

2.3

2.3

A prestigious, convivial and inhabited Centre

Montréal's Centre is that well-known part of the City that includes its historic heart, the old faubourgs and the adjacent neighbourhoods. It is home to most of the important metropolitan functions on which the public transportation, rail and road networks converge. Despite its vast renown, the Centre's relatively small territory can easily be toured on foot (see Map 2.3.1).

The Centre is the primary employment pole of the metropolis and the principal place of business activity in Québec. It houses over sixty prestigious international organizations that contribute to Montréal's international profile, including the International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association, the World Anti-Doping Agency, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, etc.

With its universities, cégeps and hospitals, the Centre hosts a major concentration of academic and research activity. It is the setting for most of Québec's major cultural and media events and is among the City's main tourist destinations. Many public and private cultural production and distribution companies are located there, including those housed at the Cité des ondes.

Vibrant and lively, the Centre's various neighbourhoods each have their own personality, which makes for a stimulating visitor experience. Most of these areas are also well established living environments, which keeps them active even after offices and stores close.

Mount Royal and the St. Lawrence River are the natural boundaries of the Centre to the north and south, forming an exceptional backdrop that is inseparable from the City's image. The Havre area, which extends from the Champlain Bridge to the Jacques-Cartier Bridge and encompasses Île Sainte-Hélène and Île Notre-Dame as well as the Old Port, is the Centre's window on the river. This area, along with Mount Royal, will be subject to a detailed planning process whose guidelines are described in Chapter 4. The detailed planning process for the Havre area will be in keeping with the work carried out by the Société du Havre.

Montréal's Centre benefits from such valuable advantages as its prestige, its liveability and its conviviality. The Plan bases the Centre's development on three objectives, which emphasize and reinforce these specific features:

5 Enhance the Centre's metropolitan, national and international vocation.

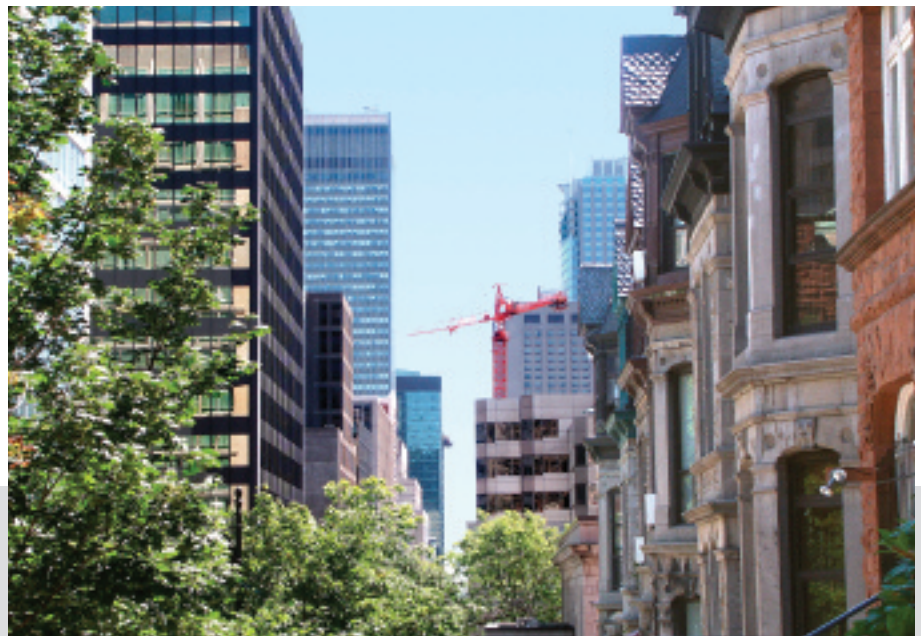
6 Increase the Centre's residential vitality.

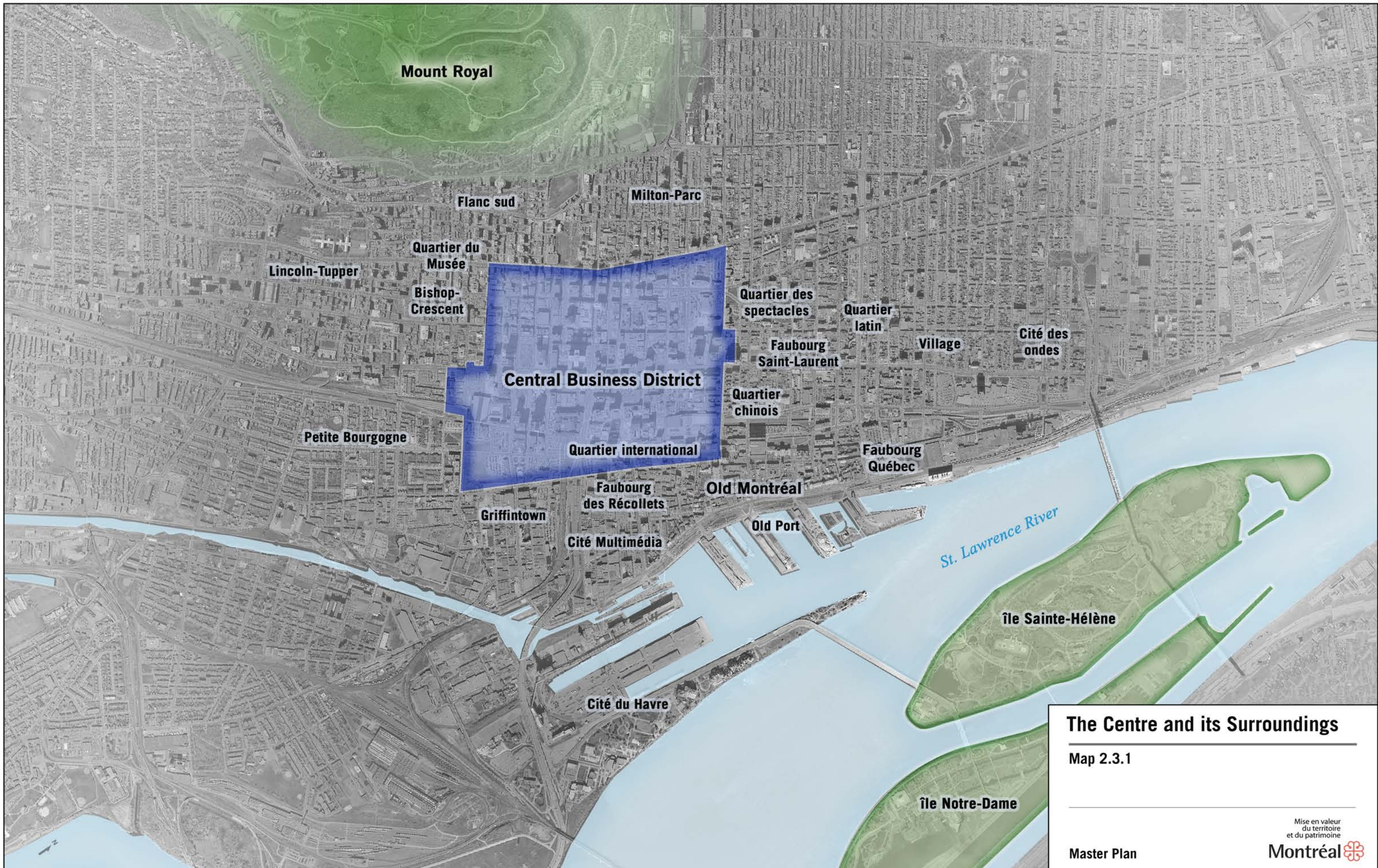
7 Strengthen the Centre's coherence and overall urban character.

The dense and varied built environment of the Centre evokes the rich history of the City and its identity and generally reflects the conviviality that is typical of Montréal society. Consolidating the built environment and highlighting features that convey heritage and identity will help strengthen the Centre's coherence and overall urban character as well as enhance its attractiveness.

The development of the Centre is among the most critical issues facing Montréal and its region in the new millennium. The consolidation of activities in this area must be guided by a vision of sustainable development and a more efficient use of existing infrastructure. The City's economic vitality depends on its ability to bolster the Centre's assets in order to reinforce its international stature and attract new jobs.

With a view to increasing the number of households in Montréal, the City must fulfill the Centre's strong residential development potential and provide these households with a pleasant living environment that incorporates all of the necessary amenities.





The Centre and its Surroundings
 Map 2.3.1
 Master Plan
 Mise en valeur
 du territoire
 et du patrimoine
Montréal

objective

5 Enhance the Centre's metropolitan, national and international vocation

The Centre's prestige is a result of its metropolitan functions, institutions and international organizations. It is also reflected in the quality and range of its retail and cultural activities, which are supported by an efficient infrastructure network, particularly in public transportation and by facilities designed to meet the needs of a large metropolis.

The Centre's attractiveness relies greatly on its lively atmosphere, the result of a great variety and intensity of functions and uses. The proximity of offices, stores, hotels and major cultural, institutional and recreational facilities make for an uncommonly dynamic environment compared to most cities of similar size.

As its performance in the areas of corporate services, high-tech and arts and media eloquently attests, Montréal has successfully made the shift to an increasingly knowledge-based economy. The Centre's vitality has greatly contributed to its success and improved the appearance of some areas. For example, the Cité Multimédia, which is located in Faubourg des Récollets, has done much to revitalize the western section of Old Montréal. Similarly, the development of the Quartier international de Montréal (QIM) reestablished the connection between the Central Business District and the former financial district on Saint-Jacques Street.

The strength of a large city's institutions, particularly those devoted to research, is a key determinant of a region's attractiveness along with the quality of its living environments.

The Centre's exceptional natural setting, its built heritage, its conviviality and most importantly its rich and unique cultural life, make it a major tourist destination that contributes to the international renown of Montréal and Québec.

As a result, Montréal enjoys a status that is enviable in many respects. However, some of the Centre's activities remain to be consolidated, while others will evolve considerably in the years to come.

The Plan specifically targets the maintenance and harmonious development of five major categories of activities that contribute to the Centre's vitality:

- Business;
- Retail;
- Institutional;
- Tourist;
- Cultural.



action 5.1

Consolidate the Central Business District (CBD)

The Central Business District (CBD) embodies Montréal's status as an economic metropolis. It encompasses the majority of the region's financial, insurance, corporate services and telecommunications activities. More importantly, it includes many activities in the expanding service sector, which makes it a place where important decisions are made. Head offices, international organizations and administrative centres are among the activities found in this area.

The CBD is also the site from which Montréal asserts itself internationally. Located in the southeast section of the Centre, the Quartier international alone accounts for approximately 80% of the jobs provided by the 67 international organizations established in Montréal.

The Plan specifies the limits of the CBD, where the City's highest buildings and densest construction are permitted, in order to protect neighbouring areas from undue development pressure (see Illustration 2.3.1). It is estimated that existing vacant lots in the CBD could accommodate more than 900,000 m² of new office space, which is enough to meet expected growth for the coming construction cycles. Furthermore, a significant portion of the future demand for office space could be met in existing buildings.

Implementation measures

- Precisely delineate the limits of the CBD and confirm it as the area in which permitted building densities and heights are the highest in Montréal.
- Support development on vacant lots (see Objective 7).
- Support residential development in those parts of the CBD that are least suitable for business activity.
- Redesign some large public spaces and their surroundings.

The CBD will be subject to a detailed planning process (see Section 4.10).

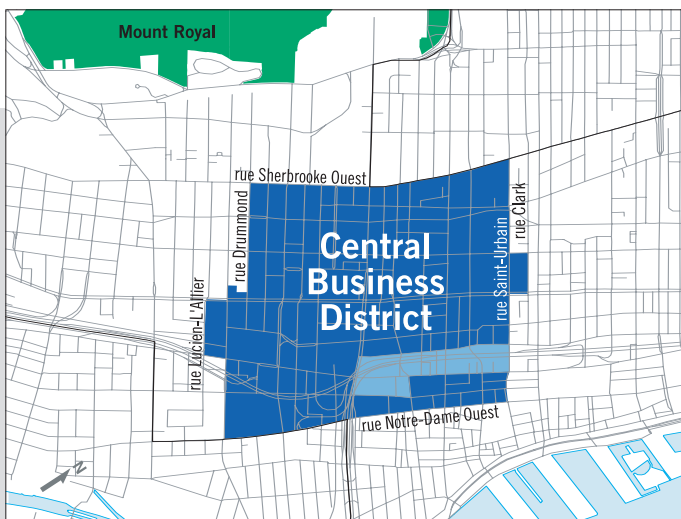


ILLUSTRATION 2.3.1 THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

The CBD (opposite) is the area in which the Master Plan provides for the highest construction density. Its perimeter is defined by the City's Charter.

The Quartier International de Montréal (in pale blue) is located in the southeast section of the CBD. It includes 80% of the jobs provided by the international organizations established in Montréal.

action 5.2

Strengthen the Centre's retail vitality

The Centre's retail activity revolves around Sainte-Catherine Street, one of the busiest commercial streets in North America. Old Montréal, the Quartier du Musée, the Bishop-Crescent area, the Quartier chinois and the Quartier latin contribute to this activity with their sizeable clienteles. The diversity of goods and services offered and the availability of highly specialized products are distinctive features of the Centre's retail presence.

This activity takes the form of department stores and malls along Sainte-Catherine Street, along with hundreds of smaller stores and businesses on adjacent streets. It is embedded in other urban functions and closely linked to the street, both benefiting from and contributing to the lively atmosphere. Access to these stores by public transportation is easy. In fact, many of them are connected to Montréal's public transportation system through the indoor pedestrian network.

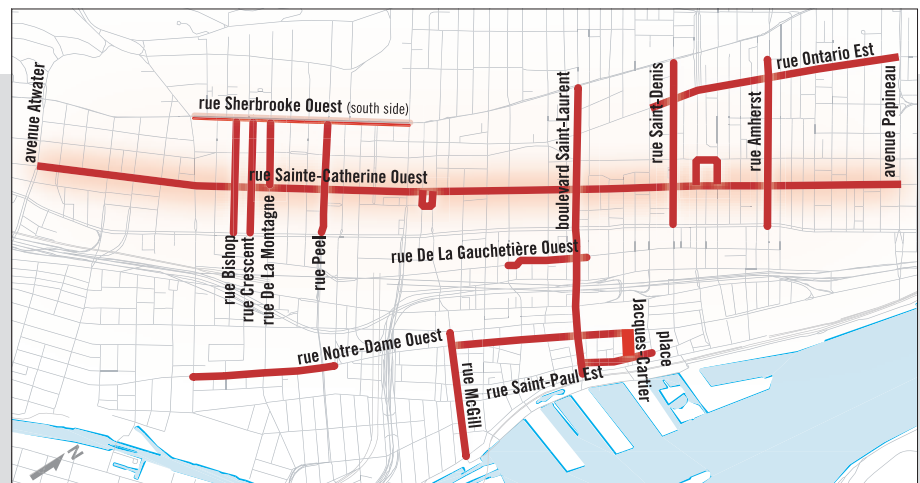
The Plan stresses the importance of maintaining the features which support the Centre's special retail function. It also seeks to consolidate the structure of its main commercial streets and ensure that businesses are laid out in a way that maximizes their interaction with the street.

Implementation measures

- Ensure adherence to the principles governing the design of commercial streets, aimed at increasing the interaction between stores, public spaces and other activities (see Objective 13).
- Consolidate the Centre's main commercial streets (see Illustration 2.3.2 below), on which:
 - All buildings must ensure street-level retail continuity through the integration of businesses with direct access at street level;
 - Malls must provide retail spaces that fit into the street's existing retail fabric.
- When calculating the total permitted building density, exclude the floor area occupied by businesses that are individually and directly accessible at street level on Sainte-Catherine Street between Atwater and Papineau Avenues.

ILLUSTRATION 2.3.2 COMMERCIAL STREETS TO BE CONSOLIDATED

To reinforce the retail vitality of the Centre, any building fronting on commercial streets designated for consolidation will be required to maintain ground-level retail continuity, by including stores with direct street access.



action 5.3

Ensure and promote the presence of major academic and health care institutions in the Centre

MAJOR ACADEMIC AND HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS IN THE CENTRE:

- Université du Québec à Montréal; Concordia University; McGill University; École de technologie supérieure;
- McGill University Health Centre, including Royal Victoria Hospital, Montréal General Hospital, Montréal Children's Hospital, Montréal Neurological Institute and Montréal Chest Institute;
- Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal, including Hôtel-Dieu, Hôpital Notre-Dame and Hôpital Saint-Luc;
- Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal.



Academic and health care institutions make an exceptional contribution to the economic and social development of Montréal, notably by stimulating the knowledge economy.

Their concentration within the Centre fosters synergy among research, teaching and service delivery activities and serves to attract a broad range of related services. For example, the presence of major hospitals attracts medical laboratories, research centres and specialized clinics.

Access to these institutions is greatly facilitated by the quality of public transportation, giving the Centre a distinct locational advantage over outlying areas, which are not as well served by infrastructure and are largely residential.

The presence of institutional complexes in the vicinity of residential neighbourhoods can generate many inconveniences. The City is firmly committed to the harmonious development of major institutions. Though their growth is eminently desirable, their integration into the surrounding environment is often a challenge. Generally of large size, institutions are also major trip generators and may have undesirable impacts on neighbouring living environments.

Several institutional properties in the Centre, especially those located on the slopes of Mount Royal, are located in valuable heritage settings. Their growth should include not only architectural and functional considerations, but also attest to a concern for natural, built and landscape heritage.

The City favours the preservation and expansion of the Centre's major institutions. To this end it recommends an approach that allows these institutions to anticipate, in collaboration with the Ville de Montréal, their future needs in order to avoid, for example, hasty recourse to their expropriatory powers.

In the specific context of the planned construction of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) on a part of the Glen site, the City prefers that buildings changing vocation in Montréal's Centre be put to institutional or public uses.

Implementation measures

- Confirm the Centre as a preferred location for metropolitan or international institutions.
- Launch concerted planning efforts with the City's institutional partners (see Objective 10).
- Favour the consolidation or expansion of university hospitals and their affiliated research centres in the Centre. In the case of buildings no longer used by university hospitals, the City favours their reuse for institutional or public purposes.

action 5.4

Develop the Centre's tourism potential

Montréal is the leading tourist destination in Québec. In 2003 it welcomed 13.2 million visitors, more than 1.3 million of which were in town for business or convention purposes. Montréal's tourism industry provides more than 75,000 jobs.



The Centre is the main tourist destination in Montréal, which enjoys a well-deserved reputation as a festive, convivial and safe city. The CBD, Old Montréal, the Old Port, Île Notre-Dame, Île Sainte-Hélène, Mount Royal and the Village are among the areas that draw the most tourists to Québec.

The concentration of large-scale cultural and recreational facilities, such as museums, concert halls and large metropolitan parks, combined with the quality of major annual events taking place in the Centre (Jazz Festival, Just For Laughs Festival, World Film Festival, Francolies, Montréal Highlights Festival, etc.) greatly enhances Montréal's fame as a tourist attraction.

The City's French-speaking character, combined with the importance of its English-speaking and other cultural communities, make for a unique environment that appeals to visitors and attests to Montréal's openness to the world.

The exceptional built heritage and geographical setting of the Centre adds to its appeal as a tourist destination. The Havre, which encompasses Île Notre-Dame, Île Sainte-Hélène, the Old Port and the entrance to the Lachine Canal (now open to pleasure boating) is a major recreational and tourist destination.

Jean-Drapeau Park is a majestic green space, a point of contact with the river and an exceptional asset which the City must preserve. Working from this perspective, the City intends to enhance its recreational and tourist attractions while preserving its character as a green open space and respecting the principle of universal accessibility.

These distinctive features of Montréal are the foundations for its tourism development. For this reason, the Plan provides for their consolidation and enhancement.

Generally speaking, the Centre is the preferred location for new tourist facilities with metropolitan, national or international outreach. Nodes of activity outside the Centre, such as the Olympic Complex, with its several large scientific facilities (Biodome, Insectarium, Botanical Garden), could be consolidated in order to accommodate additional facilities that reinforce their vocation.

Implementation measures

- Improve access to tourist sites:
 - Improve the design of certain streets and boulevards in order to strengthen the links between various areas of interest (see Objective 7).
 - Support the implementation of a rail shuttle between Montréal – Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport and the Centre (see Objective 3).
 - Encourage the development of a public transportation service such as a modern tramway system linking the Quartier des spectacles, Old Montréal, the Havre, Jean-Drapeau Park and Mount Royal (see Objective 3 and Section 4.15).
- Improve the Centre's major tourism areas:
 - Protect and enhance the Historic District of Old Montréal (see Objective 15).
 - Complete the development of the Old Port and enhance the banks of Île Notre-Dame and Île Sainte-Hélène.
- Support the construction of a trade and exhibition centre in the Centre or its immediate vicinity, with the capacity to accommodate events of international stature.

Mount Royal and the Havre each require a detailed planning process, whose guidelines are presented in Chapter 4. A similar approach will apply to the Quartier des spectacles and the CBD, in order to increase their tourist appeal.



action 5.5

Increase the Centre's cultural outreach

Montréal's cultural sector provides 90,000 direct and indirect jobs, generating 5 billion dollars in annual spin-offs. Montréal hosts more than 150 major cultural events, including some 40 of international stature.



The Centre is home to nearly 80% of Montréal's cultural activity. The abundance and variety of its cultural facilities make it the primary launch point for the development and dissemination of Québec culture and a point of contact with many foreign productions. It sets the stage for the development of Québec's cultural potential.

Above and beyond their considerable economic contribution and the tourism they generate, Montréal's cultural institutions, particularly its museums, play a fundamental educational role that contributes to the development of a sense of civic pride. Reminders of the past and places of culture, museums enable Montrealers of all backgrounds to encounter other cultures.

The Ville de Montréal acknowledges their role and advocates the creation of large cultural facilities along with the consolidation of existing ones in the Centre. This reflects its commitment to making major cultural events accessible to the public. Superior public transportation services and high visitor volume make the Centre the ideal location for events of a metropolitan or international stature.

Quartier des spectacles

A number of concert halls, theatres, studios, art galleries and exhibition spaces are located in the vicinity of Place des Arts, along Bleury Street, Sainte-Catherine Street, Saint-Denis Street and Saint-Laurent Boulevard. The area harbouring this concentration of cultural activity is known as the Quartier des spectacles.

Despite the popularity of the events that are held periodically in the Quartier des spectacles, its image or recognition does not correspond to its vocation. As one of the key sites targeted by the Master Plan for increasing the Centre's cultural outreach, it will be subject to a detailed planning process in order to increase its cohesiveness and appeal (see Section 4.22).

Artists and artisans

The cultural life of the Centre is generated in part by the presence of numerous artists and artisans that create, produce and exhibit a wide range of works. City by-laws currently allow the creation of workshops in most areas where the dominant land use is commercial or industrial. In the framework of its Cultural Development Policy, the City will implement tools and a plan of action to consolidate and develop artists' studios and live-work spaces.

THE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The Ville de Montréal has undertaken the creation of a Politique de développement culturel (Cultural Development Policy) slated for adoption in 2005. This policy emerges from a consensus reached at the Montréal Summit and states the City's principal objectives regarding cultural matters. The City will facilitate public access to the arts and culture, give the arts and artists more support and ensure the continuity of Montréal's great cultural institutions and events.

The Cultural Development Policy takes stock of a number of the City's commitments to the artistic and cultural communities, including the creation of a comprehensive cultural signage program, the implementation of different measures to support artists and the design of the Quartier des spectacles.

Implementation measures

- Consolidate the built environment and retail activity along Sainte-Catherine Street in Faubourg Saint-Laurent.
- Improve the design of the main connections between the Quartier des spectacles and adjacent areas.
- Convert some vacant lots into new public spaces.
- Facilitate proximity of cultural creation, production and exhibition facilities.
- Continue and intensify the integration of works of art into the public realm, particularly when designing new public spaces and promote this practice on private property.
- Heighten the visibility of cultural facilities (e.g.: with special signage or distinctive public space design).
- Develop and implement the Politique de développement culturel (Cultural Development Policy).
- Exempt appropriate cultural facilities being built in the Centre from construction density regulations.



objective

Increase the Centre's residential vitality

DIVERSITY OF THE CENTRE'S RESIDENTIAL STOCK

The Centre's residential stock, including housing in recycled buildings, is exceptionally diverse and reflects the different periods of the City's development.

The Centre's housing typology is varied, meeting the needs of a wide range of households. It includes single-family and row housing, "plex" housing, lofts, apartment buildings, high-rises, etc. Property agreements include single ownership, co-ownership, rental, subsidized housing and cooperatives.

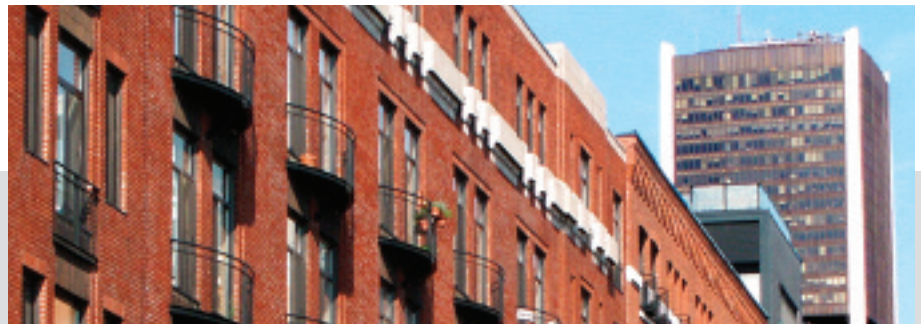
The Centre's great vitality stems in part from its large resident population, combined with hotel guests and students living in residence. This also applies to the CBD, where residential uses are authorized (see Map 2.3.2).

The Centre still has untapped real estate development potential in lots that are either vacant, underused or occupied by parking facilities. These lots could accommodate approximately 15,000 housing units (see Objective 2). With all the necessary public infrastructure already in place, residential consolidation in the Centre will contribute to Montréal's sustainable development.

Many buildings in the Centre have great potential for recycling into housing. With the evolution of certain economic sectors, some firms no longer need large amounts of space. As a result, a number of industrial and office buildings require a new vocation.

Over the years, new construction and renovation of old buildings for residential purposes has breathed new vitality into certain parts of the Centre. Old Montréal and Faubourg des Récollets have gradually been transformed into diversified, inhabited, better designed and consequently, more pleasant living environments.

The City will facilitate and support increased residential use of the Centre by ensuring that projects help to create attractive living environments. In this context, the Plan includes three actions to increase the Centre's residential vitality.



action 6.1

Ensure the quality of established living environments

There are more than 43,000 households established in the various living environments of the Centre. These households have settled in a dynamic part of the City, but they must deal with certain constraints stemming from its particular character, such as automobile traffic, night-time activity, the relative absence of private green spaces and certain social realities.

With regard to automobile traffic, the Plan has adopted an overall strategy favouring increased public transit usage. Moreover, boroughs will be able to apply traffic calming measures where they are most needed after appropriate study is completed (see Section 2.2).

The scarcity of private green spaces makes access to the City's large metropolitan parks all the more important to households living in the Centre. With this in mind, the City intends to improve links between Mount Royal Park and neighbouring areas (see Section 4.20). It also confirms the continued vocation of the existing park in the Cité du Havre.

The Plan restricts the insertion of new activities such as bars, discotheques and restaurants in the Centre's established living environments, as they have the potential to disturb the peace of a neighbourhood. In particular, the Plan projects the addition of activities complementary to residences, such as local stores, public facilities as well as personal and community services.

Far more than other living environments, the Centre is faced with social realities such as prostitution and homelessness. In order to respond to the needs of all those who live in or frequently come to the Centre, the Ville de Montréal favours a global approach including the implementation of a *Stratégie de revitalisation urbaine intégrée* (Integrated Urban Revitalization Strategy). Along these lines, the City's housing policy subscribes to the principle of social inclusion and favours a housing supply that ensures social diversity (see Section 2.1).

Zoning by-laws specify the distribution of different land uses throughout the City. The Ville de Montréal will identify any additional interventions or specific actions needed to improve the quality of its living environments. For example, the southern part of the Lincoln-Tupper district will be subject to a local detailed planning effort aimed at reinforcing the commercial structure of Sainte-Catherine Street, among other goals.

Implementation measures

- Minimize the impact of automobile traffic and potential nuisances.
- Improve access to the City's large metropolitan parks.
- Take action to enforce the criteria stated in the City's *Charte des milieux de vie résidentiels* (Residential Living Environments Charter) when necessary (see Objective 1).
- Implement the *Stratégie de revitalisation urbaine intégrée* (Integrated Urban Revitalization Strategy, see Objective 1).



ESTABLISHED LIVING ENVIRONMENTS OF THE CENTRE

Lincoln-Tupper

Lincoln-Tupper is one of the most densely populated neighbourhoods in Montréal. The great diversity of its residents also makes it a prime example of social mix. The strong presence of institutions has long been the hallmark of this area, which includes (among others) Concordia University, Dawson College, the Canadian Centre for Architecture, the Grand Séminaire de Montréal, the Maison-Mère of the Soeurs Grises and the monastery of the Pères Franciscains. Lincoln-Tupper is home to a considerable number of students, many of whom come from abroad. The rich built heritage of the area is composed not only of institutional buildings, but also of many residential buildings. The future of the neighbourhood's many institutional sites and the enhancement of their heritage value are, along with the revitalization of Sainte-Catherine Street, the most important issues tied to the development of Lincoln-Tupper.



Quartier Latin

Quartier Latin is closely associated with the presence of the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and the Cégep du Vieux-Montréal, which count some 40,000 students in total. This is especially visible on Saint-Denis Street, with its numerous restaurants, bistros and cafés. Le Quartier Latin is also a hub for cultural activities with its many performance venues, including the Théâtre Saint-Denis, built in 1900. The redesign of Berri Street, where the Bibliothèque Nationale is currently being erected, is an important part of the area's future.



The Village

The Village is located in one of Montréal's oldest blue-collar neighbourhoods and is home to many households and families. The vitality of commercial activity along Sainte-Catherine Street as well as its animated nightlife are proof of the dynamism of the City's gay community. The Village is nonetheless an area in need of revitalization. The redevelopment of the Radio-Canada site, the reduction of the impact of automobile traffic and the cohabitation of residential functions with leisure activities are all important to its continued vitality.

Old Montréal

Old Montréal's historic district, a heritage treasure recognized by the Government of Québec, is, along with the Old Port, the most visited tourist attraction in the City. Over the course of the past decade, it has become more and more popular as a residential area due to the realization of numerous new developments, but especially the renovation and re-use of older buildings. The households who live in the area wish to seek a balance between its residential, recreational and tourist activities. Additionally, the links between Old Montréal and the Faubourg Saint-Laurent, cut off by the Ville-Marie Expressway, should be re-established.



Milton-Parc

Milton-Parc boasts a desirable location between the CBD and Mount Royal. It is populated in large part by McGill University students. Milton-Parc stretches along Parc Avenue, on which most of its local retail services are located. Some of the buildings that border it are showing signs of deterioration, however. The enhancement of Parc Avenue is a key issue not only for this neighbourhood but for the entire Centre. This issue will be concretized most notably by the redesign of the Parc/Pins interchange which will offer pedestrians a far more pleasant environment.



The Flanc-Sud of Mount Royal

So great is the attractiveness of Mount Royal that Montréal's bourgeoisie called its south side home starting in the middle of the 19th century. The formidable concentration of wealth in this area earned it the name "The Golden Square Mile" around 1900. A number of institutions are clustered around the Mountain's edge, including McGill University, The Royal Victoria Hospital and the Montréal General Hospital. The Flanc-Sud still evokes a prestigious character – significantly, it is host to many foreign consulates – and carries an important natural and historic heritage that must be preserved. The growth and evolution of these institutions, the affirmation of its residential character and the improvement of the quality of its links with the Mountain are some of the issues that concern the Flanc-Sud area.

La Petite Bourgogne

La Petite Bourgogne was known as Sainte-Cunégonde until 1905. Inhabited primarily by factory workers and their families in its early days, the area was hit hard by the decline of industrial production in the middle of the 20th century. Towards the end of the 1960's, urban renewal projects resulted in the radical transformation of the area as well as its considerable decline in population. However, the renovation of old buildings, the revitalization of the Atwater Market and numerous new housing developments have breathed new life into La Petite Bourgogne. Nonetheless, the neighbourhood remains a living environment in need of a particularly strong revitalization effort.

action 6.2

Consolidate the residential function in the Centre

To complement various real estate development incentive programs (see Objective 2), the Ville de Montréal will step up its efforts in some mixed-use or residential areas with a view to consolidating the urban fabric. Some of these are large vacant sites that are well-suited to residential construction, or areas whose high potential for residential development has been slow to materialize under current conditions.

The division of land among several owners often constrains residential development. The nature and intensity of surrounding activities is also a major deterrent to the development of the residential function in some of the Centre's areas. This is particularly visible in Faubourg Saint-Laurent and Old Montréal, which are especially busy in summer.

Faubourg Québec

Upon completion, Faubourg Québec will count over 1,000 households consisting of 2,500 to 3,000 residents, which is sufficient to make neighbourhood services viable. The Plan confirms the development of the Belvédère De La Commune, which will complement Dalhousie Place. It also confirms the creation of a walkway extending the axis of Amherst Street over the train tracks, enabling pedestrian access to the Clocktower Basin from De La Commune Street. The Plan also calls for the redesign of Viger Square, next to the Faubourg, in order to improve links between the Faubourg and the living environments north of the Ville-Marie Expressway (see Section 4.4).

Faubourg Saint-Laurent

Faubourg Saint-Laurent contains many vacant lots that could accommodate new buildings, some of which could be residential. However, the desire to increase the residential function should be weighed against the strong presence of leisure and institutional activities within and around the Faubourg.

Habitations Jeanne-Mance also includes a large underused area, whose density could be increased. The Ville de Montréal supports new residential construction on this site by a redesign process that would reconnect the area with the rest of the Faubourg. The whole of Faubourg Saint-Laurent will be subject to a detailed planning process by the Borough of Ville-Marie.

Faubourg des Récollets

Faubourg des Récollets has undergone a significant positive transformation with the impetus given by the development of the Cité Multimédia. There are still numerous parking lots, vacant lots and underused buildings that require further revitalization. Its northern section, adjacent to the Quartier international de Montréal, is markedly destructured.



The Borough of Ville-Marie will conduct a detailed planning process for the northern section of Faubourg des Récollets and will identify potential public space improvements to encourage private investment. This planning process will have the further objective of creating a smoother transition between the Quartier international and the Cité Multimédia.

Cité du Havre

The Cité du Havre is a residential area whose vacant western section could accommodate up to 900 new housing units. The park located to the east of Habitat '67, however, is protected by the Plan. The residents of the Cité du Havre currently experience nuisances caused by heavy motor vehicle traffic generated primarily by the Casino de Montréal, which is located in nearby Jean-Drapeau Park. This issue, as well as improving public transportation access to the Cité du Havre, will be considered as part of a detailed planning process (see Section 4.15).

Maison de Radio-Canada parking lots

The parking lot on the west side of the Maison du Radio-Canada occupies a large area between René-Lévesque Boulevard East and Viger Avenue. These two major roadways lead to the Centre and their importance calls for an improvement of the buildings that frame them. The City strongly favours the recycling of a large portion of this site for residential construction adjacent to the established living environments. In fact, two initial residential projects are already under construction in the northern part of this area.

The Ville de Montréal intends to designate the parking lot on the east side of the Maison du Radio-Canada for mixed uses, which is more suited to the available development options. Building housing on a portion of this parking lot will be among the options considered as part of the detailed planning process for Notre-Dame Street East (see Section 4.21).

Implementation measures

- Include specific provisions in the urban planning by-laws for protecting the peace and quiet of residents in mixed-use or high-traffic areas, particularly:
 - By establishing strict construction standards with respect to soundproofing;
 - By including appropriate criteria in Site Planning and Architectural Integration Programs (SPAIP).
- Implement traffic calming measures when required (see Objective 18).
- Design new public spaces.
- Purchase and consolidate strategic properties through the Société de développement de Montréal (SDM).



action 6.3

Foster the fulfillment of the Centre's residential function

CITÉ UNIVERSITAIRE INTERNATIONALE

A joint project of Montréal's universities, the Cité will comprise 3,200 dwelling units, destined mainly for foreign students. A main complex that would offer more than 2,200 units is planned, plus satellite facilities for certain institutions. These facilities would offer a wide range of student services (reception, restaurants, meeting places, study rooms, conference rooms, games rooms, fitness centres, etc.) and some would also be open to local residents.

The number of units currently available in Montréal's university residences is slightly over 3,800. The four Montréal universities estimate that more than 7,000 units are required in order to meet their needs.

The Master Plan provides for the possibility of building residential projects in Griffintown, which until now has been largely devoted to other activities. It also reiterates the City's support for locating the Cité universitaire internationale in the Centre.

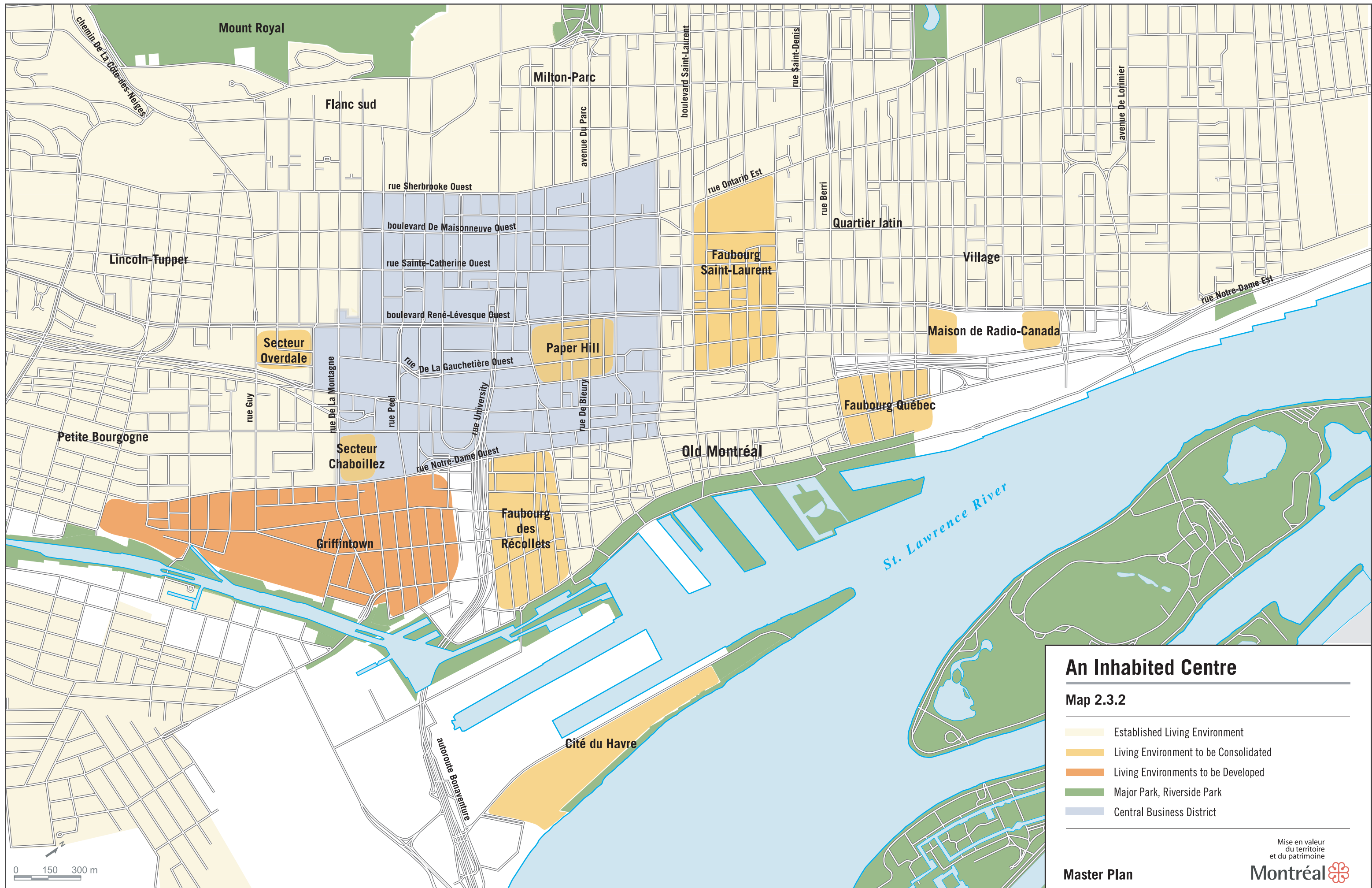
Located near the CBD, Griffintown was one of the cradles of industrial activity in North America. Its decline was precipitated by the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959 and it gradually became a destructured area in search of a new vocation. The recent arrival of the École de technologie supérieure and student housing along Peel Street and Notre-Dame Street West augurs well for the desired renewal of Griffintown. The rehabilitation of the Lachine Canal, which is now open to pleasure boating, should also be beneficial. In this context, the Plan favours mixed uses, including housing, as being conducive to its revitalization.

In view of Griffintown's heterogeneous built environment, its rich industrial heritage and the presence of major road and rail infrastructure along its eastern boundary, this area will require detailed planning (see Section 4.8.1).

Implementation measures

- Favour the construction of housing in certain parts of Griffintown, particularly:
 - east of De La Montagne Street;
 - on the site currently occupied by Canada Post.
- Encourage the relocation of some activities incompatible with residential use.
- Maintain institutional and economic activities along Peel Street and Notre-Dame Street West and in the western part of Griffintown.
- Redesign Peel Street between the CBD and the Lachine Canal.
- Preserve buildings with heritage or architectural value.





An Inhabited Centre

Map 2.3.2

- Established Living Environment
- Living Environment to be Consolidated
- Living Environments to be Developed
- Major Park, Riverside Park
- Central Business District



objective

Strengthen the Centre's coherence and overall urban character

Montréal's visual identity relies mainly on the perception of its Centre, which is, in some respects, its showcase. The image of the Centre is, in turn, shaped by the quality of its architecture, streets and public places, which should reflect and enhance its liveability.

In this context, each new building in the Centre must make a positive contribution to the City's image. High-quality design of public spaces should provide a model for public and private projects elsewhere. The quality of projects that affect the built environment is especially important, as it will shape the experience of visitors and residents over the long term.

Some areas that are not otherwise devoid of interest have been rendered bland and uninspiring by earlier actions. Similarly, the presence of vacant lots and surface parking lots degrades the environment of some busy Centre streets, even in areas as prestigious as the CBD.

The Ville-Marie and Bonaventure Expressways divide major areas of activity that should be better connected. The first impression that many people get of the Centre is what they see while commuting to work along these expressways: unimpressive and unstructured spaces.

Private real estate development and public actions must be coordinated so that the Centre's built environment gains cohesiveness and asserts its overall character. The Plan identifies four actions to steer the Centre's development in that direction.



action 7.1

Ensure high-quality architecture and design in the Centre

Architectural quality is still perceived as a constraint rather than an asset. Despite their great intrinsic value, some projects lack sensitivity and diminish the cohesion of their surroundings.

The built environment of the Centre, with its variety of building types and wealth of significant features, makes the mere application of standards insufficient to effectively oversee the architecture and integration of new buildings. Thus, the review of projects in the Centre must be based on qualitative criteria.

Implementation measures

- Refer major public and private projects to the Comité d'architecture et d'urbanisme (Architectural and Planning Advisory Committee) for review.
- Adopt City-wide mechanisms that are conducive to high-quality architecture, including architectural competitions, urban design guidelines, etc.
- Control the insertion of new buildings through appropriate standards and criteria.
- Improve the design quality of the public realm.

Objective 12 of the Plan sets forth general principles that projects must follow in order to ensure the harmonious consolidation of the built environment. In addition, Objective 13 presents the implementation measures set forth for improving the design quality of the public realm.



action 7.2

Develop the Centre's unbuilt lots

More than 200 unbuilt lots, covering approximately 60 hectares (an area twice as large as LaFontaine Park), dot the Centre of Montréal. Their development would consolidate the built environment and increase the Centre's vitality, by accommodating new activities and households.

The great majority of the Centre's unbuilt lots are operated as street-level parking lots. This use depreciates the Centre's environment in various ways and its profitability jeopardizes prospects for consolidating the urban fabric.

The City favours reducing the demand for long-term parking, by supporting a form of urbanization that encourages the use of public transportation for work trips. Objective 3 of the Plan lists actions for reducing off-street outdoor parking.

The Plan requires that buildings located in the Ville-Marie Borough west of Amherst Street locate all required parking spots inside buildings. A maximum number of parking spots will be set for buildings located in the vicinity of metro or train stations (see Action 3.5).

More broadly, the City will take steps to stimulate real estate development on vacant lots and off-street outdoor parking lots.

Implementation measures

- Implement a strategy for developing the Centre's unbuilt lots that provides for:
 - Strict application of parking by-laws;
 - New standards for the layout of parking lots;
 - Acquisition and parcelling of lots by the City;
 - Development of new public spaces that will help shape new real estate projects;
 - Financial support or tax breaks for development of unbuilt lots.

The conversion of some parking areas into public spaces is already underway. Place Eugène-Lapierre and Jardin du Gesù are to be developed by the City beginning in 2005.



action 7.3

Guide the development of the indoor pedestrian network

Montréal is one of many cities (Toronto, Calgary, Chicago, Minneapolis, Sydney) whose Centre is served by an indoor pedestrian network. Beginning in 1962 with the construction of a protected concourse between Central Station and the new shopping mall in Place Ville-Marie, Montréal's network has grown through the addition of various real estate developments in a unique spirit of public-private cooperation.

The indoor network connects many large public, institutional, cultural, recreational and commercial buildings with metro and commuter train stations. Some sections also connect to complementary facilities, especially in the Quartier international de Montréal (hotels, international organizations, the World Trade Centre, Palais des Congrès). Pedestrians can walk through the Centre without worrying about extreme weather conditions or motor vehicle traffic.

Montréal's indoor pedestrian network generally runs below street level and has little negative impact on the built environment. This is a definite advantage over networks composed of numerous skywalks. However, it poses other difficulties. For instance, it can be disorienting to people who are unfamiliar with the City. Safety perceptions also vary according to the quality of the facilities (visibility, lighting, maintenance) and pedestrian volume.

Given the City's commitment to enhancing street life, considering its effect on urban revitalization, the expansion of the indoor pedestrian network must follow certain guidelines in order to control its impact on outdoor pedestrian traffic, retail activity or the development of unbuilt street-level lots. In light of this, the indoor pedestrian network requires a detailed planning process (see Section 4.23).

Implementation measures

- Set guidelines for the development of the indoor pedestrian network.
- Harmonize design and business hours across the various sections of the network.
- Ensure the universal accessibility of the network.
- Install uniform "RESO" signage throughout the network in order to facilitate wayfinding (see Section 4.23).



action 7.4

Reinforce or improve the character of some key roadways in the Centre



The Centre is accessed via a limited number of roadways that play a major role in how Montréal is perceived. These roadways offer striking views of Montréal's major features — the river, the skyline, Mount Royal — which are revealed gradually, as one approaches.

The design of streets and boulevards in the Centre, particularly through tree planting and the construction of wide sidewalks, can increase people's sense of comfort.

These must be harmonized with the character of local activities and environments and offer pleasant and accessible rest areas that give people the opportunity to momentarily escape the bustle of the Centre's activity.

These streets must also offer pedestrians and cyclists routes that are direct, safe and pleasant. While many of the Centre's activity nodes are quite close to one another, they remain relatively isolated due to the lack of such links.

Vibrant streets

Vibrant streets offer pedestrians a comfortable, pleasant and stimulating experience, as they are given the most important place on the street. These characteristics are, more concretely, the result of conditions that vary from one street to another in terms of street animation, number of pedestrians, street design, traffic conditions, etc.

Vibrant streets draw much of their appeal from the liveliness produced by retail businesses. Sometimes this attractiveness also results from the way buildings frame the street; the grand sweep of heritage buildings that form an architectural unit on the northern side of De La Commune Street offers a good example.

The Ville de Montréal intends to preserve and accentuate those qualities that draw pedestrians to vibrant streets. All of the Centre's commercial streets, shown in Illustration 2.3.2, come under this category. The City will prioritize intervention on these streets to increase their conviviality for pedestrians and further improve the way that buildings frame them.

Saint-Laurent Boulevard

The dividing line between east and west end Montréal since 1792, Saint-Laurent Boulevard was a commercial street that gradually became home to entertainment and cultural production facilities. A point of entry for successive waves of immigrants, Saint-Laurent Boulevard typifies Montréal's cosmopolitanism like no other place in the City. Its heterogeneous morphology and varied environments are an integral part of its lively ambiance, which makes for an urban experience appreciated by Montrealers and tourists alike.

In 1996, the historical and cultural importance of Saint-Laurent Boulevard was affirmed when it was designated a national historic site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada.

Strategic links to be improved

The strategic links to be improved serve as connections between significant places, like the Mountain and the river. Their routes are generally punctuated by the presence of other important points of interest and often cross through areas which will soon undergo significant transformation. The southern part of Peel Street, for example, crosses the institutional node that surrounds the École de technologie supérieure (ETS) and Griffintown, whose vocation is in the midst of being transformed.

Each of these streets has a particular character along its various segments. Therefore, their improvement must employ approaches that are appropriate to each of their components. Through these variations, each street can be made a coherent and interesting thoroughfare, particularly for pedestrians.

The Centre's main axes

The Centre is structured by its main axes. The architecture of the buildings and the prestige of the activities found along them, as well as the importance of the places they link, help make these axes distinctive. They are lined with large hotels as well as imposing office and government buildings.

The image of these main axes is directly linked to that of the Centre. Unfortunately, the design and layout of many of them is hardly adequate given their prominent role. The City therefore intends to correct this situation, by proceeding with an appropriate redesign of the public domain and then supporting appropriate development on the adjacent properties.

Access to the Centre

Most of the roadways leading into the Centre were designed with traffic considerations in mind. Their planning generally failed to consider the surrounding landscapes and environments.

The City intends to implement various measures to improve the integration of important access routes with their surroundings. Significant redesign projects along these lines are foreseen for many roadways. The project completed at the landing of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge provides a good source of inspiration, as it permitted the creation of a new green space.

Implementation measures

The City intends to take every opportunity to improve the road network. To this end, it will focus its efforts on the roadways illustrated in Map 2.3.3. In addition, the City will:

- Ensure the consolidation of the Centre's commercial streets (see Objective 5).
- Place high priority on pedestrian and cycling facilities when redesigning the public realm, in accordance with the principles set out in Objective 13.
- Enhance Saint-Laurent Boulevard in cooperation with multiple partners, including residents' and merchants' associations.
- Build a bikeway through the Centre (see Objective 3).
- Redesign the Parc/Pins interchange, as well as the Remembrance/Côte-des-Neiges intersection.
- Maximize the covering of the Ville-Marie Expressway between Saint-Urbain and Sanguinet Streets (see Section 4.4).
- Favour the renewal and redevelopment of sites along Notre-Dame Street East.
- Complete the redevelopment of the Jacques-Cartier Bridge landing.
- Adopt regulatory measures to protect views of significant landscape features (see Objective 11).
- Regulate the built form along the Centre's access routes in accordance with Objective 14.
- Relocate the Bonaventure Expressway and convert it into a ground-level urban boulevard in order to free up the waterfront, improve access to nearby areas and develop adjacent lots.



