



Nice Méridia

an urban technopolis for an intense city



PRESS RELEASE: MIPIM 2013



Nice Méridia



Slama Avenue, "Meridia" station: a marked identity for its entryway.

In line with the Éco-Vallée territorial development, the Nice Méridia operation is one of the EPA (urban development agency) plaine du Var's key projects. Situated in the heart of Nice, the Nice Méridia urban technopolis extends from north of the Grand Arénas business district, adjacent to the Nice Côte d'Azur international airport, to the Allianz Riviera eco-district.

In 2012, one of Europe's leading urban planners, Christian Devillers, has been selected by the EPA and its partners to direct Nice Méridia's blueprints. Since, this process has associated multiple agents in order to ensure its feasibility: the services of the French State as well as those of the Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur and its general council, the regional council, Nice University, the CCI and several private enterprises.

At Cannes' 2013 MIPIM, Christian Devillers has unveiled, presented and commented Nice Méridia's model replica.

Nice Méridia, the urban technopolis innovates for its users

"Nice Méridia is emblematic of tomorrow's cities – it is a project that relies on the concept of an urban technopolis which places research and development at the heart of its urban area. Synchronously respectful of the environment, economically fruitful, innovative in its use of the latest technologies, Nice Méridia is a technopolis that knows how to harness the full potential of an urban setting."

Christian Devillers

One of Nice Méridia's principal qualities is that it fuses the specific advantages of a science park to the benefits of urban accessibility.

Destined to become one of the principal catalysts for innovation and economic growth in the vast Éco-Vallée territory, Nice Méridia is undoubtedly an attractive space for any ambitious enterprise.

Nice Méridia, a space for innovation in sustainable development

Officially labelled an "ÉcoCité", the Nice Méridia project is a demonstrator of excellence, notably on the chapter of energy consumption. Its characteristic poly-energetic approach aims to integrate energy production to its sources of consumption by means of chain-linked solar, geothermal and biomass installations. This intelligent network is regulated through technologies internationally dubbed "smart grids"; the Éco-Vallée plans to have these means extended to the entirety of its territory. The chain-linking, in constant spread, allows one to envision a global production that will become more and more autonomous in its response to users' needs, wherever they are situated. In this respect, Nice Méridia is destined to become France's first district with an operational large-scale smart grid. Its realisation already mobilises numerous agents such as the CCI, the Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur and a large number of private specialists and experts.

In tandem with the production of on-site renewable energy, a notable think-tank focuses on the reduction of energetic demands and the regulation of real-time electric power consumption, seeking solutions for a reliable energy supply for the valley.

What's more, the Nice Méridia urban technopolis will also be interconnected, as outlined in the

digital development plan for the metropolis. With the instalment of an urban monitoring system for the better management of the city's resources – and therefore the improvement of its inhabitants' quality of life –, Nice Méridia already imposes itself as a leading example for the application of tomorrow's technologies. These include its digital healthcare plan, its mobile telephony services and its pioneering policies in favour of green transport and parking.

Nice Méridia, a space for innovation in economic development

The concept of an urban technopolis, by its content, the organization of its space and its operating procedures, aims to associate the specific advantages associated with science parks generally located on the outskirts of urban areas (R&D, higher education, cross-fertilisation, new enterprise creation, etc.) to the benefits of a densely urban localisation: the diversity of its functionality (lodging, local businesses, services, activities), public transit access, reduction of daily commutes, vitality outside of office hours, proximity and quality of the offer in sports, animation, and nightly venues.

The functional diversity on which the Nice Méridia project is based relies on the idea that in an urban setting, it is possible to gather a considerable number of competencies around one or many research prerogatives in order to favour synergy between universities, innovative enterprises and laboratories. The project banks on this mutual enriching between education centres (Nice University, the IMREDD, Polytech'Nice, the regional CCI's campus, the SDS etc.) and the R&D departments of newly installed enterprises. With



Canal d'Amenée Street, animated internal transportation gateway of the technopolis, parallel to the Var.

Calendar

- Order for the **creation of a ZAC** (Zone d'aménagement concertée) in June 2013
- Pre-commercialisation in 2013 for approx. **35 000m² comprising a residence for interns and social housing**
- Preparation work (layout of networks) before **launch of first constructions in 2014**

infrastructures facilitating start-ups, short-term lease offices for specific projects and dedicated co-working spaces, entrepreneurs, students and residents will be enabled with every imaginable tool to thrive.

The objective is clear: generate new talent and offer it a quality frame of life to stimulate the creation of new business. Since 2011, several simultaneous measures have been taken to further increase

Nice Méridia's attractiveness. In this respect, the Centre d'Accueil des Entreprises Innovantes de Nice Côte d'Azur, recently labelled CEEI (Centre Européen des Entreprises et de l'Innovation) by the European Union, offers funding plans and low-cost housing plans to help young and motivated start-ups in their initial phases.

Important French and international enterprises have already manifested marked interest in Nice

Méridia and discussions are currently underway in light of their future installation.

To date, nearly 4 000 new jobs are forecast with the implementation of initiatives favouring the development of a formation process for local workforce.

A fresh equilibrium between urban and natural settings

Nice Méridia has the ambition of cultivating a fresh equilibrium between urban and natural settings on a portion of its territory currently burdened by a strong presence of heavy transportation infrastructures, little adapted to soft modes of transport and quality urban life. The chosen orientation is a rupture from the previous decades' anarchic urban planning, a formless patchwork development that has spawned commercial centres isolated from residential areas, and clear-cut lines for each type of real estate (social, residential, individual, collective, etc.). Activity sites are often found far from inhabited areas with no real attention paid to collective transportation.

The primary objective was therefore to create - on this site already more than 80% occupied, but lacking any real structure and notable identity - a space where life is a pleasure, all while taking into account the multiple important economic agents already present. What is projected is the edification of an intense urban district that applies the proven principles of infrastructural and social diversity in a way that emulates all the qualities of a downtown area: plurality of habitat, public equipment, services, businesses, leisure, employment and livelihood outside of office hours.

Christian Devillers' project is guided by a rediscovery of nature: the neighbouring hills will be connected to the greater metropolitan area, along the Var to the sports fields, offering a view on grandiose scenery, a support for the quality of residential accommodations. To answer concerns regarding the management of rainwater, sizeable "green corridors" like that of the university's park or Robini Way will be located on slightly lower ground to create a retention zone in case of the centennial reoccurrence of a major deluge.

Nice Méridia, edification of an intense urban district that applies the proven principles of infrastructural and social diversity.



Méridia square and parkway, central conviviality spaces of the technopolis, animated by local businesses and services in the tradition of Mediterranean locales.

The urban site will itself be meshed by vast green expanses: on the 200 hectares of the studied perimeter, nearly 55% will be dedicated to these spaces. Altogether, only a small portion will therefore be urbanised. Indeed, this district, which proudly bears the ÉcoCité label, aims to become a model for eco-exemplarity with a consciousness for biodiversity, rainwater management and energy. More than a simple layout plan, Christian Devillers proposes an entire process for the mutation of urban strata by progressive substitution: the outline is rooted in the existing plot. A phasing principle is suggested in order to give coherence and intelligibility to Nice Méridia's first operations, on firm ground in the territory already overcome by public entities.

Amongst its many traits, Nice Méridia will be placed at the core of a new network of soft modes of

transportation allowing continuity from Moulins and Méridia at the north all the way to the Grand Arénas, the airport and Nice's downtown at the south.

The Montel/Slama boulevard - alongside which a series of operations are currently underway - will welcome the tramway's extension to the Allianz Riviera stadium and will be organised as an inter-district spur; the Grenoble road (ex-RN 6202) will be re-qualified as an urban avenue lined with buildings capable of hosting ground-floor activities and services. Circulation will be brought back to a liveable level.

Provisional constructability program:
320 000 m²

Housing: **160 000 m²** (50 %) - or **2100** units (40 % social and intermediate housing and 60% of free-access housing)

Office space: **50 000 m²** (15 %)

Labs and R&D: **50 000 m²** (15 %) for private and institutional use

Local business space, hotels and services: **15 000 m²** (6 %)

Equipment and activities: **45 000 m²** (14 %) comprising an Éco-Campus

On top of this program, the Robini plot already hosts the Premium building - 10 000 m² erected by the Cogedim-lcade promoters. This same promoter is scheduled to commence shortly with the construction of a second structure with a projected floor space of 14 000 m² for offices, businesses, 125 student housing units and 83 free-access housing units.



Christian Devillers-Agence Devillers & Associés

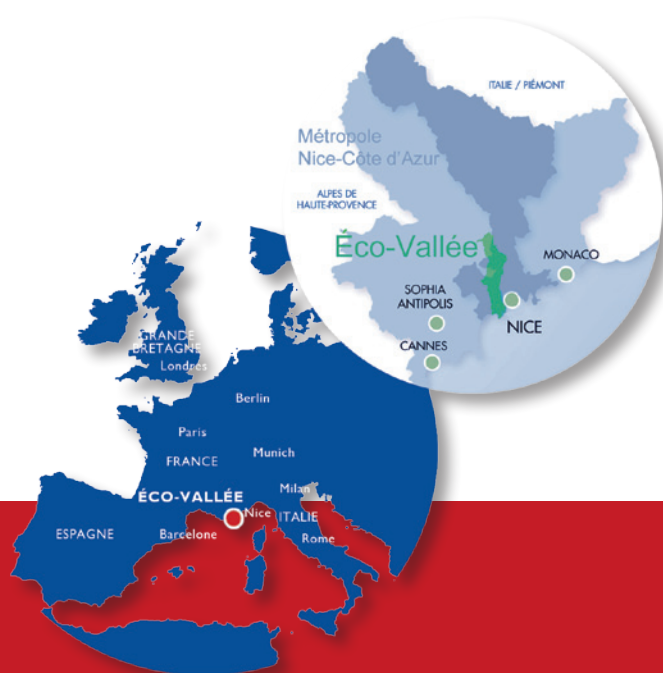
Christian Devillers is responsible for the urban planning of Nice Méridia. At the head of a multi-disciplinary grouping encompassing the Devillers & Associés agency, the Artélia urban engineering society, Transversal and renowned sociologist Alain Bourdin, he will execute, on a nine-year contract, the conception of the projects' operations, accompany the projects' construction phases to ensure architectural, urban, landscaping, and environmental coherence and effect the planning of public spaces.

Born in 1946 in Paris, Christian Devillers obtained a double architecture diploma DPLG from Paris 8 University and his Masters in urban planning in 1971. He then pursued his studies with Louis Kahn in Philadelphia where he obtained the American title of Master of Architecture; following this, he focused solely on research. Today, he wears the hats of both a practicing urban planner and architect. The Devillers & Associés agency, gifted with a multi-disciplinary team, showcases a stellar portfolio in the domains of urban projects, landscaping, urban planning of public spaces, architectural projects, large-scale infrastructures

and artwork. While seasoned veterans in sustainable development, the Devillers & Associés agency never rests on its laurels and is devoted to the constant advancement of its competencies in the various fields it engages in.

The agency is currently working on two ÉcoCités and nine Éco-quartiers, shortly underway.

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ecovallee-plaineduvar.fr
nicescotedazur.org

PRESS CONTACTS

Isabelle CARASSIC i.carassic@saatchiduke-lyon.com
 +33 (0)4 72 33 85 85
 +33 (0)6 03 89 61 20

Catherine GENTIL catherine.gentil@epa-plaineduvar.com

Elodie CHING elodie.ching@nicescotedazur.org