

WORKING COMMITTEE  
ON THE STATUS OF METROPOLIS

# A PROSPEROUS AND INCLUSIVE METROPOLIS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Report presented to the mayor  
of Montréal as part of negotiations  
on the status of metropolis

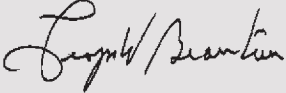
October 2015



## COMMITTEE MEMBERS



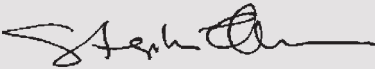
Monique F. Leroux, présidente



Léopold Beaulieu



Laurence Bherer



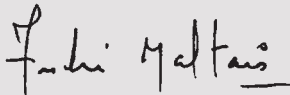
Stephen R. Bronfman



Gilles Julien



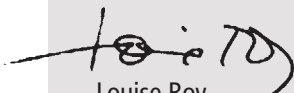
Éric Lamarre



André Maltais



John Parisella



Louise Roy



Claude Séguin

October 14, 2015

Denis Coderre  
Mayor of Montréal

Dear Mayor Coderre,

In November, you called on a few Montrealers who are committed to their city to brainstorm with you and your colleagues about the future of our city. This process is at the heart of the discussions that you have undertaken with the government of Québec. As you so eloquently put it, you and your colleagues are determined to give new meaning to Montréal's status as a metropolis.

My colleagues and I got down to business with enthusiasm. We held more than 12 meetings to produce the report that we are submitting to you today. We hope that it will meet your expectations.

For the committee, the review of administrative and legislative framework and updating the metropolis' responsibilities, powers and financial tools are essential. The process that you have undertaken is without a doubt one of the highlights of Montréal's near future.

We would also like to highlight the cooperativeness and availability of your collaborators at the city manager's office. As we worked, they made sure that their expertise and in-depth knowledge of Montréal's issues was available to us.

Please be assured of our entire support for all initiatives that will help Montréal to fulfill its role as a metropolis for all Quebecers.

Yours sincerely



Monique F. Leroux, committee chair

## SUMMARY

### **More than ever before, Montréal, Québec's metropolis, must place itself on the stage of the world economy.**

Today, competitiveness between large cities is fiercer than ever. To attract and keep talent such as investors, large cities are multiplying innovative initiatives. Montréal has everything it needs to remain competitive in this environment. However, for the past several years, it must be noted that Montréal's economy isn't growing as fast as it could. It's time to change our model and give Québec's metropolis what it needs to fully realize its potential.

If Montréal has the characteristics of an international metropolis, it must also assume specific responsibilities. It must deploy large volumes of services and infrastructures that serve not only the population, but also the population of the entire greater Montréal area and all of Québec. This reality has a major impact on the nature and cost of services that it offers residents, and consequently, creates major budgetary pressure.

The city and many other institutions and organizations around Montréal must regularly deal with programs and regulations that were designed for all of Québec, but are often poorly adapted to Montréal's reality. Montréal's context demands innovative solutions. Montréal must have a greater number of its own tools for fast, effective and adaptable responses, depending on its own specific issues and situations. It is high time to give Montréal's elected officials the ability to determine the organizational model that will best serve Montrealers.

Establishing a modern partnership that recognizes Montréal's status as a metropolis is the cornerstone that is essential to creating a new relationship with the government of Québec. This partnership should offer the city the necessary means to take effective action and meet economic and social objectives that are desirable for everyone. For its part, the government of Québec must take the organic nature of the metropolis into account and adapt its practices to the realities of a big city.

The world's biggest and most successful cities can count on more dynamic revenue sources than just real estate taxes. The diversification of Montréal's revenue sources is certainly a complex issue, but the members of the committee consider that the government of Québec needs to recognize, in a sustainable way, Montréal's contribution to Québec's economy and its special situation as a metropolis. Montréal needs more effective legal and financial leverage to develop its territory and support wealth-generating economic activity.

Redefining the status of metropolis cannot be limited to the revision of laws and regulations that govern the city's operations. This exercise must be part of a greater and more ambitious vision of Montréal's development. As the committee's work progressed, one thing became very clear: In order to give meaning and consistency to redefining Montréal's status as a metropolis, it is fundamental to establish a vision of sustainable development that is based on the metropolis' strengths and which takes into account the economic, social and environmental issues of its territory.

The recommendations issued in this report aim to give Montréal powers and more effective organization so that it can act as Québec's economic driver and as an international metropolis. The committee hopes all of its recommendations will be implemented in order to benefit all residents of Montréal and the province of Québec.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## RECOGNITION OF THE STATUS OF METROPOLIS

### THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

1. **That a new partnership between the government of Québec be defined and that it be based on the following benchmarks:**
  - The recognition of Montréal's role as Québec's metropolis.
  - Sharing responsibilities and financial resources that are adapted to the context and status of metropolis.
  - Greater administrative and legislative independence as well as increased ability to define its governance.
2. **That, to ensure its feasibility, this renewed partnership between Montréal and the government of Québec:**
  - Take into consideration the principle of subsidiarity, which implies that the level of decision should be as close as possible to the site of action and intervention, with respect to institutional missions and the skills of those involved.
  - Give Montréal sufficient and diversified sources of revenue so that it can effectively play its specific role as a metropolis of Québec.
  - Supplement any new delegation of responsibilities with the new financial resources needed to adequately carry out these responsibilities in a sustainable way.
3. **Adoption of an enabling law, through which the government will give Montréal, in recognized areas, all powers required to carry out its responsibilities as a metropolis and major urban centre.**
4. **That a partnership enable the implementation of a new administrative and legislative framework, with a view to:**
  - Abolishing ministerial approvals around borrowing regulations, items under the *Highway Safety Code* and modification to the development plan, while providing for, in the last case, an a posteriori accountability mechanism on pre-defined objectives and criteria that are adapted to Montréal's context.
  - Identifying government programs whose criteria are poorly adapted to Montréal's reality, and giving the city the right of withdrawal, authorizing it to manage money that is planned for it in these programs according to criteria that are adapted to its reality, and measuring its management compliance through a posteriori accountability based on the objectives of governmental programs.
  - Targeting, as a priority, the withdrawal of the *AccèsLogis*, *Rénovation Québec* and *ClimatSol* programs.
5. **That the possibility be evaluated of replacing unconditional financial transfers or those that are related to operating activities by a sole unconditional government transfer, set according to a percentage of the QST collected within Montréal's city limits. This percentage would be set according to the total of the large majority of current government transfers and the costs of government responsibilities held by the city.**

## BETTER GOVERNANCE IN ORDER TO BETTER SERVE RESIDENTS

### THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

6. Increasing elected official's capacity to define the city's and the boroughs' governance and management model, namely to facilitate the standardization of policies and standards across the territory as well as standardization of human resources management.
7. Removing the requirement of a qualified majority of two-thirds of the voices of the members of city council in order to enable city council to assert its jurisdiction with regards to borough jurisdiction (article 85.5 of the Charter) and to favour the absolute majority instead; transferred jurisdiction should be evaluated every five years.
8. To increase the city's capacity to centralize certain administrative functions in the interest of efficiency, namely in the case of functions that are not directly related to services to residents.
9. That the city establish a specific threshold for the cost of its activities and services, and that it use this threshold to compare its costs with those of other large Canadian cities; that the product of this exercise be made public and used to question the way business is done in areas and activities in which the city is less efficient.
10. That, as a unique employer, Montréal standardize its management rights by applying management standards to allow for comparability between the boroughs in conducting their activities, as well as the costs and services offered.
11. That Montréal create a representation mechanism that can negotiate all the provisions of the collective agreements of city employees.
12. That the negotiation plan and framework in the municipal sector – and particularly dispute settlement mechanisms, including arbitration – be reviewed to better reflect the results of the threshold of municipal service costs.



## BETTER INTEGRATED, MORE CONSISTENT GOVERNMENT ACTION

### THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

13. That the government demand that its ministries plan their actions on a metropolitan basis instead of by administrative region for issues that affect the entire metropolitan area.
14. That the government create a permanent ministerial committee for the metropolis whose aim would be, on one hand, to examine all laws, projects and programs that could have an effect on the metropolis, and on the other hand, to formulate all appropriate recommendations to the Ministers' Board. This committee should be supported by a secretariat with sufficient resources that is well versed in metropolitan issues to coordinate governmental actions in the greater Montréal area.
15. That the federal government be invited to participate in this coordination exercise in its fields of expertise.
16. That in the current government framework, the city have strong, proactive and coordinated representation within the various economic development organizations that are active in Montréal.
17. That the exercise of integrating and coordinating economic development structures and organizations continue across the island of Montréal; that the city consider combining, within a sole external organization, some of its services with a large number of organizations within its city limits; that the board of directors of this new entity give a prominent position to the mayor and municipal decision-makers, while mobilizing leaders of Montréal's economic community.
18. That the organization in charge of economic development eventually be given investment capacity, in conjunction with national, qualified, institutional partners in development sectors that have been determined as strategic; that the city, when it deems appropriate, determine and provide this structure with the financial resources needed for these funding activities.
19. That, as needed, the government of Québec allow the city to merge structures and organizations that it has designated; the the government collaborate closely with the new structure, while eliminating dual activities.
20. That the government of Québec agree on a plan of action with the city to rehabilitate contaminated lots in Montréal and that it identify various public and private sectors to fund these actions.
21. That the city benefit from legal and judicial drivers, enabling it to carry out a large ground decontamination and rehabilitation operation in a sustainable development and ecological transition perspective; in order to carry out this operation, that the city take inspiration from the process used for Société du Havre project, which brought together key businesspeople and representatives of the governments of Québec and Canada.
22. That Québec's Maritime Strategy be used to rehabilitate contaminated land along the St. Lawrence River.
23. That processes be undertaken with the federal government so it can help revitalize land along the St. Lawrence River and the port of Montréal, as it does elsewhere in Canada.

## BETTER INTEGRATED, MORE CONSISTENT GOVERNMENT ACTION (CONTINUED)

24. An in-depth review of management methods and the division of amounts received as part of the Canada-Québec agreement concerning immigration to ensure a fair allocation of resources for welcoming and integrating new arrivals.
25. That the city and the government of Québec agree on a strong partnership that would allow Montréal to:
  - Have a pluriannual financial framework and judicial and administrative tools for orienting housing programs depending on its priorities and to adjust operational thresholds within national thresholds.
  - Coordinate its actions against homelessness, such as support at day centres, shelters and organizations that offer short- and long-term housing.
26. That the city and the government of Québec develop a new, integrated urban revitalization strategy, including a dedicated fund.
27. That the city and the government of Québec explore together local accessibility models of integrated services for children in situations of vulnerability, that integrate various sectors of activity and local forces. These models could be inspired by services that are already offered in community social paediatrics and include other services offered by the city, to complete and increase the offer of services to residents.
28. That the city and the government of Québec explore conditions for a mutually beneficial transfer of school buildings to the city.
29. That an effective coordination mechanism between the city and the government of Québec be set concerning the road network on the island of Montréal and the entire greater Montréal area.
30. That the governance reform of metropolitan public transportation be accompanied by a new financial framework and a diversification of funding sources.
31. That renovation of road infrastructures to create access to various intermodal platforms be prioritized, especially access to the Port of Montréal (i.e.: the extension of Boulevard de l'Assomption, the entry-exit to Highway 25);
32. That processes be undertaken with the federal government to relaunch the Gateways and Border Crossings Fund (GBCF).

## A VISION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR QUÉBEC'S METROPOLIS

### THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS:

- 33. That an economic development strategy that is defined within a sustainable development perspective be adopted in order to guide the metropolis' actions around sustainable development to foster an internationally-renowned metropolis.**
- 34. That this strategy be based on the strengths and advantages that characterize Montréal:**
- A city of knowledge and innovation
  - A city of culture at the core of the digital economy
  - A city of mobility and transportation convergence
  - A world-class financial city
- 35. That the city's role as a key player in economic development be reinforced so that it can take strategic action in these sectors.**