

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

835 Merci, merci beaucoup de votre présentation. Ça va se retrouver, avec des bouts de traduction, peut-être, sur notre site Internet. Je vous remercie de votre présentation et à la prochaine.

**Mme NAKUSET :**

840 OK, thanks.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

845 Au revoir. Nous allons recevoir dans quelques instants David Chapman, qui est responsable de la maison Résilience Montréal.

Alors, nous reprenons avec l'audition de monsieur David Chapman qui est le directeur général de Résilience Montréal. Bonsoir, monsieur Chapman. Nice to see you. So, what would you like to say to us?

850 **M. DAVID CHAPMAN, directeur général, Résilience Montréal :**

855 Well, thank you. It's good to be here, and I'm happy that we're talking about cohabitation, that you're doing this consultation. It's not a simple issue. It's an obvious point that homelessness is growing in the city of Montreal. Anyone can see this. The people who do the statistics will tell us that indeed, it's true. And the city is only so big. So the question becomes an obvious one: if homelessness is growing, despite all the talk about ending homelessness, which we... we're here, well, then, what's the plan going to be that deals with this direct and very real thing that we're watching?

860 In short, I think some of the ideas from the City of Montreal already that I've heard on this topic, are right. What you need are accessible resources in every neighbourhood, so that you

don't have massive concentrations of people, in, you know, Hochelaga or the southwest of Montreal, for example.

865           And yet, it's also true that the real concerns and fears of people living in those neighbourhoods, who live in homes, houses, and run businesses, their concerns, also, need to be thought about.

870           And one of the things... I don't know if it's a curse, but I've been moving homeless centres now for about 10 years, and it's... and I've made plenty of mistakes. And from some of those mistakes, I've learned that it's really, really important to talk to your neighbours.

875           As Resilience Montreal's in the process of moving to 780 Atwater, where an Indigenous-led homeless centre that started as a response to... another centre had left the area, and we started, because there was a spike in the death rate among the homeless, with the departure of this other centre, which was followed in the media.

880           That would be the reason why you need homeless resources. And so, I think that's, maybe, an important point to underline. The reason why we would have homeless resources in the first place, at all... because there are some who would just say, well, why don't you just get rid of them all altogether, then we don't have an issue, right? And that would be lovely, except we would then see a spike in the death rate amongst the homeless population.

885           And, so... that's the hard reality that we face. If we're going to be humane and dignified in the face of this reality, we need to come up with a plan, and, yes, we all feel uncomfortable, and every day, we feel uncomfortable. And yet, we need to consider all the factors and ask ourselves what's the humane and dignified... what's the right thing to do?

890           So in our move to 780 Atwater, I've been meeting with neighbours for over about 4 years, now. Hundreds of hours, really. And what's really interesting is that out of all these conversations, the fears that people have really boil down to three words. Safety, security, cleanliness. And you know, I think it's important to create a plan that the neighbours actually have a lot of input into,

and when a new resource does come to the area, to think about what the neighbours would want, you know.

895 In our design, we have a number of features in the actual design of the building that ensure things like there isn't a lineup down the sidewalk that blocks the entrance to the neighbours' shops. We have a rooftop enclosed terrace for people to smoke, so we don't have a big pile of people on the front sidewalk smoking away, which, of course, would not please the neighbours. We have a refrigerated garbage room in the basement, because obviously, we know  
900 that if we're serving a lot of food, we're going to have a fair bit of garbage with that, that the neighbours don't want to see that.

And so... it's wise to incorporate the concerns of the neighbours. And... I guess I would say that it can be done, that groups can listen carefully to neighbours, and input... take their  
905 ideas and put it in the cohabitation plan. In fact, the majority of our cohabitation plans that we've created comes directly from the neighbours. Two ladies, who live a block away from where we will be.

And on our part, maybe that's a bit risky, but honestly, if you're going to be living together  
910 for a long period of time, why not listen a bit to each other, and actually take some of their ideas? So, we will be trying to do that. The reason I say trying, is because sometimes, after you spend hundreds of hours listening to neighbours and come up with a plan, a number of ideas, such as having mediators, some security for the neighbours' shops at night. You know, a mental health coordinator to facilitate quicker access to mental health resources. Clean teams that clean the  
915 neighbourhood and keep it in a good state of order, where you pay the homeless to assist in these matters.

You would think, when you present this to various levels of government, they would be quick to embrace it. Yet, what you find, quickly, when you do, is that sometimes they're not. One  
920 of the things that is also a factor is that different levels of government work together to actually make sure that the final outcome actually happens. And I've been surprised recently seeing that, in fact, this is a bigger hurdle than I had imagined.

I've probably gone on for long enough, maybe you want to ask some questions and we'll go from there?

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

O.K., il vous restait trois minutes, mais ça va très bien, on peut engager la conversation. Do you understand when I speak French?

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**M. DAVID CHAPMAN :**

A little bit, yeah.

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Nous avons lu jusqu'à quel point le projet était fragilisé, de votre déménagement au 780 Atwater. Est-ce que les choses se sont... est-ce que ça va mieux, ou si le projet est encore à risque de ne pas pouvoir déménager? Could you translate it for me?

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**Mme JUDY GOLD :**

We heard that the move to Atwater, that there were problems. I think that they were mostly financial problems. Have the problems been resolved? Are things looking up?

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**M. DAVID CHAPMAN :**

This is a good point.

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**Mme JUDY GOLD :**

Oh, sorry, I have to repeat the question because I forgot to open my microphone, I'm sorry.

955 Yes, we had heard that Resilience was having problems, financial, notably. Has the situation been resolved at all?

**M. DAVID CHAPMAN :**

960 Yes and no. We met with the social services minister, Lionel Carmant, in October, at his request. Gave him a tour of our new facility, talked about being partners, and the fact that Resilience should get more funding from the CIUSSS, and we talked about our cohabitation plan, which our neighbours had a lot of input into, and we talked about filling gaps in services, such as, perhaps, being open on weekends so that the homeless have a place to go on weekends.

965 And you would think that all of that would be warmly embraced. We're asked to give, to send a budget. So two weeks later we did, and then we were asked about our budgetary shortfall for the year, which we began to count on, now that, you know, since it was being asked. And yet, what we find, after waiting in silence for over a couple of months is sorry, all funds are used, reach out to the federal government. And so, sometimes, you have to sort of pinch yourself a bit, maybe  
970 smack yourself in the face a bit, just to say: is this for real?

And so... Unfortunately, yes, we are doing everything we can, and because we had talked about our operational shortfall, of about 350,000 dollars, we began to believe that it was indeed coming. And so, we've been left scrambling a little bit. Thanks to the media, there has  
975 been... we're starting a little bit of money coming, enough that we can just barely keep the doors open, you know, but part of the struggle is...

980 When you'd like to be thinking about things like cohabitation and working with your neighbours and investing in the long-term relationships, and yet, you're having to continually scramble to keep the lights on. It's... you know, you can see the tension, I think. It shouldn't be this way, and yet... the sad reality is, unfortunately, sometimes governments get a little persuaded by certain methodologies, things like the housing first approach, and you know, they hear things like, don't put a patch upon a patch, don't invest in things that are not going to immediately end homelessness, you know.

985 We need to end homelessness, we need to do it quickly, so, let's be wise in our  
investments. So that sounds great, the taxpayer loves to get more for less money, and... the  
problem is, if you're actually engaging people where they are, and that's what we do at  
Resilience, trying to meet people as they are, whether they're intoxicated or not, and move  
forward with them, if that's what you're doing, then what you find out is that it's not quite so simple  
990 as a novel housing program, especially in the context of Canada, where you've got hundreds of  
years of cultural genocide behind you. It's going to take a little more than a novel housing  
program to fix that.

995 So, in the real world, homelessness in Canada is not ending. And so, what we need to  
face is the hard reality in front of us, and say, what are we going to do? Yes, you can reduce  
homelessness to some degree, and yes, housing options are really, really important. And you  
need as many options as possible. Yeah. I don't want to get on a side track, but, yeah.

**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1000 Oui, oui, mais on comprend que ce que Résilience fait, c'est un centre de jour, et votre  
projet devait être un... j'imagine qu'il va voir le jour, là, je ne peux pas imaginer le contraire. Mais  
il serait un projet exemplaire par son architecture, par l'intégration des ressources, des services  
qui seraient donnés aux gens. Could you translate? Merci.

1005 **Mme JUDY GOLD :**

1010 I'm not translating word for word, but the general sense is, you know, optimistically, this  
thing will happen, your project will happen, and it appears to be somewhat of an exemplary  
project. In terms of the building itself, you know, architecturally, how it's built, in terms of the work  
that you've done regarding cohabitation... that's the impression that we have, actually. Do you  
agree with us?

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1020 Well, thank you, thank you. We would really like to see. You know, often, there's fear on both sides among the homeless community and the housed community. If you can just address that obvious reality. Sometimes if you do a few things together, like, one of the things we do is we have housed volunteers come in and participate in the centre, contributing in all kinds of various ways, where they're actually encountering homeless people in a different setting than what they're used to... it breaks down barriers, and hopefully, thank you, the good of both communities can be seen.

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

1030 Juste une observation pour bien comprendre. On a le sentiment qu'il y a un affrontement entre deux visions des ressources en hébergement pour les personnes en situation d'itinérance. Comme si vouloir avoir un centre de jour très performant, large, qui accueille beaucoup de gens, et de l'autre côté de donner accès à du logement accompagné, c'était comme deux visions qui s'affrontent actuellement au gouvernement du Québec, auprès du ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux. Est-ce que je me trompe?

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**Mme JUDY GOLD :**

1040 Essentially, what Ariane says is that we have a sense that there are two opposing visions, or two opposing approaches. One is to, of course, make a shelter, for example, as you're doing, and as Nakuset said, you know, people can die on the street, they have to go somewhere. And another approach, which is housing first. And... there's a conflicting approach, and is this approach also being part of the Quebec Health Ministry, is it clear to you if they favour one approach or the other?

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**M. DAVID CHAPMAN :**

1050 It's a really good question, and I think that at the moment, where the funding is going, if you look at, for example, where that 24 million has just been announced to help with encampments is going, you'll see that day centres get 9% of that funding envelope. And that will tell you about all you need to know.

1055 The money is going to the housing first approach, and that's fine, we can try that a while. I was a housing first supervisor for time, and watched as Inuit client after Inuit client was evicted from their apartment, and watched how it was harder to find landlords who would rent to us. Somehow, these things don't seem to come out in the research, so, you know.

1060 I don't think anyone was calculating the rise in racism that our program developed. And so, one of the real questions is, what are the long-term effects... not, like, OK, a year running or six months after, but what are the true long-term effects? While housing first does work for 50% of the homeless population, and that's a notable thing, actually. That's really notable. And so, it has its place, it has its significance.

1065 But the problem is when it steps up and wants to take almost the entire pie. That's where the problem lies. Because if you buy into that, right, and you're running around counting the number of homeless people we have every year, but you're not simultaneously counting how many are dying, that's a problem. We should know how many are dying each year, because that'll tell us how much success we're having, we're actually having.

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

OK, last question.

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**Mme JUDY GOLD :**

1080           The last question. We appreciate very much everything you've told us, the content has been very rich for us. What should we tell the City? What would you like us to tell the City?

**M. DAVID CHAPMAN :**

1085           I think they already have some of the right ideas. Put a resource in every neighbourhood that's accessible, so that you don't have massive concentrations in just certain areas. And the biggest challenge there is there's going to be wealthier areas that are going to absolutely make sure that they get out of this situation.

1090           And I hate to tell you, but they will win. So you'll do everything you can, you'll make your recommendations to the City, and they will win. Westmount will win. You know... Other areas that are wealthy will win. But I applaud you for trying. You know, do your best, and as someone who's had to look at some of the things that cities do to get rid of you, it's sad, but... I hope... I still like to hope that there can be something good that comes.

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**Mme JUDY GOLD :**

Thank you.

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**LA PRÉSIDENTE :**

Thank you. We will try very hard. Merci beaucoup de votre présence, c'était en effet très précieux. Portez-vous bien, bonne chance.

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**M. DAVID CHAPMAN :**

Merci.