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Planning
Approach

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Planning Approach

THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

Signed in 1997, the Kyoto Protocol aims to stabilize atmospheric greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations at a level that will not dangerously disturb the Earth's climate. In Canada, this represents an average reduction of 6%.

The transportation sector accounts for 38% of emissions and is responsible for most of the GHG increase in Québec. One-quarter of Québec's total GHG emissions come from Montréal. This shows the major role that the City can play in implementing the Kyoto Protocol, both as a municipality and as part of the Metropolitan Community.

By proposing a sustainable development model that seeks, in part, to reduce dependency on cars and to protect natural spaces, the Master Plan is one of the City's contributions to the goals of the Kyoto Protocol.

The preparation of the Master Plan constitutes a unique opportunity to reflect collectively on the future of the City. Montréal is a metropolis with many enviable assets. Its distinctive geography, the quality and liveability of its living environments, the diversity of its inhabitants, its cultural and economic vitality and its transportation networks are all valuable advantages in building the future City. However, a greater consistency in urban planning choices is required in order to make Montréal even more liveable and dynamic.

The Ville de Montréal endorses the principles of **sustainable development**, especially with regards to urban development and intends to take a balanced approach based on economic vitality, social equity, environmental preservation and respect for the needs of future generations. Urban planning and development decisions will be made in a way that encourages citizen involvement and respects the results of public consultations.

This approach is based on a growing awareness of the important role played by urban planning and development in the viability of communities. Montréal must provide a pleasant environment and diverse urban experiences to its citizens and visitors. Furthermore, the Master Plan incorporates the principles of universal accessibility, which will help to ensure that all Montrealers have access to all of the City's public facilities and spaces, as well as buildings both public and private. Furthermore, the quality of the urban environment has impacts on public health. Therefore, the Master Plan supports an ensemble of measures linked to the quality of dwellings, public facilities, nature areas and the environment, in order to improve the quality of life of Montrealers.

In the coming years, demographic growth in the metropolitan area will be moderate but significant, given a projected increase of 150,000 households between 2004 and 2014. Since the anticipated development is limited, special care will be required in order to avoid urban sprawl and to consolidate the existing urban fabric, especially by reinforcing links between the various areas of urban activity. In accordance with the principles of sustainable development, this will improve the cost-effectiveness of urban infrastructure and reduce the City's related maintenance and rehabilitation costs. The Master Plan seeks first and foremost to significantly improve the quality of architecture and urban landscapes and to orient the culture of the City toward better urban design.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. It is a balanced approach that incorporates environmental, social and economic dimensions. It aims for ecological integrity and economic efficiency as well as social equity among nations, individuals and generations.

- Maintaining ecological integrity requires that development respects the renewal or depletion rate of natural resources and minimizes the impact of human activities on the environment.
- An efficient economy optimizes human, natural and financial resources. It presupposes that economic actors assume responsibility for the impacts of their activities on the environment, society and resources.
- Socially equitable development means that existing human communities as well as future generations can meet their basic needs, have access to employment and social, health and educational services and can participate in decisions that affect them.

These principles are of concern to local communities, particularly in promoting a viable model for human settlements. The City has elaborated this vision in its Plan stratégique de développement durable (Sustainable Development Strategic Plan).

The Master Plan is a powerful instrument for shifting the City to sustainable development practices that will provide a better “quality of city” for both residents and visitors. A sustainable urban environment will be more compact, less dependent on individual automobiles and organized in such a way as to promote public transportation and non-motorized travel. It will offer diverse activities and services, close to residential areas composed of a range of housing types. It will provide easy access to green spaces and waterways, as well as public spaces that are safe, comfortable and enjoyable.

The quality of existing assets and their preservation must first be recognized. Most of Montréal's territory is composed of **established areas**. The Ville de Montréal intends to consolidate both the current activities and the built form of these areas (see Map 1.1).

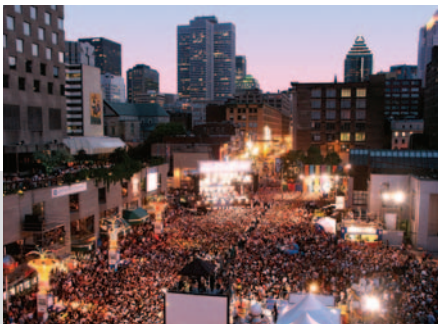
However, major planning and consolidation challenges must be met. Of the City's total area of 500 km², 26 km² are still vacant. Some 11 km² are scattered through the established areas. The remaining vacant **areas to be developed** for housing or employment purposes cover another 11 km². Montréal's territory also includes many **areas to be transformed** that are currently underused and whose activities and built form will be changed radically over the long term. This transformation will also permit the development of the remaining 4 km² of vacant land that falls within these areas.

This effort seeks to promote renewal and new construction within the City limits.

- Respecting the spirit of the **Kyoto Protocol**, Montréal's urban development will aim to increase the use of **public transportation** and active modes of transport such as walking and cycling. The intention is to consolidate and increase urban density, particularly within walking distance of metro and commuter train stations, while fully respecting the characteristics of existing neighbourhoods.
- The Plan also promotes a greater **variety of uses** in some areas of the City in order to reduce distances between residences, shops, services and workplaces, again while respecting the characteristics of each area. This will help make these areas more dynamic and increase local residents' sense of belonging.
- Special attention will be required to **optimize the development of Montréal's Centre**. This area is the most easily accessible by public transportation and is already diversified and densely occupied. Nevertheless, it still has considerable development potential, particularly its 60-odd hectares of vacant lots and numerous buildings that could be given over to new functions.
- Montréal's **residential living environments** generally exhibit an undeniable quality and diversity. The Plan proposes to enhance their special characteristics while planning for specific interventions where required.



- The areas of Montréal where employment is concentrated are quite diverse, reflecting the diversity of the City's economy. The Ville de Montréal intends to maintain this asset and to promote public and private reinvestment in **areas experiencing economic transformation**, in particular those located near densely populated areas that are well served by public transportation.
- The Plan also seeks to take advantage of Montréal's **exceptional geography**. The City is built on islands that are situated in the middle of a majestic river, the largest of which is capped by Mount Royal. A striking landmark in the flat surrounding landscape, this is the mountain that gives the municipality its name.
- The Plan will also preserve and enhance **ecoterritories** consisting of natural environments of interest, especially wooded areas, by promoting their harmonious integration with urban development.
- The City's architecture is characterized by a wide variety of buildings, a **heritage** that should be maintained and enhanced. The many existing districts that display an individual neighbourhood character contribute to this richness. The Master Plan seeks to preserve their distinctive features and to promote excellence in architecture. The coherent planning of public places will ensure a more comfortable and safe **pedestrian** experience no matter the season. This concern also underlines the need to take advantage of the special dimension that the winter adds to Montréal's landscape.
- The Master Plan conveys the City's desire to ensure **a healthier urban environment** and the optimal use of resources. The Plan therefore supports alternatives to the individual car and supports the rehabilitation of contaminated sites as well as the introduction of mitigation measures that limit environmental nuisances in living environments and reduce the urban heat island effect.
- Finally, the Master Plan confirms the permanent **agricultural zone** in the western portion of Île Bizard, in Senneville and Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue with a total area of 20.6 km². The intention is both to preserve the inherent characteristics of these environments and to focus development in areas that are already served by infrastructure and easily reached by public transportation, in accordance with the spirit of sustainable development.



The Master Plan's planning approach leads to seven goals that constitute as many challenges for Montréal:

- 1 HIGH-QUALITY, DIVERSIFIED AND COMPLETE LIVING ENVIRONMENTS;
- 2 STRUCTURING, EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS FULLY INTEGRATED INTO THE URBAN FABRIC;
- 3 A PRESTIGIOUS, CONVIVIAL AND INHABITED CENTRE;
- 4 DYNAMIC, ACCESSIBLE AND DIVERSIFIED EMPLOYMENT AREAS;
- 5 HIGH-QUALITY ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN LANDSCAPES;
- 6 AN ENHANCED BUILT, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE;
- 7 A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT.

