

VERBIER PREPARES ITS TRANSFORMATION

From public places to sports facilities and meeting spaces, Verbier will see the results of intense planning and architectural creativity come to life in the coming years. This is a necessity for the resort, which is equipping itself with the means to preserve its economic and tourist attractiveness.

After dedicating our special report “Territory – the transformation of Val de Bagnes” to Le Châble (June 2024) and then to Vollèges (December 2024), it is now the turn of Verbier, whose municipal authorities have set out their vision (PAZ) for the territory, including some major projects.

A REDESIGNED SPORTS CENTRE FOR ALL

The Verbier Sports Centre has been searching for a new look since the fire that ravaged it in 2017. It has now been designed and was approved by the General Council in September 2023. “We have completely redefined the project to bring it into line with current needs and make it part of a 30-year vision,” explains municipal architect Frédéric Quennoz. “Our goal is to imagine a sports centre that simultaneously meets the needs of families and residents in the municipality, schools, sports clubs and our international tourist clientèle. To do this, we examined each possible scenario and then integrated the centre – which is on a large scale – into the topography of the site.”

SALVAN STONE AND NATIVE WOOD

The future building will include an aquatic area with a semi-Olympic swimming pool, relaxation pools (with hot water), a regeneration spa for athletes of all kinds, a children's area (with slides and a paddling pool), a gym with modular rooms that will be available to sports clubs, and a restaurant. Costing an estimated 69 million francs, it will prioritise the use of Salvan stone, which is resistant to almost everything – chlorine, frost, etc. – and local wood, which is warm, sustainable and has fine acoustic properties. In terms of time scales, the demolition and evacuation works are finally completed and construction can now begin.

AN ICE RINK – OR NOT?

At the far end of the plot, near the existing pool, there is a “slice of wall”: “It is a prototype, in a way a piece of the future building, and acts as a qualitative benchmark. This is essential for this kind of project, as it allows us to test the how the construction will work in detail. It is also a valuable decision-making aid for professionals and politicians alike.”



The laying of the foundation stone is planned for May-June 2025. This will be followed by the construction of the entire weight-bearing structure, floor by floor. The building is expected to open to the public in 2028. “Note that the authorities still need to decide whether or not there will be an ice rink in the complex.” An issue that is still being debated.

PLACE DE L'ERMITAGE: DESIGNED BY AND FOR THE POPULATION

Anxious to redevelop this space by responding to the expectations of the population and local actors – tourist, commercial, cultural, community organisations, etc. – the municipality of Val de Bagnes organised an extensive public consultation on it in 2023. The online questionnaire was downloaded some 1,300 times and about 1,000 people completed

it, not to mention participatory workshops and on-site information days. The project gives priority to green space. Local stone on the ground, large trees all around, small boggy areas to catch rainwater, public benches, a large pavilion with a multi-purpose room open to all and a café kiosk make up the overall design.

It is designed to work in every season: “The square can, depending on needs, host a Christmas market, a concert, a lottery or an ice rink during the winter.” This modularity is essential to ensuring that the square represents not only a breathing space, a void or an oasis of calm in the heart of bustling Verbier, but also a sociable meeting place. A three-storey car park can be found below ground, with its entrance cleverly concealed in a wooden pavilion at the end.

ESPACE ORNY: SERVICES FOR CITIZENS

Today, Chalet Orny hosts a private school, offices and a conference room. In the future, this large building in the heart of the resort, near a playground, will become Espace Orny and be open to the public, while retaining its alpine charm. "It will be a hub for citizens' services, including the Population Office and the tax office. A handy focal point for residents of Verbier and seasonal visitors."

Espace Orny will also include a library and toy library, a literary café and modular meeting spaces. "The firm that won the international competition has achieved a beautiful contemporary interpretation of vernacular architecture."

Opening onto a public square that leads into a children's playground, the place will also lend itself

very well to the organisation of exhibitions, conferences, wedding drinks and birthday celebrations, and will also be a space for tourist activities in case of bad weather. The consultation document should be filed by early 2026.

ESSERTS-SAVOLEYRES TMX: NEW STATION NEAR CARREFOUR

Work will begin on the station this spring, managed by Téléverbier. Specifically, a new facility called Télémixite (TMX) Esserts-Planards-Savoieyres will allow a direct, fast and comfortable connection between Verbier and Savoieyres-La Tzoumaz, without removing your skis, from winter 2026-2027. A station will need to be built between Les Esserts and Le Carrefour, providing a direct connection with Les Ruinettes, to achieve this. Work will begin in April 2025 and is expected to be completed in 2026, with a break during the winter.

"Everything has been done to minimise nuisance in the resort," explains Jean-Pascal Tornay, sector manager for Savoieyres-La Tzoumaz and future Chief Operating Officer of Téléverbier from 1 May 2025. A study was carried out to minimise the transport of materials. Helicopter flights for the pylons will depart from Les Ruinettes and Téléverbier's website will provide weekly updates on major forthcoming milestones.



"I SEE MYSELF AS A FERRYMAN"

Born in Vevey, Frédéric Quennoz completed his compulsory schooling in Valais, and is still attached to it. His career began with architect Pierre Schweizer in Sierre, with whom he designed many public buildings, including the Orsières school centre and the Sierre media library. He was subsequently associated with various architectural workshops, and founded K-Architects in Carouge in 2004, followed by the Ateliers d'Architectes in Cologny in 2017. From this beautiful adventure, this art and contemporary music enthusiast retains the memory of major projects, such as the development of private clinics throughout Switzerland and the La Réserve marina in Geneva, but also numerous restorations of heritage objects and historic villas all around the Lake Geneva area.

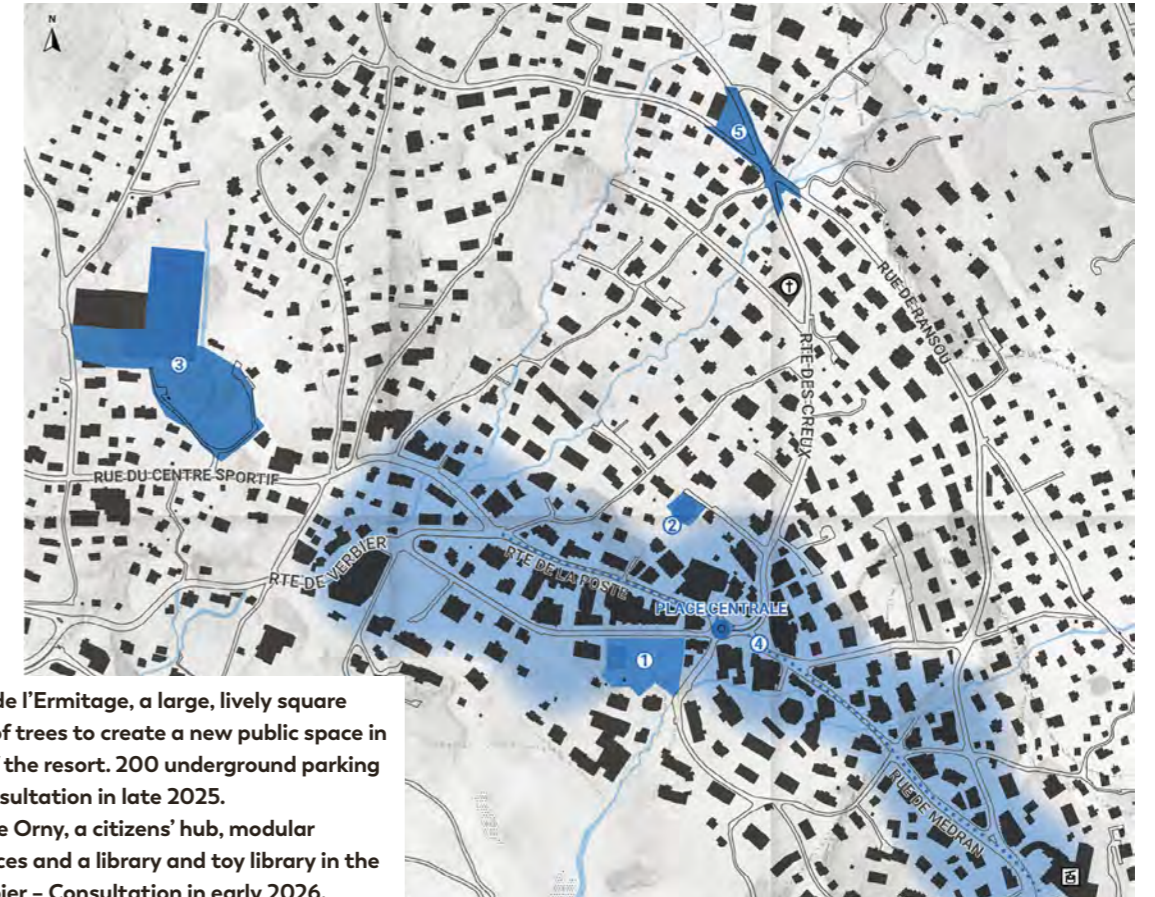
At the age of 48, the father of two is happy to return to Valais and finds in Val de Bagnes a place to express his vision. "I see myself as a ferryman, switching between the infrastructure needs of the municipality and those of future users. What do I have to offer? Technical know-how, experience of complexity, local sensitivity, network, listening and dynamism."



→ Learn more about Verbier's plans



→ Learn more about the project in this video



- 1** The Place de l'Ermitage, a large, lively square with plenty of trees to create a new public space in the centre of the resort. 200 underground parking spaces - Consultation in late 2025.
- 2** The Espace Orny, a citizens' hub, modular meeting spaces and a library and toy library in the heart of Verbier - Consultation in early 2026.
- 3** The Sports Centre, a vast complex offering relaxation and sports activities for all - Opening in 2028.
- 4** Pedestrianisation of the rue de Médran, for a better quality of life in the heart of the resort and support for soft mobility - Underway.
- 5** Espace Brunet, redevelopment of bus shelters with a green space and friendly waiting area - Works in 2025.



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This document is translated from the French version published in the municipal brochure *VdB Le Mag!* in March and distributed to all households. The full version is available online.

ERMITAGE



ORNY

