



CA L'ALTISENT AND FONT DEL RECTOR GARDENS

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Ca l'Altisent is the former summer house of the Altisent family of musicians and writers. The old house, a two-storey building with a tower and various annexed volumes was built at the beginning of the 20th century. Despite its discreet architectural value, it was included in the catalog (BCIL) of heritage protection for its important value for Sant Climent's people and for the role that the family house had in the development of the Catalan art scene of the early years of the past century hosting concerts and literature events.



In 2003, a deal between the former owners and the municipality allowed Ca l'Altisent and the surrounding land to become public property. After this, the city and AMB joint together resources to

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promote the construction of a new library in a renovated Ca l'Altisent building, and the creation of a series of new connected public spaces.



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The old garden next to the house gave access to the land that borders the stream. Although these spaces never had a specific use, natives of the place remember walking through those lands next to the Rector's Fountain. Nature and abandonment had made them inaccessible for decades and left them on the brink of oblivion.

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The project is a joint intervention of Architecture, Public Space and Landscape. The project was born with the idea of creating a new urban route that connects the squares of the Vila and the Town Hall with the Church Square through the new Library Square and a zigzagging and accessible park.

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The transformation, of converting what was once private into a public building has allowed the opening to the city of its garden and access to the vegetable space that borders the natural stream from the Town Hall Square. The recovery of a building and a garden closely linked to local history has allowed to create a new square connected with other public spaces, improve the living qualities of the surrounding and at the same time, value the Sant Climent's architectural and cultural heritage.

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By converting the old private garden into a public square, the project enables continuing the public space along a vegetized park that connects different points of the village and brings back elements like "la font del Rector" to the citizens along a recovered and enriched green area with low maintenance local species that increase the natural qualities of the site.

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The park is conceived as a new itinerary that makes its way into an area in which the vegetation of the river has been gaining ground over time and eliminating any trace of old paths that ran parallel to the course of the water and gave access to the Rector's Font. Some spaces for rest and contemplation accompany the ascending path towards the Church square. This connecting infrastructure runs through a regained natural space with freshly planted local species that integrate with the spontaneous vegetation. The accessible path adapts to the existing terrain to modify the natural terrain as little as possible. The connection point between the two banks of the stream is through a wooden platform that acts as a viewpoint towards the restored Font del Rector. The result is a fully accessible zigzag itinerary between the new Library Square and the Church Square through a regenerated natural space.

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The square of the new library is designed to prioritize the widening of the space toward the arched façade of the building, opening the space towards the Town Hall square and increase the visual and spatial continuity.

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The proposal recovers a natural space hitherto untouched by citizens and provides the place with a new Library. Through the architectural restoration and transformation of a building of local interest, the opportunity to reconquer the public space that surrounds the building appears. The joint intervention means an urban improvement for Sant Climent de Llobregat both due to the new public building and the reconquest of new public spaces for citizens connecting several squares and points of interest through an urban fabric. The intervention goes beyond an architectural or public space proposal. The global nature of the proposal is its main interest, from the beginning it was clear how this union of social, pedagogical, architectural, historical, and urban interventions was the most significant value. This combination of interventions makes it possible to improve the urban landscape, the human ecosystem, and the social and environmental indicators of Sant Climent through a project that promotes encounters and social relations in the new spaces designed for civic uses, recovers heritage by redefining a building and adapts spaces with environmental and sustainable strategies.

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