number 91 of Avenue du Président Salvador Allende (owned by the city) allows to give back a surface of 4,500 sq meters to the construction of an extension of hospital Ville Evrard. The hospital benefits of a double access that allows directing the circulation (public access through avenue Boissière and logistic access to the underground parking lot via rue Allende). The space occupied by it can be limited to the 6 floors buildings of the activity should remain limited to a child care pole. Other plots could easily be converted into housing projects.

HP Ville Evrard n°92 n°94 n°93
- A public equipment related to local companies (an specialization center for instance) will be built in the core of the site, directly related with the Nature corridor.
- Creation of large market structures along the Linear forest. It will host several programs and become a new pole for social and cultural exchange between Haut Montreuil and Bas Montreuil. It will also have an impact on neighboring cities due to the arrival of the tramway.
- Different activities are relocated, including company Oval (O) from Les Roches.
- Last phase of the extension of rue Jean Baptiste Lamarck, which allows connecting with rue Rosny and ensures the traffic to activities around the street itself and those along the different markets.
The highway is transformed into a hybrid between nature and an artificial landscape: Linear forest.

Activities in Signac neighborhood follow new axes of fields and inhabited areas.

View of the Linear forest and the Signac neighborhood.
The nature corridor embraces the market

Swale Psychiatric hospital

The crossing fields connect rue E. Branly to the natural gateway

The plot can be turned to offices and dwelling

Portosity towards the crossing fields

Between façades and open spaces in boulevard de la Boissière

Boissière market, a new center of gravity for a city block

The nature corridor embraces the market

The crossing fields connect rue E. Branly to the nature gateway

View of boulevard de la Boissière at the entrance of a Nature corridor
Activities in rue des Roches neighborhood follow new axes of fields and inhabited areas.
The greenhouses above the roofs add up to the agriculture via hydroponic and aquaponic systems. They are accessible from the common areas and play an important role by keeping the building’s thermal inertia.

The collective housing are accessed by common areas, spaces conceived to stimulate exchange between people and ideas. These buffer zones in between two horizontal housing blocks, have a glass roof and facade, which can be open during summer for enhancing ventilation within the units and may be closed during winter for creating a temperate climate.

The modular structure of the building allows a flexibility that evolves around a central core: the housing units can be converted into office spaces and vice-versa. The typology of the units might also be adapted according to the needs of its inhabitants.

The "spaces for sharing" are adaptable spaces that may be used by the housing units inhabitants or towards activities according to the needs of the condominium.

Examples:

> "Neighborhood restaurant" : extension of the activities of "Delis/Grocery store" that can develop a restaurant in parallel with the activities of food preparing/storage/delivery.
> "Shared atelier" : extension of the "millwork" activity, a space rented to allow neighbors to have access to specialized millwork tools, sharing the equipments for their own use.
> Kindergarden, multifunctional room, association room...

The semi-buried parking lot is connected to the activities spaces in order to be adaptable to the variation of the need for parking space. The parking spots that are not used can be replaced by storage areas for the activities taking place in the buildings.

Sharing walls
The walls for private activities become public walls, accessible by everyone and for everyone, we can climb it on our way home, we can grow vegetables on it or it can be a support for light structures...

Sharing the work in the agricultural fields
Sharing the resources
While the ground floor base is built by the city, a co-ownership is created composed of one or more companies and of inhabitants.

Activities and housing are the base of the program, then offices parking and space for sharing are added depending on the co-ownership ambitions.

The modular structure of the building enables the future needs between housing and offices and between activities and parking.