

# 4.23

## Indoor pedestrian network

### General goals

- Ensure interaction and complementarity between the indoor pedestrian network and street activities
- Improve the functionality of the indoor pedestrian network in terms of access, business hours, design, user safety and orientation
- Structure development of the indoor pedestrian network to favour the use of public transportation

### Planning issues

The indoor pedestrian network started to take shape in 1962, with the construction of a corridor between Central Station and the shopping concourse in Place Ville-Marie. Over the years, the network has expanded, through successive real estate projects, in a unique spirit of public-private partnership. Connecting a variety of urban functions (offices, stores, housing, community and institutional facilities), the pedestrian network is structured around ten metro stations in the Centre and enables users to move about without venturing out into Montréal's sometimes-extreme weather. The numerous shopping malls connected to the indoor pedestrian network contribute to the Centre's importance in the City's retail structure.

Running almost entirely underground, the indoor pedestrian network is not visually intrusive, unlike overhead walkways found in other cities. However, it presents other difficulties, particularly with respect to street life. Many of the buildings connected to the indoor pedestrian network offer few entrances or direct access to stores from the sidewalk. In some segments, low traffic during some periods of the day can generate a feeling of insecurity.

The lack of sustained and integrated planning has led to a network made up of a series of segments that do not compose a clearly defined whole. The variation in levels and the lack of adequate signage and outdoor views make orientation difficult, especially for mobility impaired persons. The lack of consistency in design also contributes to the heterogeneity of the network. The recent completion of the "RÉSO" signage system throughout the Quartier International de Montréal is an exemplary first step towards harmonizing and rationalizing signage in the indoor pedestrian network.

While addressing the issues associated with this unique urban environment, detailed planning for the indoor pedestrian network must consider public and private stakeholder concerns, as well as the potential impact of development on the Centre's urban activities. In addition, detailed planning for the indoor pedestrian network should be carried out in parallel with and with respect to the detailed planning of the Central Business District (see Section 4.10).

### Planning guidelines

- 1 Ensure that buildings connected to the indoor pedestrian network maintain street interaction and maximize openings to and direct access from the sidewalk, while encouraging commercial uses that generate activity at street level.
- 2 Define and apply standards to harmonize the form (access, design, lighting, ventilation) and business hours of the network, as well as ensuring the maintenance and safety of public and private property.
- 3 Introduce the "RÉSO" signage system throughout the indoor pedestrian network in order to improve user orientation.
- 4 Aim to provide universal access for mobility impaired persons throughout the indoor pedestrian network.
- 5 Determine directions and development guidelines for the indoor pedestrian network in a way that encourages public transportation use.

