Reducing Territorial Inequalities and Preventing Urban Discrimination

A roadmap for transforming City of Montréal initiatives

Conseil interculturel de Montréal

Montréal

This Policy Statement (hereafter "report") was prepared between June 2022 and April 2023 and was adopted by the members of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CiM) at their Assembly on May 3, 2023.

The Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CiM) is an advisory committee that was created in 2003 to advise the City of Montréal on intercultural relations. The CiM is made up of 15 volunteer members drawn from the Montréal population, who have experience and/or expertise in this area. CiM's membership reflects the city's population in terms of gender and age and is also representative of Montréal's cultural, linguistic, social and geographic diversity.

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Summary

This report by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CiM) focuses on territorial inequalities, a key concern for government action within the context of a socio-ecological transition. Developed as part of the city's updated Land Use and Mobility Plan (PUM), the goal of the report is to support the City of Montréal in its decision-making to reduce territorial inequalities and prevent discrimination, by taking into account the opinions of immigrant and racialized populations. The document is based on a review of academic literature and primary scientific data, three focus groups with residents of the chosen boroughs (Saint-Léonard, Saint-Laurent and Montréal-Nord), and an online survey of Montréalers.

The findings focused on five issues:

1. **Mobility**

2. **Housing**

3. **Public facilities, services and spaces**

4. **Citizen participation**

5. **Socio-ecological transition**

The findings led to 13 recommendations addressed to the City of Montréal, designed to help the City better address territorial challenges and population diversity in Montréal's urban planning for 2050.

MOBILITY

Public and active transportation are less accessible, and transportation infrastructures are of inferior quality in Montréal's outlying neighbourhoods, where immigrant and racialized populations heavily rely on these modes of transport. Current fare structures disadvantage these populations, and instances of discrimination, often not recorded in official statistics, create a feeling of insecurity and exclusion, which affects their mobility and integration into Montréal society.

Given the above, the CiM makes three recommendations; specific actions to achieve them are outlined in Section 5:

1   That the City of Montréal work with the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) to develop public and active transportation and promote these new initiatives by targeting the under-served neighbourhoods where a majority of immigrants and racialized people live.

2   That the City of Montréal work with the Société de transport de Montréal (STM), boroughs and community organizations to improve the quality of public transit services and active transportation infrastructure in outlying neighbourhoods, where immigrant and racialized people primarily live.

3   That the City of Montréal work with the ARTM (Agence régionale de transport métropolitain), the STM (Société de transport de Montréal) and the SPVM (Service de police de la Ville de Montréal) to provide new reduced fare options for vulnerable households, continue discrimination training for transit employees, and simplify the complaints process to prevent discriminatory treatment of immigrant and racialized transit users.

HOUSING

Outlying neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized residents, such as Montréal-Nord, Saint-Léonard and Saint-Laurent, suffer from a lack of social and community housing, low vacancy rates for affordable housing, and long processing times for social housing applications. Housing available to low-income immigrants and racialized people is often unsanitary, not adapted to household size, and in areas that are far from services. Moreover, in Montréal, housing-related discrimination is disproportionately experienced by immigrants and racialized people.

Given the above, the CiM makes three recommendations; specific actions to achieve them are outlined in Section 5:

4   That the City of Montréal purchase land and buildings in neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of social and community housing and high numbers of immigrant and racialized residents, in order to increase its real estate holdings and encourage a more equitable development of social and community housing within its jurisdiction.

5   That the City of Montréal monitor the *By-law concerning the sanitation, maintenance and safety of dwelling units* more closely, and increase the funding and human resources devoted to inspecting and renovating buildings that are unsanitary and in poor condition, particularly in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized people.

6   That the City of Montréal work with the CDPDJ (Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse), the BINAM (Bureau d'intégration des nouveaux arrivants à Montréal / Montréal Newcomer Office), relevant provincial authorities and tenants' rights associations to better regulate the practices of building owners and managers in the private rental sector, and also develop new by-laws governing the social housing sector, in order to prevent any form of housing discrimination or unfair treatment.

PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES AND SPACES

The distribution of public spaces and facilities throughout Montréal, especially in neighbourhoods such as Saint-Laurent, Montréal-Nord and Saint-Léonard, is highly uneven, limiting access to services, recreation and culture for area residents. Moreover, the diversity and accessibility of the available activities, both in physical and monetary terms, fail to meet the residents' needs. Survey respondents expressed dissatisfaction with street maintenance, garbage collection and snow removal, and immigrant and racialized residents expressed a sense of insecurity and said they felt discriminated against in public spaces.

Given the above, the CiM makes three recommendations; specific actions to achieve them are outlined in Section 5:

7 That the City of Montréal work with the boroughs to make targeted investments in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in order to balance the availability of sports and cultural facilities and activities throughout its territory, to ensure that they are of appropriate quality and quantity, and that they take into account the diversity of local needs.

8 That the City of Montréal develop and implement common standards for all boroughs regarding essential municipal services such as street maintenance, garbage collection and snow removal.

9 That the City of Montréal work with the BRDS (Office of the commissioner against racism and systemic discrimination), the SPVM (Service de police de la Ville de Montréal), the boroughs, and community and private partners to implement measures focusing on prevention and community outreach in order to strengthen the sense of safety and reduce discrimination against immigrant and racialized people in public spaces in the outlying neighbourhoods mentioned in this report.

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Citizen participation varies from one neighbourhood to another in Montréal, and certain specific barriers, such as a lack of information and language barriers, prevent immigrant and racialized people from getting involved. Lack of communication and poor access to information on citizen participation are major problems that affect newcomers in particular, and require the city to make greater efforts to share information on relevant services and organizations. Another important finding is the need to vary the kinds of participation and ways in which people can get involved, in order to promote inclusion: provide childcare, take into account different schedules, go to the neighbourhoods where participation is lowest, but also offer a range of incentives.

Given the above, the CiM makes two recommendations; specific actions to achieve them are outlined in Section 5:

10 That the City work with the BINAM and local community organizations serving immigrant and racialized populations to tailor the ways it communicates information on citizen consultation and municipal services to the diverse nature of the groups and neighbourhoods in question.

11 That the City adapt the procedures for taking part in public urban planning consultations to the needs and limitations of the target groups, and that it financially compensate[1] the expertise and involvement of immigrant and racialized people.

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[1] *The issue of financially compensating people from certain neighbourhoods to get involved in their community was discussed during a panel on social and environmental transition organized by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal on April 30, 2022.*

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

Montréal neighbourhoods with a significant percentage of immigrant and racialized populations lack green spaces and suffer from environmental inequalities, making them more vulnerable to climate change and the urban heat island effect. A more equitable distribution of green spaces, designed with the local population in mind, would limit the risks of eco-gentrification and offer co-benefits.[2] Immigrants and racialized people living in outlying neighbourhoods may want to get involved in environmental initiatives, but they don't necessarily have the time, means or information to do so.

Given the above, the CiM makes two recommendations; specific actions to achieve them are outlined in Section 5:

12   That the City of Montréal work with neighbourhood round tables and community organizations to involve immigrant and racialized populations in choosing the areas to be greened and in deciding which types of green spaces and landscaping should be prioritized in neighbourhoods with little greenery, which could potentially lead to a genuine socio-ecological transition based on local needs.

13   That the City work with local community organizations to fund environmental awareness-raising and training events for immigrant and racialized residents, and strengthen social cohesion in order to encourage them to get involved in environmental projects in their neighbourhoods.

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[2] *Co-benefits can be defined as the positive effects that a policy or measure aimed at one objective might have on other objectives.*

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List of acronyms

AIEM

Accueil aux immigrants de l'est de Montréal

Help for immigrants, refugees and refugee claimants from East Montréal

ARTM

Autorité régionale de transport métropolitain

Regional metropolitan transportation authority

BINAM

Bureau d'intégration des nouveaux arrivants à Montréal

Montréal Newcomer Office

BRDS

Bureau de la commissaire à la lutte au racisme et aux discriminations systémiques

Office of the commissioner against racism and systemic discrimination

BRT

Bus rapid transit

CAPE

Comité d'Action de Parc-Extension

Parc-Extension Action Committee

CDPDJ

Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse du Québec

Québec human rights and youth rights commission

CEUM

Centre d'écologie urbaine de Montréal

Montréal urban ecology centre

CIM

Conseil interculturel de Montréal

Montréal intercultural council

CIUSSS

Centres intégrés universitaires de santé et de services sociaux

Integrated university health and social services centres

CJM

Conseil Jeunesse de Montréal

Montréal Youth Council

CO-OP

Housing cooperative

CPE

Centres de la petite enfance

Early childhood centres

EDI

Equity, diversity and inclusion

GBA+

Intersectional gender-based analysis

HLM

Habitations à loyer modique
Low-rent housing

IPCC

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

ISQ

Institut de la statistique du Québec
Québec statistics institute

IWC-CTI

Immigrant Workers Centre

LRT

Light rail transit

MMC

Montréal Metropolitan Community

MSDI

Material and social deprivation index

NPO

Non-profit organization

OCPM

Office de consultation publique de Montréal
Montréal Public Consultation Office

OMHM

Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal
Montréal Municipal Housing Bureau

PUM

Plan d'urbanisme et de mobilité de Montréal
Montréal Land Use and Mobility Plan

SDIS

Service de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion sociale
Diversity and Social Inclusion Department

SPVM

Service de police de la Ville de Montréal
Montréal police department

STM

Société de transport de Montréal
Montréal transportation company

TAL

Tribunal Administratif du Logement
Rental board

TIP

Territoires d'intervention prioritaires du BINAM

BINAM priority action areas

Preface

This report by the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CiM) was finalized after a difficult summer in Quebec, during which our cities and towns experienced repeated heat waves, floods, forest fires and high levels of air pollution. Although I am writing the preface from my homeland, a long way from Quebec, I can't stop wondering how Montréal's most vulnerable populations are coping with these climate-related events. Do young people in the poorest sector of Saint-Léonard have access to the municipal swimming pool? In Parc-Extension, which endures intense heat due to the lack of green space, how are families in precarious situations, living crammed into small apartments, coping? Quebec's difficult summer of 2023 is clearly linked to the climate upheavals that scientists have been talking about for decades. The quality of one's living environment has become central to human health and adaptation to climate change.

Housing is another crisis affecting Quebec cities, both large and small. The critical lack of social and affordable housing in Quebec, particularly in certain Montréal neighbourhoods, mirrors the situation in many other so-called developed countries. The shrinking stock of social and affordable housing is certainly one of the sources of territorial disparities and constitutes the main barrier to protecting access to a quality living environment at a reasonable price, as many of the people who took part in this CiM

study pointed out. Paradoxically, improving a living environment, whether by adding public transit or by greening streets, can drive up the cost of housing and threaten access to housing for many disadvantaged families. The recommendations put forward in this report must be considered promptly in order to reduce the financial and health burden on disadvantaged populations, which are often immigrant or racialized groups.

This report is a response to calls from scientists and multilateral organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to rethink our cities and eliminate inequalities in access to a quality living environment. These urban inequalities will persist, and even grow, if no transformative action appropriate to the local context is taken. Such action is all the more important in a city like Montréal, which is home to several ethno-cultural groups and a mix of past and present colonization and immigration processes. Socio-ecological issues, combined with discrimination and social injustice, require special attention from the government and its institutions, as well as from civil society.

The task the CiM set itself in producing this report was not a simple undertaking. Nevertheless, the team successfully completed the research. I would like to underline the team's quality and scientific rigor, most evident in the care taken in defining terms and in the use of

various data collection and analysis tools, which allowed the voices of minority groups in society to be heard. The focus on territorial inequalities is a key choice for analysis, as it will inform the development of tools and actions by public health and urban planning departments.

The recommendations in this report are aimed specifically at the municipal level. This level of governance is considered the most appropriate for alleviating environmental problems, according to several multilateral international organizations such as the UN, national governments and civil society. Home to more than half of the planet's population, cities are becoming the focus when it comes to public policy. The IPCC's sixth report bears witness to this, dedicating two chapters to cities and the urbanization process.

The empirical basis of this report, and the testimonials gathered from three targeted neighbourhoods, will help the city and its boroughs to refine their urban planning tools in a transversal way, and to break away from working in isolation from one another, so as to maintain a welcoming environment offering a wealth of public services and to reduce their ecological footprint. The CiM's report is therefore full of optimism: it could help improve the living environments of many thousands of people in Montréal.

THI-THANH-HIÊN PHAM

Associate Professor, Department of Urban Studies and Tourism

Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)

A Word from the President

Montrealers do not all experience the city in the same way, depending on where they come from and the neighbourhood in which they live. These inequalities are unacceptable and have been condemned for several years by many key individuals and organizations within the Montréal community, as well as by local and regional concerted action groups.

In a context where it is necessary to ask how the various populations that make up Montréal can participate in the socio-ecological transition, the members of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CiM) sought to explore the following five themes through the lens of territorial inequalities. We studied the realities experienced by Montréal's immigrant and racialized populations in terms of:

Mobility

Housing

Public facilities, services and spaces

Citizen participation

Socio-ecological transition

This report presents an overview of the current situation, documents territorial discrimination within the city, and outlines 13 recommendations for the City of Montréal. We are already looking forward to receiving feedback from the municipal administration regarding their implementation.

Working on such a wide range of important issues, in conjunction with a number of City of Montréal departments, elected officials and community organizations, exemplifies our role as a liaison:

- Firstly, we collaborated with organizations in key neighbourhoods to ensure that citizens' voices were included. Several neighbourhood round tables also shared the survey used in our study. Throughout this report, we have also highlighted a number of existing initiatives (see the "Great Initiative" sections), in the interests of both acknowledgement and wider public awareness.

- In addition, in the early stages of our research, we were fortunate to be able to speak with the elected City officials assigned to the issues in question, and to familiarize ourselves with tools such as the new Living Environment Equity Index from the Diversity and Social Inclusion Department, as well as the climate vulnerability map from the Office of Ecological Transition and Resilience.

We also joined the Transition en commun alliance in 2022. The CiM continues to be represented in this alliance, and this commitment will also be a way for us to continue our watch, to maintain our influence and to play our role as a conduit between the public and the municipal administration on the various issues addressed in this report.

We hope that this report is just the first step towards systemic, lasting and fundamental change, so that Montréalers of all origins and from all neighbourhoods can experience an equitable and inclusive city.

Happy reading!

LAYLA BELMAHI

President of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal

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The Montréalers who shared their expertise and their time by responding to the survey and taking part in the focus groups.

Selma Tannouche Bennani, for her thorough and compassionate approach to coordinating the research.

The neighbourhood round tables and community organizations for their assistance in sending out the survey, organizing focus groups and recruiting participants: the UIPT (Un itinéraire pour tous) in Montréal-Nord, the CEFJI (Centre d'encadrement pour jeunes femmes immigrantes) in Saint-Laurent and Concertation Saint-Léonard. Special thanks to the three contributors/organizers who helped organize the meetings.

Chloé Reiser, for her thorough, high-quality research and her ability to collaborate with CiM members.

All the CiM members who contributed in one way or another to this report, by helping to choose the topic and approach, recruiting participants, presenting the document to the OCPM, reviewing it and providing feedback, connecting with community organizations, meeting with elected officials and inviting government workers to the general meetings.

The elected officials and staff working in the City of Montréal's various service departments, whom we dealt with throughout the process.

Introduction

"The right to the city manifests itself as a superior form of rights: right to freedom, to individualization in socialization, to habitat and to inhabit."

H. LEFEBVRE,
LE DROIT À LA VILLE, P. 140.

Cities have long been studied as spaces that act as both producers and transmitters of inequality and oppression. Because they are ideal places in which to observe social relations, they are also the best place to witness unequal and discriminatory relations (Alessandrin and Dagorn, 2020). Yet they can also be places where people assert their right to the city, and where new ways of reducing territorial inequalities and promoting social justice are developed.

When trying to understand urban inequalities, we must look at the city's political, economic and social history. Starting in the 1940s and 1950s, Montréal's immigrant and racialized populations began to settle in the city's more outlying and industrialized neighbourhoods, resulting in territorial inequalities that still exist today. But differences between neighbourhoods are also the result of political and urban planning choices. In fact, governments largely abandoned outlying neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized residents, particularly from 1970 to 1990. Then, in the 1990s and 2000s,

inequalities between neighbourhoods were exacerbated, as urban policies were adopted to renew the downtown core and convert industrial areas, in a broader context of urbanization that encouraged cities to adopt an entrepreneurial mindset in order to stay competitive with other major cities (Harvey, 1989). This meant that, for many years, Montréal was thought of in terms of competitiveness and attractiveness rather than in terms of equality and social justice.

Today, the City of Montréal recognizes the territorial inequalities within its jurisdiction and is looking for ways to reduce them and to prevent discrimination in the areas of mobility, housing and urban health. As part of this pursuit of equality, the city must ensure fair treatment for all its citizens and guarantee adequate services (including transportation, housing, health, and education) throughout the city.

The first objective of this report is to outline Montréal's territorial inequalities and the City's approach to the issue, which lies at the heart of municipal government action. Following a review of the scientific and grey literature, the CiM selected five major areas of focus in order to study territorial inequalities and municipal initiatives in Montréal: mobility; housing; public facilities, services and spaces; citizen participation and the socio-ecological transition.

The second objective is to work with immigrant and racialized residents of previously neglected neighbourhoods to identify the challenges they face in accessing local resources on a day-to-day basis.

The report is divided into five sections:

CONTEXT AND DEFINITIONS
This section introduces the concepts of territorial inequality, discrimination and equity, based on a review of urban planning literature.

1

METHOD
This section outlines the main issues addressed in the report, the research methods' three stages (literature review, three focus groups in three chosen neighbourhoods, and an online questionnaire designed to survey Montréalers' perceptions of territorial inequalities), and the limitations of the methods.

2

MONTRÉAL'S TERRITORIAL INEQUALITIES: AN OVERVIEW
This section presents the findings from the review of the literature on Montréal's territorial inequalities, and an analysis of the city's response to these inequalities based on a study of its most recent development plans and programs.

3

MONTRÉAL'S TERRITORIAL INEQUALITIES: FRONT-LINE FINDINGS
This section presents the results of the focus groups held in Saint-Laurent, Saint-Léonard and Montréal-Nord, and the results of the online survey.

4

TACKLING TERRITORIAL INEQUALITIES IN MONTRÉAL:
ACTION-ORIENTED RECOMMENDATIONS
This section presents 13 recommendations based on the findings of Sections 3 and 4, to guide the City of Montréal and its partners towards the best possible response to territorial challenges and population diversity in urban planning through to 2050.

5

Context and definitions

1

1 Context and definitions

The purpose of this first section is to define the terms used in the report and to describe the research context.

1.1 Defining terms

Territorial inequalities

Territorial inequalities can be defined as disparities between different areas in terms of their economic, social and cultural development. These inequalities are often thought to reveal situations of imbalance, and even injustice. Territorial inequalities are most often systemic, "the result of domination, perceptions and stereotypes that permeate our societies and affect social interactions" (Bidard *et al.*, 2020, p. 136), particularly in immigration countries.

The term is usually used in the plural and is measured using a variable that quantifies the inequality and can serve as a basis for comparison. Furthermore, the changes in territorial inequalities are often measured using quantitative factors such as income, standard of living, unemployment or employment rates, access to training and healthcare, etc. However, they can also be measured using qualitative assessments that focus on residents' perceptions of access to resources, and their experiences of injustice.

Taking urban territorial inequalities into account means looking at the differences between neighbourhoods in terms of services and infrastructure across the entire metropolitan area. It also means looking at differences in the way people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods are treated, and identifying an asymmetrical approach both in the way urban resources are allocated and in the way residents access and use these resources (Michel and Ribardière, 2017).

This report will take a closer look at the territorial inequalities that fall within the City's areas of jurisdiction:[3] access to affordable and suitable housing, to public spaces, to employment, to transportation, to sports and leisure, to culture, to digital technology, to active citizenship, and so on. It will also examine ways to combat these inequalities.

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[3]   *However, certain areas of jurisdiction mentioned in the report are shared between different levels of government, such as housing, which is divided between the federal, provincial and municipal governments.*

Territorial discrimination

The term *territorial discrimination* was first used in the late 2000s by several mayors of the communes in Seine-Saint-Denis, on the outskirts of Paris, to alert government and the media to urban management situations they considered to be unequal. (Epstein *et al.*, 2020; Hancock *et al.*, 2016).

This concept goes further than the terms *territorial disparities* and *inequalities*, as it implicates governments and developers in these spatial injustices. Territorial discrimination is a reflection of the political processes that gave rise to it and, more specifically, of inner-city/outer-city relationships. It affects neighbourhoods that are frequently overlooked, and whose populations often belong to disadvantaged social categories. It can also be explained by urban living conditions in these areas, specifically the lack of community facilities (libraries, arenas and skating rinks, swimming pools, stadiums, community and leisure centres, museums, art galleries) and lack of access to different urban resources (housing, education, employment, urban infrastructure), which exacerbate unequal opportunities in these neighbourhoods and prevent social mobility (Kirszbaum, 2004).

There are two ways of thinking about territorial discrimination. Firstly, they can be considered **through an individual approach**, by reflecting on the inequalities of treatment experienced by individuals in relation to their place of residence (Petit *et al.*, 2016). We can also approach the issue **through a more collective, spatial approach**. The aim is to analyze inequalities in the provision of public services, which disadvantage certain neighbourhoods and people living in places where there is a high concentration of immigrants and/or low-income people. Here, inequalities are measured according to quality or accessibility. This report considers territorial discrimination using the second approach, through injustice arising from differences in development and planning between neighbourhoods.

There are several possible courses of action and policies to counter territorial discrimination. 1) **From a legal standpoint**, legislation can be enacted, by adding "place of residence" to the grounds of discrimination, for instance, or by making it possible to lodge territorial discrimination complaints alleging unequal treatment by government services in outlying neighbourhoods. 2) **From a political and urban planning standpoint**, programs can be put in place to fight the inequalities that lead to this kind of discrimination (Doytcheva, 2008). Tackling territorial discrimination also calls for the city to implement positive discrimination policies, and to create priority action zones in its urban planning, for example (Alessandrin *et al.*, 2021), with the aim of ensuring that local governments can fulfill their mission of promoting equality and inclusion.

However, in a context where equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is becoming an increasingly important issue, we must bear in mind that recognizing territorial discrimination can sometimes lead to the understatement and watering down of racial discrimination within a broader range of discriminations (Kirszbaum, 2016). The goal of this report is to highlight Montréal's inequalities from a spatial standpoint, without neglecting to mention the links between these inequalities and racial discrimination.

Territorial equity

Territorial equity refers to "spatial planning that ensures equal access for all to goods and services that serve the common good, whether these involve transportation infrastructure, social and health services, education and culture, and even employment and all the benefits of life in society" (Géoconfluences, 2015). Equity means fair treatment for all citizens, regardless of where they live. The objective of equity in spatial planning is to correct situations of spatial injustice and try to do more for disadvantaged areas. It encourages us to think in terms of fair treatment and accessibility, as well as mutual support between neighbourhoods. To redress inequalities and compensate for the slow development of certain areas, governments are encouraged to adopt positive discrimination policies. Moreover, adopting territorial equity as an urban planning principle can be applied at a variety of different levels. This report looks at the urban context, the inequalities that exist between neighbourhoods, and the government policies that have been or should be implemented by the City to try to correct them and guarantee a basic level of equity. The City can address territorial inequities through urban projects, changes to urban planning regulations, subsidies and partnerships.

1.2   Research context

For several years, the CiM has been focusing on development, urban planning and transportation issues, and has already formulated a number of recommendations in its policy statements and briefs, specifically in the brief entitled *Mémoire sur le schéma d'aménagement et de développement de l'agglomération de Montréal* (Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2014) and in its recent Policy Statement entitled *Immigrant and/or Racialized Seniors: Promoting Inclusive Life Spaces* (Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2021).

Public consultation on *City Vision* made it possible for the CiM to develop the aforementioned research areas. The brief *Horizon 2050: Prendre en compte les disparités et les discriminations territoriales dans l'aménagement urbain futur de Montréal* (Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2022) identifies the

concerns shared by several CiM members, notably on the issue of the socio-ecological transition and its links with immigrant and racialized populations in Montréal.

After the brief was submitted in the fall of 2022, in-depth research was conducted to generate data on territorial inequality issues. The objective was to expand CiM members' knowledge on the issue so they could better advise the municipal government on future planning initiatives. The research focused specifically on the nature, implications, mechanisms of formation and consequences of territorial inequalities in urban planning.

Method

2
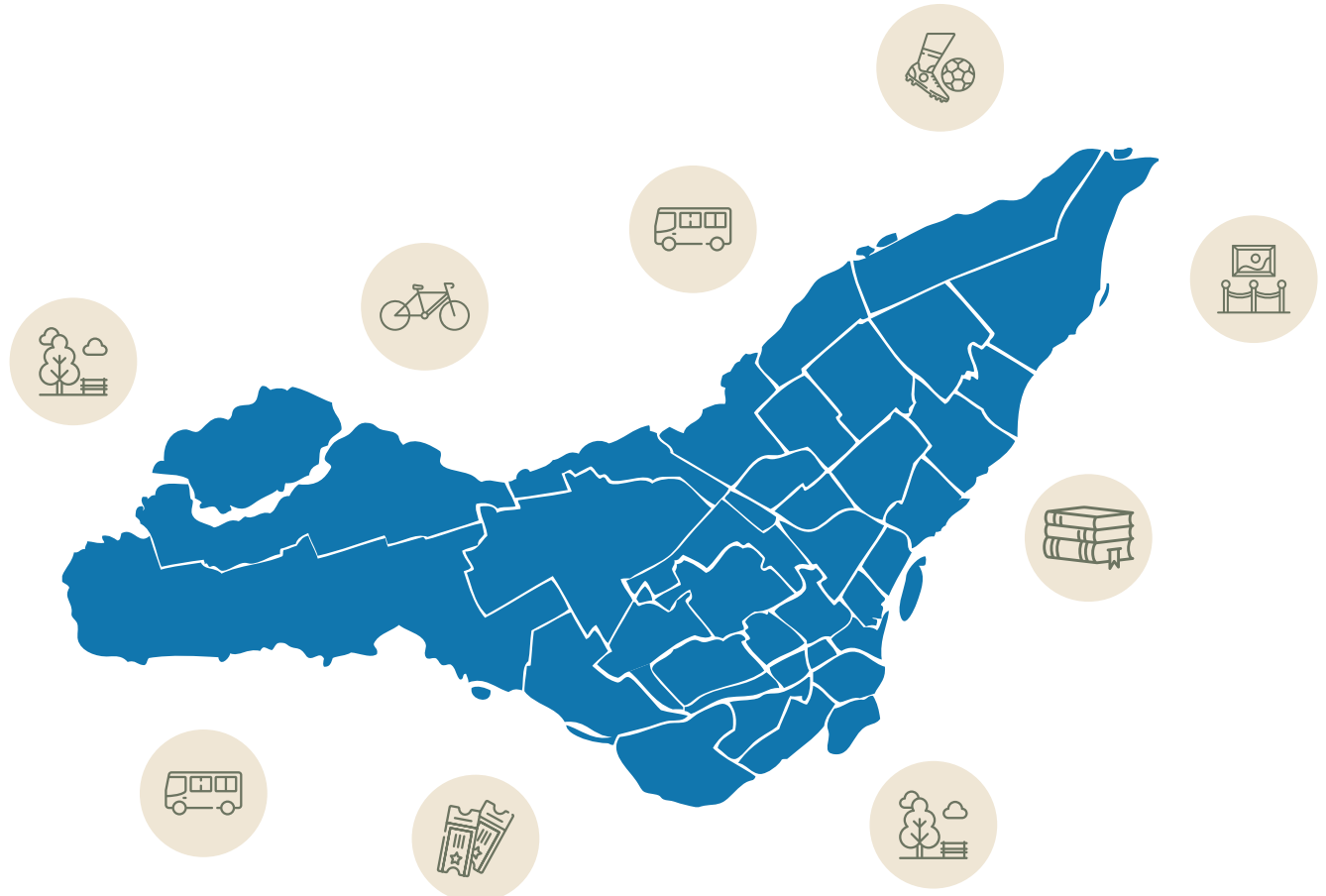
2 Method

This report continues the CiM's work on territorial inequalities, one of the many forms of racism and discrimination that exist in Montréal. Its purpose is to provide a deeper understanding of territorial inequalities and discrimination in urban areas, and more specifically of how they are experienced by Montréal's immigrant and racialized populations.

The research was carried out in three phases:

The first phase consisted of a review of the scientific literature on the concepts of territorial inequalities and discrimination, as well as a review of the grey literature[4] comprised of the City of Montréal's development plans and programs related to territorial inequalities. This phase helped define the terms of the topic and identify blind spots in the City's actions in this area.

1

The second phase involved setting up focus groups to gather hard, site-specific data on territorial inequalities as experienced by immigrant and racialized people in three Montréal neighbourhoods with a large percentage of immigrant and racialized populations.

2

The third phase involved conducting a survey to generate additional data on territorial inequalities across Montréal.

3

Throughout the research process, CiM members met with City of Montréal elected officials and civil servants, as well as community organizations, in order to monitor the work already being done on these issues and integrate it into their work.

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4 *Grey literature is information produced outside of traditional publishing and distribution channels, and can be produced by government bodies, community organizations, industry, institutions and others.*

2.1 Overview of the issues

The purpose of this report is to help develop a better understanding of territorial inequalities and discrimination, so that the City of Montréal can develop policies to reduce these inequalities and combat discrimination.

Its first objective is to provide an overview of Montréal's territorial inequalities. This was accomplished by reviewing scientific and grey literature to shed light on the concept of territorial and urban planning inequalities, showing how they are reflected in Montréal's urban space, and how the City handles this key municipal issue.

Its second objective is to highlight the challenges immigrant and racialized populations living in the chosen neighbourhoods face on a daily basis in accessing urban resources. These challenges were identified through empirical research, conducted in partnership with Montréal's immigrant and racialized populations: the aim was to hear their views regarding their most pressing needs, the priority areas for action in their neighbourhoods, and the recommendations they would like to see implemented to ensure the City is developed in a more equitable way. Through focus groups and a survey, the CiM's goal was to consider immigrant and racialized Montréalers as experts on their own lived experience.

2.2 Literature review

The first step was to review scientific literature on territorial inequalities and discrimination and their connection to land-use planning. This enabled us to define the terms and understand the implications for urban planning. Next, a review of the grey literature comprised of the City of Montréal's development plans and programs, specifically *City Vision* (Ville de Montréal, 2022), provided an overview of the City's efforts to address the issue of territorial inequalities. Finally, a broad overview of Montréal's territorial inequalities was drawn up, based on existing research and statistical data.

This first phase of the research led to recommendations to be integrated into the City of Montréal's future Land Use and Mobility Plan (PUM), which the CiM presented as a brief to the OCPM (Office de consultation publique de Montréal).[5] This phase also enabled CiM members to reach a consensus on five priority areas related to territorial inequalities: mobility; housing; public facilities, services and spaces; and the transversal issues of citizen participation in land-use planning and the socio-ecological transition.

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[5] *https://ocpm.qc.ca/fr/consultation-publique/projet-ville (available in French only)*

2.3 Focus groups

In order to learn about real-life experiences of territorial inequalities in Montréal, and to build on data generated by research and statistics, the CIM based this report on an analysis of the findings from three focus groups held in sociological neighbourhoods with high immigration rates,[6] and attended by people belonging to visible minorities.[7] These focus groups centered on three topics: mobility, housing, and public and green spaces.

Neighbourhood selection

This report is based on the City of Montréal's proposed network of sociological neighbourhoods.[8] Unlike boroughs, the term *sociological neighbourhoods* does not describe formal municipals divisions, but rather areas divided and identified by local organizations "on the basis of history, membership, social and community organization and the area's specific challenges" (Ville de Montréal, 2014). This division is used by neighbourhood round tables to establish and define their geographical areas of action.

We chose the neighbourhoods where the focus groups were held based on a review of summary documents and existing statistics (see Table 1). Next, we identified positive correlations between certain variables and the percentage of immigrants and visible minorities per neighbourhood (see Table 2). The purpose of this statistical analysis was to pinpoint the areas of greatest need. For each of the three topics (mobility, housing, and public and green spaces), two or three sociological neighbourhoods were identified that presented the greatest challenges for immigrants and racialized people.

Montréal's sociological neighbourhoods with the highest rates of racialized and immigrant populations

Sociological neighbourhood	Immigration rate (%)	Representation of visible minorities (%)
Parc-Extension	57	64
Saint-Laurent	54	53
Côte-des-Neiges	52	54
Bordeaux-Cartierville	51	47
Saint-Michel	49	60
Saint-Léonard	49	43
Montréal-Nord	42	49

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[6]   *In this section on statistics, we used Statistics Canada terminology, as defined in the glossary (see p. 90). The rest of the report uses CiM's preferred terminology, specifically the term* immigrant and racialized populations.

[7]   Ibid.

[8]   *The network includes 32 sociological neighbourhoods.*

Table 2

Neighbourhood needs ranked by correlations

Topic	Indicator/variable	Sociological neighbourhoods with the greatest needs
Mobility	Transit-friendly score[9]	• Saint-Léonard • Montréal-Nord • Saint-Laurent
Housing	Core housing need[10]	• Parc-Extension • Montréal-Nord • Saint-Michel
Public and green spaces	Canopy cover[11]	• Saint-Léonard • Parc-Extension • Montréal-Nord

Based on this initial statistical analysis, one neighbourhood out of the three with the greatest needs was chosen for each topic. The choice was primarily based on the availability of local partners, but also on the fact that some neighbourhoods are overrepresented in studies on certain issues. Focus group topics were decided in consultation with the groups helping to organize the activities.

The mobility focus groups were held in Saint-Laurent, the housing focus groups in Montréal-Nord and the public and green spaces focus groups in Saint-Léonard. Community groups were involved in choosing the focus group topics and questions, to ensure maximum participation in the process.
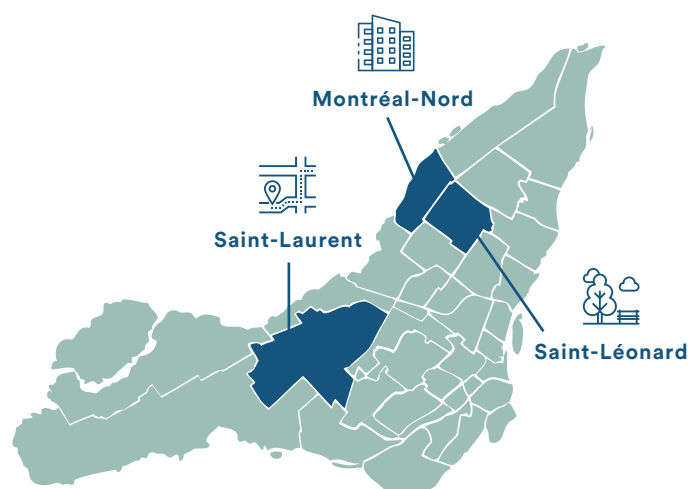
9 *Developed by location intelligence company Local Logic, the Transit-friendly score measures the frequency and level of service of a given location's public transit service, based on that location's access to all transit stops and stations.*

10 *According to Statistics Canada, a household in core housing need is one where the housing is considered inadequate, unaffordable or unsuitable in size, and where the level of income is insufficient to meet the costs of suitable and adequate housing in their community.*

11 *Canopy cover refers to the surface area of ground shade provided by trees in a given area.*
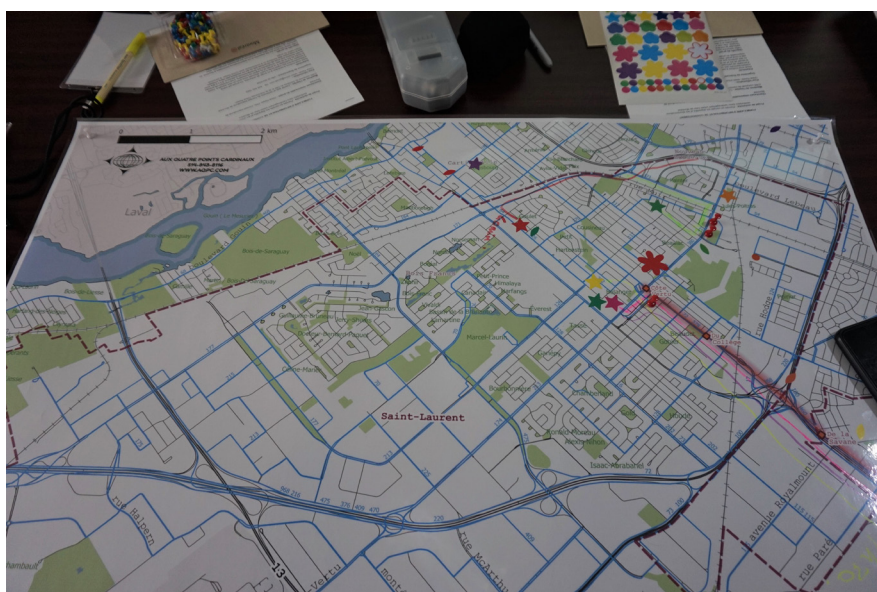
Focus groups

The questions asked during the focus groups were broad and open-ended in order to encourage a range of responses. Each focus group centered on one of the three topics: mobility, housing, or public and green spaces. The focus groups proceeded as follows: first, general questions were asked based on a printed map of the neighbourhood (see Appendix 1 and Figure 1). Using colour-coded pins and stickers, residents were asked to show where they live, work and go about their daily lives, as well as the places in their neighbourhood they like, dislike, hope to be improved, and see as having development potential. A key explained how to choose the appropriate sticker or pin colour. Next, residents were asked questions relating to the specific focus group topic (see Appendix 2). Non-verbal communication and group interactions were closely observed.

The use of a printed map focused the discussion on space and land-use planning, and made it easier for participants to speak up. The questions were displayed on a screen in both French and English, to help those in the process of learning French.

**Map used for the
Saint-Laurent focus group**

Each focus group consisted of seven to nine people, all immigrants and/or racialized people living in the designated Montréal neighbourhood and recruited with the help of community partners. Group members varied widely in terms of age, gender, arrival date in Canada and immigration status (see Table 3).

Table 3

Survey participant characteristics

Number of participants per neighbourhood	Per age group	Per gender	Per arrival date in Canada	Per immigration status
Saint-Laurent **8**	Under 25: **1** 25-65: **6** Over 65: **1**	Women: **5** Men: **3**	Less than 5 years ago: **7** More than 5 years ago: **1**	Refugee claimants: **5** Permanent residents: **3**
Montréal-Nord **7**	Under 25: **0** 25-65: **6** Over 65: **1**	Women: **4** Men: **3**	Less than 5 years ago: **5** More than 5 years ago: **2**	Refugee claimants: **3** Permanent residents: **3** Canadian citizens: **1**
Saint-Léonard **9**	Under 25: **2** 25-65: **7** Over 65: **0**	Women: **6** Men: **3**	Less than 5 years ago: **5** More than 5 years ago: **4**	Refugee claimants: **3** Permanent residents: **4** Canadian citizens: **2**

The focus groups were held either in a community space that was reasonably easy to access, or in the offices of a partner organization. In fact, we made a point of travelling to the neighbourhoods in question to assess the needs of immigrant and racialized people in their own living environments.[12]

Schedules were established with the organizations to accommodate participants as much as possible (two evening focus groups and one morning focus group, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.). Childcare solutions were set up for each focus group (two children were looked after by community organizers in Saint-Laurent, and five children took part in a colouring activity in Saint-Léonard, in the same room as the focus group).

Each participant received financial compensation in the form of a gift card, as well as two tickets for public transit and a meal from a local restaurant or caterer.

The aim was to recognize the time, experience and citizen expertise of the participants. These incentives were among the recommendations the CiM presented in its brief entitled *Mémoire sur les obstacles et les modalités liés à la participation démocratique des citoyennes et des citoyens issu.e.s des communautés ethnoculturelles à Montréal* (Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2019).[13]

The focus groups also allowed for the exchange of best practices between people who have recently arrived in Canada and those who have been living in Montréal for several years, on topics such as childcare, car registration, support offered locally by certain organizations, cultural differences and the refugee claimant application process.

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[12] *This was among the CiM's recommendations (Recommendations 1 and 2) in the* Mémoire sur les obstacles et les modalités liés à la participation démocratique des citoyennes et citoyens issu.e.s des communautés ethnoculturelles à Montréal *(Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2019).*

[13] *This brief on the obstacles to citizen participation (Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2019) recommended providing incentives to those who attend question periods at city council and borough council meetings (Recommendation 4). Recommendation 11 of this report calls on the City to introduce financial compensation for people who are involved in the consultation processes for Montréal's urban planning and environmental projects.*

2.4 Survey

To supplement the data collected through the focus groups, an online survey intended for all Montréalers and focusing on the three main topics and on citizen participation was sent out. The survey was available in French and English and included single-answer, dropdown and multiple-answer questions, Likert scales[14] and six open-ended questions (see Appendix 3). It was sent to all of Montréal's neighbourhood round tables, to a number of organizations working to welcome and integrate newcomers, to anti-racism organizations, to organizations that serve immigrant and racialized populations, and to international student associations, for a total of over 90 organizations.

A total of 287 people responded to the survey between November 15, 2022 and January 31, 2023. The majority of respondents (70%) were between 25 and 44, with women and men almost equally represented (48% vs. 51%, respectively). The majority of respondents (67%) were born in Canada, and 46% are members of a visible minority in Canada (see Figure 2). Five gift cards were raffled off among participants.
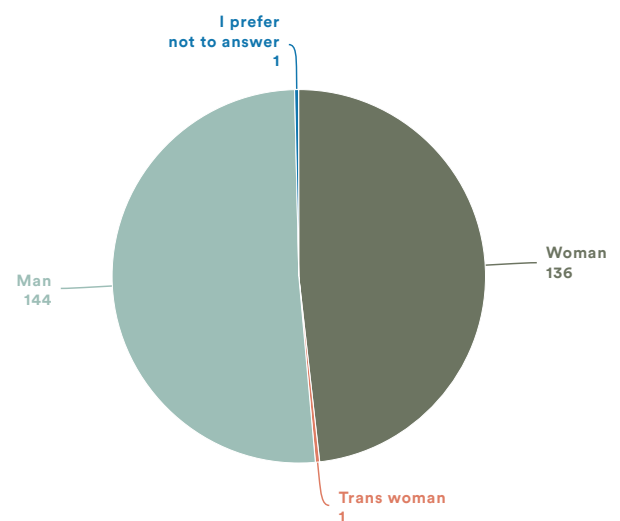
Figure 2

Survey respondent characteristics

What is your age group?

Legend:
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

Values shown: 41, 115, 84, 32, 3, 7, 1, 1
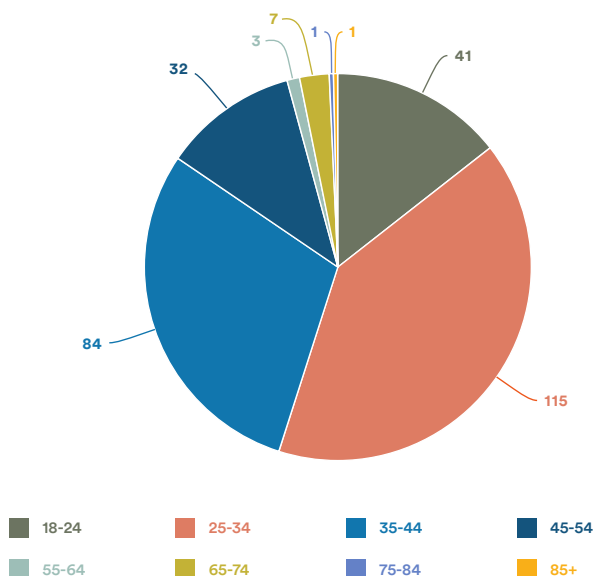
What gender do you identify with?

- Woman 136
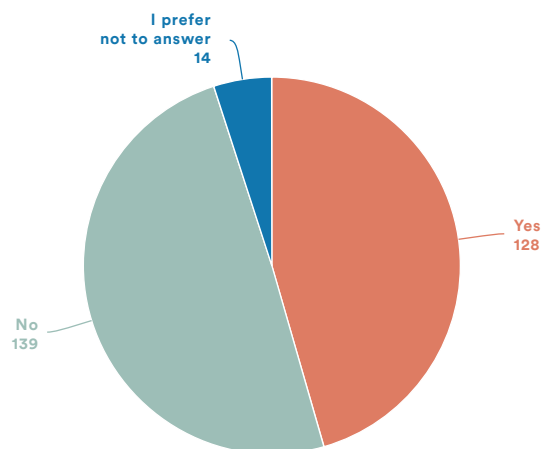- Man 144
- Trans woman 1
- I prefer not to answer 1

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[14] *The Likert scale, sometimes referred to as a satisfaction scale, is a question that uses a 5- or 7-point scale covering a wide spectrum of opinions on a subject, ranging from one extreme attitude to another. Likert-type questions usually include a moderate or neutral option.*
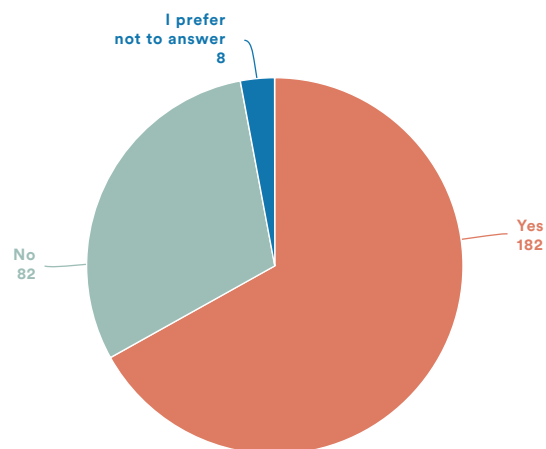
Figure 2

Survey respondent characteristics *(continued)*

Are you a member of a visible minority in Canada?

I prefer
not to answer
14

Yes
128

No
139

Were you born in Canada?

I prefer
not to answer
8

Yes
182

No
82

2.5   Research limitations

The main research limitations pertain to the survey results, specifically the answers to the closed-ended questions. While it can be interesting to analyze open-ended question responses, depending on the neighbourhoods and participant identities involved, this type of survey data can be more difficult to process. The sample is too small to allow for differentiated analysis and statistical representativeness.

Neither the focus groups nor the survey enabled us to gather the experiences of immigrant and racialized allophones. In the spirit of inclusion, the online questionnaire was therefore offered in both official languages, and some questions were asked in English during the focus groups. However, we did manage to get input from an Arabic-speaking Syrian person at the Saint-Laurent focus group and from a Spanish-speaking Mexican person at the Saint-Léonard focus group, with interpretation provided by a representative from Accueil aux immigrants de l'est de Montréal (AIEM).

Montréal's territorial inequalities:
An overview

3

3 Montréal's territorial inequalities: An overview

The third part of this report presents an overview of territorial inequalities and the City of Montréal's efforts to reduce inequalities and prevent discrimination.

3.1 Research: Findings

In Montréal, urban studies research has highlighted the presence of significant territorial inequalities in access to urban resources in areas such as housing, employment, education, food, health and transportation (Audrin *et al.*, 2019; Bertrand, 2013; Myles *et al.*, 2000; Pham *et al.*, 2012; Rose and Twigge-Molecey, 2013). These territorial inequalities are often tied to income inequality, and also correlate with immigration status and belonging to a racialized group. Indeed, there are significant links between the low level of development and facilities in certain areas and the high rates of immigration and visible minorities in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Our research points to three main areas of focus: 1) mobility, 2) housing, and 3) access to public and green spaces.

Mobility: Findings

Public and active transportation are fundamental to a city's equitable and sustainable development. And, indeed, they are the main means for many people living in Canada, particularly low-income households and immigrant and racialized people (Heisz and Schellenberg, 2004), to access jobs, health care and education. Implementing public and active transportation initiatives can generate several benefits that go far beyond mobility, specifically in terms of the socio-ecological transition: reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improved environmental noise quality, increased safety thanks to fewer accidents, and so on. However, access to public and active transportation in Montréal is uneven, particularly for people living in the City's outlying neighbourhoods, which have a high percentage of immigrant and racialized populations.

Several studies have highlighted Montréal's ongoing inequalities in access to public and active transportation[15] (Paulhiac Scherrer, 2018). In fact, while they are more dependent on public transit, the people living in Montréal's most disadvantaged and most heavily immigrant neighbourhoods have the least access to it (Walks, 2014). A 2016 *Le Devoir* article called them the "mobility poor". These territorial inequalities can be attributed both to a lack of transportation infrastructure in these neighbourhoods and to difficulties accessing the network from outlying neighbourhoods. To understand how these territorial inequalities play out in Montréal, we compared the Public Transit Proximity Index map with the Material and Social Deprivation Index map (MSDI)[16] (see Figure 3). As shown on the map, the areas in the north, the southwest and the east of the island of Montréal – which have high levels of deprivation and a high percentage of immigrant and racialized households – are particularly isolated, and have very little access to public transit.

Figure 3

Public Transit Proximity Index and MSDI in Montréal

Source:
Ferraris, F. S. Transport collectif : les enfants pauvres de la mobilité. **Le Devoir, 12 Dec. 2016.**

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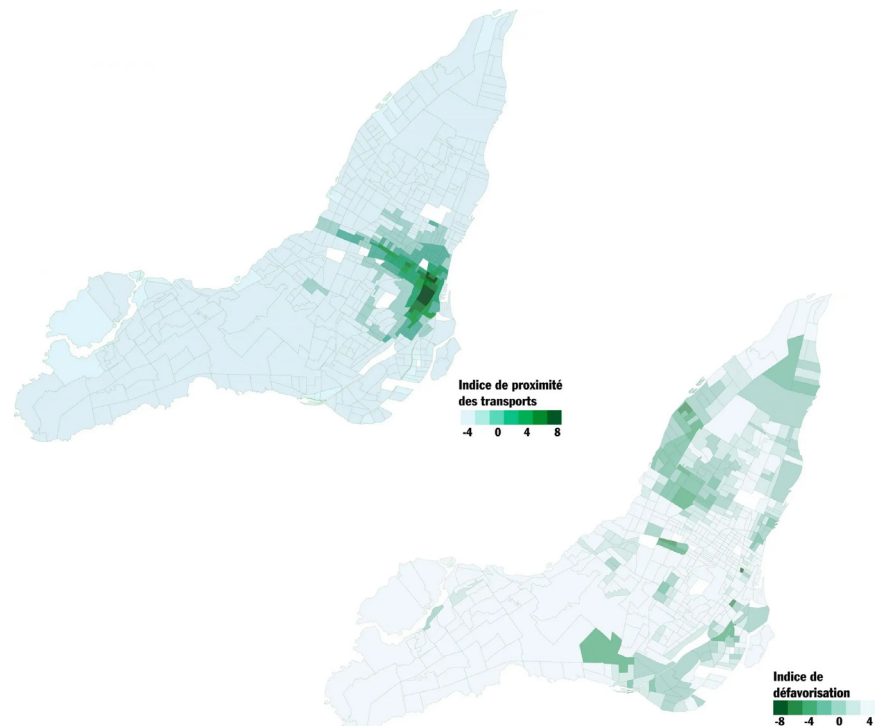
[15] *Active transportation is self-propelled motion, or getting around using human power. This includes walking, cycling, skateboarding, etc.*

[16] *The goal of this index is to define and describe deprivation in small local areas. MSDI measures two aspects: the material aspect, which reflects the lack of everyday goods and amenities, and the social aspect, which reflects a fragile social network.*

Recent research on active transportation has also pointed to significant territorial inequalities between neighbourhoods. The INTERACT team (INTErventions urbaines, Recherche-Action, Communautés et sanTé) has specifically highlighted Montréal's social inequalities with regard to facilities and infrastructure that promote health and physical activity (INTERACT, 2019). The study shows that neighbourhoods with a high percentage of racialized people have fewer bike paths on average than less diverse neighbourhoods, resulting in major health inequalities. Montréal-Nord, an economically disadvantaged neighbourhood with a high percentage of visible minorities, is still among the Montréal neighbourhoods with the least-developed network of bicycle paths. Residents have long been calling for more safe bicycle paths due to the serious road safety issues in the neighbourhood.[17]

Housing: Findings

Access to adequate, affordable housing is a major challenge for immigrants and a key step in the process of establishing themselves in Montréal and their neighbourhoods. However, the City's current housing crisis, characterized by rising rents, increasing renovictions[18] and a stubbornly low vacancy rate for affordable rental units, especially those designed for families,[19] is particularly hard on low-income, immigrant and racialized tenants, especially in areas experiencing gentrification, a phenomenon that increasingly affects the island's immigrant-reception neighbourhoods in the inner suburbs, such as Parc-Extension (Reiser and Jolivet, 2018; Jolivet *et al.*, 2022).

If we look at where social and community housing is located in the City of Montréal, we see that there are few such units in neighbourhoods with a high immigration rate, even though the need is particularly pressing there (Reiser, 2021). Yet social and community housing, whether low-rent housing (HLMs), housing cooperatives (CO-OPs) or non-profit housing organizations (NPOs), are often the only means of combating housing discrimination issues and curbing gentrification. The standard process for allocating social and community housing is based on precise criteria, designed to ensure that potential tenants have more equitable access to housing, regardless of their social status, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical and/or mental condition. Social housing also helps make people in low-income households feel more secure, and is a way of including immigrants and racialized people in the host society (Fischler *et al.*, 2017). If we look at the number and percentage of social and community housing units in the six priority action areas (TIPs)[20] defined by the BINAM (Bureau d'intégration des nouveaux arrivants à Montréal) (see Figure 4), we see they are significantly lower than in more central neighbourhoods.

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[17] *On May 13, 2023, the third consecutive yearly bike ride/protest was organized in Montréal-Nord to demand more bicycle paths in the area. The event was jointly organized by two community outreach organizations, Parole d'excluEs and Hoodstock. (Radio-Canada, 2023).*

[18] *The term* renoviction *refers to the practice of evicting tenants for major renovations or repairs, giving landlords the opportunity to rent their properties to new tenants at a higher price while increasing the resale value of their properties.*

[19] *In fact, the vacancy rate has fallen below the balanced market threshold of 3%: according to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), in October 2022, it stood at 2.2% for the island of Montréal. Of all rental units, affordable and family rental units are in the shortest supply (https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/fr/lobservateur-du-logement/2023/loffre-logements-locatifs-croit-mais-demande-bondit).*

[20] *The* territoires d'intervention prioritaires*, or TIPs, are priority action areas defined by the BINAM, located in the following eight boroughs: Ahuntsic-Cartierville, Anjou and Saint-Léonard, Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Montréal-Nord, Saint-Laurent and Pierrefonds-Roxboro, and Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension. The goal is to create local policies to promote development in these six areas, where 62% of newcomers to Montréal settle (BINAM, 2018).*

This is particularly true in Saint-Léonard (0.9%), Saint-Laurent (1.5%) and Pierrefonds-Roxboro (2.5%), all outlying neighbourhoods where the percentage of social and community housing compared to the overall rental stock is less than 3%, compared to nearly 13% in the borough of Ville-Marie in 2021 (Ville de Montréal, 2021a). This situation has been pointed out repeatedly by community housing groups. The fact that there is less social and community housing in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with high immigration rates makes immigrant and racialized populations even more vulnerable to the effects of gentrification and rising rents (Reiser, 2021).

Figure 4

Distribution of social and community housing units by sociological neighbourhood and by BINAM-defined TIP, or priority action area

Source:
Ville de Montréal (2020a). Guide d'accompagnement de la demande de soutien financier. Programme Territoires d'inclusion prioritaires 2021-2024.

TIPs are shown in red on the map.

There are also significant territorial inequalities when it comes to the state of housing. Curbcut is a platform that enables users to explore Montréal's urban sustainability data in a dynamic, intuitive way.[21] The platform shows a strong positive correlation between the percentage of inadequate housing[22] and the number of immigrants, meaning that boroughs with a higher percentage of foreign-born residents tend to also have a higher percentage of inadequate housing.

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[21] *Curbcut is a platform for in-depth, dynamic and intuitive exploration of urban sustainability. It's a data mining tool that allows users to cross-reference different types of statistical variables and, more specifically, to observe spatial correlations.*
https://montreal.curbcut.ca/?geo=CMA&tb=home&lng=fr

[22] *This factor is determined by the state of the unit: a rental unit is considered adequate if there are no reports of major repairs needed. This factor forms part of the definition of core housing need.*

Access to green spaces and environmental inequalities: Findings

Sustainable development and the socio-ecological transition are key issues at a time when people are increasingly concerned about the impacts of climate change, which include rising temperatures, heat waves, heavy rainfall, storms, drought, and flooding. The importance of access to nature in urban settings became abundantly clear during the COVID-19 pandemic, as people realized that natural environments provide significant benefits: they reduce heat, improve city dwellers' mental health and promote socialization. Yet research shows that Montréalers suffer many instances of environmental injustice.[23]

First and foremost, research shows that the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods are the ones with the least canopy cover (Pham *et al.*, 2012). This is because parks and trees are inequitably distributed across Montréal (Apparicio *et al.*, 2013; Jepson *et al.*, 2022). Furthermore, socioeconomically marginalized people generally have less access to green spaces, even though they would clearly derive many health benefits from them (Crouse *et al.*, 2017; Pinault *et al.*, 2021). Most of the TIPs are areas where the canopy cover is less than 15%, which is significantly lower than Montréal's average canopy cover of 20%. This is the case in Saint-Léonard, Montréal-Nord, Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension and Saint-Laurent. Montréal-Nord has the least canopy cover, even though it's home to a large percentage of immigrants and visible minorities. INTERACT's study (2019) shows a link between racialized neighbourhoods and the low incidence of greenery and green spaces. Other studies also highlight inequalities between Montréal neighbourhoods with respect to greening programs and initiatives. For example, a study of

the socio-spatial distribution of green laneways in Montréal by Pham, Boucher and Jacques (2022) shows that this green infrastructure is concentrated in white middle-class neighbourhoods, and is less prevalent in neighbourhoods with more newly-arrived immigrants and visible minorities. This disparity can be explained by social inequalities, but also by how people are mobilized and involved in these voluntary greening initiatives (Jerome *et al.*, 2017). Research also shows that creating large urban parks and green laneways doesn't always benefit people living in Montréal's less affluent neighbourhoods (Baumann-Lapierre, 2019; Jabbour, 2018). In fact, creating green spaces in disadvantaged neighbourhoods may have adverse effects, including eco-gentrification,[24] or rising rents and land values caused by the greening projects, the displacement of long-term residents and community organizations, and the loss of a sense of community for vulnerable populations (Megelas *et al.*, 2021; Tardif-Paradis, 2021; Institut national de santé publique du Québec, 2023).

The lack of development of green infrastructure is a determining factor in how vulnerable cities are to climate change, and increases the inequalities between regions in that respect. Green spaces and trees help combat urban heat islands, filter pollution, regulate water flow and reduce the need for air conditioning. Work on reducing environmental inequalities focuses on differences in climate change vulnerability, defined in the third report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as "the degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes". Research has shown that Montréal's

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[23] *Environmental injustice can be defined as the process by which policies "lead to an inequitable distribution of environmental benefits and harms that is specifically disadvantageous to the poorest and/or [...] exclude social groups from the decision-making process regarding the management of [their] environment" (Blanchon* et al.*, 2009).*

[24] *Eco-gentrification is a process whereby an area is socially transformed by neoliberal municipal development policies and projects based on environmental principles such as urban agriculture or greening policies, which displace and exclude the most economically vulnerable populations (Béliveau Côté, 2018).*

heat islands (i.e., areas with much higher temperatures than other inner-city areas) are unevenly distributed (Chakraborty *et al.*, 2019).

The 10 largest Montréal heat islands are located in the following areas: the area around Highway 40 and Saint-Laurent Boulevard; the area around the airport; Saint-Laurent Boulevard in Plateau-Mont-Royal; Cité de la mode in Ahuntsic-Cartierville; Longue-Pointe; the Viauville industrial area; along the shores of the St. Lawrence River in the Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve borough; the sector encompassing the Sainte-Marie and Angus neighbourhoods and the eastern part of Parc La Fontaine; and Avenue du Mont-Royal (Banville, 2022) (see Figure 5). There is a strong correlation between these urban heat islands and the neighbourhoods with the highest numbers of newcomers and the highest rates of racialized residents, such as certain TIPs, specifically the borough of Saint-Laurent. Like Saint-Laurent Boulevard and Avenue du Mont-Royal, these areas also have a high concentration of unhoused people, particularly Indigenous people, who are even more vulnerable to temperature extremes because they live on the streets[25] (Kidd *et al.*, 2022).
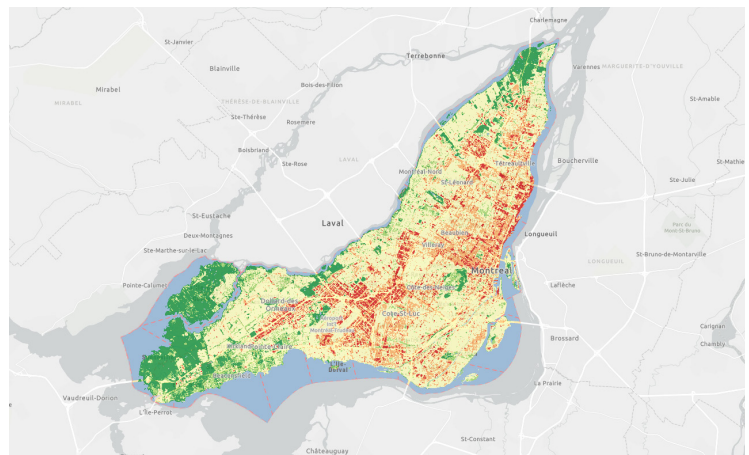
Figure 5

Montréal heat island map

Source:
City of Montréal open data site, 2016 heat island data, updated in 2022.

https://donnees.montreal.ca/dataset/ilots-de-chaleur

The aforementioned territorial inequalities are not static: they evolve according to various temporary and long-term contextual factors. They must be considered in relation to demographic trends, economic and health crises, and climate change. It is therefore important to cross-reference the data on current territorial inequalities with forecasts for other contextual factors.

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25 *Extremely cold temperatures must also be considered when assessing vulnerability to climate change. During these periods, immigrant and racialized populations living in unsanitary and poorly insulated housing, as well as unhoused people, are the most severely affected by the cold.*

3.2 Existing municipal initiatives to reduce territorial inequalities

Since the early 2000s, and in particular since it obtained metropolis status in 2017,[26] the City of Montréal has become increasingly aware of territorial inequalities, and has developed plans and policies focused on equity and diversity.

Under Mayor Valérie Plante's leadership, the City first adopted *Montréal inclusive – Plan d'action 2018-2021*, a roadmap outlining the measures required for the integration of immigrant and racialized people in Montréal. One of the plan's key features is the 2019 Access to city services without fear policy, whereby administrative departments modified identification requirements to enable persons without legal status or awaiting legal status to access programs and services.

Next, the City drew up its *Action Plan for Solidarity, Equity and Inclusion 2021-2025*. According to the Mayor, the goal of the plan is to "ensure people are our main priority as we move towards designing an inclusive environmental transition, building a sustainable recovery that leaves no one behind, and creating a social fabric that embraces all of Montréal's diversity". (Ville de Montréal, 2020e, p. 5). The plan includes 71 initiatives to reduce social inequalities in three areas: at the individual, the neighbourhood and the metropolis level, in order to make Montréal a more caring, equitable and inclusive city. The plan has enabled the entire municipal administration to integrate intersectional gender-based analysis, or

GBA+. The objective of mainstreaming this approach is to make the City more aware of how various discrimination factors can interact to exacerbate the prejudice experienced by certain populations, and to understand the upstream effects a project, program or policy can have.

The *Solidarity, Equity and Inclusion Plan* builds on other initiatives that promote social inclusion, specifically the public consultations on systemic racism and discrimination in which the CiM took part in 2018. After the OCPM report on that topic was published in June 2020, the City of Montréal acknowledged the existence of systemic racism and, in 2020, created the BRDS[27] (Bureau de la commissaire à la lutte au racisme et aux discriminations systémiques, or Office of the commissioner against racism and systemic discrimination), as well as the Montréal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities. In March 2023, two years after its creation, the BRDS published a second report presenting its progress on the 12 priority commitments to achieve an inclusive transition (Ville de Montréal, 2023).

Created in 2016 to help newcomers integrate into Montréal life, the BINAM, which reports to the City of Montréal's Diversity and Social Inclusion Department (or SDIS - Service de la diversité et de l'inclusion sociale), has also introduced a number of initiatives to fight territorial inequalities. It has funded joint projects with researchers and community

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[26] *The City and the Québec government recognize that inequalities exist between different territories, with some areas requiring special, coordinated efforts on the part of Québec City and the City with regard to urban planning and housing, public facilities, social development, education and employment.*

[27] *The creation of this body was a recommendation made by the CiM in its brief on systemic racism (Conseil interculturel de Montréal, 2020).*

organizations to document the obstacles and discrimination experienced by recent immigrants, specifically with respect to housing (Reiser and Breault, 2021). The BINAM has also drafted a companion document to the *Solidarity, Equity and Inclusion Plan*, entitled *Le Bureau d'intégration des nouveaux arrivants (BINAM): rôle et mandats*, which defines six priority inclusion territories, or TIPs.

Public action is also guided by the strategic action plan, *Montréal 2030*; Priority 8 of the plan focuses on combating racism and systemic discrimination.[28] To achieve this goal, the SDIS worked with more than a dozen municipal departments to develop a Living Environment Equity Index, designed to identify the areas of greatest need in order to prioritize funding. This initial version of the index was used in the second edition of the City of Montréal's participatory budget charter, published in October 2022, and the criterion of territorial equity ("to ensure that the City of Montréal's residents, in all their diversity, have fair access to municipal infrastructure within its jurisdiction"; Ville de Montréal, 2022a, p. 3) will henceforth be taken into account when selecting future projects. The SDIS is currently running other projects to test coordinated, localized initiatives in the areas of greatest need.

The Diversity and Social Inclusion Department developped a *Living Environment Equity Index*, designed to identify the areas of greatest need in the City of Montréal, in order to prioritize funding for *areas where vulnerability is most prevalent*.

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[28] *Priority 8: "Fighting racism and systemic discrimination, in the City and in society, to ensure that all people are included, economically integrated, safe and able to fulfill their potential."*

3.3 Blind spots in the City's planning

A closer look at municipal development plans and policies on the specific issues of mobility, housing, the environment and sports and leisure shows that little attention is given to territorial discrimination and injustices against Montréal's immigrant and racialized communities.

With regard to mobility, while studies conducted on behalf of the Service de la mise en valeur du territoire et du patrimoine and the Division de la planification des transports et de la mobilité de la Ville de Montréal (Paulhiac Scherrer, 2018) have outlined mobility inequalities affecting immigrant and racialized people, these are still poorly taken into account in the municipality's mobility programs and plans. The City of Montréal's former *Transportation Plan*, which preceded the Land Use and Mobility Plan (PUM) currently being drafted, makes no mention of territorial inequalities affecting immigrant and racialized populations (Ville de Montréal, 2008). Other more recent reports, such as *Réussir la transition vers la mobilité durable* published by the Commission sur le transport et les travaux publics (Ville de Montréal, 2020d), do not evaluate mobility and access through an intersectional lens.

With regard to housing, while the City states in its *By-law for a Diverse Metropolis* that it wishes to "promote a balanced, quality residential offer throughout its territory" (Ville de Montréal, 2020c, p. 7), there is no mention of inequalities faced by immigrant and racialized people. General reference is made to "vulnerable or marginalized people, and those who encounter forms of discrimination" (Ville de Montréal, 2020c, p. 6), but no mention is made of immigrant and racialized people.

With regard to the issues of the socio-ecological transition and access to green spaces, very little mention is made of territorial inequalities affecting immigrant and racialized people. For example, in the *2020-2030 Climate Plan* (Ville de Montréal, 2020b), no mention is made of the environmental inequalities experienced by immigrant and racialized people. The same is true of the *Nature and Sports Plan* (Ville de Montréal, 2021c): at no point is there any mention of the territorial inequalities affecting immigrant and racialized populations in terms of access to nature, sports and leisure activities in the City. The *Urban Sport and Outdoor Master Plan* (Ville de Montréal, 2018b) is one of the only programs to address the social inequalities that exist between neighbourhoods and to point to territorial inequalities, in particular the lower quality of infrastructure and facilities in more economically vulnerable neighbourhoods.

One explanation for this is that the various municipal departments work in isolation from one another. Specifically, the issue of diversity and inclusion is confined to the boroughs and City's SDIS (Service de la diversité et de l'inclusion sociale). In fact, municipal action on the issues of inequality and discrimination is mainly managed by a single administrative unit, whereas it should

be the subject of transversal work by different units, involving all the agents who handle discrimination issues on a daily basis. Although the BRDS (Office of the commissioner against racism and systemic discrimination) was set up precisely to carry out this transversal work and act as a link between all the City's departments in the fight against racism and systemic discrimination, the various units are still finding it difficult to integrate a differentiated vision of territories and populations into their programs and projects. This raises questions about how urban planning issues such as housing, mobility and access to green spaces are addressed, and how they are integrated into strategies that are too broad and not sufficiently tailored to the different realities of specific neighbourhoods. Despite implementing the GBA+ approach (intersectional gender-based analysis) in many of its plans, and setting up interdepartmental projects such as the Living Environment Equity Index, the City of Montréal is still lacking in the application of an intersectional perspective that would center the question of race at the heart of its analysis, particularly when it comes to addressing issues of territorial inequalities and urban planning. It also needs to improve when it comes to adjusting development and service provision to the realities of the diverse territories that make up the City.

Municipal action on the issues of *inequality* and *discrimination* is mainly managed by *a single administrative unit*, whereas it should be the subject of *transversal work* by different units, involving all the agents who handle discrimination issues on a daily basis.

The fact that the City's various action plans and policies fail to take territorial inequalities into account only serves to exacerbate economic and social inequalities between territories and citizens. While the City of Montréal's efforts to recognize territorial inequalities in its upcoming *Land Use and Mobility Plan* are to be commended, more needs to be done to translate this recognition into improved planning policies, and to strengthen immigrant and racialized people's sense of belonging and inclusion in Montréal.

3.4 *City Vision*: A new approach to territorial inequalities

City Vision is a working document for the City of Montréal's future *Land Use and Mobility Plan* (PUM) (Ville de Montréal, 2022b). It presents the municipality's overall development and urban planning objectives, as well as its vision for the city of tomorrow.

Unlike previous urban development plans, this document contains a comprehensive section on the issue of social inequalities. The section highlights the particularly disadvantaged situation of immigrants and racialized people, and shows that these socioeconomic inequalities exacerbate the vulnerability of people living in situations of poverty and exclusion and have an impact on access to housing and public transport, citizen participation and vulnerability to climate change. The document notes that "most people living in poverty are immigrants

(39%) and identify as belonging to a visible minority (46%), specifically black or Arab (32%)" (p. 40). The document also emphasizes the importance of adopting an intersectional approach, since the lived experience of people living in poverty is not homogeneous: "The concept of intersectionality, which posits that discrimination is cumulative and reinforcing, helps us clarify and deepen our understanding of social inequalities" (p. 40). Intersectionality refers to a dynamic interaction between different forms of discrimination, such as racial, gender, sex, class, physical ability and age-based discrimination; thus, considering territorial inequalities from an intersectional perspective is a real step forward. The City of Montréal recognizes the existence of territorial inequalities in the areas of 1) mobility, 2) housing, 3) access to public and green spaces; 4) citizen participation and 5) the socio-ecological transition.

Mobility · Housing · Public facilities, services and spaces · Citizen participation · Socio-ecological transition

Mobility: Findings

In *City Vision*, the City of Montréal recognizes that public and active transportation services are unevenly distributed. Figure 6, taken from the document, illustrates the inequalities in access to public transit, specifically in the island's inner suburbs: "While roads provide motorized access to the entire island of Montréal, major territorial inequalities exist when it comes to pedestrian, bicycle and public transportation infrastructure" (Ville de Montréal, 2022b, p. 41). What's more,
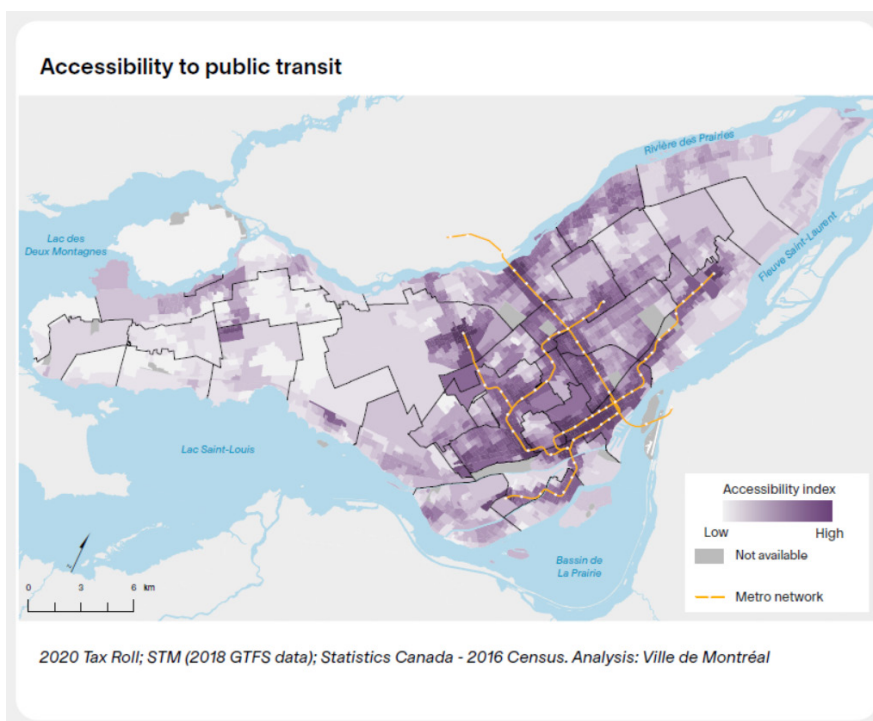
a closer look at the *City Vision* table showing the distribution of road space by mode of transportation and borough (p. 48) shows that it's in these same inner suburbs that soft and active mobility, such as cycling, is least developed. This is notably the case in Saint-Léonard, where bike paths account for just 0.3% of road space, and in Montréal-Nord, where only 2.7% of road space is devoted to public transit.

Map of accessibility to public transit

Source:
Ville de Montréal (2022b). **City Vision - Toward a land use and mobility plan.**

Accessibility to public transit

Accessibility index
Low — High
Not available
Metro network

2020 Tax Roll; STM (2018 GTFS data); Statistics Canada - 2016 Census. Analysis: Ville de Montréal

Housing: Findings

City Vision also points to territorial inequalities when it comes to housing. In fact, Figure 7 shows that the neighbourhoods with the most pressing housing needs are also those with the highest percentages of low-income, immigrant and racialized populations, specifically Parc-Extension, Montréal-Nord and Saint-Michel.

The city also acknowledges in its document that immigrant and racialized people are more often the victims of discrimination by landlords in the private rental market: "Certain populations suffer discrimination when trying to access housing. The discrimination is often based on ethnic origin, functional ability, age, gender identity, immigration status, household type and socioeconomic status" (p. 132). Yet, while the City talks about housing discrimination, it offers few solutions to help these vulnerable communities.

Share of tenant households with urgent housing needs, 2016, municipality of Montréal

Statistics Canada - 2016 Census
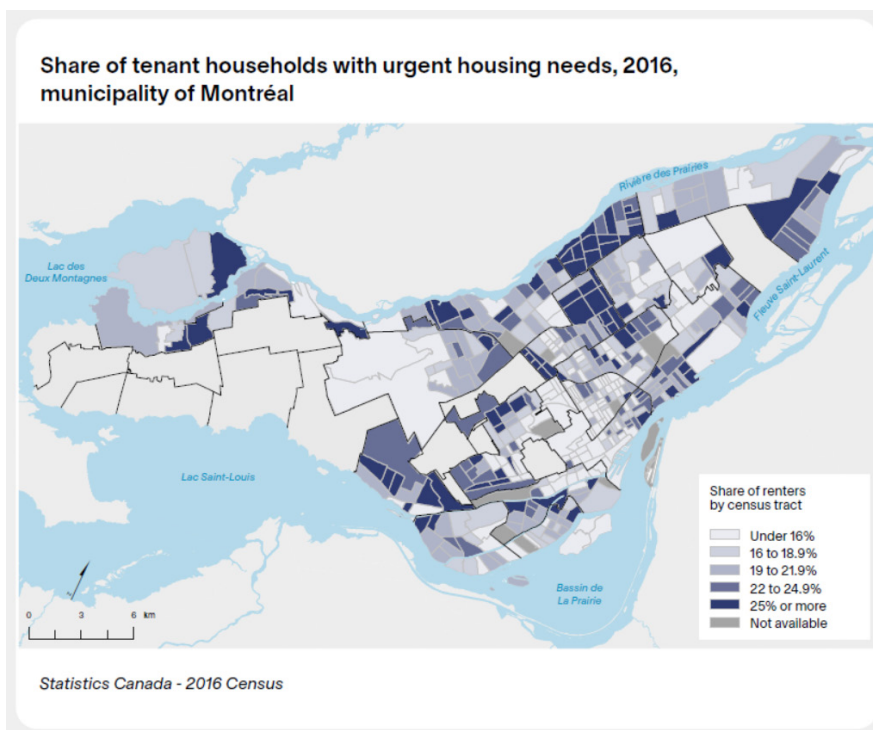
Access to public spaces: Findings

The City also notes that parks, green spaces and other off-street public spaces are not evenly distributed throughout the city. Some boroughs have very few public spaces compared to road space. In Montréal-Nord, for example, public spaces account for 20% of the surface area, with road space accounting for 80%. In Saint-Léonard, public spaces account for only 26% of the borough, with road space accounting for 74% (see Figure 8).

Furthermore, the City recognizes that immigrant and racialized people experience greater insecurity and suffer more harassment, attacks and discriminatory behaviour in public spaces than other citizens:

"In Montréal, Indigenous and racialized people and immigrants, and especially women, face more discrimination than the general population, particularly when seeking employment, as well as in public spaces and on public transit" (p. 40). What's more, despite the fact that the SPVM adopted a policy on police stops in 2021, some immigrant and racialized people, and specifically young people, continue to feel targeted by these stops, especially in certain neighbourhoods, like Saint-Michel and Montréal-Nord (Ducas, 2022).

Map of the ratio of green spaces to road space by borough

Source:
Ville de Montréal (2022b). **City Vision - Toward a land use and mobility plan.**

Composition of public spaces by borough
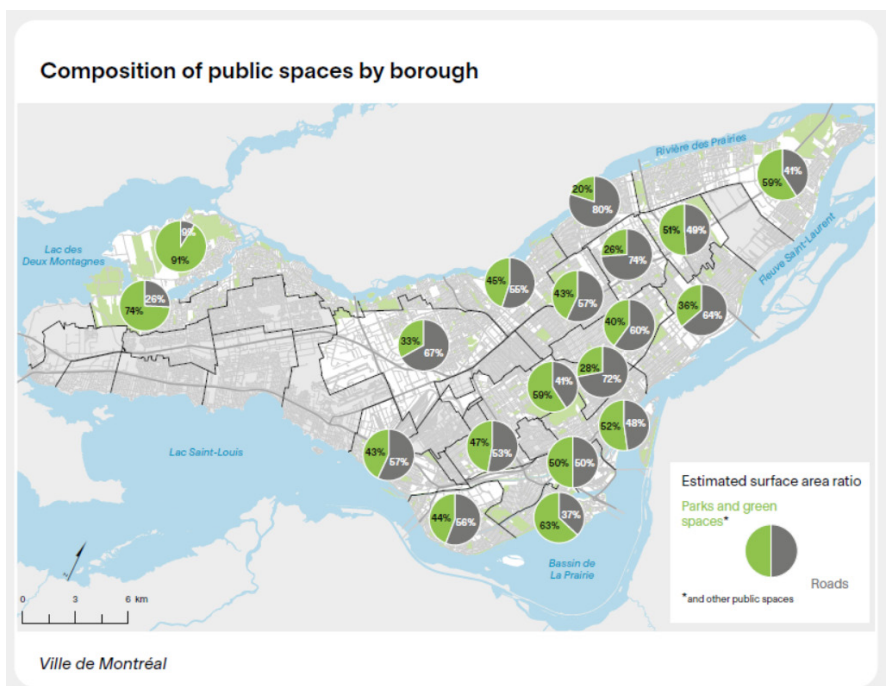
Citizen participation: Findings

In *City Vision*, the City also points out the inequalities in citizen participation by population, but also by neighbourhood: "We have observed that racialized, Indigenous and immigrant people are under-represented in existing citizen consultation mechanisms" (p. 58) and in "the collaboration and design phases of development projects" (p. 60). Unequal digital access stemming from social inequalities partly explains the low participation of immigrant and racialized people in consultation processes.

To encourage the participation of the people primarily affected by the new Land Use and Mobility Plan (PUM), the OPCM implemented a public consultation process that includes the following initiatives: creating a digital platform (Réflexion2050.ca), touring living environments, preparing a consultation kit, conducting cultural mediation events, and holding meetings with targeted populations, to ensure that all Montréalers are consulted and to find out what

they hope the City's future development will look like. As part of its commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and the fight against discrimination, the City also relies on "co-creation and the re-integration of previously overlooked historical and Indigenous knowledge" (p. 60). For the time being, however, these inclusive and participatory urban planning ideas are still on the drawing board.

Following the OCPM consultation held in the fall of 2022, the City must update *City Vision* to reflect the population's aspirations, and determine what measures need to be put in place to achieve the vision presented in the document. Thereafter, City Council will adopt a preliminary version of PUM 2050; a second public consultation will be held on the preliminary version before City Council adopts the final version.

⇨ **Réflexion 2050**

2050 City Vision

Toward a land use and mobility plan

Socio-ecological transition: Findings

Finally, in *City Vision*, the City acknowledges the environmental inequalities experienced by immigrant and racialized people, and the resulting increased vulnerability to the effects of climate change: "Low-income people, racialized people and immigrants are more likely to live in unsanitary and overcrowded housing, in heat islands and near transportation infrastructure such as expressways, highways and airports, meaning they are more exposed to noise and air pollution, and to the effects of climate change such as heat waves. Indigenous, immigrant and racialized people have more challenges in finding suitable employment and housing, and are therefore disproportionately affected by climate shocks" (p. 41). Moreover, "low-income people and, to a lesser extent,

racialized and immigrant people, live in areas with less vegetation" (p. 124).

Looking at the canopy cover map in Figure 9, we can see that most of the TIPs – specifically, Saint-Léonard, Montréal-Nord, Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension and Saint-Laurent – are areas where the canopy cover is less than 15%, much lower than Montréal's average of 20%. This situation is closely linked to the phenomenon of heat islands, which particularly affect people living in these disadvantaged neighbourhoods, leading to health risks for vulnerable people, specifically children, seniors and people with cardiovascular or respiratory conditions.

Figure 9

Canopy cover index map by borough

Source:
Ville de Montréal (2022b). **City Vision - Toward a land use and mobility plan.**
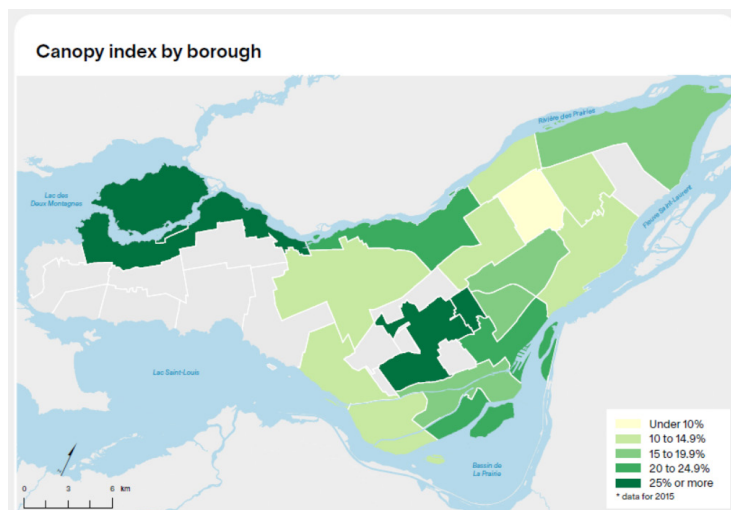
With regard to air quality, *City Vision* states that low-income, immigrant and racialized populations are at greater risk of exposure to air pollution; however, there is no data on territorial inequalities in terms of air quality. And yet, it seems clear from the figures comparing means of transportation and road space in each neighbourhood that air quality is not the same across the island.

Montréal's territorial inequalities:
Front-line findings

4

4 Montréal's territorial inequalities: Front-line findings

This fourth section presents the results of the focus groups and survey carried out for this study. It draws on real-life experiences to highlight Montréal's territorial inequalities, and presents the issues raised by immigrant and racialized people, as well as the solutions that were put forward.

4.1 Inequitable access to public and active transportation

The focus group in the Saint-Laurent neighbourhood focused on mobility. Of the eight immigrants and racialized people who took part, all said their primary means of getting around was on foot or by public transit (bus and metro); only one person owned a car. In Saint-Léonard and Montréal-Nord, participants also said they got around mainly by bus. This corroborates other studies, that found that immigrant and racialized people and specifically newcomers are more dependent on public and active transportation (Heisz and Schellenberg, 2004; Paulhiac Scherrer, 2018; Walks, 2014). Moreover, this dependence is exacerbated by the fact that these neighbourhoods are sprawling and isolated, have few local services and facilities, and are not conducive to walking.

"I can't walk to get to things in Saint-Laurent. In the summer and winter, I have to take the bus. It's not that easy, I can't just walk ten minutes [to get where I need to go]."

Focus group participants mentioned several barriers to mobility, arising both from their specific living environment and urban planning (exogenous factors) and from personal vulnerability (endogenous factors).

It is essential to take local context into account when considering transport inequalities. For example, although participants in the neighbourhoods in question are particularly dependent on bus service,[29] they stated that the public transit offered by the City in their area is of poor quality. Many pointed to low bus frequency as a major obstacle in getting around. Certain sectors and bus routes in particular are singled out as being problematic in the following qutoes (the first two refer to Saint-Laurent and the third to Saint-Léonard).

"There are some places in my neighbourhood [where buses take] far too long to come [...]. It's really a long wait. Some bus routes are better, but others, like [...] the 128, for example, sometimes you have to wait an hour at the bus stop."

"The 121 bus stops right in front of my house, but if I need to get somewhere in a hurry, I have to walk all the way to the 171, which comes more [often], to go to Côte-Vertu. Sometimes the bus comes every 15 minutes, sometimes every 20 minutes, sometimes every 30 minutes, and we wait for it by the side of the road. So, that's my problem: the wait times are too long in relation to my needs."

"It depends on the line and the time of day. The 141, for instance, is really regular, but the 192 on Robert is the worst, and the 32 North as well; there are times when you're waiting for the bus, 20 minutes go by and it still hasn't show up."

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[29] *Saint-Léonard and Montréal-Nord have no metro station. There are only two metro stations (Côte-Vertu and Du Collège) in the expansive Saint-Laurent neighbourhood, and these only serve the southeast part of the neighbourhood.*

According to some participants in the Montréal-Nord focus group, the applications used to obtain public and private transit timetables are not up to date.

"Montréal's transit data isn't updated regularly, not even in the official app. I have the Transit app.[30] When I leave the house, I look to see what time the 49 is coming. I run to catch the bus, but most of the time it's already gone by, or I have to wait more than 10 minutes for the next bus to arrive. The system needs to be improved, because it's wasting our time."

Low bus frequency is an obstacle to mobility that is compounded by other factors such as the lack of bus shelters and/or benches at some stops. These factors were often mentioned, in each focus group, as constituting an additional obstacle, especially in the winter. Furthermore, when bus stops do have a shelter, it's often in bad condition.

"Some stops, like the one on Chevrier, don't have shelters. So, we're talking about how the buses are often late – so, you're waiting outside, and then it starts to rain... it's really a pain!"

"There are lots of shelters [but] they aren't cleaned. Some of them are so dirty, you don't even want to go inside."

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[30] *Transit is a private app. Chrono is the official ARTM app, which is supposed to provide accurate timetables.*

Another issue raised in connection with the quality of public transit is safety. Some people reported feeling unsafe when using public transit outside peak hours and in areas with lower ridership. Others reported experiencing discrimination and racial profiling, specifically by STM officers. These kinds of experiences significantly affect immigrant and racialized peoples' sense of safety on public transit.

"I've already seen someone exposing themselves at Côte-Vertu station in the evening. I was alone, so I ran. I didn't know I was supposed to call the police so they wouldn't do it again. I felt so panicked, I just had to leave."

"When I'm riding the bus with my kids, they won't sit quietly, and the driver says to me: 'Lady, make your kids stop!' But how am I supposed to control them? It's not easy!"

Cost is also a significant obstacle for immigrants and racialized people using public transit. Several focus group participants mentioned the steep fare increases,[31] which result in higher travel costs, putting a strain on the budgets of low-income households and limiting their access to employment. The high cost of public transit was the most frequent response to survey question 12: "What are the biggest challenges you face in getting around your neighbourhood?"

"The cost of a monthly pass was much lower when I first got here in March 2022. Now, it's $94 a month – that's crazy! Social assistance is $750 a month, our apartment is $500, the bus is $100... [After that,] how am I supposed to afford to eat?"

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[31] *Montréal's public transit fares will increase by 3% in 2023, compared to a 1-2% increase over the past five years. This increase is due to inflation, but also the drop in ridership in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

The focus groups emphasized that refugee claimants without work permits are particularly hard hit by fare hikes, and suggested the introduction of a special fare, or even free travel. In all three neighbourhoods, several people also mentioned that the prices are too high for children and students, and criticized the fact that only monthly pass prices are reduced. A number of people suggested establishing a family fare for families with several children, as well as discounts on single passes for students.

Still on the topic of fares, two focus groups, one in Saint-Laurent and the other in Montréal-Nord, discussed the issue of payment on public transit, especially on buses, where fares must be paid in cash if the bus pass hasn't been reloaded. Immigrant and racialized residents living in these neighbourhoods must go to a metro station to reload their transit pass, even though metro access is very difficult in these areas. This means long waits and longer commutes at the beginning of each month.

"When you're a refugee claimant, when you don't have any money, [public transit] should be free."

"My son is only six and he goes to school on his own. I don't work, I don't have any income, and I have to pay $56 a month[32] to reload his bus pass. He goes to Émile-Legault. I don't feel confident about letting him walk all the way there from Côte-Vertu by himself."

"When I think about going downtown with my partner and two children, I often think twice because, if I take the bus, how much will it cost? The four bus tickets cost more than parking!"

"The problem is, you can't reload your STM card on the bus. I have to go to the metro to do it. I'd like to be able to do it on my phone or [...] reload it directly on the bus."

"There's a huge line-up on the first of the month. Everyone's waiting to reload their card and there's only one metro station in Saint-Laurent. If you have an appointment or need to get to work on time, good luck!"

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[32] *To qualify for the reduced fare, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.*

The focus groups made it clear that some immigrant and racialized people don't always have the right information about services or fares. The STM needs to do more to publicize fare increases and new initiatives, as well as better explain its fare structure, in order to improve transportation literacy.

In regards to active transportation, obstacles to mobility were also mentioned, particularly in relation to cycling and walking. Most of the focus group participants highlighted safety issues on major boulevards in the three neighbourhoods, where there are fewer bicycle paths and sidewalks that are poorly developed and inadequately protected. These challenges to active transportation are not the same for everyone, and should be approached from an intersectional perspective. Among those particularly impacted by this mobility deficit are single mothers, who mentioned the difficulty of getting around on foot or by bicycle with children in these outlying neighbourhoods. Seniors and people with reduced mobility also reported problems getting around in their neighbourhoods.

"There are some places that just feel unsafe to me. In my neighbourhood, none of the streets from Sami Fruits to Côte-Vertu have bike paths. A few sidewalks have them, but they're not on every street, and it's dangerous for kids."

"Lots of kids in my neighbourhood have bike accidents, especially in the summer. They play next to Sami Fruits – not on the main road, but the road on the other side. There are a lot of problems for seniors, too. When I walk with my kids, I see there's not enough room for everyone. When we go out on our bikes, we have to share the road with cars. That's not safe!"

Velorution CDN-NDG encourages residents of a predominantly immigrant neighbourhood to use bicycles

The goal of the Velorution CDN-NDG project is to teach the predominantly immigrant population of Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce about cycling as a means of getting around on a daily basis, and to provide them with the tools to do so. The organization offers bike repair workshops in the neighbourhood's parks, as well as introductory cycling courses for children and adults, to encourage them to take up this active and sustainable mode of transportation. The organization can also loan bicycles.

Source: https://cyclonordsud.org/velorution-cdn-ndg/
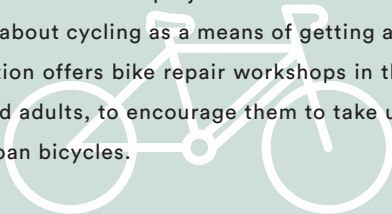
Others focus group participants mentioned that poor maintenance of walking and bicycle paths makes accessing public transit and getting around the neighbourhood even more difficult. Sidewalk snow removal in the winter was a particularly sensitive issue.

"I often have to walk [to the metro station]. It usually takes 25 minutes but, in the winter, with the snow, I just can't do it."

4.2 A lack of affordable and adequate housing

During the focus groups in Saint-Laurent, Montréal-Nord and Saint-Léonard, access to adequate, affordable housing emerged as a major issue for immigrant and racialized people. It's worth noting that the majority of immigrants surveyed live in buildings of eight units or less in these outlying neighbourhoods.

Significant rent increases have been reported in the three neighbourhoods studied, consistent with increases of over 5% in the overall Montréal rental market in 2022 (CMHC, 2023). These increases have many implications, especially in areas that were once considered affordable and are home to a majority of low-income immigrant and racialized people. Many of the people interviewed said they had opted for housing that was either too small, unsanitary or unaffordable,[33] because they couldn't find anything more suitable. Newcomers had the most difficulty finding affordable housing. Those who have been living in a neighbourhood for a long time watch anxiously as their rent rises, and are unable to move within the neighbourhood to improve their housing conditions.

"Really? You want to talk about housing? It's way too expensive! Especially since the pandemic, it's gone up like crazy. [The landlords] raised my rent and didn't even do any work."

"Now I understand why so many immigrants settle here in Montréal-Nord. It's cheaper. But the apartments are no good, and now it's too expensive here as well."

"We pay $1,300 a month for a four and a half, and I'm not working yet, so only [my husband] works. It's very expensive and nothing is included. And [the landlord] asked us for a $1,000 deposit."

"When I first arrived in July of this year, I stayed at the immigrant hotel. I started looking online for somewhere to live. I'd find places for $600 or $700 in the neighbourhood but, three months later, when I got my cheque, the rent had gone up to $1,200 or $1,300. Landlords just do whatever they want, there are no restrictions."

"It's hard now to change neighbourhoods and find something better. It's just too expensive everywhere."

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[33] *People in households that spend 30% or more of total household income on housing are considered to have a housing affordability problem.*

Sometimes these rent increases lead to dire situations, with some participants reporting being evicted or at risk of eviction. When these types of cases go to court, the TAL (rental board) rarely rules in the tenants' favour.

"I had a terrible experience with my former landlord. She practically put me and my daughters out on the street because she raised the rent and we refused to pay. She filed a case with the Rental board, won, and the bailiff came to force me to leave.[34] At the very last minute, we found a place to live, but the whole situation was so stressful, I spent a lot of time crying."

"My landlord told my neighbour: 'I'm not going to do any work in your apartment. And, when you move out, I'm going to raise the rent.' So I'm careful. I pay before the end of the month and I ask for a receipt."

In outlying neighbourhoods, the lack of access to affordable housing is not offset by the availability of social and community housing,[35] which is lower than in central areas, despite the high demand (see Section 3.1). In fact, a number of people mentioned the very long wait times for subsidized housing.

Many also pointed out that refugee claimants, refugees and people without legal status cannot access subsidized housing in Montréal,[37] which constitutes a major obstacle to fair access to housing.

"People have to wait a long time to get social housing,[36] up to five or six years in my neighbourhood. I've applied in all the neighbourhoods to increase my chances. But you still have to wait, and it takes way too long."

"I'm telling you, when you're a refugee claimant in Québec, you can't catch a break, ma'am! You can't work, you can't get social housing. Being a refugee claimant in this province is like being on parole!"

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[34] *In this case, the tenant was not directly evicted by her landlord. However, as she was unable to pay the new rent set by the landlord or the arrears, she had to leave the premises.*

[35] *In Québec, social and community housing includes low-rent housing (HLMs), government-run social housing, CO-OPs and housing NPOs.*

[36] *The person is talking about HLMs.*

[37] *Anyone who is neither a permanent resident nor a citizen is formally excluded from Quebec's subsidized housing programs. They may have access to housing through an NPO or CO-OP project, but not to a subsidized unit or HLM.*

Other obstacles to accessing housing in the neighbourhoods in question include instances of discrimination experienced by several people during their search for housing, during the course of their occupancy, or in their dealings with landlords. Discrimination can manifest itself in many ways, from simply refusing to rent to a particular applicant, to using discriminatory screening criteria, and even targeted ads. The increase in discrimination should be viewed in the context of a tighter rental market in immigrant-reception neighbourhoods, as lower vacancy rates mean that landlords can be more selective. In the focus groups, several people mentioned the following sometimes illegal demands made by landlords:

"When you're an immigrant and you're looking for a place to live, they ask to check your credit rating, they ask for references, and they ask to check your bank account to see if you can pay for the place. But it's not easy for us immigrants to provide all that information. Some people come here and they don't know a soul."

"When I first came here, the landlord charged me two months' rent. When I went to the Rental board, they told me he didn't have the right to do that."

"Finding a place to live here is a real ordeal, depending on your nationality and skin colour. If the landlord sees you, that's it: he won't rent you the apartment. This has happened to me several times. We're asked to get a signature or bring a Canadian friend. When you call the landlord because you have a problem in your apartment, you never hear from him, but he always shows up when it's time to collect the rent. It seems the law isn't the same for everyone, and it certainly doesn't seem to benefit immigrants."

Most of the discrimination experienced by focus group participants in the neighbourhoods in question, and especially in Saint-Léonard and Montréal-Nord, was related to ethnic origin and skin colour. Many of them also mentioned that families with children face discrimination when it comes to finding adequate, affordable housing in those neighbourhoods.

"When I was looking for a place to live and I'd say I've got three daughters, they hung up on me, they wouldn't even give me a chance. In the end, I had to lie to find a place. I told them I was single and that I only had two daughters, because if I didn't, I'd be homeless."

GREAT INITIATIVE N° 4

CDPDJ launches "Rent without Discrimination" ad campaign

The Rent Without Discrimination campaign aims to inform landlords and tenants of their obligations and rights. The campaign was posted in the Montréal metro. The tools used in this campaign make it easy for landlords and tenants to understand their rights and obligations from the time a rental unit is advertised to when tenants are selected, as well as during the entire rental period. The campaign also features resources for tenants or prospective tenants who have experienced discrimination.

Source: https://www.cdpdj.qc.ca/fr/nos-services/outils-en-ligne/louer-sans-discrimination

Among the housing issues raised by participants, a number of them mentioned unsanitary conditions:[38] pest infestations, heating or insulation issues, or general building maintenance problems. As noted in Section 3 of this report, the housing stock in these outlying neighbourhoods, where the majority of immigrant and racialized people live, is more rundown than in the central areas. In Montréal-Nord, where the housing focus group was held, over 8% of housing units need major repairs.[39]

"When I'm washing dishes in my kitchen, it feels like the wall's going to fall in on me. And my neighbour's bathtub leaks."

"The place I've been living in since July has a problem with the oven, and the living room heating doesn't work either. I've been without heating ever since."

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[38] *A dwelling is considered unsanitary, and therefore unfit for habitation, if it is likely to be detrimental to the health, safety or well-being of the occupants. The term* unsanitary *can refer to the overall condition of the building and the built environment, but also to the specific condition of a particular unit.*

[39] *Major repairs* are major renovations to a home, such as renovating the bathroom or kitchen, or rewiring the entire electrical system. Dwellings in need of major repairs are therefore in poor or very poor condition, and often pose a health or safety risk to the tenants.

Several people also mentioned the lack of large units suitable for families in the neighbourhoods in question. In 2016, Saint-Laurent had the highest rate (23.5%) of renter households in undersized housing.

Based on these findings, the focus groups suggested ways to improve access to affordable and adequate housing in their neighbourhoods, and to promote greater social inclusion of immigrant and racialized people.

"We need to address this issue from a collective and governmental point of view. Canada brings in immigrants, but it doesn't really offer any programs for newcomers, to provide them with housing while they figure things out. I think that's the biggest problem."

"[We need to] build more apartments, a lot more! Because in Montréal-Nord, there are a lot of empty lots. Why aren't we putting up apartment buildings? Because that would reduce the shortage. [We don't need] condo developments, we need apartment buildings, and we need to build them with the necessary infrastructure for the residents."

"We're refugee claimants, so we don't want to belittle what the Canadian government has done for us, but there's still a lot more that could be done, especially when it comes to housing. Work and housing, those are the basics."

4.3 Fewer public facilities and services, public spaces that are less inclusive and less well-maintained

Participants in each focus group highlighted the lack of access to public services, leisure facilities and culture. They also noted the lack of sports facilities in their respective neighbourhoods. In fact, these predominantly immigrant and racialized neighbourhoods are known to have insufficient sports facilities to meet the population's needs. In Saint-Laurent, several people mentioned the lack of sports fields and multisport complexes. Sometimes, while the facilities exist, they aren't sufficient to meet the population's needs, as is the case for Saint-Laurent's aquatic facilities. Many people also spoke about the need to expand the offering of sports activities for young people.

"There aren't enough sports fields."

"There are small parks, but there aren't enough swimming pools. It's not always easy to go swimming in the summer, because there aren't enough spots and it's really crowded. Last year, I waited in line for an hour to get into the pool. That wasn't fun."

"Other neighbourhoods have lots of sports centres, but in Saint-Laurent, there are basically none - just one or two for the whole of Saint-Laurent. I've been trying to sign myself and my kids up for swimming lessons for two years now but I can't, because the waitlist is so long. Two years – that's totally unacceptable."

"My son enjoys playing soccer, but I can't sign him up because there are too many people and also because registration costs too much. [Other neighbourhoods] provide lessons for sports-minded kids, but here in Saint-Laurent, I don't see anything like that."

In Saint-Léonard, access to sports facilities and the range of sports activities offered, specifically those for teenagers, were identified as key factors of territorial inequality. The focus group's findings corroborate Hiên Pham's research on immigrant youth and the use of public spaces in Saint-Léonard.

"We're lucky, because there are quite a lot of sports fields; but I coach soccer in Saint-Léonard, and most of the time the fields are closed, because it's natural grass and they want to keep it looking good. So, what's the point of even having soccer fields, then?"

"There's no sports centre for teenagers. My son looked for one, it's a big sports centre near the [railroad], but it's private. There's no recreation centre either."

Montréal-Nord focus group participants also mentioned the lack of activities for young people. In addition to the lack of sports facilities (specifically indoor soccer courts, mentioned by one person), several participants highlighted the lack of cultural activities and facilities in the neighbourhood, such as libraries, movie theatres, performance spaces, etc. Some immigrant and racialized people felt that providing these activities would help make the neighbourhood safer.

"Yes, there's the library. But there are no movie theatres in Montréal-Nord, there's just not that much for young people to do. There's more to life than eating, drinking and sleeping. People also need to relax, hang out and have fun. Yes, it's winter now, but the city could still offer different activities for young people. That would also solve the safety problem."

"Basically, you could say that Montréal-Nord doesn't have enough recreation facilities. There are no movie theatres, no restaurants, no community pools, no shows...[40] **If I want to take my daughters to the movies, I have to go visit my sister in Laval."**

"I like my neighbourhood, because I like the fact that [I live] so close to my child's school, but I can tell that there aren't many cultural things for kids to do, especially during the summer."

In the neighbourhoods in question, immigrant and racialized residents face a number of obstacles to accessing cultural and sports activities. Several people mentioned that these activities are too expensive or difficult to access by public transit (see Section 4.1). People also mentioned a lack of information about local facilities and services. Some people suggested creating activities specifically for immigrants, which would take these various obstacles into account.

"During the summer, [the City] should organize trips outside the city, so that immigrant families can see something other than Montréal without having to spend too much money."

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[40] *The Maison de la Culture puts on shows, but the focus group participant didn't seem to know about them.*

Participants in Montréal-Nord and Saint-Léonard in particular said they were dissatisfied with the maintenance of streets and parks, garbage collection,[41] and snow removal, with some even expressing the belief that this treatment is a form of territorial discrimination. As far as snow removal in these two neighbourhoods is concerned, participants felt that the biggest problem was on secondary residential streets. Inadequate snow removal in these areas affects both residents' mobility and their ability to access services.

"One thing I really don't like about Montréal-Nord is [...] all the garbage in the street."

"There's garbage everywhere in this neighbourhood. It comes right up to my front door, it's disgusting! I spend a lot of time outside, every morning and evening, picking up garbage around my building."

"Maybe it's a dumb thing to say, but I think there's a problem with garbage collection in this neighbourhood. It used to be twice a week, but they've changed the pickup schedule, and now it's only once a week. Especially in the summer, it's a real nightmare! And in Saint-Léonard, we're not even allowed to put the garbage out on the balcony, so it won't look bad from the street."

"They used to clear the streets and put salt down right after it snowed [...]. But if you look at the streets now, they still haven't cleared the snow that fell last Friday. [...] No one seems to care, especially not City Hall; I don't know if it's specifically the people of Montréal-Nord, but their overall attitude is very bad. Don't take my word for it: go outside and see for yourself. You can't walk [on the sidewalk] right now!"

"I drive my car in Saint-Léonard. Normally, my commute isn't too bad, but I don't know if there's a special policy for clearing the snow from certain neighbourhoods but, in some areas, it's very slow.[42] Main streets like Lacordaire and Viau are cleared, but in some neighbourhoods, it's just awful. Most of the time, [it's] the residents who clear it. And parking is a nightmare!"

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[41] *Community organizers on the Saint-Michel housing committee have ascertained that the issue of garbage in the street in this neighbourhood is due to the fact that low-income residents can't afford to buy heavy-duty garbage bags, so they use the free supermarket bags, which are less sturdy and tear more easily.*

[42] *The City and boroughs remove snow from the main roads first, then secondary streets, and then sidewalks on residential streets. While residents are responsible for clearing snow in front of their property, street maintenance is the responsibility of the City and the boroughs.*

The comments made by focus group participants also enabled us to gauge the feeling of insecurity[43] and discrimination experienced by immigrant and racialized people in some of their neighbourhoods' public areas, especially in Montréal-Nord and Saint-Léonard. Many residents of both these neighbourhoods said they felt unsafe, some linking this feeling to features of the built environment, such as street lighting, others to experiences of discrimination in public places. In Saint-Léonard, two women wearing headscarves said they experienced discrimination. These comments confirm the results of an extensive survey carried out by Concertation Saint-Léonard on people's sense of safety in Saint-Léonard (Concertation Saint-Léonard, 2022), which showed that the feeling of safety isn't necessarily tied to the crime rate, but is determined by a number of other factors.

"In my opinion, the situation in Saint-Léonard has changed [in terms of] safety. I've been here 18 years, and there's more violence now. It used to be a really quiet neighbourhood. Now, when my son goes out, I go with him."

"I've also been a victim of discrimination. I was on my way home from Maisonneuve hospital, waiting for the bus, when someone driving by shouted insults at me from his car [because of] my headscarf. I was really scared because there was no one else around. [The person] told me: 'Go back to your country.'"

"Sad to say, I witnessed two cases of discrimination in the park [...] In both cases, it was a man shouting angrily at a woman wearing a headscarf. There's a lot of discrimination in the neighbourhood. My sister wears a headscarf, and she doesn't feel comfortable going to any of the parks. Coubertin, for instance, [she definitely] won't go there."

"I'd also like to say something about the street lights. Before, I could go out after dark but now, I don't walk at night in the park, because there aren't enough street lights there."

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43   *A sense of insecurity in an urban milieu is "a complex emotion rooted in the fear of crime, bullying, intimidation and violence in public places. It is based on a personal assessment of perceived risk" (Paquin, 2006).*

Other comments indicate that the lack of safety felt by immigrant and racialized people is also due to the way certain neighbourhoods are characterized, specifically by the media, which spreads rumours and reinforces people's negative perceptions of the area; this is particularly true of Montréal-Nord (Vogler, 2020). However, government neglect also feeds these stereotypes, as it reinforces the neighbourhood's negative image.

"People see Montréal-Nord as a place with a lot of safety issues, especially near Pascal Street. But that goes back about fifteen years, when there were a lot of shootings in the area. It's true, but it's also part of the negative image people have. When you say, 'I'm from Montréal-Nord', right away people think, 'Oh, he's a gangster!' They think you're a bad person. We're afraid to put Montréal-Nord as our home address."

"When I first moved here, lots of people warned me about getting a place in Saint-Michel or Montréal-Nord. Especially if you have children, they said, it's not safe."

"I've never had any bad experiences, but I'm still scared. No matter what time of the day or night I come home, I'm always afraid. Because I've heard that there are a lot of safety issues in Montréal-Nord, so we're always on edge. I don't think the government should [just accept the situation], there's still a lot of work to be done to make Montréal-Nord as safe as it was before. Local organizations are doing a lot of work here […] but in my opinion, it's not enough."
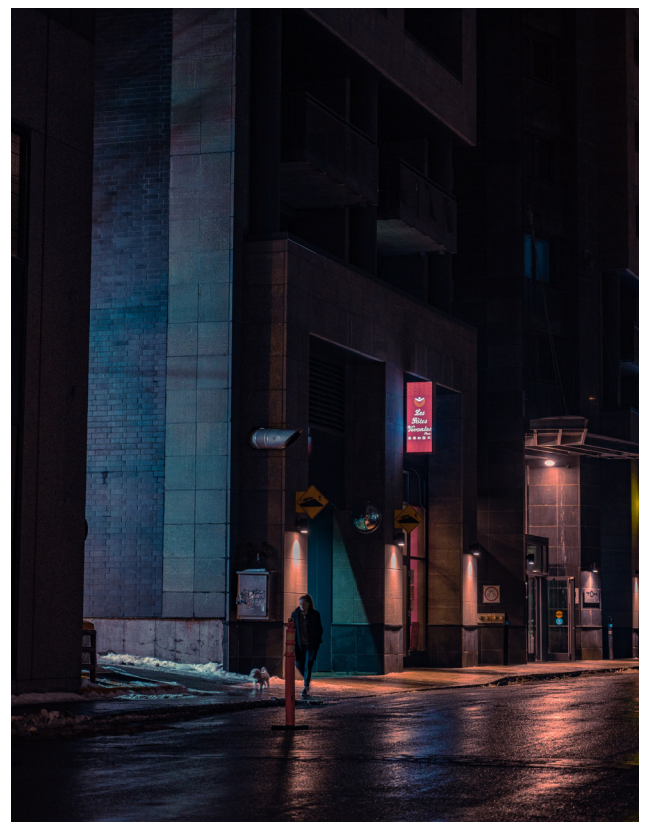
4.4 Insufficient communication, through channels that disregard immigrant and racialized people's reality

When asked how they were involved in local issues, most focus group participants said they volunteered with local community groups and citizen committees. However, very few had ever attended a city council meeting or taken part in an urban planning consultation – a fact reflected in the survey results.

Most participants felt that the main obstacle to participation was poor communication on the part of the City, and a lack of information on urban projects and citizen consultation in general. This point is illustrated by the following exchanges, which took place in Montréal-Nord, on the subject of citizen participation in urban planning.

Were you aware before the focus group that the City was in the process of updating its urban development plan?

– [All:] No.

– I didn't know but now that I do, I'm going to get involved.

– No, we didn't know about it before, it's the first time we're hearing about it.

And what would motivate you to get more involved? What does the City need to do to get immigrants more involved? What should be put in place?

– What's important is to get the information out there!

– There's not enough information. I come here to the organization, but other people stay at home, they don't know what's out there. There's a lot they don't know. We need a lot more information.

– We should [have] more focus groups like this one, and also [invite] a lot more people so people can learn about things.

– You have to go and get the information, it doesn't come to you! When I arrived at the hotel, PRAIDA gave me some information, but not everyone has access to this information when they arrive.

– When I arrived, I was pregnant, but I didn't know that there was food assistance, or places where you could rent baby equipment.

– It's a great question because it makes me think. The rest of us also have a job to do! What kind of a job? We have to help others, talk to them, let them know what we know, where you can get help. That's our job as citizens: to tell other people who've just arrived what they need to know.

In Saint-Léonard, participants urged the City to use a variety of methods in order to communicate relevant information as effectively as possible: schools, the radio, social media and newspapers. Others called on the City to involve local community organizations in the consultation process, so that citizens have real input into the City's projects.

Several people highlighted the fact that newcomers face unique barriers to participation. To counter these, they suggested holding focus groups in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of recent arrivals, to pass on information about the public services available and the community organizations active in these areas.

"There isn't enough information. The proof is that we didn't know there were ways, like this, for people to get involved in their neighbourhood."

"It's also good to get the word out on social networks."

"Often, we don't know where to go, we don't [know] that certain things exist. That kind of information, that's what's missing."

"Hand out information in schools, or go on the radio. I only [found out] three months ago that there's an organization like this, even though I've been here for two years."

"How can we get information out to new people, help them learn, find out where they can get information? There's definitely an information problem."

GREAT INITIATIVE N° 8   **The redevelopment of Saint-Michel's Francon quarry: a project based on a citizen consultation process**

Unlike Frédéric-Back Park, built by the City in Saint-Michel, the project to reclaim the former Francon quarry is based on local citizen input and community consultation at the borough level. During the summer of 2017, the Vivre Saint-Michel en santé neighbourhood round table launched a series of summer events called *Un été autour de Francon*. The goal of the events was to tell the story of the quarry's past as a snow dump, and encourage locals to get involved in the project by touring the area around the site, and writing postcards to share their vision for the quarry. The next step was a citizen forum, held on October 21, 2017 and attended by nearly 150 people, at which Saint-Michel residents shared their ideas, suggestions and also fears about the development of the Francon quarry. The recommendations made by citizens, and especially immigrants and racialized people, who make up the greater part of the neighbourhood's population, reflect Saint-Michel's current needs in terms of mobility, food self-sufficiency, educational success and work-readiness. The project submitted by the neighbourhood round table consolidates these recommendations and is based on an integrated vision of the site's development, and includes both the development of services for the local population and better management of waste snow. The citizen consultation process is ongoing, in order to help locals learn more about the site and increase their sense of ownership of the project.

Source: https://www.vivre-saint-michel.org/projets/francon-c%C5%93ur-de-notre-quartier/

The focus groups generated ideas for boosting citizen involvement, one of which was to hold meetings in the evenings and on weekends. The participants also encouraged the City to go to the people it wants to involve, and hold meetings in the neighbourhoods where there is less participation. In Saint-Laurent and Montréal-Nord, many stressed the importance of offering childcare during consultation sessions.[44] Language is also an important issue for immigrants and racialized people. In Saint-Léonard, an allophone participant in the process of learning French pointed out that she wouldn't have been able to take part in the focus group if translation hadn't been available.

"For now, we can attend daytime meetings, but things will be different when we start working. It's important to offer varied meeting times."

"If someone could look after my children, I'd be here all day!"

"Activities like this are good. Going out into the neighbourhoods, and just providing information, explaining what the research is [about], what the issues are."

"It's easier to participate when the kids are in daycare. It's better, at least you can concentrate."

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[44] *To encourage citizens to participate, several Montréal borough councils (Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension, Ville-Marie and the Sud-Ouest) already offer free childcare during council meetings.*

The focus group findings are supported by the answers to the following open survey question: "What measures do you think would encourage you to get involved and, more broadly, encourage immigrant and/or racialized people to be involved in urban planning, both for your neighbourhood and for Montréal?» (see Table 4). The answers were grouped into four categories, each corresponding to a set of suggestions for encouraging citizen participation in urban planning consultations, in populations and neighbourhoods that tend to be less involved. Several of the ideas put forward dealt with the need to vary and increase the channels for communicating information, including paper-based (mailings, community newspapers, posters on the street and in public places), digital (social media) and face-to-face methods (meeting people as they leave schools or metro stations, going door-to-door).

ADVERTISE AND COMMUNICATE INFORMATION MORE EFFECTIVELY

"More posters or representatives in the neighbourhood to inform residents of events they can participate in."

"Publicize meetings more in public places."

"Neighborhood signage + social networks."

"Promote on social networks."

"More advertising."

"Promote these events."

"Share information more widely."

"Provide more information."

"More publicity for citizen consultation/participation [events]."

"Better communication channels and a greater variety of events."

"Improve the circulation of information."

"Above all PROVIDE INFORMATION by mail or by putting up posters in the parks or whatever. Because if certain events are already happening, I don't know about them!"

"Tell immigrants where they can participate, and poll them [about] their interests and constraints, to create spaces that are as adapted as possible to their reality."

"Provide information about events in several languages and on several platforms."

"Go to places of worship and community organizations to talk about the events."

"Make announcements [on] the radio."

"Provide better explanations, better communication."

"Send municipal council schedules by mail, along with the flyers, and put them up in public places, like arenas, libraries and recreation centres."

"Receive information by email and through the CO-OP."

"Community newspapers should be given out again [in the] metro, with coverage of local news."

"[W]e immigrants don't really know what's going on in our neighbourhood, we don't know where to go."

"I wish there were more education sessions [like this one], so I could learn more about life in Montréal."

"An actual, physical sign posted on a main street, that says: 'Come help us organize…'"

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45 *Several answers were translated from Spanish.*

PROVIDE DIFFERENT WAYS FOR CITIZENS TO GET INVOLVED

"Don't just [hold] formal events with lots of red tape."

"Each municipality/borough should have much larger participatory budgets, with mechanisms that give citizens real decision-making power. Residents should be able to give their municipality specific projects, which the municipality would be obliged to carry out to the best of its ability, with transparent accountability procedures and – who knows? – perhaps even penalties if the projects aren't carried out."

"Go door to door."

"Hold citizen consultations in different locations that are geared to people's needs and abilities."

"Organize more community events."

"Hold informal meetings at different times and places, do street interviews, organize discussion forums with accessibility measures."

"Go door-to-door or talk to people in waiting rooms (at CLSCs, community organizations, etc.). Go into schools and have students take home paper questionnaires for their parents."

"Meet over coffee, do cooking focus groups, [match] newcomers with volunteers to [help them learn] the language."

"Come up with new ways people can get involved and participate: through non-profit organizations, volunteer associations, cultural and sports organizations, etc."

SET PRIORITIES IN CONSULTATION WITH CITIZENS

"Find out people's actual concerns, rather than focusing on the issues that only serve to justify the existence of community organizations."

"[Address] basic issues such as pedestrian safety, other than simply implementing traffic calming measures with no overall vision or concrete steps to reduce car traffic; access to quality schools, especially high schools; access to quality green spaces; enough garbage pick-up days; access to FSL (French as a Second Language) classes; access to jobs other than cheap labour."

"Learn to really listen, address concerns by reaching out to the community, and build trust at every possible opportunity."

"Ask more open-ended questions so we can move beyond the overly narrow framework of ready-made solutions, which only perpetuate social inequality and discrimination."

"Find ways to include [residents] from the get-go, even before projects are launched."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

"In several languages." / "Make information available in several languages." / "Communicate in several languages." / "If the City or the borough provided a translation service, they could offer inclusive activities for a multi-ethnic neighbourhood like Parc-Ex." / "Offer multilingual activities." / "I have the impression that the language used in communications can be an obstacle for some." / "A more open-minded attitude to other languages would make [the activity] accessible to more people." / "Translate the posters."

"Put on [events] at different times and in different languages."

"Provide greater schedule flexibility."

"Extend citizen consultation hours, increase the number of locations to get closer to residents who don't participate without prompting."

"The ones without family or other support need a childcare group." / "Offering childcare services seems to me to be an essential requirement." / "Go and meet them where they live, with childcare if necessary."

"Put on events at times that are suitable for everyone, and provide childcare." / "Schedule activities on weekends." / "I think that community organizations should organize cultural events on weekends, so community members can participate."

"Set up accessible activities, inform about opportunities and needs in the neighbourhood. Focus on free admission. Make [the activity more enticing] by offering food."

"[Provide] some form of compensation." / "More incentives." / "I think I'd like to have some kind of compensation [that] recognizes my involvement in community planning; if I provide a referral, I'd like to be compensated in some way."

"More events where different people can get together."

"Provide more information in advance about the topic and where [the event] is being held."

4.5 Striking environmental inequalities between neighbourhoods

During the focus groups, the issue of environmental injustice was discussed primarily in terms of access to quality green spaces. Generally speaking, residents of the neighbourhoods in question, and especially Montréal-Nord and Saint-Léonard, felt that their communities didn't have enough parks and green spaces compared to other Montréal neighbourhoods. This lack of parks and green space has repercussions on people's health and well-being, with many people mentioning the pollution and heat islands in their neighbourhoods. In fact, according to 2016 census data, the three neighbourhoods studied have the lowest ratio of parks and green spaces to total neighbourhood area, including major parks: the percentage in Saint-Laurent is 3.6%, in Montréal-Nord, 3.9% and in Saint-Léonard, 4.4%, whereas the Montréal average is 11.4%.[46]

"There are some [green spaces], but given the amount of pollution, there aren't enough. There are a lot of roads but there aren't that many trees."

Participants also pointed out that their neighbourhood's parks and green spaces are difficult to access. In Saint-Léonard, for example, many mentioned they had trouble getting there on foot or by bicycle. Once again, we see that territorial inequalities are interconnected: here, lack of access to green spaces is linked to a lack of access to public transit and active transportation.

"There's [only] one park I can go to, and I have to take the bus to get there. It's not a park I can just walk to with my daughters."

Others said that some parks were poorly maintained, which decreases their use.

"I've lived in the neighbourhood for 18 years and I used to really like Parc Delorme. People used to have picnics there, we thought we were in Maisonneuve, but now the grass is all burnt. The municipality does nothing, so people have stopped coming."

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[46] *Several comparative statistics are available on the Park People website:*
   https://parkpeople.ca/fr/resources/case-study/parcs-montreal-cerse

What's more, participants said that their neighbourhood parks not only lack equipment, but also sports, cultural and social activities, especially during the winter months, as stated by two participants from Saint-Léonard (see quotes, right). Their observations are in line with the research findings of Pham, Boucher and Jacques on the use of green and public spaces by young people and seniors in Saint-Léonard (Pham *et al.*, 2022). Montréal-Nord residents feel that there aren't enough activities in their neighbourhood to raise awareness about cleanliness and good park etiquette.

"There should be more activities in the parks. We could get out of the house and go play soccer. The City should organize free activities to liven up the parks, otherwise there's not much going on."

"In the winter, apart from sledding, there's really not much to do. It's too quiet here."

The exchange below, which took place during the focus group in Saint-Léonard, clearly demonstrates the importance of community organizations and neighbourhood round tables in disseminating information about activities offered in parks, and in devising ways to bring people together in local green and public spaces.

Focus group participant:

- It would be good to organize activities where people from different cultures could meet and learn about each other, so we could understand each other better and build relationships and connections between communities.
That's a way to really fight discrimination.

Social Development Coordinator for a Saint-Léonard community organization:

- I want you to know that in the park right next door, the citizens' committee has created a space where people can participate in summer activities. You've got to make it your own! If you want to throw a party, if you have an idea that means you need a permit from the borough, let me know and I'll help you. There's so much you can do! You can also contact me if you want to be on the citizens' committee. Citizens don't realize how much power they have. We can launch projects and put pressure on institutions to demand improvements.

Other focus group participant:

- We need to do this in schools, too, so that [children] learn to accept differences at an early age.

Rather than simply planting more trees, immigrant and racialized participants suggested improving the equipment and maintenance of existing parks, and making them more accessible on foot or by bicycle. Several participants also expressed a desire for social, community and cultural activities to be organized in green spaces, for extended hours, and for facilities to be open longer, especially in the winter. These initiatives also need to be better communicated, especially to newcomers.

GREAT INITIATIVE Nº 10

The ILEAU project involves residents of all ages in the greening of Montréal's east end

The goal of the ILEAU project, organized by CRE-Montréal (Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal), is to fight urban heat islands in east Montréal's eight boroughs, with a particular focus on school and preschool grounds. Its priority is therefore to include the young residents most directly affected – children and young people – by organizing awareness-raising activities, such as asking the children to identify the heat islands on their school/preschool grounds. It also organizes activities, such as tree-planting, that empower young people by enabling them to take direct action against heat islands and create awareness of the steps involved in the socio-ecological transition.

Source: https://ileau.ca/sites/default/files/upload/fiche_d_activites_pedagogiques_bd.pdf

With regard to the socio-ecological transition, territorial inequalities are apparent when it comes to green laneways. In Saint-Léonard, for example, of the ten people taking part in the focus group, only two had ever heard of these greening and climate change adaptation initiatives at the municipal level. In fact, green laneways are less common in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of recent immigrants and visible minorities (Pham *et al.*, 2022). Creating a green laneway is a citizen-driven process, and the immigrants and racialized people attending the focus groups said they lacked the information to get involved in this type of project, but also often the time and resources – conditions that are closely tied to citizen participation, as demonstrated above.

Tackling territorial inequalities in Montréal:

Action-oriented recommendations

This research project identified five issues that form the basis of a set of recommendations addressed to the City of Montréal. Each of the 13 action-oriented recommendations is further broken down into a number of specific actions.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Finding

Generally speaking, there is less public transit service in Montréal's outlying neighbourhoods (see p. 22-23). This means limited and unequal access for the immigrant and racialized people living in these areas, who are heavily dependent on this type of transportation (see p. 33). There are also major inequalities in Montréal's development of walking and cycling networks, which put outlying neighbourhoods with a majority of immigrant and racialized residents at a particular disadvantage (see p. 24 and 33). Moreover, new public transit and active transportation initiatives in these neighbourhoods are poorly publicized, leading to a lack of awareness and use of these services, and thus to even greater inequality for immigrant and racialized populations, specifically newcomers (see p. 33).

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) to develop public and active transportation and promote these new initiatives by targeting the under-served neighbourhoods where a majority of immigrants and racialized people live.

Specific Actions

- That the City work with the STM to extend existing bus routes into less affluent neighbourhoods, where the population is heavily dependent on public transit.

- That the City work with the STM to use existing feasibility studies to plan the development of new metro lines, light rail transit (LRT) and bus rapid transit (BRT) systems in these areas of the city, as well as shuttles for populations with specific needs, such as the elderly and people with disabilities.

- That the City allocate more funding to developing safe, interconnected walking and cycling paths in these areas, specifically in the three neighbourhoods discussed in this report.

- That the City work with the STM to launch a campaign to publicize its new public transit and active transportation initiatives, in order to increase Montréalers' awareness of and commitment to these initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

2

Finding

In the outlying neighbourhoods where the majority of immigrants and racialized people live, the public transit service is often poor, with bus shelters that are non-existent or deteriorating and less frequent bus service (see p. 41-42). The bicycle paths and sidewalks in these neighbourhoods also have safety and maintenance issues (see p. 43 and p. 46).

Specific Actions

- That the City work with the STM to improve the bus service in neighbourhoods, where the majority of immigrants and racialized people are dependent on it to get around, by increasing bus service on the most-used routes and allocating more funding to installing and maintaining bus shelters.

- That the City work with the boroughs to better maintain and clear snow from the walking and cycling paths in these neighbourhoods, particularly on local residential streets.

- That the City work with the government and community organizations in question to provide funding for programs that encourage people who are not accustomed to cycling to take up the sport.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with the Société de transport de Montréal (STM), boroughs and community organizations to improve the quality of public transit services and active transportation infrastructure in outlying neighbourhoods, where immigrant and racialized people primarily live.

RECOMMENDATION

3

Finding

Zone pricing and rising public transit costs discriminate against people living in outlying neighbourhoods, where the housing is generally more affordable, where the majority of low-income people reside, and where immigrants and newcomers to Québec rely heavily on public transit (see p. 43-44). Refugee claimants and multi-child households face even greater inequalities. Moreover, the fact that cards can only be reloaded at metro stations and that bus fares can only be paid in cash puts people living in neighbourhoods with inadequate public transit infrastructure at a disadvantage (see p. 44-45). Finally, focus group participants reported a number of incidents of discrimination on public transit (see p. 43), which are not always reflected in STM statistics. These incidents make the people involved feel insecure, and can affect their mobility and ability to integrate into Montréal society.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with the ARTM (Agence régionale de transport métropolitain), the STM (Société de transport de Montréal) and the SPVM (Service de police de la Ville de Montréal) to provide new reduced fare options for vulnerable households, continue discrimination training for transit employees, and simplify the complaints process to prevent discriminatory treatment of immigrant and racialized transit users.

Specific Actions

- That the City work with the ARTM to offer reduced fares, free public transit or reduced-price passes for low-income people, large families, newcomers and migrants with precarious status.

- That the City work with the ARTM to speed up the roll-out of pilot projects to create easier payment options right on the bus, using a credit card or smartphone.

- That the City work with the STM and the SPVM to provide ongoing training on discrimination issues for all SPVM Métro officers, inspectors, and STM special constables, and regularly update training content.

- That the City work with the STM and the SPVM to simplify and raise awareness of the complaint and incident response process in more diverse neighbourhoods; and that it implement a standard with regard to this process, with guaranteed turnaround times.

RECOMMENDATION

4

Finding

Outlying neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized residents, such as Saint-Laurent and Saint-Léonard, face a shortage of social and community housing, despite high demand, and this exacerbates territorial inequalities (p. 24-25). These areas also have low vacancy rates for affordable rental housing for families, and lengthy processing times for social housing applications. Immigrant and racialized households stress that rents are rising in neighbourhoods previously considered more affordable (p. 47-48).

Specific Actions

- That the City give priority to acquiring land and buildings in neighbourhoods with the lowest supply, by using all the means of action at its disposal (mutual agreement contract, expropriation, or pre-emptive right), in order to build up a real estate reserve for developing social and community housing in these areas, specifically Saint-Laurent and Saint-Léonard.

- That the City prioritize social and community housing projects, including large-family units, that are better suited to the realities of these neighbourhoods' residents.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal purchase land and buildings in neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of social and community housing and high numbers of immigrant and racialized residents, in order to increase its real estate holdings and encourage a more equitable development of social and community housing within its jurisdiction.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Finding

Affordable housing for low-income people, immigrants and newcomers to Québec is often too small and/or unsanitary, and requires maintenance and repairs that the landlord often fails to do (p. 25 and p. 50). This situation contributes to territorial inequalities with regard to housing.

Specific Actions

- That the City allocate more funding to buying and renovating existing buildings in the neighbourhoods highlighted in the report (Montréal-Nord, Saint-Laurent and Saint-Léonard).

- That the City extend the new Responsible Owner certification to all buildings, regardless of the number of units.[47]

- That the City rigorously apply the measures at its disposal against uncooperative landlords, specifically by issuing more penalties and fines, and even going as far as expropriating property; that this action be prioritized in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized residents.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal monitor the *By-law concerning the sanitation, maintenance and safety of dwelling units* more closely, and increase the funding and human resources devoted to inspecting and renovating buildings that are unsanitary and in poor condition, particularly in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized people.

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[47] For the time being, the City of Montréal's new Responsible Owner certification applies only to rental buildings with eight units or more. However, a large percentage of the immigrant households interviewed for this report live in outlying neighbourhoods in buildings with fewer than eight units.

RECOMMENDATION

6

Finding

The comments made by focus group participants highlight discriminatory practices in the private rental (p. 49) and social housing markets (p. 48), which are often not recorded in official reports. These experiences of housing-related discrimination affect several social groups, including families with young children and refugee claimants.

Specific Actions

- That the City provide more funding to tenants' rights associations in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized residents, so they can continue providing information and legal support services.

- That the City work with the CDPDJ and the BINAM to provide information in various languages on rights and the different recourse options available to newcomers in the event that they are subject to housing-related discrimination.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with the CDPDJ (Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse), the BINAM (Bureau d'intégration des nouveaux arrivants à Montréal / Montréal Newcomer Office), relevant provincial authorities and tenants' rights associations to better regulate the practices of building owners and managers in the private rental sector, and also develop new by-laws governing the social housing sector, in order to prevent any form of housing discrimination or unfair treatment.

- That the City lobby the provincial government to make fundamental changes to the way the TAL (Rental board) operates, such as better oversight of repossessions and no-fault evictions, and setting up an emergency fund for evictees, and that the City work to improve access to legal aid, through subsidies and higher salary thresholds, in order to better protect the most vulnerable tenants.

- That the City lobby the provincial government to change the rules for allocating social housing so that refugees, people without legal status or awaiting legal status can access social housing and the Rent Supplement Program.

RECOMMENDATION

7

Finding

Sports and cultural facilities and public spaces are unevenly distributed throughout Montréal (p. 52-53), resulting in a lack of access to services, recreation and culture for people living in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, which are most often predominantly immigrant and racialized. In addition, there are gaps in the diversity and accessibility of activities offered in the neighbourhoods mentioned in this report (p. 53-54). Several participants pointed out that activities are not always affordable or accessible by public transit (p. 54).

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with the boroughs to make targeted investments in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in order to balance the availability of sports and cultural facilities and activities throughout its territory, to ensure that they are of appropriate quality and quantity, and that they take into account the diversity of local needs.

Specific Actions

- That the City promote the development of sustainable sports and cultural infrastructure, while taking into account demographic growth and the diversity of needs in different areas and prioritizing the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods where demand is strong, specifically in Montréal's east end.

- That the City make it a priority to maintain and upgrade existing facilities in neighbourhoods with the least sports infrastructure.

- That the City improve cooperation and pooling of resources and equipment supplied by partners, such as school service centres and community organizations, in order to broaden the range of services and activities available in neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrant and racialized populations, and make them more affordable.

- That the City fund the organization of free sports and cultural activities for young people and seniors year-round, primarily in parks in the outlying neighbourhoods mentioned in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

8

Finding

Participant comments show dissatisfaction with street and park maintenance, garbage collection and snow removal, especially in Montréal-Nord and Saint-Léonard (p. 55).

Specific Action

- That the City work with its partners to establish common service standards for all boroughs, and that it make all Montréalers, but especially newcomers, aware of these standards.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal develop and implement common standards for all boroughs regarding essential municipal services such as street maintenance, garbage collection and snow removal.

RECOMMENDATION

9

Finding

Participant comments highlighted the feelings of insecurity and discrimination experienced by immigrant and racialized people in public spaces in their neighbourhoods, as well as the negative perception of safety in certain neighbourhoods (p. 56-57). Parks and green spaces, for example in Saint-Léonard, are sometimes hard to reach and poorly maintained, and lack facilities as well as cultural activities. What's more, some parks have insufficient lighting, which exacerbates people's feelings of insecurity (p. 56).

Specific Actions

- That the City improve lighting and support and promote inclusive and intercultural activities in public spaces, especially parks and green spaces in outlying neighbourhoods.

- That the City resort more frequently to using local community organizations that specialize in mediation and prevention, in order to reduce the need for police intervention in public spaces in these neighbourhoods.

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with the BRDS (Office of the commissioner against racism and systemic discrimination), the SPVM (Service de police de la Ville de Montréal), the boroughs, and community and private partners to implement measures focusing on prevention and community outreach in order to strengthen the sense of safety and reduce discrimination against immigrant and racialized people in public spaces in the outlying neighbourhoods mentioned in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

10

Finding

Immigrant and racialized focus group participants repeatedly commented on the City's poor communication and lack of information regarding citizen consultations on urban development projects in their neighbourhoods (p. 58).

Specific Actions

- That the City develop different strategies for communicating information to different audiences, both in person and digitally, using a GBA+ approach.

- That the City work with the BINAM and local community organizations to produce multilingual materials on municipal services and public consultations, and to make immigrants aware of the City's services and activities as soon as they arrive.

- That the City use pictograms as well as audiovisual and animated content to make the materials it produces as accessible as possible.

Recommendation

That the City work with the BINAM and local community organizations serving immigrant and racialized populations to tailor the ways it communicates information on citizen consultation and municipal services to the diverse nature of the groups and neighbourhoods in question.

RECOMMENDATION

11

Finding

Not all Montréal neighbourhoods have the same level of citizen participation, and there are a number of specific barriers preventing immigrant and racialized people from getting involved (p. 58). The main finding here is that the City needs to vary the ways in which people can get involved, and make activities more inclusive and tailored to different populations and territories. For example, it's important to offer childcare during citizen consultations, to vary the schedule to include evenings and weekends, to travel to neighbourhoods to consult the residents, and to offer financial compensation to recognize the contribution of disadvantaged populations (p. 58-64).

Recommendation

That the City adapt the procedures for taking part in public urban planning consultations to the needs and limitations of the target groups, and that it financially compensate the expertise and involvement of immigrant and racialized people.

Specific Actions

- That the City work with community organizations and neighbourhood round tables to identify the populations and areas with the lowest levels of citizen participation, and develop specific strategies for each of these groups.

- That the City schedule its citizen consultations to take into account the demands of the participants' work and personal lives, and plan for children to be present by providing childcare.

- That the City hold the meetings in a variety of locations, and ensure that the spaces are accessible to as many people as possible.

- That the City encourage immigrant and racialized populations to participate in public consultations by offering a variety of incentives such as food, beverages and transit tickets, and especially by providing real financial compensation for low-income people.

RECOMMENDATION

12

Finding

Some of Montréal's more disadvantaged neighbourhoods have few green spaces, low canopy cover and experience additional environmental inequalities that particularly impact immigrant, racialized and low-income populations (p. 26-27 and p. 65). This increases their exposure to the effects of climate change and heat islands (p. 27). The green spaces available to them are often inaccessible and are poorly maintained, poorly equipped and lacking activities tailored to their needs (p. 65). Equitable greening throughout Montréal, based on the local population's needs, would bring co-benefits, in this case by curbing eco-gentrification and improving the quality of life of the affected communities (p. 26).

Recommendation

That the City of Montréal work with neighbourhood round tables and community organizations to involve immigrant and racialized populations in choosing the areas to be greened and in deciding which types of green spaces and landscaping should be prioritized in neighbourhoods with little greenery, which could potentially lead to a genuine socio-ecological transition based on local needs.

Specific Actions

- That the City work with the boroughs, community organizations and residents to establish an equitable greening standard, combined with policies such as a rent registry[48] to control rising housing prices, in order to ensure that greening initiatives are tied to the housing sector.

- That the City of Montréal create shady areas in the municipal spaces of the neighbourhoods in question – parks, swimming pools, etc. – to reduce the heat felt by residents.

- That the City, along with local community organizations and neighbourhood round tables, organize focus groups and public consultations with immigrant and racialized communities to choose which areas should be greened in neighbourhoods with low vegetation cover, and to decide which types of green spaces and amenities (such as outdoor furniture) should be prioritized.

- That the City focus particular attention on projected use, access by public transit and active transportation, and the management and maintenance of these new urban green spaces, giving priority to local businesses.

- That the City assess the greening process and its impacts at every stage, to ensure that citizens are not adversely affected, and to refocus the initiative as necessary. Success indicators could be defined by the local population.

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[48] *There's no such thing as rent control in Québec. It's up to the tenant to determine if the rent increase is justified and, if it isn't, to formally dispute it before the TAL (Rental board).*

RECOMMENDATION

13

Immigrant and racialized people may want to get involved in environmental initiatives, but they don't necessarily have the time, means or information to do so. (p. 67). The phenomenon of urban agriculture affects the socio-ecological transition, food security and waste management simultaneously, but is not always well regarded by immigrant and racialized populations. Further, to get people involved in environmental projects, we need to strengthen the sense of community spirit in these neighbourhoods.

Recommendation

That the City work with local community organizations to fund environmental awareness-raising and training events for immigrant and racialized residents, and strengthen social cohesion in order to encourage them to get involved in environmental projects in their neighbourhoods.

Specific Actions

- That the City work with neighbourhood round tables, *éco-quartiers* (local environmental action groups) and community organizations to offer free training and workshops on urban agriculture, composting and recycling in outlying neighbourhoods with a high percentage of immigrants.

- That the City prioritize creating community and collective gardens in the least green neighbourhoods.

- That the City provide free group activities to raise awareness of environmental issues and strengthen community ties in the green spaces of the neighbourhoods in question.

- That the City offer financial support to low-income residents of the least green neighbourhoods so they can get involved in environmental projects, such as creating green laneways and other greening initiatives.

Conclusion

In this report, the Conseil interculturel de Montréal (CiM) hopes to highlight the key role municipalities play in helping to reduce social inequalities between neighbourhoods and combat discrimination against immigrants and racialized people. Although the City of Montréal has recently factored territorial inequalities into its urban planning policies, more work needs to be done to transform this recognition into targeted action, that would lead to the genuine inclusion of all Montréal's immigrant and racialized communities. This is especially important for long-term planning, given projected demographic changes.

This report contains 13 recommendations that address five key planning issues: mobility; housing; public facilities, services and spaces; citizen participation; and the socio-ecological transition. It urges the City of Montréal to work with boroughs, local authorities, consensus-building organizations – especially neighbourhood round tables, which act as a link between all local and regional players – and community groups to address the concrete needs of citizens. It shows that transversal actions and cross-sector collaborations are also crucial to tackling priority issues in an integrated way, especially from a socio-ecological transition perspective. Finally, the report highlights the need to take a participatory approach that involves citizens in shaping the future of Montréal, while reducing inequalities and combating discrimination.

By working together to implement these recommendations, the City of Montréal and its partners will be contributing to a fairer and more inclusive urban society for all, one that provides better access to services, more equal opportunities and a better quality of life for immigrants and racialized people. This process will also strengthen social cohesion and ensure that the needs and concerns of all Montréalers are taken into account, thereby helping to build a more equitable, united and mutually supportive future for all residents, regardless of the neighbourhood in which they live.

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Glossary

ACCESSIBILITY

The ability to access a place or resource. Accessibility can be financial, spatial, temporal, etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL INEQUALITIES

Inequality between individuals or groups with respect to their exposure to environmental nuisances and risks, and to their ability to access environmental resources and amenities (Durand and Jaglin, 2012).

HOUSEHOLD EFFORT RATE

The percentage of its gross annual income that a household spends on housing, including rent or mortgage, taxes, heating and electricity.

IMMIGRANT

A person who is, or has been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. This is a person born outside of the country to whom immigration authorities have granted the right to reside in Canada on a permanent basis. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship through naturalization are included in this group.

IMMIGRATION

All immigrant arrivals in Canada from another country, involving a change in their usual place of residence.

IMMIGRATION RATE

The number of immigrants, divided by the size of the host population over a given period.

MIGRANTS WITH PRECARIOUS STATUS

People whose immigration status is neither permanent nor guaranteed, making them ineligible for coverage under Québec's health insurance plan (RAMQ) or a federal program. They can be temporary workers, international students, people awaiting family reunification or acceptance of a humanitarian application, etc.

RECENT IMMIGRANT

According to Statistics Canada, this refers to immigrants who arrived in the country in the five years preceding the last census.

REDUCED PUBLIC TRANSIT FARES

All fare reductions that require proof of income in order to qualify. The goal is to provide financial assistance to support the mobility of more vulnerable people.

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

"In the ecological and social context, the concept of transition refers to seeking to move from a contemporary situation marked by unsustainable trajectories to a state of societies characterized by sustainability and equity, with respect to present and future generations." (Renouard *et al.*, 2020) [free translation]

VISIBLE MINORITIES

"Persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour" (Article 3 of the 1995 *Employment Equity Act*). This term is used in Canada in both legislation and official statistics. Data on visible minorities in Canada are collected on a self-reporting basis, based on respondents' sense of belonging to one or more ethnic groups in a limited number of categories: Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Japanese, Korean and Pacific Islander. This term is more descriptive than *racialized people*.

Appendix 1

Questions asked at all three focus groups

1st activity

Using a basic map of the neighbourhood (printed road map), residents were asked to use colour-coded stickers or pins to indicate where they live, work and go about their daily activities, as well as the places they like and dislike, hope to be improved, and see as having development potential. A key was provided to help participants choose the right colour sticker or pin. Pre-filled post-it notes were also provided to record qualitative comments on specific parts of the neighbourhood.

- Where do you live?
- Where do you work? In what part of the neighbourhood do you do most of your daily activities?
- What do you like about your neighbourhood?
- What do you dislike about it? What would you like to change?
- What services and infrastructure do you think are missing?
- Are you satisfied with the kind of connections you have in your neighbourhood?

2nd activity

The questions asked in the second activity (see Appendix 2) related to the specific topics addressed by the focus groups in each neighbourhood.

3rd activity

Each focus group ended with general questions about citizen participation.

- Do you feel like you have the ability to bring about the kind of change you'd like to see in your neighbourhood and in your city? Why or why not?
- When it comes to urban planning, do you think the City of Montréal pays enough attention to the opinions of immigrants and/or racialized people?
- Have you ever attended any public consultations? If not, why not? What measures could be put in place to encourage you to participate?
- What do you think are the most pressing urban planning issues in your neighbourhood?
- If anything were possible, how would you envision Montréal's development in 2050? What do you consider the most important issues, especially for immigrants and/or racialized people?
- Do you have any other comments to share regarding your personal experience of urban planning and the future of Montréal?

Appendix 2

Questions relating to specific focus group topics

NEIGHBOUR-HOOD	FOCUS GROUP TOPIC	QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE TOPIC
Saint-Laurent	Mobility	• Can you tell us about the trip or route you take most often? • What type of transportation do you use for this trip or route? On average, how many minutes does it take? Can you draw it on the map? • How comfortable are you when taking this trip or route? Why or why not? Use the map to indicate the areas where you feel safe and comfortable, and those where you're more anxious and stressed. • Generally speaking, do you encounter any challenges getting around within and outside of your neighbourhood? If so, what kinds of challenges? Please describe them in detail. • If anything were possible, what would your preferred mode of transportation be? Please explain. • Do you think your neighbourhood has good public transit service? Use the map to show the areas you think have good levels of service, and the areas you think are less well served. • What policies do you think should be put in place to improve access to public transit and active transportation in your neighbourhood?
Montréal-Nord	Housing	• Can you describe your apartment? • How long have you lived there? • What was apartment-hunting like for you? Why? • What do you think of your apartment? What do you like about it and what would you like to change? • If anything were possible, what would your dream home look like? • Generally speaking, what do you think of the housing in your neighbourhood? What do you think of apartment prices in your neighbourhood? • What kind of housing does your neighbourhood lack? • How do you think access to safe, adequate, affordable housing could be improved in your neighbourhood? What policies need to be put in place?
Saint-Léonard	Public and green spaces	• What public and green spaces do you use most often? Show them on the map and tell us why you go there. • Do you feel safe and comfortable in these places? Why or why not? • Is it easy for you to get to your neighbourhood's public and green spaces on foot or by public transit? • Generally speaking, do you think there are enough public services and facilities in your neighbourhood? • Do you feel you live in an area with enough green spaces and services? • How would you describe your neighbourhood's green spaces? Are they well-maintained? User-friendly? Safe? Easy to reach on foot or by public transit? • If anything were possible, how would you like your neighbourhood's parks and public spaces to be developed? • How do you think access to your neighbourhood's public and green spaces could be improved?

Appendix 3

Survey questions

	By checking this box, I confirm that I have read and understood the information about the research project and what my voluntary participation in the project entails. All information collected for the project will be kept strictly confidential.

	QUESTION	QUESTION TYPE
1	In which Montréal neighbourhood do you live?	Dropdown
2	What age group do you belong to?	Single-answer
3	What is your gender identity?	Single-answer
4	Are you a person with a disability?	Single-answer
5	Are you Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)?	Single-answer
6	Are you a member of a visible minority in Canada? (Visible minorities are people, other than Indigenous peoples, who identify as non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.)	Single-answer
7	Are you a member of an ethnic minority? (Ethnic minorities are people, other than Indigenous peoples and visible minorities, whose mother tongue is neither English nor French).	Single-answer
8	Were you born in Canada?	Single-answer
9	What is your immigration status in Canada?	Single-answer
10	What is your everyday means of transportation? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
11	How long does your average main daily trip take, either to work, school, shopping, activities, etc.? Give the time in minutes.	Open-ended
12	What are the biggest challenges you face in getting around your neighbourhood? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
13	If anything were possible, what would your preferred means of transportation be in your neighbourhood? Select only one option.	Single-answer
14	Regarding the place where you now live, are you...?	Single-answer
15	What type of accommodation do you live in?	Single-answer
16	How big is your apartment?	Single-answer
17	How long have you lived in this apartment? Give at least the number of years.	Open-ended
18	What is your monthly rent? Give the amount in $CAD.	Open-ended
19	What percentage of your household income does this represent?	Single-answer
20	Do you feel comfortable in your home?	Single-answer
21	Why or why not?	Open-ended
22	Have you ever experienced any of the following housing-related issues? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
23	Which of the City's public spaces and facilities do you normally use? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer

Survey questions

24	Why do you use them? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
25	What services and community facilities do you feel are missing in your neighbourhood?	Open-ended
26	Rate the following 5 statements on a scale of 1 to 6. • There's enough green space and nature in my neighbourhood. • It's easy to get to these places by public transit or on foot. • In general, the green spaces in my neighbourhood are safe. • In general, the green spaces in my neighbourhood are welcoming. • In general, the green spaces in my neighbourhood are well maintained.	Likert scale
27	Do you have an Internet connection at home?	Single-answer
28	How do you connect to the Internet? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
29	Do you get involved in local issues that matter to you?	Single-answer
30	If so, what kind of organizations or institutions are you involved with? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
31	Rate the following 3 statements on a scale of 1 to 6. • I feel like I have the ability to bring about change in my neighbourhood. • I feel my voice is heard. • I have access to information provided by the City on events and public consultations taking place in my neighbourhood.	Likert scale
32	What challenges do you face when trying to take part in the cultural, social and/or political activities organized in your neighbourhood, such as block parties, city council meetings, etc.? Select all that apply.	Multiple-answer
33	What measures do you think would encourage you to get involved and, more broadly, encourage immigrant and/or racialized people to be involved in urban planning, both for your neighbourhood and for Montréal?	Open-ended

If you'd like to be entered in a draw for 1 of 5 $50 gift cards, please enter your e-mail address below.
In the interest of confidentiality, this information will not be associated with your answers.