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**CATEGORY**

Urban/architectural

**LOCATION** La Chaux-de-Fonds Les Cornes Morel**POPULATION** 38'000**STUDY SITE** 7.75 ha **SITE OF PROJECT** 1.56 ha**SITE PROPOSED BY:** City of La Chaux-de-Fonds. Town planning and environment Department.**OWNER OF THE SITE:** City of La Chaux-de-Fonds.**TYPE OF ORDER AFTER COMPETITION:**

Study Site: district Plan and possibly a special urban development plan.

Project Site: project development mandate.

*Because of its town planning, the city of "La Chaux-de-Fonds" is a candidate for World Heritage cities of UNESCO, it is also the city where "Le Corbusier" was born and where he realized his first works.*

*The city is famous for its prestigious watch and jewel industries.*

**CHANGE TO OPERATE**

To the West of the city, the free space between the 2 cities of La Chaux-de-Fonds and Le Locle is currently the object of a coordinated and planned restructuring program in the wake of an urban planning contest.

The Eastern part of the city is in better shape, but it is in need of new development guidelines to redefine the city limits and link in a visible, coherent and attractive way, the planned new district with the remarkable urban fabric of La Chaux-de-Fonds and its centre located approximately 900 meters away from the sector that is the subject of the competition.

The "Esplanade" housing district bordering the perimeter of the contest in the west constitutes now the built limit of the city; it is not the end or the beginning of the city.

The future district must clearly play this role.

**CITY STRATEGY**

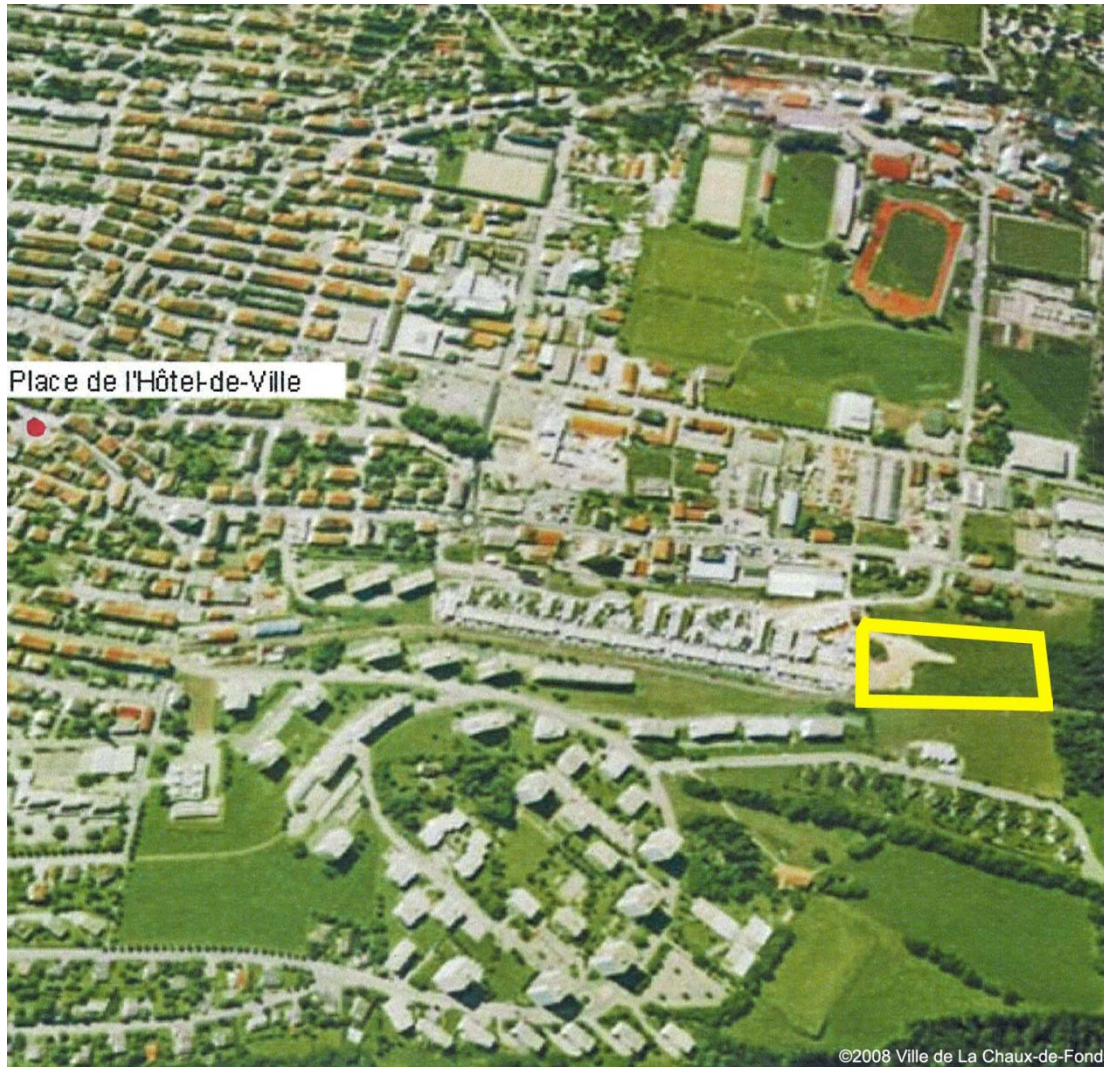
The urban perimeter of La Chaux-de-Fonds has this major quality of being self-contained and dense while offering – thanks to its checkerboard plan – high quality parks and open areas.

The limits of the built areas are clean and the close relation between the city and nature is an exceptional characteristic of the town plan.

Safeguarding and enhancing this unique quality are the two basic ingredients of the city's urban planning policy.

The city wishes to redevelop the sector whose attractiveness suffered from the mixed activities zones located at the bottom of the valley.





**SITE DEFINITION**

The ground is gently sloping towards the North-West. Exposure to sunshine is the greatest at the end of the day. This orientation is particularly beneficial in the Jura Mountains, especially in winter, as the city's altitude (1,000 meters) enables it to stand above the clouds that shroud the plain. This gentle slope becomes steeper in the Northern fringes. In the South the site is skirted by a railroad track (CJ). A link between both sides of the track must be created to give access to the planned "Les Arêtes" sports centre (swimming pool, sports ground, fencing centre). On the North side, the access road to the Jura is one of the main exits from the city; a tunnel bypass is planned to reduce car traffic in the city centre. To the West the Esplanade district contains approximately 300 residences and some retail activities.

In the East a forest of great natural quality, is the first expression of the untouched Jura landscape and starts at the limits of the communal territory.

**NEW URBAN MOBILITY**

The presence of the CJ railway at the edge of the site is an opportunity to create a new station to connect the sector to the main CFF station and turn this regional line into a true urban line. East-West pedestrian connections must be improved and redirected along the direction of the valley. North-South pedestrian connections, running perpendicular to the valley, must be designed and planned to connect the "Les Arêtes" centre with the "La Charrière" sports centre located on the North side of the mountain.

**NEW SOCIAL LIFE**

Population changes in the Neuchateloises mountains, linked to the development of the clock making industry create a demand for medium status housing.

The offer should range from detached or semi-detached single family homes, to small buildings with 3 or 4 apartments in a structured urban landscape with a high environmental quality.

Pedestrian access and paths must be particularly attractive.

Parking spaces may be collective or isolated and not necessarily located outdoors. It must be kept in mind that heavy snowfalls may impact the various facilities.

**NEW ECOLOGY**

The city of La Chaux-de-Fonds has a large urban heating network already serving the whole contiguous Esplanade district in the West and which will be used to supply energy to future buildings.

The use of other soft energies like solar and geothermal energy is also an option.

That would help the district meet current energy saving criteria and environmental requirement and boost its attraction and success.







# europan 10 - Suisse - La Chaux-de-Fonds



Railway tracks + "Esplanade" district bordering the project site

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Lower limit of the study site

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The "Esplanade" district seen from the road skirting the study site

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View from the top of the project site with the end of the "Esplanade" district to the left

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