



Aerial view



Street view



View into courtyard

PROVINCIAL CAPITOL BUILDING, TOULOUSE, FRANCE

Architects: Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc. in association with Anderson/Schwartz Architects and Hermet-Blanc-Lagausie-Mommens/Atelier A4

Client: Département de la Haute-Garonne

Area: 760,000 sf

Construction Cost: \$80,000,000

Completion: 1999

VSBA, in association with Anderson/Schwartz Architects and Hermet-Blanc-Lagausie-Mommens/Atelier A4, won a 1992 international competition to design this capitol building for a southern province of France. The program called for an administrative and legislative complex including offices, a legislative assembly chamber, public services, various public and governmental support spaces, three levels of underground parking for public and staff, and outdoor and indoor ceremonial spaces. The design challenge was to insert this inherently large and potentially imposing building into a smaller-scaled commercial/residential quarter, and to combine repetitive office units with monumental forms appropriate to the official and ceremonial governmental functions.

Our solution arranges offices in two slender six-story wings of flexible loft space linked by two glass-clad bridges. These linear administration buildings frame a pedestrian way, a “civic street.” Via a monumental entrance, it crosses the site diagonally and connects the site of an historic city gate near the Canal du Midi bridge -- replicated with two columns -- with Toulouse’s commercial center. At the center of the site, one wing bows outward to create a crescent-shaped public space along the civic street, which serves as the focus of the departmental offices and the public entrance court to the services as well as the legislative chamber. The brick facades evoke the glory, the rosy aura, of the historic part of Toulouse, one of France’s very few “brick” cities. The very flexible and repetitive office buildings are complemented by and contrasted with the state assembly wing.

The building’s position in the center of the site, framed by landscaped park and gardens, softens its neighborhood impact, while allowing the possibility of future expansion of smaller increments nearer the perimeter of the site.

As prime architect, VSBA provided complete design services and construction documents in metric for the project. Major construction administration was performed by our French associate architects, with VSBA’s continuing construction review throughout.

*North entry &
the "street through the building"*



Courtyard



Courtyard entry



*Assembly Hall
exterior*



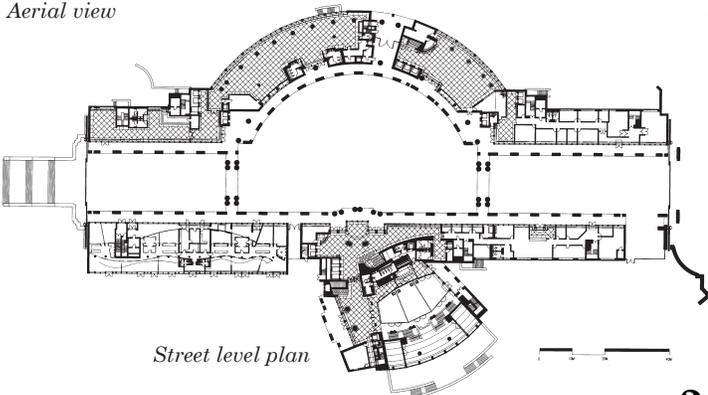
Distant views of the building in context



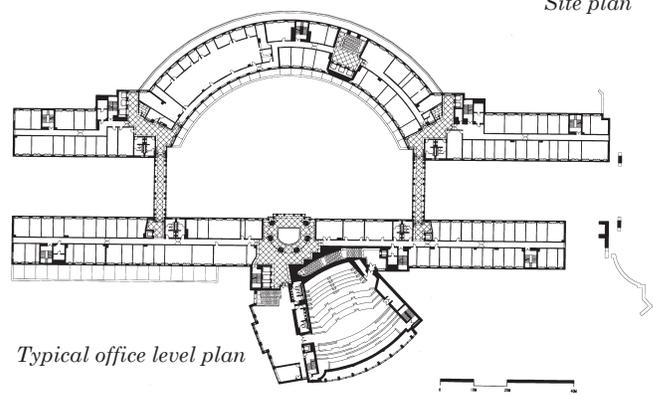
Aerial view



Site plan



Street level plan



Typical office level plan



Assembly Hall



Window & wall details

Assembly Hall