

Les rues et les espaces publics comme élan de développement à centre-ville



Mémoire sur la Stratégie centre-ville
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Mission

RuePublique
oeuvre à
améliorer la
convivialité des
quartiers de
Montréal,
en ré-imaginant
les rues et en
faisant la
promotion d'un
usage amélioré
des espaces
publics.

CRÉDITS :

PHOTOS, RECHERCHE ET
RÉDACTION

Zvi Leve

À propos de RuePublique

Les rues comme « espace public » sont au cœur de notre projet. Nous portons une attention toute particulière à la formation de communautés vibrantes et au développement du transport actif, public et collectif.

RuePublique entamera des discussions dans le but de dialoguer sur les espaces publics et l'effet que ceux-ci ont sur nos habitudes. Nous organiserons et implanterons des projets de recherche, des assemblées, des consultations et des ateliers qui donneront aux résidents les outils nécessaires pour s'exprimer et avoir accès aux idées nouvelles.

À travers ses différentes activités, RuePublique incitera les citoyens à passer de la parole aux actes. Nous croyons atteindre cet objectif en étant une organisation ouverte à la participation et en mettant sur pied des ateliers et des événements afin d'initier les résidents à de nouvelles habitudes de vie et de nouvelles façons de faire.

Nous serons aussi à la recherche d'alternatives sur le plan de l'urbanisme, qui transformeraient le quartier et le rendrait plus sécuritaire, tout en permettant à l'espace public de devenir un lieu d'échange écologiquement viable. Naturellement, nous souhaitons également maximiser l'accès aux modes de transport actifs et en commun et encourager leur usage.

Nous souhaitons encourager l'adoption de meilleures habitudes, afin de confronter au quotidien les défis écologiques auxquels nous sommes confrontés à l'échelle mondiale. Dans le but d'améliorer la qualité de vie ici et maintenant, nous couvrirons divers sujets allant de la sécurité à la santé en passant par l'empreinte carbonique et la réduction de notre dépendance aux carburants fossiles. Des changements d'une telle envergure doivent prendre place peu à peu et doivent surtout se faire dans un climat qui favorise le dialogue.

Les actions de RuePublique visent à :

- REPENSER COLLECTIVEMENT LES ESPACES PUBLICS
- ENCOURAGER LES CITOYENS À S'IMPLIQUER
- TROUVER DES ALTERNATIVES URBANISTIQUES
- IMAGINER UN MODE DE VIE URBAINE ÉCO-RESPONSABLE

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Résumé

Pour RuePublique, les rues sont l'espace public le plus important dans nos villes. Cet espace est précieux pour diverses fins qui sont souvent en conflit les unes avec les autres : stationnement ou circulation, véhicules ou humaines, activité privée ou publique, etc. L'aménagement de nos rues aura donc des impacts sur nos habitudes de déplacement, la santé publique, l'activité économique, l'environnement et autres.

En s'inspirant des orientations exprimées par la Ville de Montréal et la Communauté Métropolitaine de Montréal dans leurs documents de planification (le Schéma de développement de l'agglomération de Montréal, le Plan d'urbanisme, le Plan de transport, le Plan de développement durable de la collectivité montréalaise et autres), les priorités de développement de Montréal sont clairement d'améliorer le cadre de vie et de favoriser un développement durable. On veut créer des milieux de vie de qualité, diversifiés et complets, des réseaux de transport structurants, efficaces et bien intégrés au tissu urbain, des secteurs d'emplois dynamiques, accessibles et diversifiés, un paysage urbain et une architecture de qualité...

Clairement la Stratégie centre-ville est un enjeu urbain beaucoup plus large que la simple occupation des rues. La rue est la composante structurante de nos milieux de vie et nos réseaux de transports. L'occupation de cet espace par des véhicules immobiles empêche d'autres formes de développement.

Orientation 1 – Mise en valeur des rues comme espace public

- Identifier des zones et corridors à traitements prioritaires
- Favoriser un partage plus équilibré et équitable de la voirie

Orientation 2 – Renforcer la connectivité et l'accès aux destinations

- Création de réseaux de circulation ciblés
- Accessibilité filtré

Orientation 3 – Stationnement adaptif

- Établir des cibles
- Incitatives pour encourager l'utilisation flexible de stationnement



For better or for worse, Montréal's urban development has occurred in fits and starts – from the late 1970's until the early 2000's, the city was losing population and economic activities, but an 'élan' of development in recent years has spurred development, both in the central city and beyond. The city's 'Stratégie centre-ville' seeks to capitalize on this wave of development but RuePublique has serious concerns about the lack of vision supporting the strategy. We believe that a more focused approach, which concentrates on the policy levers which are currently available to the city, in particular the use of streets and public spaces, has the potential to create the necessary synergies to catalyze further development.

Cities exist to in order to bring people together and to facilitate the exchange of ideas, goods, and services. Accessibility has always been an important element in urban development patterns so transportation investment priorities have had a direct impact on urban form¹. The advent of motorized personal transportation has completely changed land use patterns during the last century, but the limits of this 'development model' are now in sight. Streets often comprise more than one quarter of all

¹ Newman & Kenworthy (1999, pp 52-59)

public space in cities, but they often fail to provide their surrounding communities with a space where people can safely walk, bicycle, drive, take transit, and socialize.²

Despite Montréal's inherent advantages, the region itself is following the historical development trends of other North American cities: decentralized development is increasing at a faster pace than infill development in central areas, and the level of vehicle ownership in the region is increasing faster than the population. High demand for accessible urban neighbourhoods is driving up property values and squeezing out lower-income residents. Growing inequalities and conflicts over on-street parking are creating tensions in some central areas.



² National Association of City Transportation Officials (2013). [Urban Street Design Guide](#).

Orientation 1 – Mise en valeur des rues comme espace public

The Stratégie centre-ville implicitly recognizes the city's sustainable development goals³⁴⁵ such as improving quality of life, assuring economic vitality, reducing auto-dependence, and the impact of the car. The importance of densité and accessibilité is noted but it is not elaborated how these attributes combine with 'mixité' to create 'qualité' nor 'rayonnement'. This is where an overall vision of development would be helpful.

Identifier des zones et corridors pour traitements prioritaires



Figure 1 Centre de Recherche du CHUM vers square Viger

³ Schéma d'aménagement et de développement de l'agglomération de Montréal (2014)

⁴ Plan de transport (2008)

⁵ Plan de développement durable de la collectivité montréalaise 2010-2015

Favoriser un partage plus équilibré et équitable de la voirie

In our opinion, traffic corridors should prioritize the mobility of people over vehicles. If we want public and active transportation to be the preferred choice for trips, we must allocate space (and time!) accordingly. We need to create safe and comfortable networks which efficiently bring people to their desired destinations. We can no longer continue to treat pedestrians and cyclists as second or third class travellers.



Figure 2 Cyclist needs must be accommodated on major traffic arteries

Orientation 2 - Renforcer la connectivité entre destinations

Création des réseaux de circulation ciblés

The Stratégie centre-ville seeks to reinforce Montréal's position in the knowledge economy with innovation and creativity playing an important role in 'driving' development, yet Montréal has struggled to retain the graduates of our multiple universities. We believe that more emphasis on integrating the universities (and Cegeps) into their local environment, both physically and socially, can produce the desired synergies for development. Actions should consider public and active transport access and could include localized street treatments, for example creating shared spaces which become pedestrian zones between the hours of 10h-20h . Such treatments could be adapted and applied in different locations:

- *McGill College between Métro McGill and the McGill campus*
- *Between UQAM and Cegep de Vieux Montréal/BANQ*
- *Around Concordia and Dawson (including access to nearby facilities)*



Accessibilité filtrée

Localized street or alley treatments can be used to facilitate pedestrian and cyclist access away from vehicle circulation. ***We must create networks which facilitate and even prioritize mobility by active transport using filtered permeability⁶ to avoid conflicts with motor vehicles.*** Alleys, small streets between major traffic arteries and even spaces between buildings can all be adapted to facilitate access for people. Removing options for vehicle circulation can actually improve traffic flow!



For many years we have been shaping our cities to accommodate cars; it is now time that we start shaping our cities to accommodate people.

⁶ Transitized blog. What is filtered permeability? <http://transitized.com/concepts/what-is-filtered-permeability/>

Orientation 3 – Stationnement adaptif

Parking for bicycles and vehicles which have a 'shared usage' structure is no less important than parking for cars. For cyclists, bike parking remains a significant challenge in both commercial and residential areas, particularly during the winter months when the on-street bike parking supports are removed. Bicycle supports should always be integrated within any landscaping project in addition to other greening elements such as trees.

Établir des cibles

In order to evaluate the success of any strategy, one must have 'performance targets' of some sort. RuePublique believes that one of the goals of any 'sustainable development' strategies should be the systematic reallocation of street space to serve people-scaled needs. There should be a goal of reducing the number of on-street parking spaces while also increasing bicycle parking and space made available to shared transportation modes.



Incitatives pour encourager l'utilisation flexible de stationnement

The future of mobility and parking needs is far from clear, but the allocation of public space will have an important impact on the choices that we make as a society. Despite the rapid development of new technologies, it is clear that environmental and economic pressures are also increasing. We can expect profound changes in many different areas in the coming years. Given the uncertain development climate which we are facing, *RuePublique strongly recommends the adoption of flexible policies which are resilient and easily adaptable in the face of change.*



The excessive provision of parking creates powerful incentives to use the car.

Conclusion

We need to develop new centers and rejuvenate existing ones at a human scale which favours active transportation. Concentrating parking in off-street locations will reduce the effort necessary to find parking while also reducing parking costs assumed by the city.

There are also equity issues associated with our development priorities. We have created cities which require high degrees of mobility, yet public transport is not necessarily a viable option for all people or for all trips. Frequently it is lower income or older populations which are poorly served by public transportation options. The revenues to the city from parking fees are very important, but the cost to the city of providing and maintaining on-street parking is also significant and largely unknown, as is the cost of enforcing the parking policy. Furthermore, the ubiquitous presence of parking leads drivers to expect that car trips will always be convenient and door-to-door; we do not even notice the enormous of public space which is dedicated to 'storing' our private vehicles.

It is well known that a physical environment which disproportionately allocates space to cars can have a detrimental impact on social relations. By breaking the link between parking and other activities, RuePublique believes that we can return our attention to the public domain. Our streets belong to all of us, and it is imperative that we use their value to further sustainable development goals.

