

A : [commissions@ville.montreal.qc.ca](mailto:commissions@ville.montreal.qc.ca)  
Date : 2019-12-30 00:00  
Objet : Vacant spaces on commercial streets

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Thank you for this inquiry.

I own a business on Ste Catherine st west for the past 3 years and was looking for a local 2 years before renting this one.

In the process, I found that building owners don't feel an urge to rent their locals. They say that they will keep it empty until they get their asking price which in most cases is extremely inflated. They prefer to have it empty than to lower the value of their buildings they say. They would rather rent 1 at a high price than to rent 3 at a lower price. I know of a few that have been empty for more than 5 years with the landlord is not putting any effort in renting them.

I believe this tactic has to change if we want businesses and downtown to thrive.

People still enjoy street shopping as opposed to online shopping. We still need restaurants, bars, cafés, tourist shops, retail.... With all the high rise condos being built, we need a vibrant downtown shopping street to keep clients happy and LOCAL economy growing as opposed to international online markets to grow. St Catherine st needs to have all it's empty locals rented.

The city needs to urge building owners to rent their empty locals. It looks really bad for our visiting tourists and equally as bad for neighbouring businesses.

One idea is to maybe fine landlords for every month a local is for vacant. Pop up stores can easily rent them while landlords look for permanent tenants at a decent price.

Maybe give a tax break to land lords that rent all their locals and have that tax break trickle down to the tenant's first rental months.

It feels strongly like Real estate speculation. With all the condo developments in the downtown center, landlords are banking that the prices of these buildings will go up and will be bought by condo developers. Commercial needs to stay commercial. Residential properties should not be allowed to develop too close to Ste Catherine st.

Also, if there are street renovations or construction to do, give "REAL" tax breaks to the businesses to help during the construction.

Also, parking problems need a solution. Have short term affordable parking lots so people can drive to the downtown shops.

If not, get the metro to work 24 hours/day like all major cities do it.

Please feel free to contact me as I am willing to help in any way.

best regards,  
**Sandra Campanelli**

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