



Discovery of Perpignan

district by district



How to present, suggest, and finally invite visitors to discover all the richness of Perpignan's heritage? Our city is both a bridge and a cross point of valleys, rivers and mountains; it is also the millenary capital of a transient kingdom; a fortress planted on a border with a complex identity; a city of convents and brotherhoods where faith resounds in several languages, from Romanesque to Baroque; a city of commerce, industry, crafts; a city of art and history.

Far from restricting heritage to a few hallmarks, the signage implemented in 2013 aims to highlight and reflect this diversity, this richness and this heterogeneity. From singular buildings to whole districts, it scopes various themes relating to history, art, architecture and urbanism. Far from prioritizing single elements among this eclectic heritage, the signage offers a personalized approach and invites visitors to a free wandering along the streets, without pre-established itinerary.

Accurate and documented, this signage provides tools of understanding, by means of explicative documents, plans, drawings, photographs and details. You can read from outside 83 remarkable elements of Perpignan's heritage while wandering through the city.

This booklet contributes to this trip at the core of heritage by regrouping these documentation, district by district. Besides the mapping of the various locations duly signalized by totems and desks, it stresses the particular identity of the various districts and their building history.

The City of Perpignan is proud to offer this key of understanding to all its loving visitors and citizens.

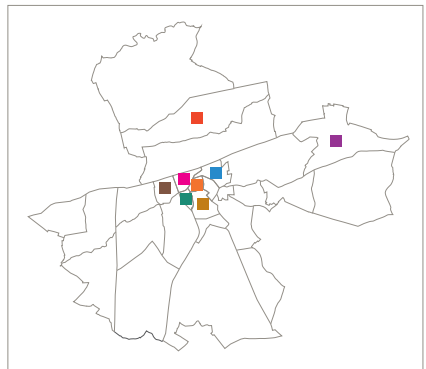
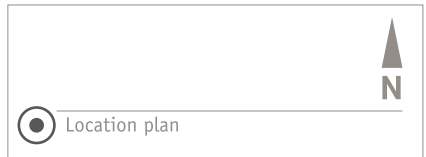
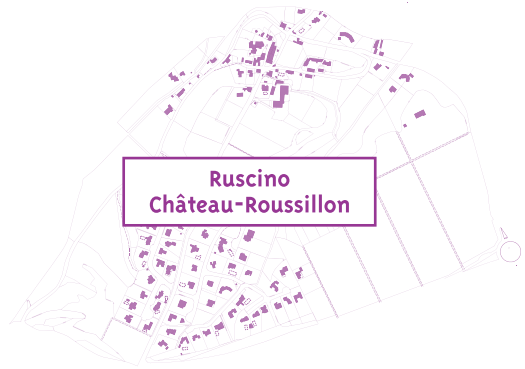
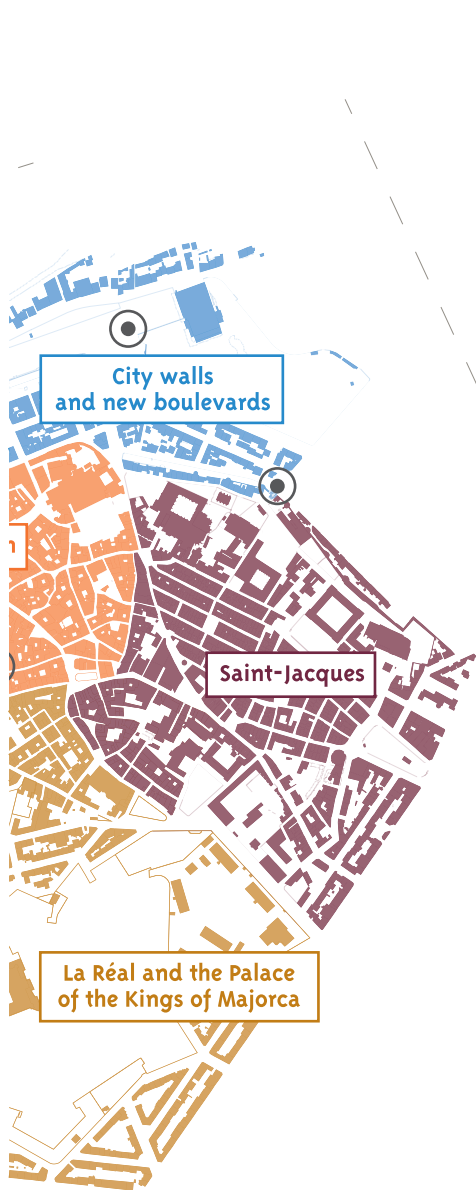
Jean-Marc Pujol, Mayor of Perpignan.

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General map





Ruscino – Château-Roussillon

The name of Roussillon comes from the antique city of Ruscino, now situated in Château-Roussillon, i.e. between Perpignan and the sea. This oppidum experienced a very long human occupation from prehistory to the middle age and remains open to discovery since never covered by more modern buildings.

This inexhaustible archaeological site, explored since the end of the 18th century, is now officially protected. It covers several hills and a large plateau. A hut from the Iron age (600 BC) has been reconstituted with durable materials. Ruins of the monumental forum built under August (20 BC - 5 AC), as well as the tracks of a Roman residential zone, which were both almost completely destroyed during the Early Empire are still visible. The site experienced a revival in Visigothic times and during the Muslim conquest. During the middle age people settled down on the surrounding hills. The Romanesque Chapel (11th century) remains at the core of the hamlet of Château-Roussillon as well as the signal tower (13th century) which dominates the north of the plain.





Saint-Jean

The first occurrence of Perpignan is dated 927. At the end of the 10th century, the Count of Roussillon settled down there. To answer to this designated role of capital, the city grew around this primitive core, I.E. the Count Castle, the Saint-Jean le Vieux (Old St John's) Romanesque church **03** and a small network of streets **02**. From the end of the 13th century, the city was locked by great defensive walls. From the 14th century, the Castillet **01** became one of the fortified city gates. **During the Middle Age**, the heart of the city concentrated the religious, political and economic powers, symbolized by the cathedral set, **03-06** and the Lodge Square **09-12** respectively. The name of the streets recall their commercial role **13** and **14**. The architecture is typically a medieval one **07**. This district still possesses some beautiful houses with large yards which are typical for Catalan medieval architecture **15**, **20** and **24** and rich mansions built during the Modern period **08**, **16-19**, **21**, **22**.



00 Location plan

01 The Castillet

02 La rue des Abreuvoirs

03 The Saint-Jean-Le-Vieux church

04 The Cathedral

05 The Saint-Jean-Baptiste cathedral

06 The Campo Santo (cloister cemetery)

07 The Mas Saint-Jean dead-end

08 The Cathedral square

09 The Lodge Square

10 The Sea Lodge

11 The City Hall

12 The Deputation Palace

13 La rue de la Barre



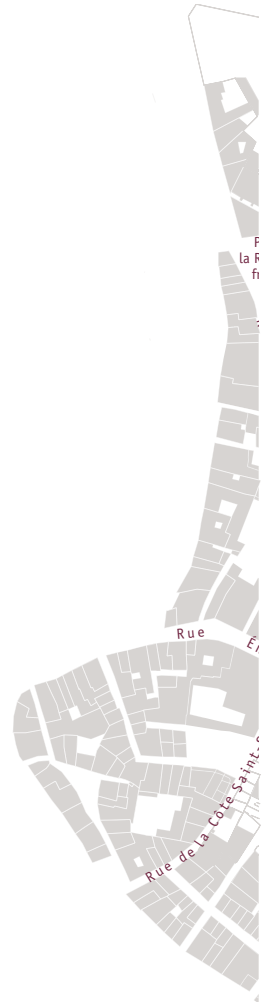
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| 14 | La rue des Marchands | 20 | Medieval architecture |
| 15 | La Casa Julia | 21 | La place de la République |
| 16 | La préfecture | 22 | La rue du Théâtre |
| 17 | La rue Mailly | 23 | Le palais des Corts |
| 18 | L'hôtel de Lazerme | 24 | La Casa Xanxo |
| 19 | Rue de la Cloche d'Or et rue Queya | | |

Saint-Jacques

Located on a hill (in Catalan, Puig), the Saint-Jacques **06** district has been created by the Kings of Aragon, maybe as early as the end of the 12th century, with the intention to extend the city there.

Quickly fitted with a church **08**, it is one of the three new parishes of the 13th century. It first hosted a hospital for lepers **07**, before becoming the Jewish district, the call **04**. It then attracted the weavers, thanks to the transfer of the market, also the gardeners who cultivated the orchards of Saint-Jacques, and finally during the 19th century, the workers of the JOB cigarette paper mill **12**.

The physiognomy of this district is strongly marked by the five convents which were successively built namely the Dominicans convent **02** and **01**, the Convent of the Ladies of Saint-Sauveur **11**, the Convent of Great Carmelites **14**, the convent of the Minims **05** and the Convent of the Discalced Carmelites. It also conserves beautiful prints of the military occupation like the powder magazine, the old Academy **03** and the barracks of the Puig **07**.



Location plan

- 01** The Dominican Third order Chapel
- 02** The Dominicans' convent
- 03** Powder magazine and ancient academy
- 04** Le call, Jewish ghetto

05 The Minims' convent

- 06** The Saint-Jacques district
- 07** Puig square
- 08** The Saint-Jacques church
- 09** Çagarriga Mansion
- 10** Ancient University

11 The Saint-Sauveur convent

- 12** Émile Zola street
- 13** Jean Moulin high school
- 14** Convent of Carmelites



La Réal and the Palace of the Kings of Majorca

The District of La Réal is limited to the North by the streets des Augustins and de la Fusterie. Built from 1228, it extends from East to West between the streets Grande la Monnaie and Petite La Réal. On this date, the gift of land to the Fathers of Mercy, installed in the En bastit district opens a period of land concessions until 1260. The Church **02**, built in the first third of the 14th century at the prior location of the convent of the Fathers of Penance, completes this new Kings' parish. Charles Quint adds to it the Royal Convent Sainte-Claire **03**, built at its own expenses from 1548 to 1550.

This Royal parish adjoins actually the Palace of the Kings of Majorca **04**, built from 1274 to 1344, an almost untouched building which testifies the splendor of this transient Majorcan monarchy **01**. An imposing Citadel **05** was built around the fortress during the French Occupation (1463-1493), and it was rebuilt during the 16th century by the Kings of Spain, before being modernized by the famous architect Vauban during the following century. The outdoor works, as well as the Southern walls, disappeared around 1930 to make way to a new district **06**.



- 01** The Majorcan town
- 02** The church Notre-Dame de La Réal
- 03** The Royal convent Sainte-Claire
- 04** The Palace of the Kings of Majorca
- 05** The citadel
- 06** The Southern avenues





Saint-Mathieu

The Saint-Mathieu District **02** grew from 1230 on, on both sides of the old way to Mailloles. The regent of the King of Aragon James I the Conqueror sold pieces of land strictly under the condition to build houses on them. The Templars continued this urbanism project. The octagonal urban grid and the regularity of the rectangular plots evidence a both organized and controlled urbanization with houses only opening onto the street by one façade.

Mentioned for the first time in 1305, The parish Church was dismantled in 1639 in order for Spaniards to defend the Citadel. Since the quest for a new location proved to be rather difficult in this crowded parish, it was rebuilt as late as in 1671 **01**. The great convent of Franciscans **03**, the first mendicant order to settle in Perpignan during the thirteenth century, was built in the North of the district. From the end of the 17th century, it was gradually replaced by a military hospital. At the same time and nearby, soldiers also built a cemetery which was widely expanded in the 19th century **04**.



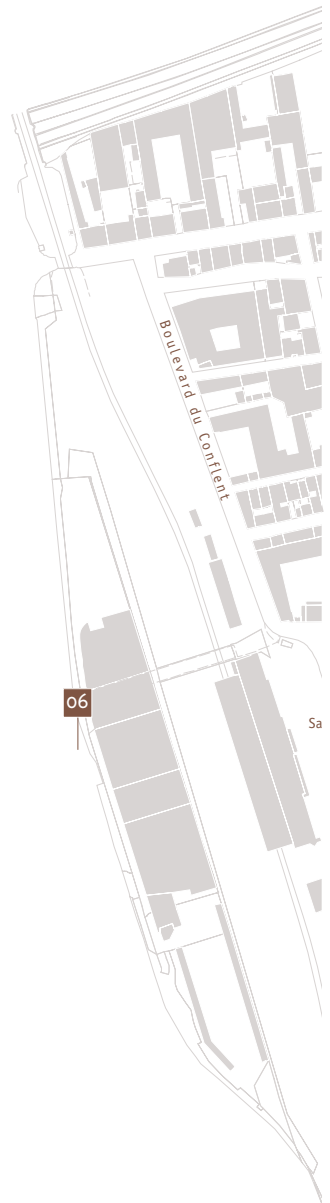
- 0** Location plan
- 01** The Saint-Mathieu church
- 02** The Saint-Mathieu District
- 03** The Convent of Franciscans
- 04** The Saint-Martin cemetery



The railway Station District

For reasons of safety – the embankment of the railway could be used as a shelter by attackers –, the railway station 05, completed in 1862, is located far from the city and connected to it by a single avenue. A district was built despite 01 military easements which were supposed to prohibit any durable building. The proximity of the station attracted soon a population of workers but also of rich industry captains and traders who took well-known architects such as Viggo Dorph-Petersen or Raoul Castan, to build their houses 03 and 04, factories 04 or headquarters 02.

Isolated for long behind the railway, the district of Saint-Assisclé is nowadays at the core of an ambitious urban project aiming to turn it into a district of speed and modernity i.e. a fortress for Perpignan's territory. Since the launching of the operation, in 1994, some achievements emerged such as the Hôtel d'agglomération or the centre del món (centre of the world), a wide commercial multifunction complex hosting namely the HVT station 06.



01 The railway Station District

02 Raoul Castan

03 Viggo-Dorph Petersen

04 Bardou mansion and factory

05 The historical station

06 The HST station



Boulevard Edmond Michelet

Avenue de Grande-Bretagne

Rue Benjamin Franklin

Rue Paul Riquet

01

02

03

04

05

Avenue du Général Charles de Gaulle

Rue Léon Dieudé

Rue Frédéric Valette

Place Salvador Dali

Rue Nicolas Boileau

Rue Alexandre Joseph Oliva

Place Albert de Belgique

Rue François Marceau

Rue Paul Massot

Quai Alfred Nobel

Rue Georges Courteline

Rue de Paris

Rue de Venise

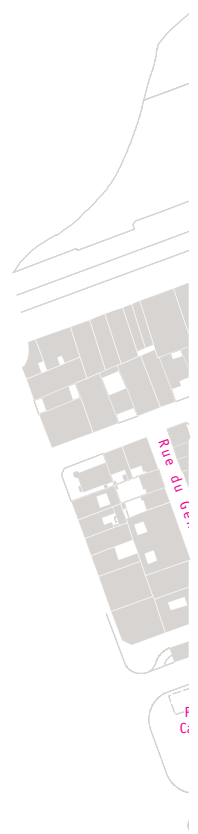
Quai de Hanovre

The new town and the suburb

At the end of the 17th century, aiming to strengthen the most vulnerable point of the defensive walls, doubled them along the Basse River by means of a large “horny work”, consisting in two bastions connected by a curtain, extending up to the Tet River. However, these fortifications, which were supposed to favor an urban expansion, remained unfinished. In the middle of the 18th century, the Count of Mailly designed gardens in the middle of the strongholds. The new city stagnated, exposed to the floods of the Basse River, isolated from the outside and from the rest of the city **05**.

Its opening and development had to wait for the great works of the Second Empire, with the creation of two gates, the demolition of the old rampart along the Basse River, the layout of the South Dock and of the place Arago **04** and **06**. At the beginning of the 20th century, the construction of the first Palmarium on a terrace bridging the River completed these arrangements. At the same time, the destruction of the ramparts reinforced the commercial function of the district **01** and **02**, by turning it into a vital link between the station and the core of the city, and opening it onto the suburb **08**.

Since 2011, the Théâtre de L'Archipel **07** and the numerous shops around it are giving a new impulse to these districts.



00 Location plan

01 Aux Dames de France department store

02 Jean Payra square

03 The malls onto the Basse River, the rich buildings of the thirties

04 The Arago square

05 The new city

06 The malls onto the Basse River, the “haussmannian” Perpignan at the water’s edge

07 The Théâtre de L'Archipel

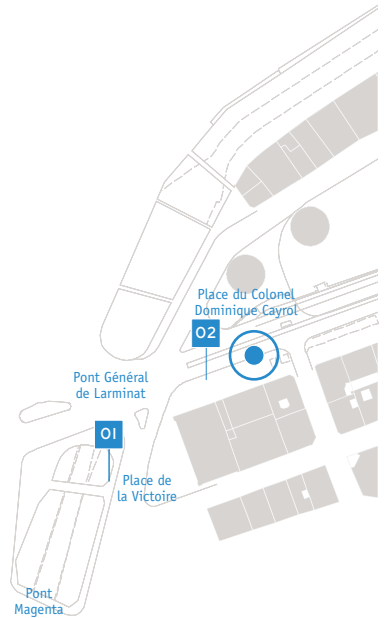
08 The suburb



City walls and new boulevards

Successive city walls, many times enlarged or reduced, modernized, locked the City inside imposing fortifications **01**, today reduced to a few ruins **12**. From 1904 to 1906, the promoter Edmond Bartissol took in charge the destruction of the Northern ramparts, in name of the city. This considerable loss transformed the city by revealing free lands to urbanize. Large squares linked by a belt of avenues replaced the old gates. The freed spaces also amplified the Downtown residential capacity and gave birth to modern, commercial or cultural facilities. They also offered an arena to talented architects of the 20th century **02 - 05**, **07 - 09**, **11**, **13 - 15**

The promenade of the plane trees, La Passejada, built in 1809 on an initiative of general Palmarole changed its name in 2007 to become the Maillol Alleys. It is the oldest park of the city. From the 1870s, this entertainment space was prolonged by the square of the fortifications, the square Bir Hakeim **16**. Since 1970, the imposing Congress Hall Georges Pompidou separates those spaces **17**. Its construction necessitated the removal of the monument to the Dead of the 1870 war now situated at beginning of the boulevard Jean Bourrat.



00 Location plan

01 The walls of Perpignan

02 Le Castillet movie hall

03 Around the Nicolau House

04 The Vilar House

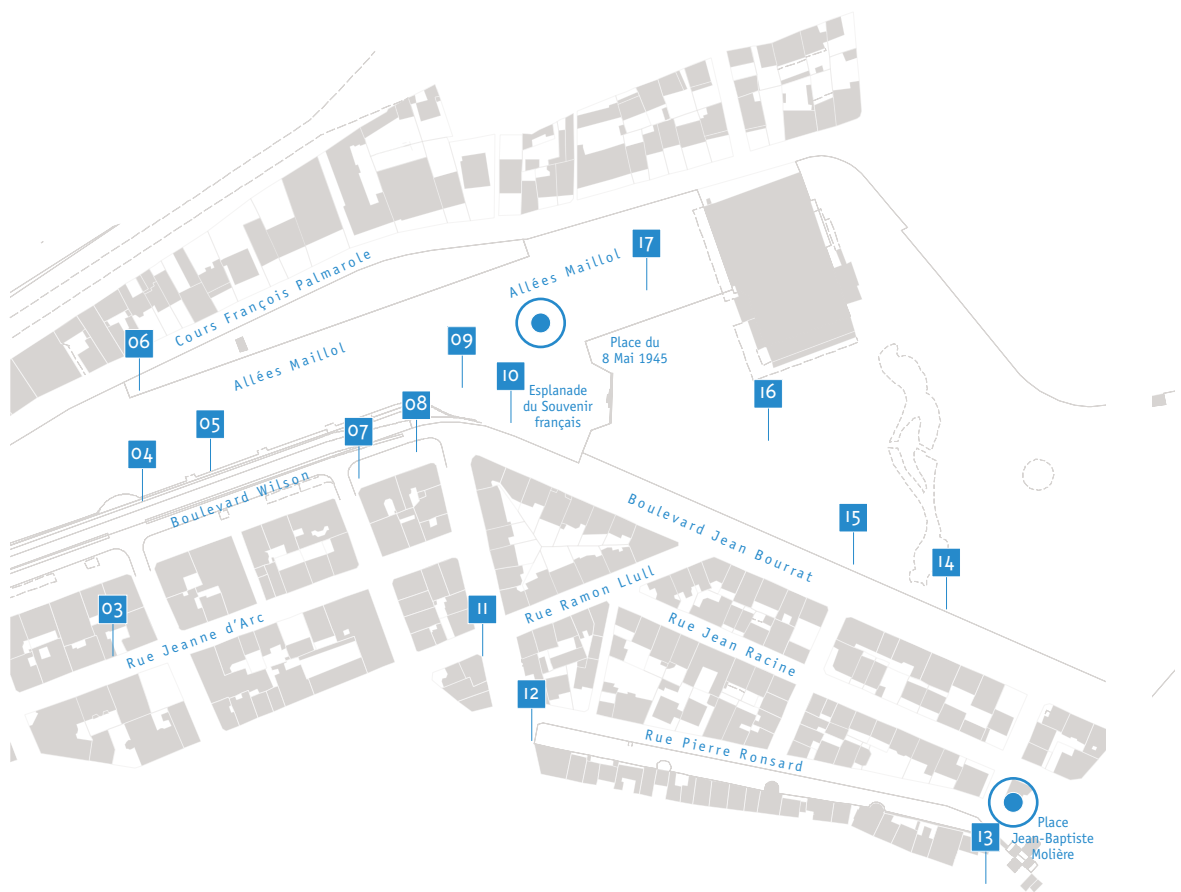
05 Henri Sicart

06 The Maillol Alleys

07 Claudius Trénet

08 Eugène Montès

09 The architects' walk



10 Monument to the Death 1914-1918

11 Édouard Mas-Chancel

12 The walls

13 Raoul Castan

14 Fériid Muchir

15 Alfred Joffe

16 The square Bir Hakeim

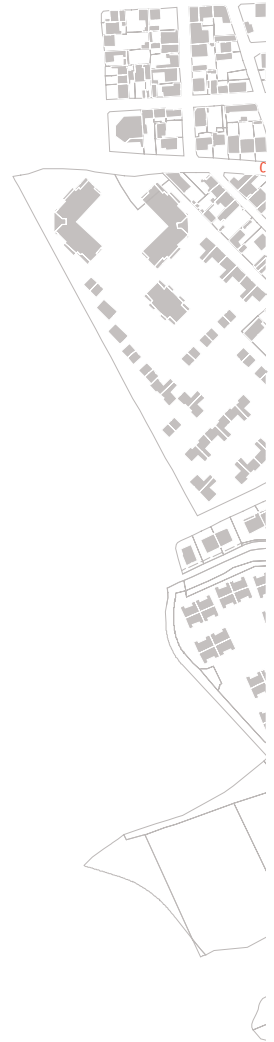
17 The Congress Hall Georges Pompidou

Le Vernet

The history of this northern district of Perpignan dates back to the 9th century. A villa of the Vernet and the Saint-Christophe church are mentioned as early as 899, both as belongings of the Gothic Lord Stephanus and his wife Anna. A village of peasants grew around it. **In 1195**, the construction of a stone bridge on the Tet River connected this hamlet to the city. In the 18th century, a paved road namely today's Avenue Maréchal Joffre, replaced the old path. It's was first modern road in Roussillon.

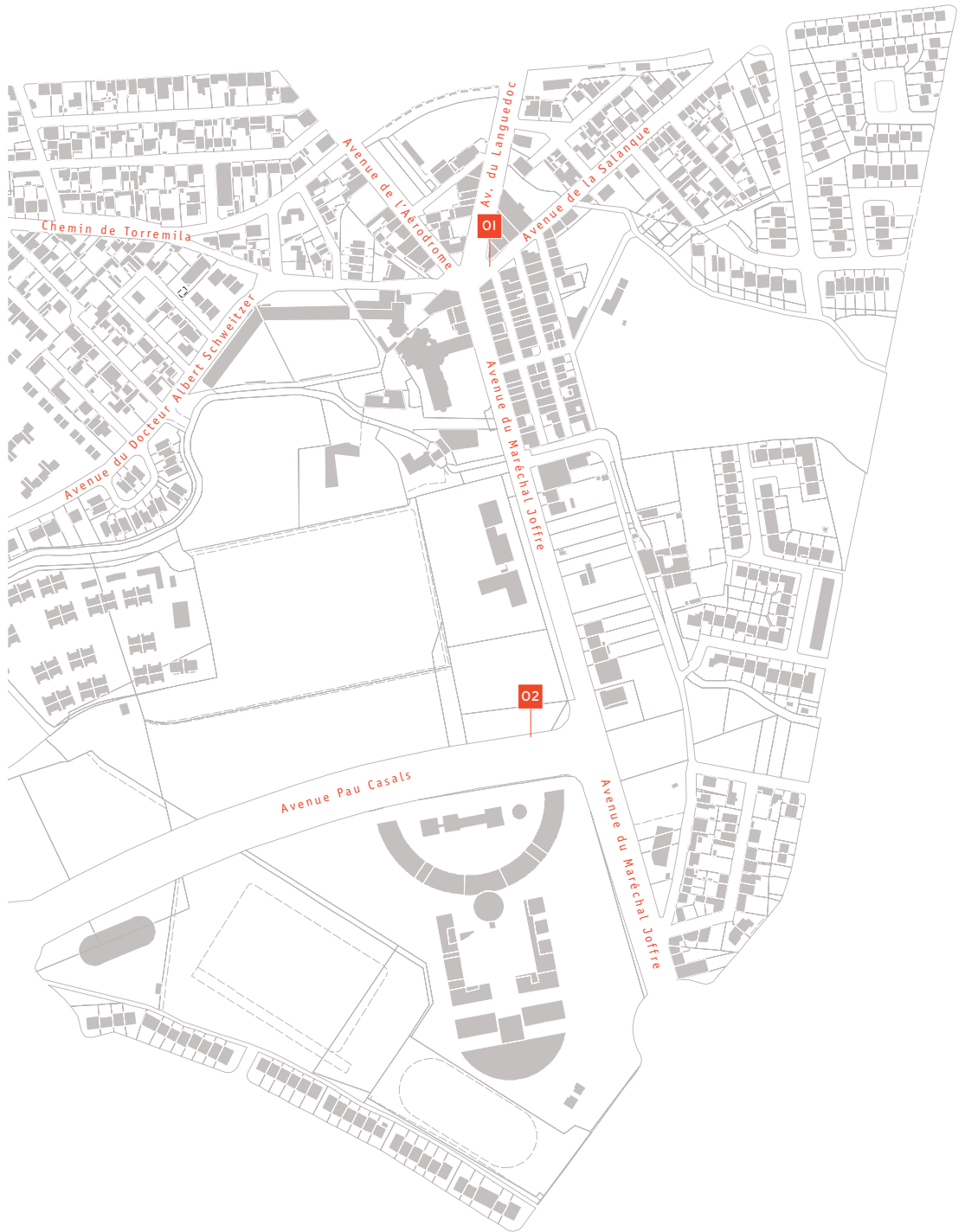
One Upper and one Lower Vernet grew in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries and finally agglomerated the primitive village to the city. The Poor Clares settled there in 1878, in a new Sainte-Claire Monastery built from 1874.

This vast districts hosts various facilities and services: the main Hospital Saint-Jean de Perpignan and Numerous clinics, the Brutus Stadium and various sporting facilities, schools, the post-modern high school Aristide Maillol and the airport... It is also characterized by the presence of social housing.



01 Le Vernet

02 The Aristide Maillol high school





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