



Downtown Strategy BUILDING ON MOMENTUM

2016 Consultation Document





TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR	4
MESSAGE FROM RICHARD BERGERON	6
A DOWNTOWN WITH MOMENTUM	8
OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY	11
WHERE IS DOWNTOWN?	12
1. A PORTRAIT OF DOWNTOWN	14
1.1 EVOLUTION AND HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN MONTRÉAL	14
1.2 DOWNTOWN TODAY	17
THE ECONOMIC ENGINE OF QUEBEC	17
A VIBRANT ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL NETWORK AND A FLOURISHING KNOWLEDGE HUB	20
A RAPIDLY GROWING, MIXED POPULATION	22
NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSOLIDATION	25
EVER-BUSIER TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS	29
A BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO BE ENHANCED	34
2. TREMENDOUS DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL	36
3. OUTLOOK: DOWNTOWN IN 2030	40
4. TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS AND STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS	43
TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT 1 ENHANCING THE PUBLIC TRANSIT NETWORK	44
TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT 2 OPENING UP DOWNTOWN TO THE RIVER	46
TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT 3 CONVERTING INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS: A MODEL OF URBAN REGENERATION	48
THEME 1 COMPLETE, INCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS	50
THEME 2 A DISTINCTIVE ECONOMIC ENGINE	54
THEME 3 SMART, SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY	56
THEME 4 INFRASTRUCTURE THAT INTEGRATES MORE SEAMLESSLY INTO THE URBAN FABRIC	58

LEGEND AND CREDITS

PHOTOS

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Factorie l'agence

Montréal 



Denis Coderre
Mayor of Montréal

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

The 21st century is the century of the city. In 2008, the world passed an important milestone when the proportion of the global population living in cities exceeded 50%. The UN predicts that by 2050 this figure will reach 70%: cities will be home to no fewer than 2.5 billion more people by then.

This means that the future success of humanity now depends on how cities are built, and the quality of life they offer their residents. I am determined to ensure that Montréal remains an extraordinary place to live and becomes a model and an inspiration for urban North America.

Along with this vast shift to urbanization, the globalization of an economy that now revolves around knowledge, creativity and information has made cities the main centres of wealth creation. No longer is it so much countries that are competing economically with each other, but rather cities and the regions around them, called city-regions. Accordingly, we have to do our utmost to develop our own talents – which means prioritizing education – and to attract and retain the best people and companies from around the globe.

A city's international reputation and its brand are key in this respect. And that's where its downtown comes in.

A city's downtown is where the community shows its face to the world, where it displays its values and asserts its vitality, where it showcases its lifestyle. On every continent, today's leading cities – the ones whose names are on everyone's lips and that are thriving in this competition between the world's city-regions – have all grasped this truth and are developing remarkable urban initiatives for their downtowns. Better yet, they are turning their entire downtowns into exceptional urban projects.

Our Downtown Strategy's objective is to launch an exceptional urban project that will allow the Greater Montréal community, and even Quebec as a whole, to make downtown Montréal one of the linchpins of our collective future.

We are fortunate to be starting from a solid foundation, supported by history, geography and the vision of the illustrious city leaders who came before us. For downtown Montréal is already a happy exception within North America: not only is it lived in, but it is the continent's second-largest knowledge hub, Quebec's leading economic engine, a veritable cultural and gastronomic Eden, home to the finest shopping street in all of Canada, the world's largest indoor city, the universal capital of harmonious co-existence (if there were such a title), and more. We already knew all this back in the 1960s, when we propelled our downtown into the modern era.

And we've recently rediscovered it, as evidenced by the tremendous momentum the city centre has been building in recent years, as a great place to live, a hotbed of culture and a terrific place to do business.

Two decades ago, people said that all the vacant lots made downtown Montréal look like a bombsite. Combining public- and private-sector know-how, the momentum we have seen in recent years has erased this negative perception. There remains much to be done, mind you, for downtown still has tremendous development potential. The commitment I am making today is to support the momentum in our city centre.

Two of the many forms that this support will take will be especially transformational.

The first is in line with my strong preference for public transit as the model for travel both to and from and within the downtown area. The planned metropolitan electric network, the REM, announced recently by the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec is a giant step in this direction. Fifty years ago, the original metro network made a vital contribution to directing the growth and defining the distinctive personality of downtown Montréal. The REM will soon make it the North American champion of cutting-edge public transit systems.

The second form lies in opening up our downtown to the St. Lawrence River – something Montrealers have been hoping to see for a long time now. Technological evolution and changes in the global production system now allow us to recycle vast tracts of industrial, railway and port properties that have historically separated cities' central cores from their waterfronts in urban centres around the world. In downtown Montréal alone, the Strategy aims to redevelop no fewer than 20 kilometres of waterfronts in various ways. Of course, we will be careful not to interfere with any Port of Montreal activities, as the Port remains one of our vital economic assets.

From Hamburg and Lyon to Barcelona, San Francisco, Paris and Vancouver, international cities hailed for the quality of their urban design all share one thing in common. Over the past ten to twenty years they have all deployed development strategies for their cores based on these two central principles: choosing public transit and showcasing their connection with the water. With this Downtown Strategy, Montréal intends to join this select club of model cities for the 21st century.

It is important to understand that the downtown vision announced with our Strategy must be shared, for it will benefit everyone. Downtown development does not take anything away from any other part of our city. For people living in Greater Montréal and indeed everywhere in Quebec, it is in everyone's interest for the downtown of our metropolis to be prosperous and highly regarded. I will also make sure that the Strategy excludes no one, but instead reinforces Montréal's reputation as a model of social integration.

Let us once again have confidence in our abilities and together build a downtown worthy of Montréal's international standing.



Denis Coderre
Mayor of Montréal



Richard Bergeron

City Councillor – Saint-Jacques District

Executive Committee member
responsible for the Downtown Strategy

MESSAGE FROM RICHARD BERGERON

Something amazing is happening downtown, something that the urban planner in me had been anticipating for a very long time. Downtown is seeing tremendous development momentum, and what's special about this momentum is that it is affecting many different aspects of city development:

- **Demographic momentum:** downtown has recently gained 15,000 new residents and is getting ready to welcome 10,000 more once the many new housing projects are completed
- **Housing construction momentum,** with no fewer than 2,500 annual housing starts, 10 times more than 20 years ago
- **Momentum as a place to do business,** as shown by the 250,000 m² of office space recently delivered or currently under construction
- **Commercial momentum,** as illustrated by the arrival of new supermarkets, furniture stores, hotels, and other commercial ventures
- **Momentum in terms of public services,** centred around the new CHUM and its research centre
- **Momentum as a cultural hub,** as evidenced by the Maison de la danse, the NFB, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts Pavilion for Peace, the renovation of the Saint-Sulpice library, and other projects
- **Skyrocketing public transit momentum,** with a 50% increase in ridership to downtown over the past 15 years, translating into more than 110,000 new users
- **Social momentum,** such as that illustrated by the inclusive approach taken for Émilie Gamelin Park and Cabot Square, and by the recent appointment of a protector of the homeless and the creation of the International Observatory of Mayors on Living Together
- **Economic momentum** driven by these developments, as shown by the value of building permits – an annual average of \$1.2 billion for the Ville-Marie Borough alone, not including the CHUM and its research centre – triple that in previous years

With the Downtown Strategy, Mayor Coderre has given me the responsibility of ensuring that this momentum builds and confirms Montréal's standing as one of the world's most attractive and vibrant cities. I couldn't have hoped for a more inspiring mandate.

To start with, the timing is right. Thanks to years of awareness building, from the Kyoto Protocol (1997) to the Paris Agreement (2015), a clear majority of Montrealers are now strongly in favour of sustainable development. This means that people are rediscovering the joys of urban centrality – density, diversity and accessibility – typical of Montréal's central neighbourhoods, and above all its downtown. This trend is particularly popular with the "millennials" of Generation Y. Whether they were raised in the city or the suburbs, they are massively opting for these central neighbourhoods and an urban lifestyle built around public transit and active transportation.

Certain challenges are becoming apparent, however, so it is essential that the city, supported by higher levels of government, take action in each of the three main areas covered by the Strategy:

- **Transportation:** The transportation networks providing access to downtown date from the 1960s and 1970s, and today have reached saturation point. If we are to continue developing our downtown, there will have to be a cycle of major investment aimed at improving this access. In this regard, the Strategy proposes that priority go to investment in public transit and active transportation.
- **Neighbourhoods:** The housing built downtown in the past few years has targeted two markets: luxury units and small starter units for young households. To avoid seeing these households forced to move away from downtown when they are ready to start a family, the Strategy proposes an emphasis on building family housing and planning the community facilities families need, with elementary schools topping the list. To ensure that people with lower incomes can also live downtown, the Strategy proposes that the city's inclusiveness policy be rigorously applied.

- **The economy:** Competition has become fierce in the areas of office and retail space, the two pillars of downtown employment. The Strategy aims to meet this challenge by ensuring optimal access to downtown on the one hand, and focusing on the unique nature and quality of the downtown urban experience on the other.

Montréal is a natural crossroads between Europe and North America, combining the best of these two major traditions in the art of city design: on the European side, respect for historic roots, heritage, harmony, refinement, conviviality and civic mindedness; on the North American side, vitality, eclecticism, audacity, confidence in the future and dynamic private initiative. The Strategy is an opportunity to make the most of our city's dual character by combining the best of Europe with the best of North America in our downtown. The first to benefit from this will clearly be Montrealers of today and tomorrow. This is what I told my students 25 years ago and it's what I still believe, now more than ever.

Please join us in this vital collective conversation about the future of our downtown.



Richard Bergeron

City Councillor – Saint-Jacques District
Executive Committee member responsible
for the Downtown Strategy



A DOWNTOWN WITH MOMENTUM

DOWNTOWN MONTRÉAL IS A THRIVING PLACE. IT IS THE HEART OF THE CITY, WITH NEARLY 100,000 RESIDENTS AND MORE THAN 300,000 WORKERS, 150,000 STUDENTS AND THOUSANDS OF VISITORS EVERY DAY.

This is the economic hub of the region, home to four institutions of higher learning, two university hospitals, a wide variety of cultural attractions like none other in North America, numerous major tourist attractions, a wealth of architectural and heritage treasures, 19 kilometres of shoreline, an extensive public transit network including 15 metro stations, and one of the world's largest indoor pedestrian networks. Downtown Montréal is Quebec's economic engine, a mosaic of vibrant neighbourhoods brimming with tremendous sustainable urban development potential.

Renewed interest in downtown – Time to seize the opportunity

Over the past two decades, Montrealers have shown renewed interest in their downtown. In fact, the number of residents grew by 12% in the 10 years from 2001 to 2011. This young, cosmopolitan and highly educated population contributes to the area's vitality. And then there are the 720,000 workers, students and visitors who come downtown every day.

At the same time, there has been huge investment in a number of property development projects. New downtown housing represents over one-third of all housing starts in the city, and there are many new office towers underway or in the works. Downtown Montréal also boasts considerable development potential, particularly along the St. Lawrence River and with several major institutional sites to be repurposed.

There are some major projects on the drawing board, including a metropolitan electric transportation network (REM), and the renewal of the Old Port, the Harbourfront sector and the Ville-Marie Expressway. All these projects will add new vitality to parts of downtown and enhance existing or emerging neighbourhoods. The leading educational and cultural institutions and the business community could be valuable partners in these transformational projects.

Support from other levels of government for these urban projects, combined with the commitment of Montréal city authorities, offers an unprecedented opportunity for downtown. It is time to seize this opportunity and plan the area's development over the next 15 years.

Downtown, a valuable source of revenue for the Montréal community

The heart of the metropolis and the economic engine for the region, downtown Montréal generates tremendous wealth for the city as a whole. Municipal tax revenue from the Ville-Marie Borough alone will exceed spending there by \$371 million in 2016. This means that 42% of tax revenue generated by the borough will flow back to the Montréal community to finance projects and activities that will benefit all Montrealers.

The impact of globalization

In today's globalized world, cities are increasingly competing with one another – from the local to the international level. Optimizing downtown Montréal's development potential and its attractiveness will equip it to carve out a place as one of the world's great cities.

The new paradigm and the urgent need for action

Downtown Montréal is a model of environmentally sound urban development. It offers residents and visitors a liveable scale, thanks to the proximity of services, dense neighbourhoods and the availability of active and public transportation. The growing popularity of public transit and active transportation among residents and commuters is a priceless asset in reaching greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The pivotal role of downtown and the sustainable lifestyle it offers are central to this new paradigm.

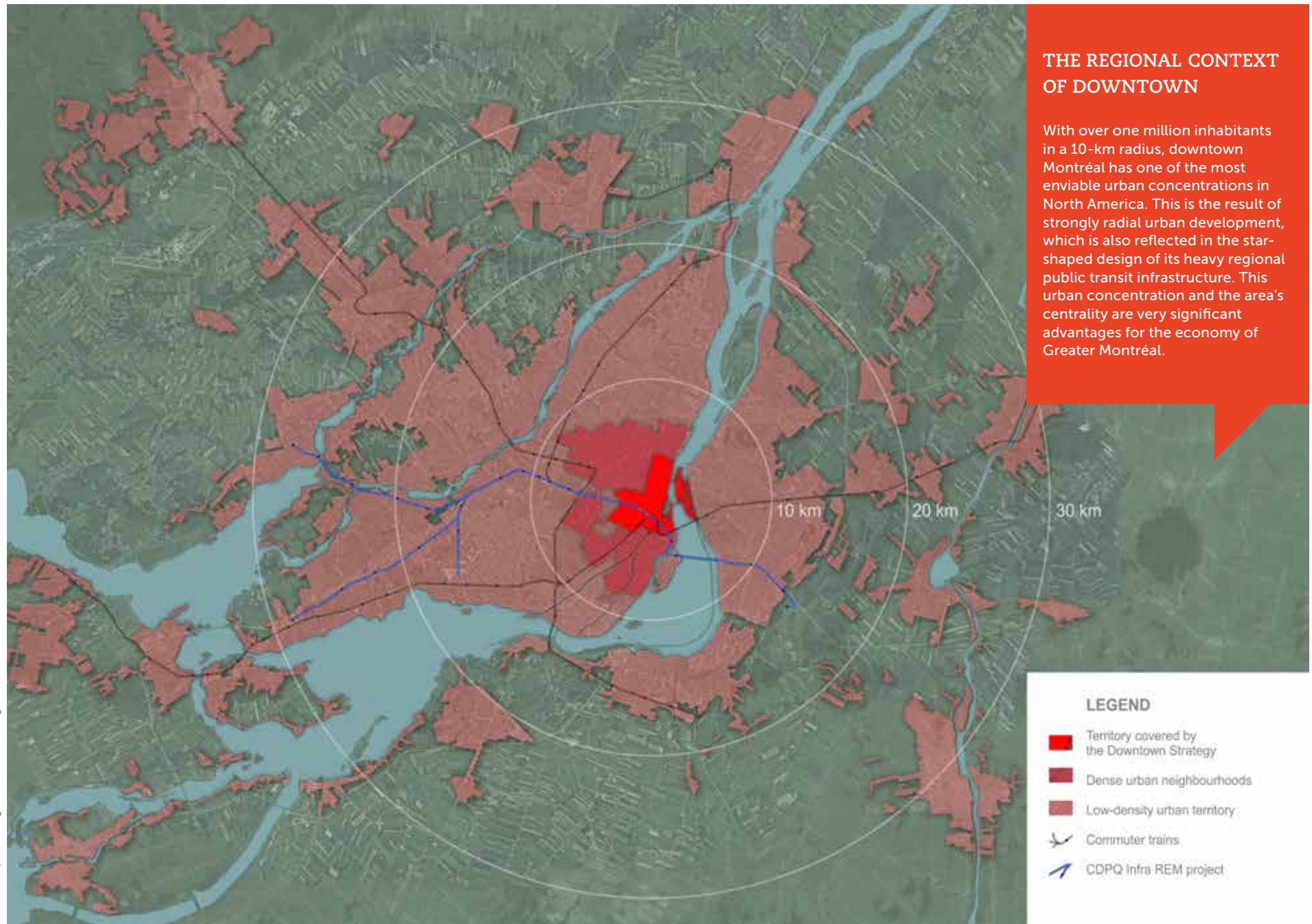
Now the Montréal administration is looking to support and optimize the momentum of its downtown, so as to:

- Enhance access to the the region's main activity hub
- Broaden the availability of a sustainable lifestyle in liveable, attractive and inclusive neighbourhoods
- Boost downtown's predominance in the metropolitan economy in a context where cities are competing worldwide, along with its ability to generate wealth for the whole community



Chemin-Qui-Marche lookout | Credit: © OGariépy

URBANIZED REGION





OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

The goal of the Downtown Strategy is to direct urban growth toward the heart of the metropolitan region by prioritizing greater density downtown. Accordingly, the Strategy focuses on the area's accessibility, attractiveness, energy and vitality with a view to making it a great place to live, work, study and play. The underlying aim of the Strategy is to make Montréal more competitive internationally, and it charts a course toward a decidedly urban future. It will optimize downtown Montréal's development potential based on a bold vision of the future, realized through targeted initiatives guiding public- and private-sector actions.

The Downtown Strategy consultation document presents a vision for the years to come and strategic directions for the entire area. It proposes initiatives in all areas of municipal jurisdiction, from mobility to public security, cleanliness, culture, recreation, libraries, housing, social development, public property development and economic vitality. This kind of broad approach will pave the way for an integrated strategy. Indeed, the recommendations in the strategy will extend beyond municipal jurisdiction issues to cover themes with a major impact on the vitality of downtown, in particular access via public transit.

The Strategy Action Plan will be released in winter 2016 and will propose initiatives with measurable and substantial impacts on downtown Montréal's development potential.



Playing pétanque | Credit © Kelly Jacob

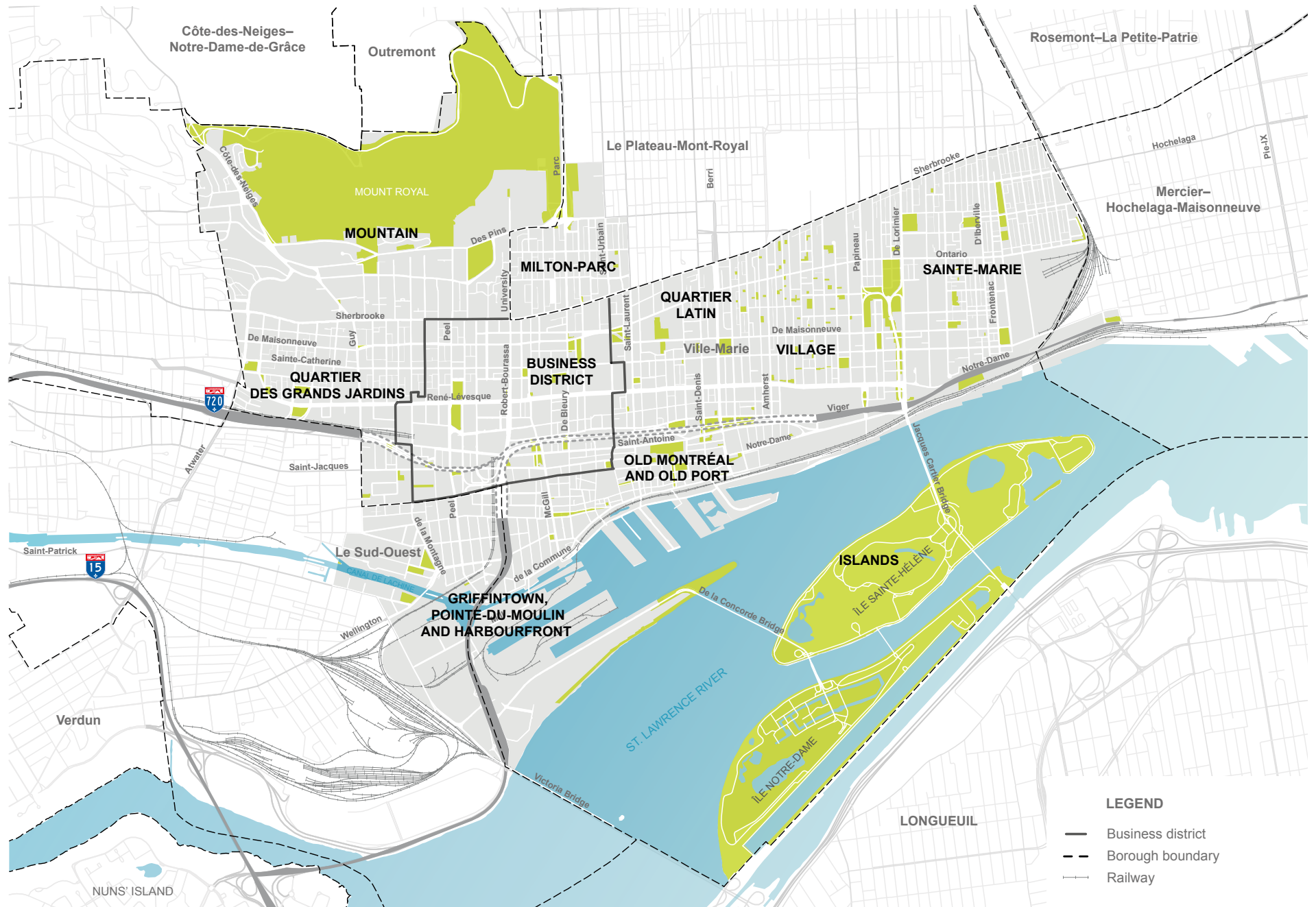


WHERE IS DOWNTOWN?

The downtown area covered by the Strategy was determined on the basis of geographic and historical factors and the actual expansion potential of existing neighbourhoods. The boundaries of the area were set so as to include those elements that typify Montréal and make it an economic, cultural and tourism hub. Consequently, it encompasses the business district and adjacent neighborhoods, specifically Griffintown, the Bridge-Wellington sector and Old Montréal to the south, the Saint-Jacques and Sainte-Marie neighbourhoods to the east, Milton-Parc to the north and the Quartier des grands jardins to the west. All of them have development and densification potential.

Downtown extends just over 18 km² and includes the entire Ville-Marie Borough and parts of the Le Plateau-Mont-Royal, Le Sud-Ouest and Mercier–Hochelaga-Maisonneuve boroughs. It differs from other parts of the city in terms of its central location, built environment and intensity of activities.

DOWNTOWN AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOODS



1

A PORTRAIT OF DOWNTOWN

1.1 EVOLUTION AND HISTORY OF DOWNTOWN MONTRÉAL



Population: 1,150

A fortified town, hub of the fur trade LATE 17th – LATE 18th CENTURY

The fortified town of Ville-Marie, the first permanent European settlement on Montréal Island, was founded by Maisonneuve and Jeanne Mance in 1642 on the banks of the St. Lawrence, not far from the former Iroquois village of Hochelaga. It was a religious colony, established by the French in a strategic location, the last stop before the Lachine Rapids. The site had been a summertime fur trading post between Natives and Europeans for several decades already. This commercial role expanded and the town started to grow. Suburbs, or *faubourgs*, sprang up along the Saint-Laurent and Notre-Dame roads, and this is where most people worked, in artisanal workshops. The British Conquest in 1760 attracted merchants and along with them a new, affluent Anglophone citizenry.

The town at this time was densely populated, with homes and businesses sharing the same buildings, and different social groups living side by side. Following numerous fires, though, the town was largely rebuilt with stone, and homes became more expensive. Poorer Montrealers moved farther out – this was the start of the social and linguistic separation between the suburbs and the centre. Meanwhile, expanding business activities were taking up more and more room inside the town walls, crowding out housing.



Population: 9,000
(increase of 7,850)

A commercial centre of the British Empire LATE 18th – MID-19th CENTURY

In 1801, the government authorized the demolition of the fortifications. More than two-thirds of Montrealers were living in the suburbs by that time. Urbanization continued as existing suburbs expanded and the new Faubourg Sainte-Anne, or Griffintown, was divided into lots. It attracted factories and their workers, as well as the first massive wave of immigrants, most of them Irish, who flocked to Montréal to build the Lachine Canal.

The opening of the canal, in 1825, confirmed Montréal's role as the hub of the Canadian economy. The harbour made the town the primary centre of trade in the country. The canal's dual role as a means of transportation and a source of energy drew many factories, and the banks of the Lachine Canal became the cradle of industrialization in Canada. Business downtown intensified and became more diversified. When the fortifications came down, Montréal produced its first urban plan: the Commissioners' Plan (1804–1817) called for streets to be widened so as to make the town more accessible from the suburbs and included provisions for the first public squares.



1852



Population: 57,700
(increase of 48,700)

Canada's industrial metropolis MID-19th – LATE 19th CENTURY

The city underwent spectacular growth during this period as people flooded in from the countryside and from around the world. French Canadians were in the majority again, and the entire area covered by this Strategy was now urbanized. Up until 1883, the administrative boundaries of Montréal corresponded more or less to today's downtown, with upwards of 155,000 residents.

The opening of the Victoria Bridge in 1859 and the railway lines that converged on the harbour made the city a hub of international trade. Business from the port and railways picked up steam in the old city centre and as warehouse-stores took up more space, wealthier residents moved to the Saint-Antoine neighbourhood, followed by the retail trade and religious communities. A new downtown area started to take shape in the upper town.

The first business district was established along St. James Street, today's rue Saint-Jacques, around new buildings that housed banks and insurance companies. Tramways, at first horse drawn (1862) and later electric (1892), quickly became popular, allowing workers to live in the more affordable municipalities springing up nearby, such as the area now known as the Plateau Mont-Royal.

1881



Population: 155,200
(increase of 97,500)

Centre of Canada's metropolis LATE 19th – MID-20th CENTURY

Between 1880 and 1910, Montréal grew in population and size as a number of surrounding villages were annexed. Industrialization continued apace, up to the Depression in the 1930s. The federal government invested in new port and intermodal infrastructure in the 1910s and 1920s, making Montréal the leading grain port in North America and the second-largest passenger port after New York City. A new business district emerged around Dorchester Square, which was soon ringed by prestigious train stations and fancy hotels.

Sainte-Catherine Street East was the heart of shopping and cultural life, and attracted new entertainment venues (movie and other theatres, cabarets and nightclubs). During Prohibition, nightlife flourished along Sainte-Catherine and in the Red Light district, and mass tourism took off.

With the increasing availability of automobiles for the upper classes, residential neighbourhoods sprang up even farther from the city centre. In the lower town, the older neighbourhoods were allowed to become run down; fires were frequent and new construction rare. A housing crisis turned workers' flats into overcrowded slums.

1966



Population: 136,300
(loss of 18,900)
Montréal pop.: 1,295,000

A modern, dense and multifunctional downtown MID-20th – EARLY 21st CENTURY

This period saw factories close in the old downtown area and a modern downtown emerge. The Port of Montreal's fortunes began to fade in 1959 with the opening of the Seaway. The Lachine Canal was closed to navigation and, in 1976, port operations permanently shifted eastward. As business fell off in the port and trucking gained popularity for hauling freight, rail transportation also declined.

The number of downtown residents dropped off sharply, and neighbourhoods gave way to office towers and expressways (Bonaventure and Ville-Marie). Meanwhile the middle class fled the centre city for outlying communities and cities.

Downtown businesses continued to specialize in services, and the business district was consolidated as new office towers went up. A large number of public-sector projects expanded downtown eastward (Hydro-Québec head office, Place des Arts, Maison de Radio-Canada). The development of the modern downtown gained impetus with the new metro, in 1966. The green and orange lines created rapid, efficient connections between the densely populated neighbourhoods in the centre of the island and the business district.

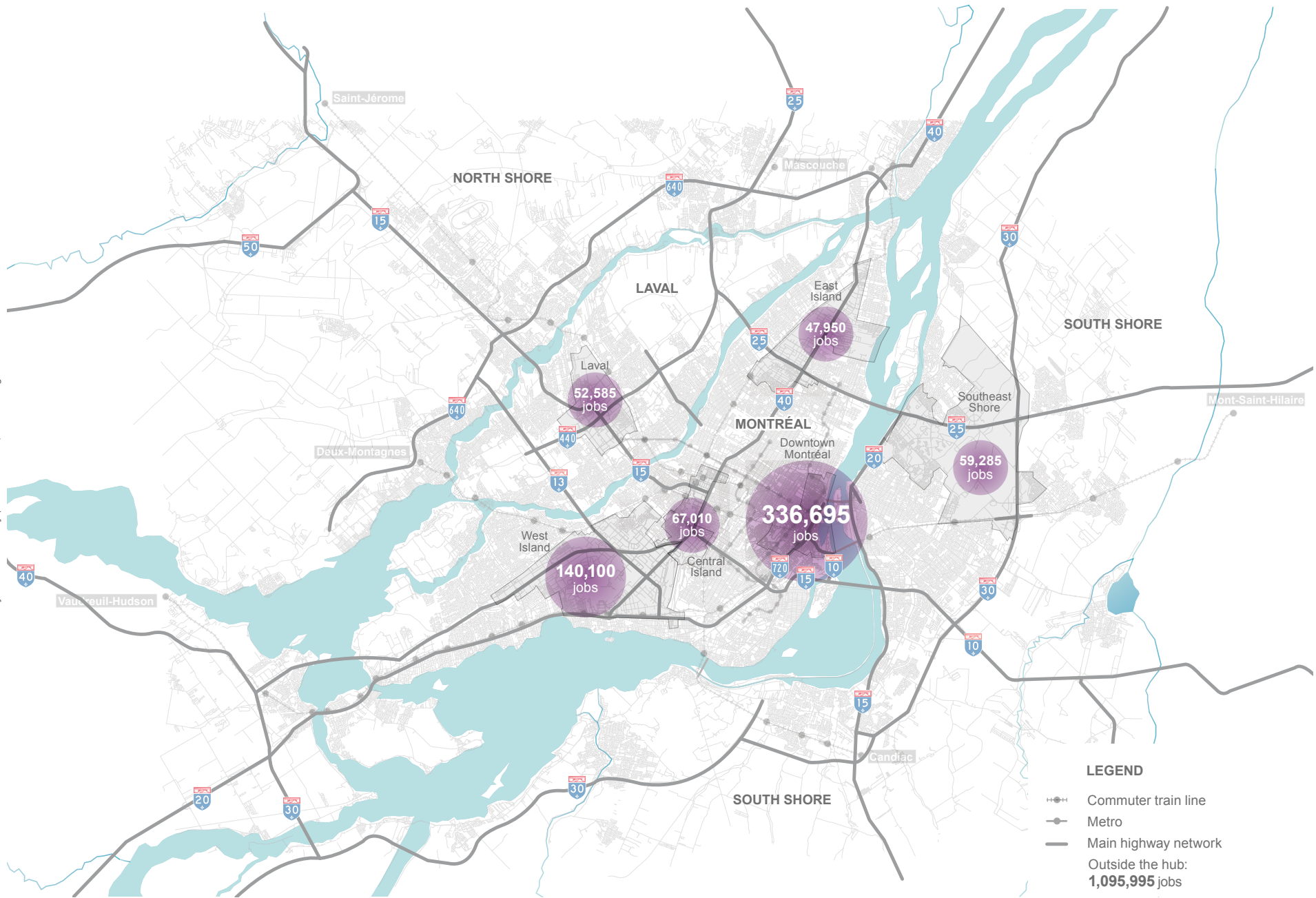
Starting with Expo 67, held on an enlarged Île Sainte-Hélène and the new Île Notre-Dame, Montréal began positioning itself on the cultural and event-driven tourism market, a role confirmed when it hosted the 1976 Olympic Games.

1990



Population: 82,700
(loss of 54,000)
Montréal pop.: 1,000,000
(loss of 295,000)

BREAKDOWN OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE MONTRÉAL AREA



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, customized by place of work | Processing: BC2

1.2 DOWNTOWN TODAY

THE ECONOMIC ENGINE OF QUEBEC

HIGHLIGHTS

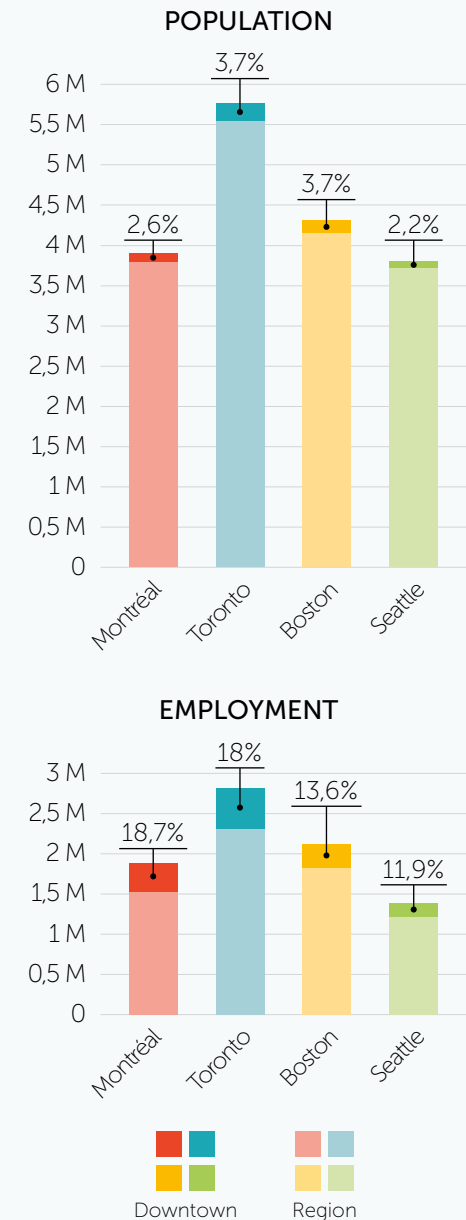
- Downtown Montréal is Quebec's largest employment hub.
- Close to half of all jobs downtown are associated with the high value-added sectors of innovation and creativity.

Downtown Montréal remains the main employment hub of the metropolitan area.

With 337,000 jobs and the highest employment density in Quebec, downtown far outweighs other employment concentrations in the region and in Quebec as a whole, although jobs have been tending to spread out since the 1980s. In the Montréal region, one in five jobs is located downtown. This share has been stable since 2001, but it has grown less quickly than that of South and North Shores. The economic sectors that account for the most jobs are professional services, finance and insurance, and public administration.

Montréal's international image revolves largely around its downtown. The city surpasses other Canadian urban centres in terms of the number of international conventions, headquarters of international organizations and consulates. Most of these are held or located downtown, especially in the Quartier international (convention centre, ICAO). Downtown Montréal is also where a large proportion of Quebec's most popular tourist attractions are located, especially when it comes to cultural and event-based tourism (festivals, Old Port, Old Montréal).

Weight of downtown Montréal, Toronto, Boston and Seattle in relation to each city's CMA in terms of population and jobs (2011)

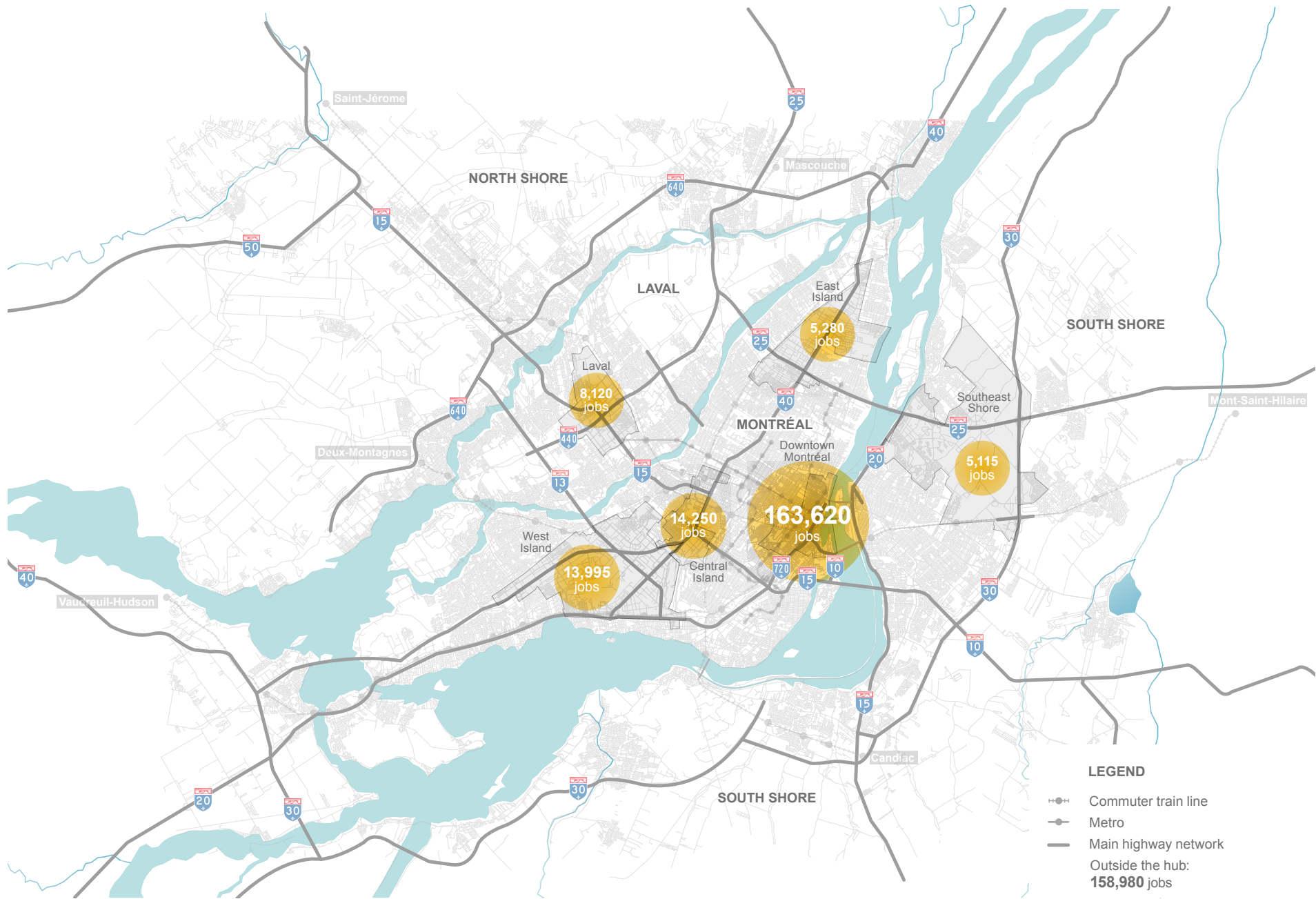


Downtown is also well positioned in the growing knowledge economy, which has replaced the industrial economy. Innovation and creativity now play a key role in economic vitality. In fact, 44% of jobs associated with innovation and creativity in the region, including professional services, the information industry, educational and research institutions and the cultural industry, are found downtown. The city core is home to two major university hospitals – including the newly constructed Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM) – and to the Quartier de l'innovation, established by the École de technologie supérieure and McGill and Concordia universities, which brings together the largest concentration of multimedia and information technology firms in Canada.

With more than half of all office space in the metropolitan region, Montréal ranks second among North American cities for the proportion of office space in the downtown core, after New York. However, downtown no longer has a monopoly on office space: while the modern downtown of the 1960s was home to almost all office space in the metropolitan region, by 2015 it accounted for only 55%. This decline in its relative weight has been particularly marked, in the past 15 years, for high-end office buildings (Class A). In 2000, fully 72% of them were located downtown; by 2015, the figure had fallen to 62%.

The retail trade has been stable for the past decade, although in relative decline in regional terms. The weight of the downtown retail hub has been dropping – from 17.5% to 10% – since the 1990s, as new shopping destinations have opened on the North and South Shores. Rue Sainte-Catherine and the surrounding streets and underground shopping malls linked to it still form the retail core of downtown and draw shoppers from throughout the region and across the entire province. The vacancy rate for retail space is above the regional average of 9.2%. Retail activity and office activity are mutually supportive, as can be seen from the large number of restaurants. Similarly, one-quarter of spending in shopping malls downtown comes from people who work in the area.

BREAKDOWN OF EMPLOYMENT IN INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, customized by place of work | Processing: BC2



A VIBRANT ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL NETWORK AND A FLOURISHING KNOWLEDGE HUB

HIGHLIGHTS

- **With four institutions of higher learning and numerous performance and exhibition venues, downtown is a hub of knowledge and culture like none other in Canada.**

Downtown is Quebec's main artistic and cultural hub. In addition to museums, concert halls, theatres and other arts and performance venues serving the entire metropolis, it is also home to the Grande Bibliothèque and huge indoor and outdoor international arts and entertainment festivals. The Place des Arts sector continues to receive major public investment, confirming its importance as Quebec's cultural hub. Along with the Maison symphonique de Montréal, the Wilder - Espace danse and NFB headquarters projects now taking shape are helping to consolidate and diversify this area by adding administrative, production and training functions in a variety of artistic fields. A Special Planning Program has been created for the adjacent Quartier latin, and the former Saint-Sulpice library is being converted. Museums are also thriving, with the new Montreal Museum of Fine Arts pavilion and the expansion of the Pointe-à-Callière museum into the Montréal Archaeology and History Complex. Throughout downtown there are also a multitude of smaller performance and exhibition venues celebrating theatre, dance, visual, technological and other arts and helping to densify and enrich the downtown artistic network.

Downtown also has the highest concentration of institutions of higher learning and research centres in Quebec. In total, the post-secondary educational institutions downtown bring in nearly 150,000 students. These educational institutions, just like cultural ones, contribute to downtown life and redevelopment through the addition of new buildings, the revitalization of the built heritage and their presence in the public space. They interact with their surroundings and create public events and activities that enliven downtown and share and provide access to culture.

For years now, downtown movie theatres have been closing and audiences at local performance venues have been shrinking.

For instance, attendance at venues in the Quartier des spectacles dropped by 20% between 2004 and 2011. Over that same period, many large performance venues opened in the outer suburbs. Since then venues on Montréal Island, and in particular downtown, especially those offering French-language comedy and music shows, have lost market share to suburban competitors. In addition, it is difficult for Montréal venues to qualify for certain subsidy programs, including support for tours, while suburban venues often receive financial backing from their respective cities.

Spaces for artistic creation, which help to create a special ambience and enliven a neighbourhood, as well as to support the overall vitality of the cultural economy, are also in danger. A number of them have vanished from downtown, while other sectors have gained strength, in particular in Sainte-Marie around the Faubourgs creative hub. Nonetheless, the presence of these creative professionals in downtown neighbourhoods remains precarious, as rents for their premises continue to rise and they face development pressure.



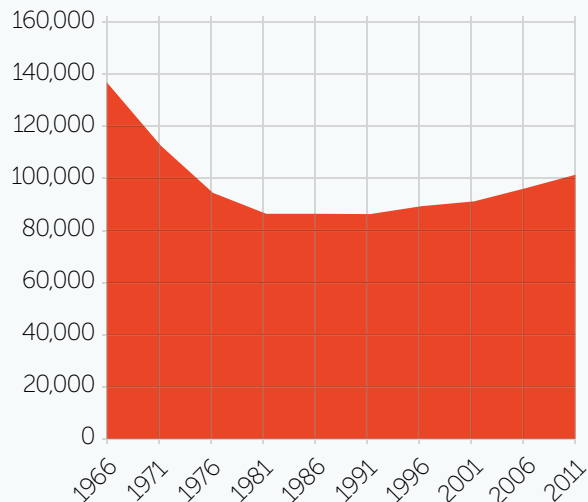


A RAPIDLY GROWING, MIXED POPULATION

HIGHLIGHTS

- Downtown is undergoing a real estate boom: new housing in Ville-Marie represents one-third of all housing starts in the city.
- The downtown population has been growing strongly since the early 2000s, up by over 10,000 in 10 years.
- 57% of downtown households are single individuals.
- Most buyers of new residential units are owner-occupants.

Downtown Montréal population, 1966–2011



Growth in the number of downtown residents picked up again in the late 1990s and has been rising steadily for the past ten years. In 2011, the downtown population was 98,836. It is increasing faster than for the Montréal agglomeration as a whole: the growth rate between 2001 and 2011 was 5.8% downtown, or nearly three times that of the agglomeration (2%).

In fact, downtown has been enjoying a residential development boom for 10 years now, illustrating a regional trend in the construction market in recent decades: concentration, accompanied by densification. The Ville-Marie Borough is leading this movement, boasting the largest market share in the city for 10 years now and accounting for one-third of all city housing starts in 2012–2014. Most new housing units are concentrated in the downtown core and the western sector and share similar characteristics: small (average 65 m²), high cost (over \$400,000 per unit) condos in large housing complexes (over 125 units). According to a 2014 study, three-quarters of buyers in new housing projects are acquiring a unit for themselves (66%) or a family member (6%) to live in. Most of these buyers are under 35 and hope to live downtown for many years. Investors account for 28% of buyers, and are concentrated mainly around the Bell Centre.

Population density downtown is higher than the average for the city and neighbouring boroughs, with the exception of Plateau Mont-Royal.

While all downtown neighbourhoods are residential, some are more densely inhabited than others: the Milton-Parc sector and the Quartier des grands jardins (over 150 units/ha), the heart of the Village, the northern part of Sainte-Marie, Chinatown and the eastern part of Old Montréal (over 75 units/ha).

Residents are largely young, cosmopolitan and university educated.

The most common age group is 20–34, accounting for 40% of residents, differentiating this area from the rest of the agglomeration. Seniors make up 13.4%. The level of education is much higher here than in the rest of Montréal, with 60% of residents holding a university degree (as compared with 34% citywide). Lastly, close to half of residents were born abroad and immigrated either recently or before 2001.

Over half of households are single individuals and the proportion of families with children is lower downtown than in other central neighbourhoods.

Housing downtown consists essentially of small units, one-bedroom or less (studio). Three-bedroom or larger units represent 11.5% of those available, much less than in neighbouring boroughs and in the city as a whole on average, but correspond to the makeup of households. Nonetheless, there is a significant percentage of families with children living in small units (studio or one-bedroom): 17.5% in Ville-Marie. For families with three or more children, this proportion is 12.6%. These are the highest rates in the city.

There is enormous social diversity across downtown, with considerable differences in income and housing costs.

The average cost of a home is under \$325,000 east of Saint-Hubert and always higher to the west. Ville-Marie is the borough where the median income of tenant households is lowest, i.e. \$26,000 in 2010. Nearly 15,000 households, or 41% in the borough, are financially stretched when it comes to housing (low income and a rent-to-income ratio of 30% or more). Single-tenant households have the highest rent-to-income ratios, with 35% of them spending more than half their income on housing. Downtown has 8,920 social and community housing units (public, NPOs, co-ops). Ville-Marie is the borough with the second-highest amount of social and community housing. Housing construction in recent years has been aimed at a more affluent clientele: new occupants have incomes higher than the average for the metropolitan region and half of them earn \$100,000 or more annually.



Jeanne-Mance | Neighbourhood party

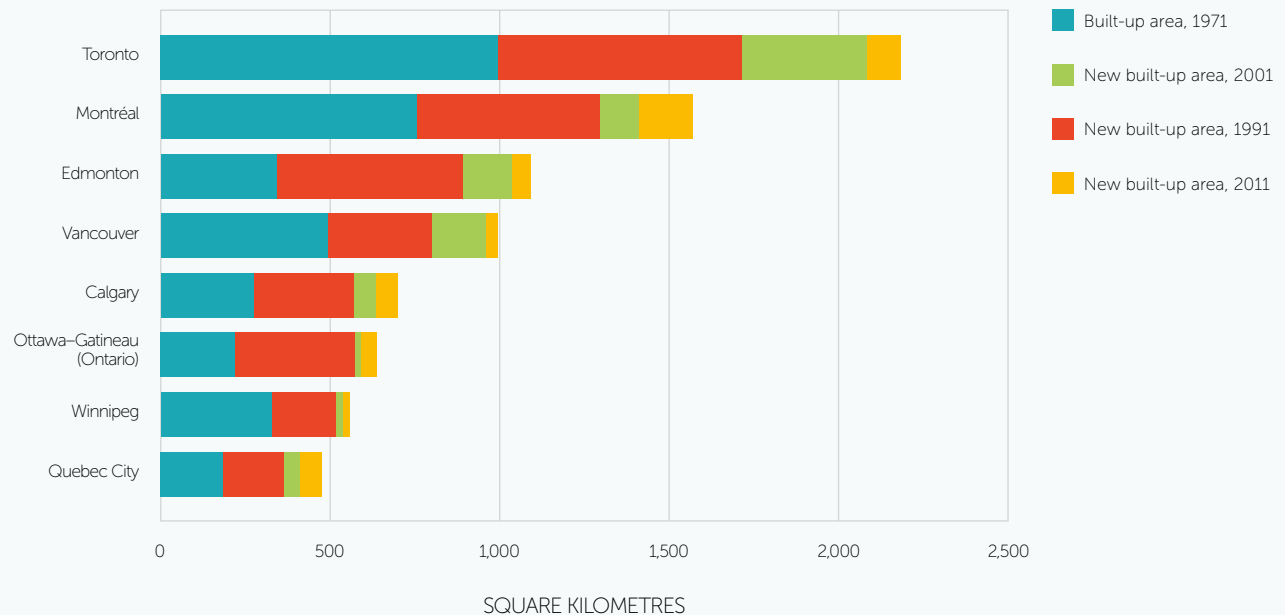
Homelessness and its associated problems (mental health, addiction, etc.) remain an important issue downtown. Most assistance organizations and facilities, including shelters, day centres, halfway houses and rooming houses, are located downtown. Under its 2014-2017 homelessness action plan, the city recently appointed a protector for the homeless, who has committed the city to supporting the creation of 1,000 beds for vulnerable or homeless people and to getting 2,000 homeless people off the street by 2020.

ACROSS THE REGION

The Montréal region is experiencing serious urban sprawl, along with a trend to greater housing density. The dominant form has shifted from single-family homes (70% of housing starts in the early 1990s) to apartments (75% of housing starts today). Since the early 2000s, the built-up area of the metropolitan area has expanded by 161 km², the largest increase for all Canadian metropolitan areas. As a result, some North and South Shore municipalities have seen significant population growth, ranging from 9% in Laval to 26% in Mascouche and 29% in Vaudreuil-Dorion. Net migration for the city of Montréal is negative, as the number of people moving off island exceeds those arriving in Montréal. It is worth noting, however, that 20% of new buyers downtown are from the metropolitan region (outside of Montréal) and 65% from Montréal Island.

Source: Statistics Canada, *The Changing Landscape of Canadian Metropolitan Areas*, March 2016
Processing: Factorie Lagence

Growth in the built-up areas of Canadian metropolitan areas since 1971



NEIGHBOURHOOD CONSOLIDATION

HIGHLIGHTS

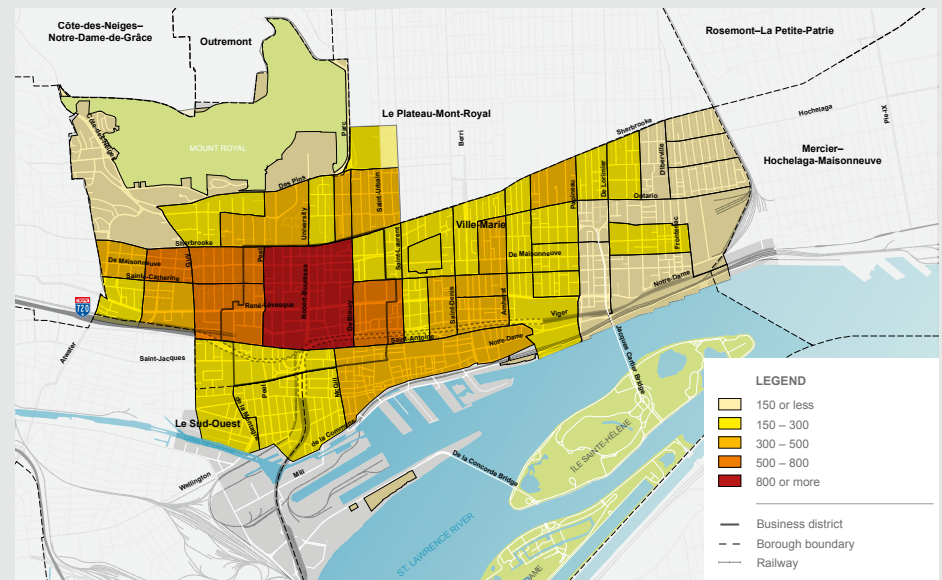
- Downtown is already well served in terms of local services and facilities, but access is uneven.
- 70% of downtown residents get to work by public transit (34%) or active transportation (36%).
- Expressways and transit arteries break up the pedestrian and bike path network and isolate certain sectors.

Downtown presents some unique assets as an urban living environment, in terms of density, proximity to facilities and services, vibrant cultural life and easy mobility via public transit and active transportation. Nonetheless, there are disparities when it comes to access to services and neighbourhood life, largely as a result of the historical development of different sectors.

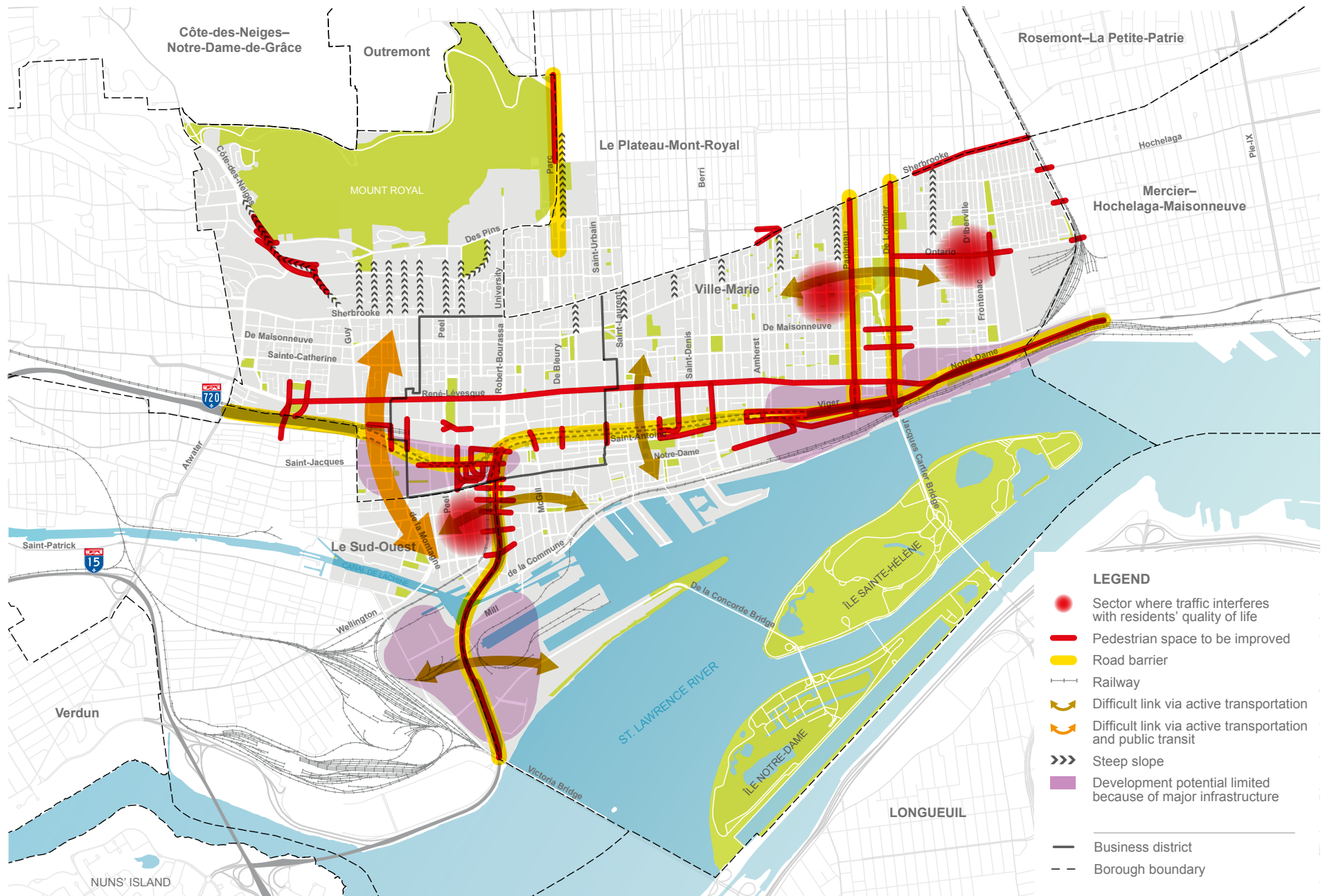
Downtown is fortunate to have the Mount Royal and Île Sainte-Hélène metropolitan parks and the linear parks in the Old Port and along the Lachine Canal nearby. Nevertheless, it is a major heat island. This is one of the parts of the agglomeration where temperatures are highest, mainly because of the density of built-up areas, the lack of greenery, the extensive paved surfaces and the air-conditioning equipment in high-rises. There are few public green spaces in the western sector, and no access to the waterfront east of Amherst, aside from Bellerive Park, with its limited accessibility.

In Peter-McGill, Griffintown, Faubourg Québec and Faubourg des Récollets, public services in the form of local elementary schools, libraries, playing fields, arenas, parks or cultural centres are lacking. Similarly, the availability of local businesses (food, services) is suboptimal in all sectors.

Issues involving relations between homeless people, local residents and merchants are common in many parts of downtown. While people generally feel safe throughout the downtown area, there are conflicts between homeless and marginalized people and other users in many public spaces, in particular Viger Square, Place Émilie-Gamelin, the Village and Faubourg Saint-Laurent. Mediation efforts have been introduced, such as the mobile homelessness referral and intervention team (EMRII brigade), consisting of police officers and outreach workers, and the homelessness intervention sectors in the Ville-Marie Borough, which assist homeless people and support local residents in dealing with related issues (Accueil Bonneau, Village and Cabot Square). The Borough and local organizations also have various projects to redevelop and hold activities in public areas.



MOBILITY ISSUES IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA



LEGEND

- Sector where traffic interferes with residents' quality of life
- Pedestrian space to be improved
- Road barrier
- Railway
- ↔ Difficult link via active transportation
- ↔ Difficult link via active transportation and public transit
- ↔ Steep slope
- Development potential limited because of major infrastructure
- Business district
- Borough boundary

Downtown is geared to foot traffic.

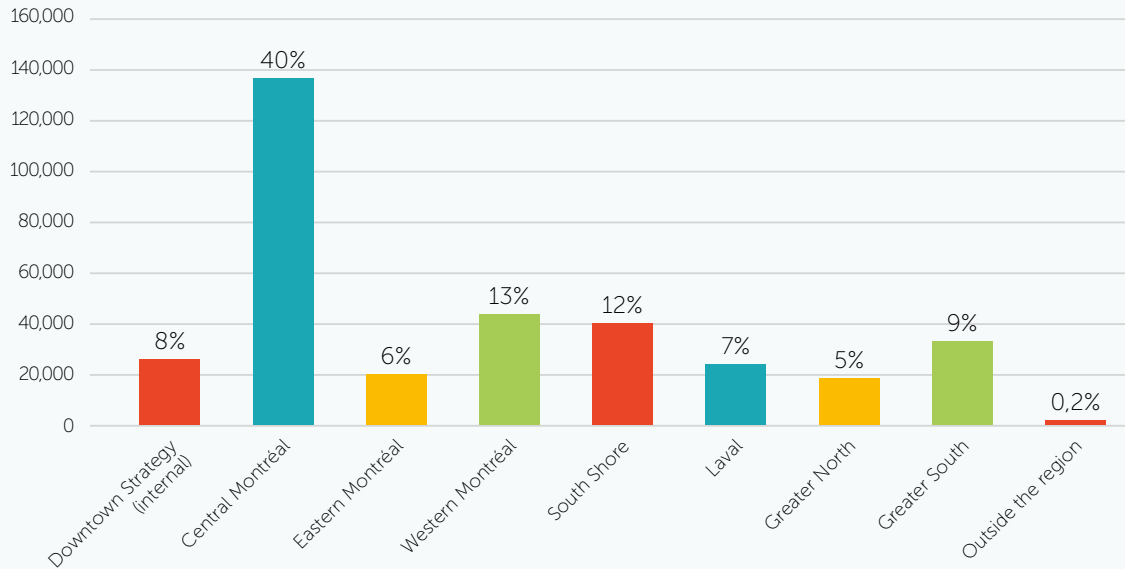
Nearly one-third of residents walk to work. The fact that there are different hubs of activity dotted around the downtown core is conducive to this mode of transport. Nonetheless, some sectors of downtown are less suited to daily travel on foot, in terms of safety and convenience. In some places, major road and rail infrastructure cuts off neighbourhoods and makes life difficult for pedestrians and cyclists, be they residents, workers or tourists. Rue Notre-Dame Est, the area around the Jacques Cartier Bridge (with Papineau and de Lorimier avenues), the Ville-Marie Expressway and its access roads, the area around the downtown terminus and even Boulevard René-Lévesque are the main obstacles in downtown active transportation networks, and among the most hazardous for pedestrians and cyclists. Similarly, Old Montréal and the Old Port are separated by a railway track increasingly used by freight trains. Lastly, bike paths are discontinuous, and the sections of these paths that are not separated from the roadway can be more dangerous.

Many major development projects for public property are being carried out or are in the planning stages:

- Transformation of the Bonaventure Expressway into a boulevard with a wide green median
- Redevelopment of the Quartier des gares, one of the busiest gateways to downtown
- Development of the Place des Arts sector of the Quartier des spectacles
- Redevelopment of Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest
- Covering of a section of the Ville-Marie Expressway at the foot of City Hall and creating a public square there; upgrading Viger Square
- Redevelopment of several streets to link the St. Lawrence River and Mount Royal (urban promenade)
- Redevelopment of Rue Saint-Paul

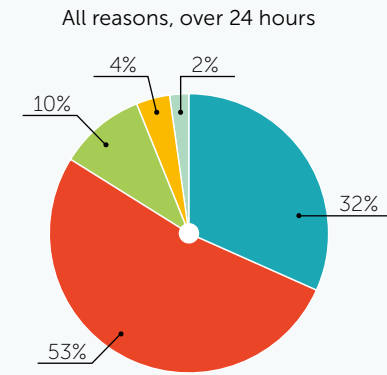
All these projects are intended to increase the amount of greenery, upgrade the public domain and integrate transportation infrastructure, hence fostering the shift toward denser, more intense activities and the travel they generate. This in turn will require safe streets and free spaces for relaxing and socializing with others, to make for a pleasant, liveable environment.

Share of travel by origin and destination during morning rush hour



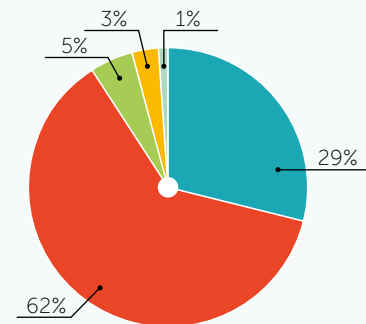
Source: Enquête Origine-Destination 2013 | Processing: WSP

Modal share of travel to/from/within the area covered by the Downtown Strategy



Total trips / day: 1,265,000

All reasons, during MRH* (5 a.m. to 8:59 a.m.)

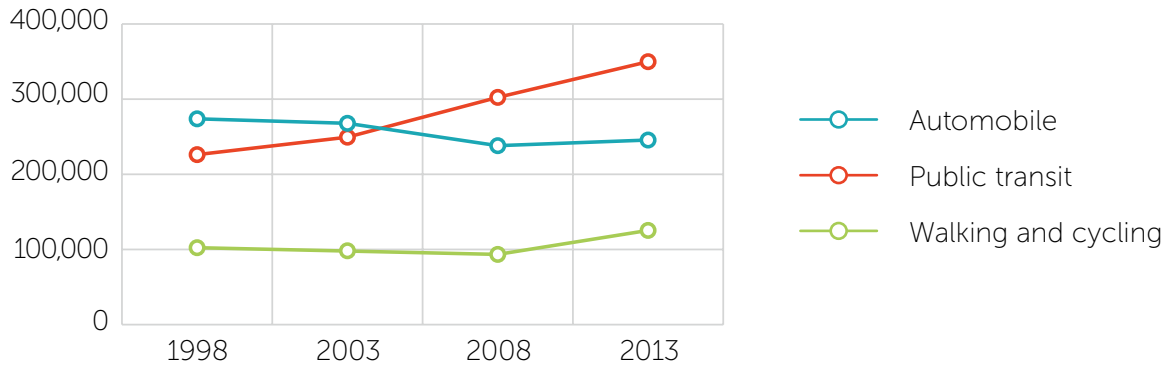


Total trips during MRH: 343,000

*Morning rush hour

- Automobile
- Public transit
- Walking
- Cycling
- Other

Trends in modal share of travel to/from/within downtown over 24 hours



Source: Enquêtes Origine-Destination 1998, 2003, 2008, 2013 | Processing: Ville de Montréal



EVER-BUSIER TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

HIGHLIGHTS

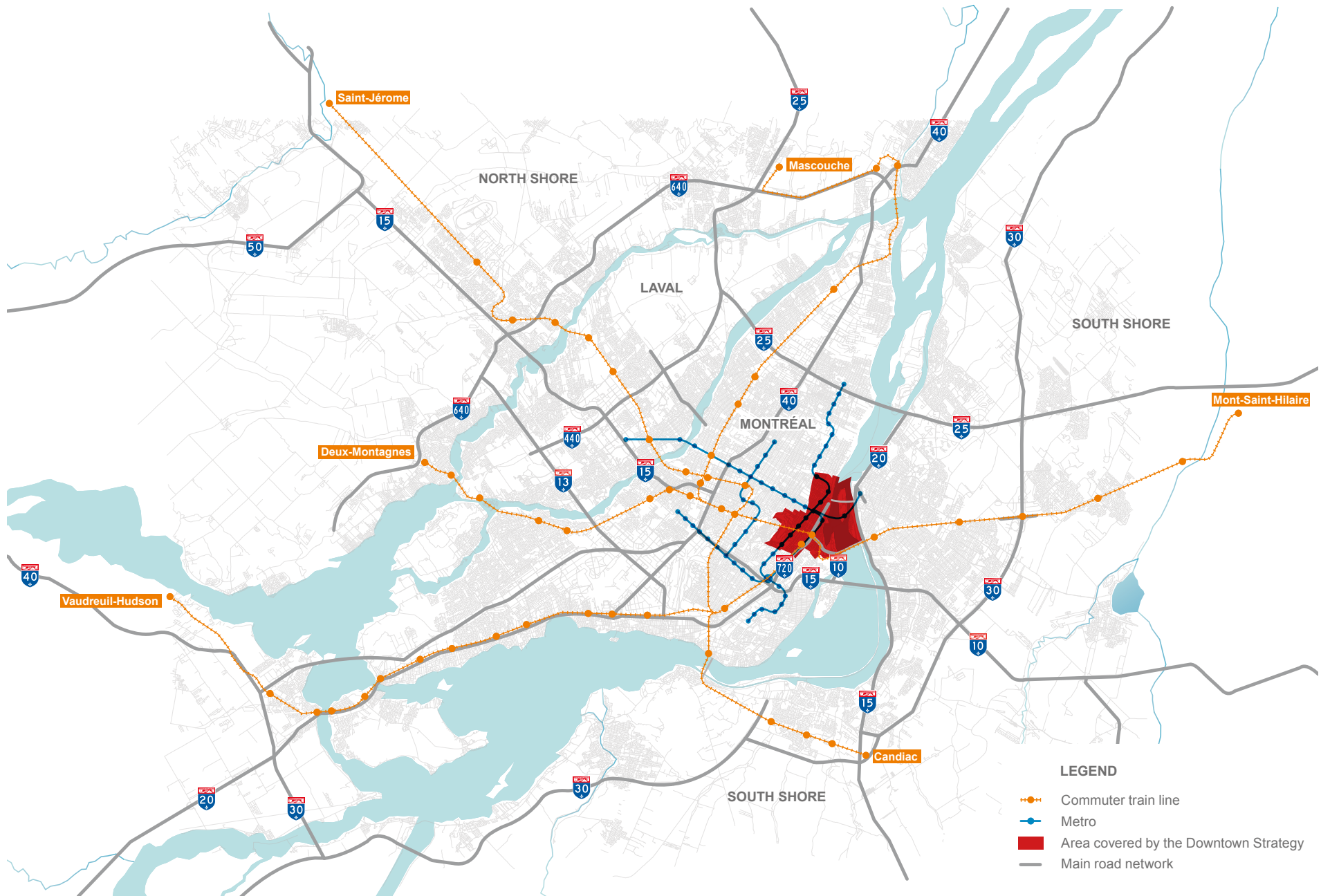
- Downtown has an efficient radial transportation system.
- Downtown generates over one million trips per day.
- Public transit is the most common way to reach downtown.
- Many parts of the public transportation networks are saturated or near capacity during morning rush hour:
 - The eastern portion of the orange line
 - The central portion of the green line
 - The downtown terminus and the reserved lane on the Champlain Bridge
 - Central Station and the Deux-Montagnes commuter train line
 - The 165 (Côte-des-Neiges), 80 (Parc) and 24 (Sherbrooke) bus routes

Travel to, from and within downtown continues to increase. On average, downtown generates over one million trips per day, of which 40% are within central Montréal neighbourhoods, along the orange and green metro lines. Travel to outlying communities accounts for 33%, two-thirds of trips being to and from Longueuil and the South Shore.

Public transit is the most common means of getting downtown, and its modal share is rising.

Just over half of all travel to, from and within downtown is by public transit, accounting for 62% of all trips during morning rush hour. Drivers account for about 30%, and the number of cars heading downtown has remained almost steady for 15 years. In other words, the growth in the number of trips has been absorbed by public transit.

RADIAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

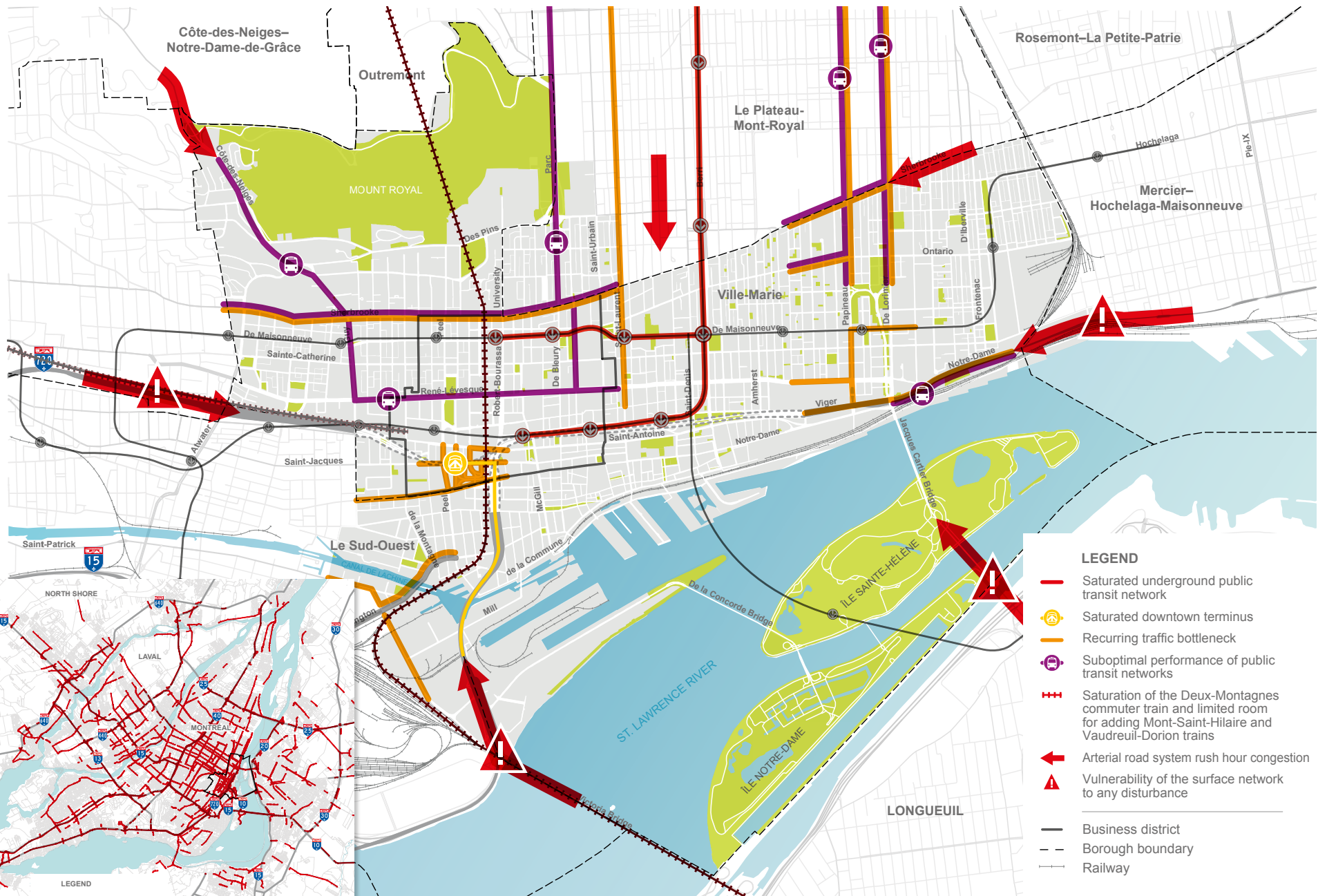


Three public transit projects in Montréal are under study or have been announced. The first, which directly concerns downtown, is headed up by the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec and calls for an electrified train line (the Réseau électrique métropolitain, or REM) to be built between Brossard and Deux-Montagnes via downtown Montréal by 2020, with spurs to the airport and Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. The planned bus rapid transit (BRT) line along Pie-IX, slated for 2022, is to start in Laval and take passengers to the Pie-IX station on the green line. In the long term, it is expected to account for 70,000 trips per day in both directions. Lastly, the extension of the blue metro line to Anjou is under study. The city's Transportation Plan (2008) also mentions the possibility of a tramway system to serve downtown.

Downtown bike paths are a real success. The de Maisonneuve and Berri paths are the most popular, with about 5,000 trips a day in summertime. Other paths, like those along the Lachine Canal and leading to Île Sainte-Hélène, are used for both travel and pleasure. The downtown network has yet to be completed, so as to offer continuous paths across the entire downtown area.

The issue is not so much the number of parking spots available downtown, but rather their distribution, information on their availability, and their rates. There are close to 49,000 parking spots downtown, 11,520 of them on-street and 37,400 in off-street lots. Surface parking lots represent 19% of all off-street parking. The occupancy rate for parking lots shows that paid on-street parking spots are occupied three-quarters of the day in the business district, the Quartier international and Old Montréal. On the other hand, the average occupancy rate is about 50% for other sectors. For off-street parking, the occupancy rate ranges from 56% (Old Montréal) to 78% (Quartier international and business district) and 97% around the CHUM and Chinatown. But the fact remains that this negative perception has an impact on whether people will come downtown to shop or see a show.

SATURATION AND VULNERABILITY OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS LEADING DOWNTOWN



Sources: MOTREM 2008; Ministère des Transports du Québec, 2014, *Évaluation des coûts de la congestion routière dans la région de Montréal* | Processing: BC2

Many major portions of the public transit network leading downtown are saturated at rush hour:

- **The orange line is at over 100% capacity between the Mont-Royal and Bonaventure stations and over 80% as far as the Jean-Talon station.**
The green line is saturated between the Berri-UQAM and McGill stations, which are the two busiest stations in the network.
- **The main bus routes serving downtown have no reserve capacity (165 – Côte-des-Neiges, 24 – Sherbrooke, 80 – Parc, 55 – Saint-Laurent).**
In addition, buses on some routes are occasionally held up by traffic congestion, in particular on Ontario and Papineau, and the performance of many reserved lanes, including the one on René-Lévesque, is suboptimal.
- **Central Station, with over 9 million passengers per year, has reached saturation point.** The six commuter train lines have their terminus downtown, split between Central Station and the Lucien-L'Allier metro station. The Mount Royal tunnel giving the Deux-Montagnes and Mascouche lines direct access to downtown is in need of major retrofitting.
- **Near the train stations, the downtown AMT terminus reached saturation in 2010 and has not been expanded since then.** A total of 1,800 buses from the South Shore pass through every day, saturating the reserved lane on the Champlain Bridge at rush hour and causing chronic congestion around Central Station and the downtown terminus.

Almost all of the road corridors leading downtown are congested. To the north, there are 107,000 vehicles on average every day between the Parc and Berri —i.e., more than take the Jacques Cartier Bridge—, and 78,000 on the north-south routes between Papineau and Frontenac. This traffic grows worse as it flows through the downtown core, and can detract from the quality of life in these sectors. To the east, the streets are congested around the Jacques Cartier Bridge, which also makes bus traffic less efficient.

Over the next 15 years, there will be major construction work on almost all the regional routes into downtown Montréal. Work on a new Champlain Bridge has begun and is to be completed by 2018. The Bonaventure Expressway and the Turcot Interchange (2015–2020) are also undergoing major work, and the Louis-Hippolyte-La Fontaine tunnel is to be upgraded.



A BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO BE ENHANCED

HIGHLIGHTS

- The downtown area has the city's largest number of heritage buildings.
- Many institutional and religious buildings are in need of conversion and major investment.

Today's downtown includes all the historic neighbourhoods that made up the city of Montréal until the late 19th century, so a large number of buildings and some entire neighbourhoods bear witness to the different periods in the city's past. Much of Old Montréal, the birthplace of the city and its first downtown, has been preserved. However, the late 19th-century downtown around Dorchester Square and along Sainte-Catherine, Saint-Antoine and René-Lévesque suffered during the megaproject era in the 1960s and 1970s, when towers sprang up, streets were widened and many lots were left vacant. Nonetheless, a great many historic buildings still stand alongside more modern ones.

The built heritage downtown may be vulnerable (left vacant, subject to demolition pressure) in view of property development trends not necessarily conducive to enhancing and safeguarding the built environment. Many heritage buildings have been demolished because they were not maintained or fell victim to redevelopment pressure.

About 9% of the housing stock requires major repairs; this is within the Montréal average. These units are located mainly in the north part of the Village and Sainte-Marie and in the Quartier des grands jardins. Problems with substandard housing and upkeep affect duplexes and triplexes, as well as apartment buildings.

Downtown has also lost many public institutions, leaving vast sites with heritage buildings vacant. This is the case for the Royal Victoria Hospital, the Montreal Children's Hospital, the Miséricorde hospital, the Shriners Hospital and parts of Hôtel-Dieu and Hôpital Notre-Dame.

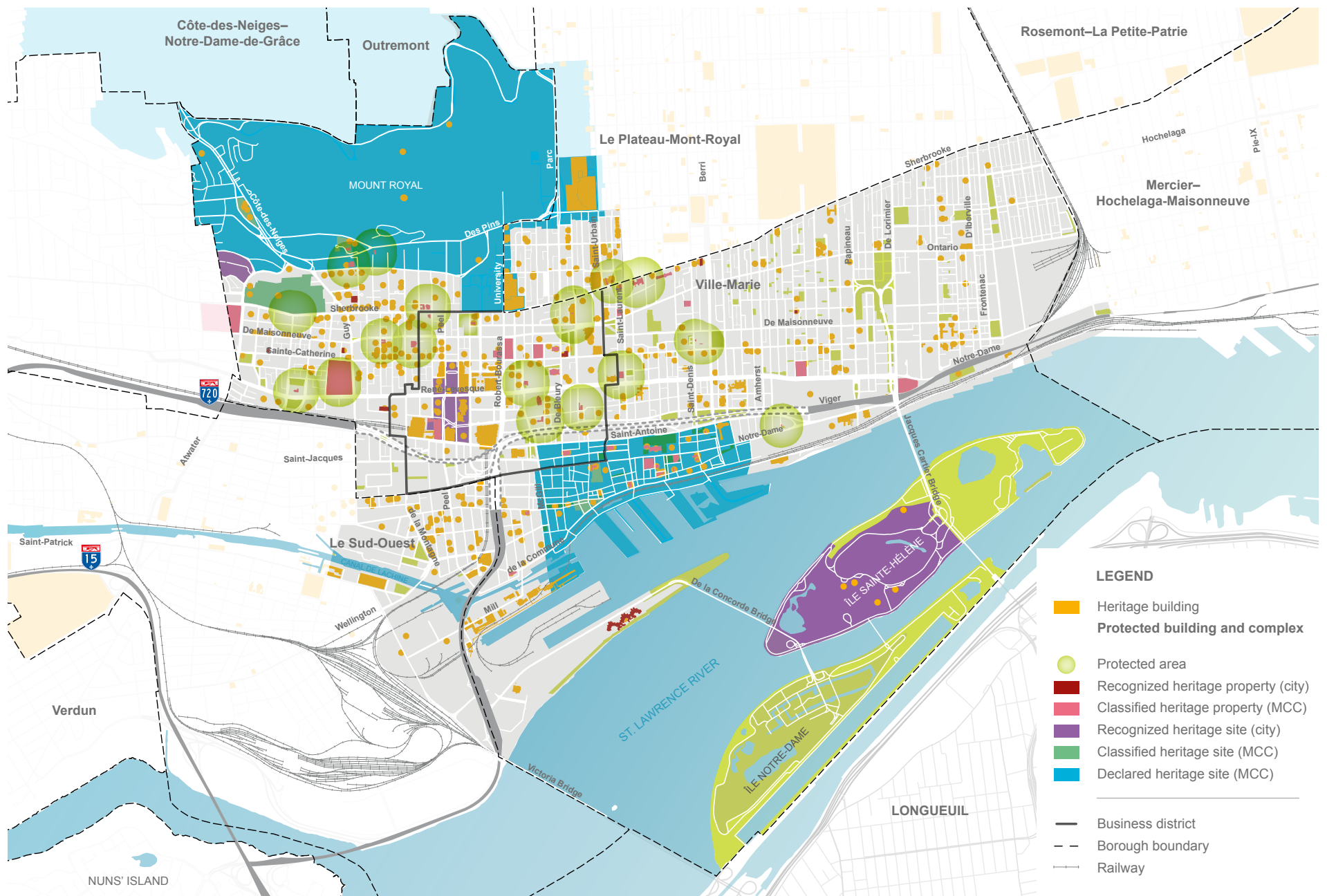
The future of many churches and convent complexes downtown is uncertain. Churches were long a part of neighbourhood social life, but their role has significantly decreased in recent years. Many of them are now vulnerable, given the high maintenance costs facing their owners.

In many cases they still offer services for the most disadvantaged members of society, while others have formed partnerships or are considering that option as a way of sharing maintenance costs with other tenants. Convent complexes, very visible in the west and north parts of downtown, are increasingly being vacated and also have high conversion potential.



St. James United Church | Credit: © Raphaëlle Brault

HERITAGE



2

TREMENDOUS DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

DOWNTOWN HAS TREMENDOUS DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL, WITH ITS MANY VACANT OR UNDERUTILIZED LOTS AND OTHERS THAT ARE BEING REPURPOSED. THIS POTENTIAL IS EVIDENT IN VARIOUS TYPES OF SITES AROUND THE ENTIRE DOWNTOWN AREA:

Central sectors require attention

There are various clusters of underutilized lots throughout downtown. Faubourg Saint-Laurent, Quartier des gares, Griffintown and Cité du multimedia all have a number of vacant lots suitable for development.

Large peripheral sectors to be repurposed

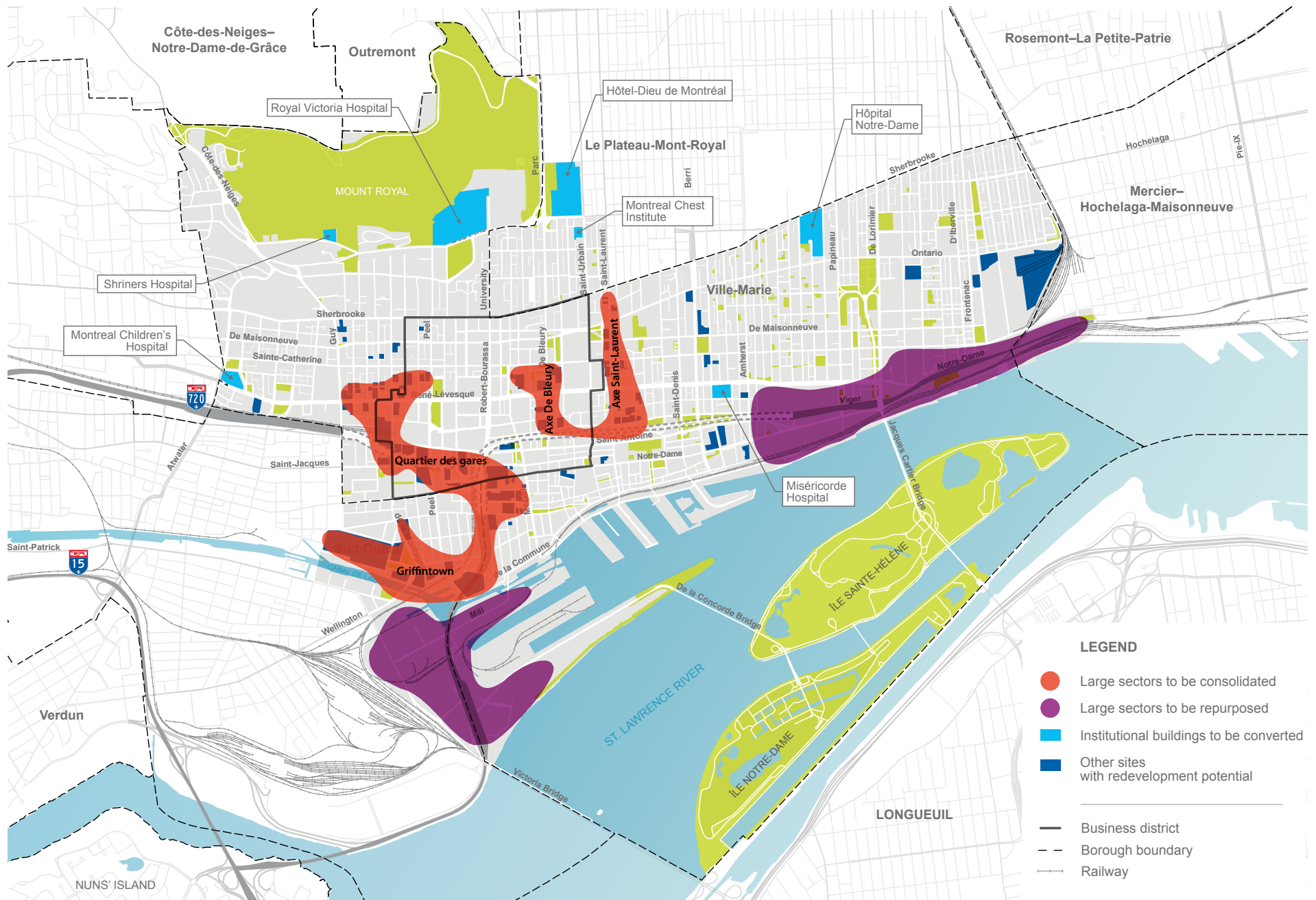
Sectors affected by the deindustrialization of central neighbourhoods and major projects in the 1960s are today earmarked for new vocations. The first of these sectors is in the east, near the river, where numerous large sites need to be repurposed or densified. This sector includes the Maison de Radio-Canada site, underutilized properties in the Port of Montreal, vacant lots at the foot of the Jacques Cartier Bridge and other undeveloped industrial sites and properties. In the southwest, the Bridge-Wellington, Cité du Havre and Pointe-du-Moulin pier sectors have large numbers of industrial sites and undeveloped lots to be repurposed for the needs of future expansion.

Large institutional sites to be converted

Finally, there are several large institutional sites that are now surplus to government requirements and ripe for conversion (the Hôtel-Dieu, Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal Children's Hospital, Miséricorde Hospital, Montreal Chest Institute, Shriners Hospital and part of Notre-Dame Hospital). A number of these sites are underdeveloped, and some of the buildings are of heritage value.

Overall, downtown Montréal has a large pool of sites to be developed or repurposed.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL



LEGEND

- Large sectors to be consolidated
- Large sectors to be repurposed
- Institutional buildings to be converted
- Other sites with redevelopment potential
- Business district
- - - Borough boundary
- +— Railway

In the long term, the downtown area could accommodate upwards of 40,000 new households, 800,000 m² of office or employment-related space and 200,000 m² of retail space. Our downtown will also see new community and institutional vocations and additional large public spaces. This means that it has significant leeway when it comes to selecting projects and enhancing the quality of its future property inventory.

Of course, this development potential depends on the economy, but also in large part on the overall vision of urban development throughout the metropolitan region. Some important choices will have to be made regarding the urban planning and transportation initiatives to be prioritized.

FOR THOSE SITES WHERE PLANNING EXERCISES HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONDUCTED, THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL IS BASED ON A KNOWN PRELIMINARY PROGRAM (FOR INSTANCE, THE PROJECT PROPOSED BY MCGILL UNIVERSITY FOR THE ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL). IN OTHER CASES, VARIOUS HYPOTHESES HAVE BEEN MADE REGARDING THE BREAKDOWN BETWEEN DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS BASED ON ZONED DENSITY UNDER CURRENT BY-LAWS. THIS METHODOLOGY MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY A THEORETICAL POTENTIAL OR A POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT RESERVE.

POTENTIAL CAPACITY

Residential (No. of units)	42,500
Office /Employment (m ²)	800,000
Retail (m ²)	200,000
Community (m ²)	80,000
Institutional (m ²)	250,000
Streets, parks and green spaces (m ²)	225,000



3

OUTLOOK: DOWNTOWN IN 2030

The Strategy is based on the following vision of the future:

Greater Montréal has a dynamic and bustling metropolitan downtown. The area's sustained urban development is the result of a collective desire to foster a lifestyle with a smaller ecological footprint and promote responsible urban growth so as to limit urban sprawl. Downtown is a place of experimentation, both in urban forms – bold architecture, integrated resource management, reinvented public space – and in the activities it offers as a centre of knowledge and research and the main showcase for the city's cultural and artistic wealth. As the hub of the activities that drive Quebec's economy, it is also a pillar of Montréal's innovation ecosystem. More than ever, the downtown of 2030 will be the image that Montréal projects worldwide.

By 2030, downtown will have 50,000 new residents, including families with children, seniors and young adults attracted by the city centre's multiple facets, the quality of life in the central neighbourhoods, and the intense vitality of the Montréal's downtown core. In the longer term (2050), downtown will have nearly 100,000 new residents.

Connected with the central neighbourhoods and the rest of the region by a vast network of the most sustainable transportation modes, central Montréal will be known for its highly efficient transportation system, aided by intelligent management tools.

Its unique setting, between the St. Lawrence River and Mount Royal, will be highlighted by waterfront redevelopment. East of the Old Port, a new waterfront sector will open up the Saint-Jacques and Sainte-Marie neighbourhoods to the river while farther west, downtown will stretch all the way to the banks of the St. Lawrence between Cité du Havre and the Champlain Bridge. There will be nearly 20 km of waterfront trails bringing a breath of fresh air to the dense downtown districts.

The development of harbourfront properties and underutilized central lots, the conversion of large institutional sites and the regeneration of the built heritage will all help to revitalize our downtown, thanks to innovative urban projects.

The proximity of workplaces, schools, daycare centres, parks, shops and other everyday places, and of less frequent destinations – performance venues, museums, the waterfront – along with the ease of getting around, will make downtown Montréal a stimulating, practical and pleasant place to live for people at all income levels and stages of life.

This 2030 outlook for downtown revolves around the following key concepts:

DENSITY

A prerequisite for proximity and interaction, essential for innovation and building neighbourhood life. Easy access to everyday services and facilities: schools, daycare centres, shops, parks, sports facilities, libraries, restaurants, cafés, bars, etc.

MIX

A blend of uses and users, housing for all segments of the population, a wide range of job types, variety in the built environment. Downtown must be inclusive, a place for everyone to live and work.

QUALITY

Attention given to the urban environment to make it sustainable and pleasant for day-to-day living: high-quality urban design and architecture, well-maintained and clean public networks, well-maintained public and private buildings.



ACCESSIBILITY

An integrated, efficient public transit network serving all parts of downtown; an urban environment conducive to easy, safe mobility.

IMAGE

One of the world's leading major cities, a draw for large organizations, innovative companies and talent for research and studies and for artistic creation and performance.



4

TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS AND STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

GIVEN THE CURRENT PORTRAIT OF OUR DOWNTOWN, ITS DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL AND THE CITY'S AMBITIONS FOR THE ENTIRE AREA, THREE TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED, ALONG WITH STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS GROUPED TOGETHER UNDER FOUR MAIN HEADINGS.

TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECTS

- Enhancing the public transit network
- Opening up downtown to the river
- Converting institutional complexes and public buildings: a model of urban regeneration

STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

- Complete, inclusive neighbourhoods
- A distinctive economic engine
- Smart, sustainable mobility
- Infrastructure that integrates more seamlessly into the urban fabric



TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT 1 ENHANCING THE PUBLIC TRANSIT NETWORK

Efficient mobility in the centre of the metropolis is key to the attractiveness and prosperity of the entire metropolitan region. For this reason, the Strategy stresses the importance of enhancing the public transit network serving downtown. Public transit is the main means of providing quick, sustainable access to the heart of the city, while combatting the negative effects of traffic congestion in both central and outlying neighbourhoods.

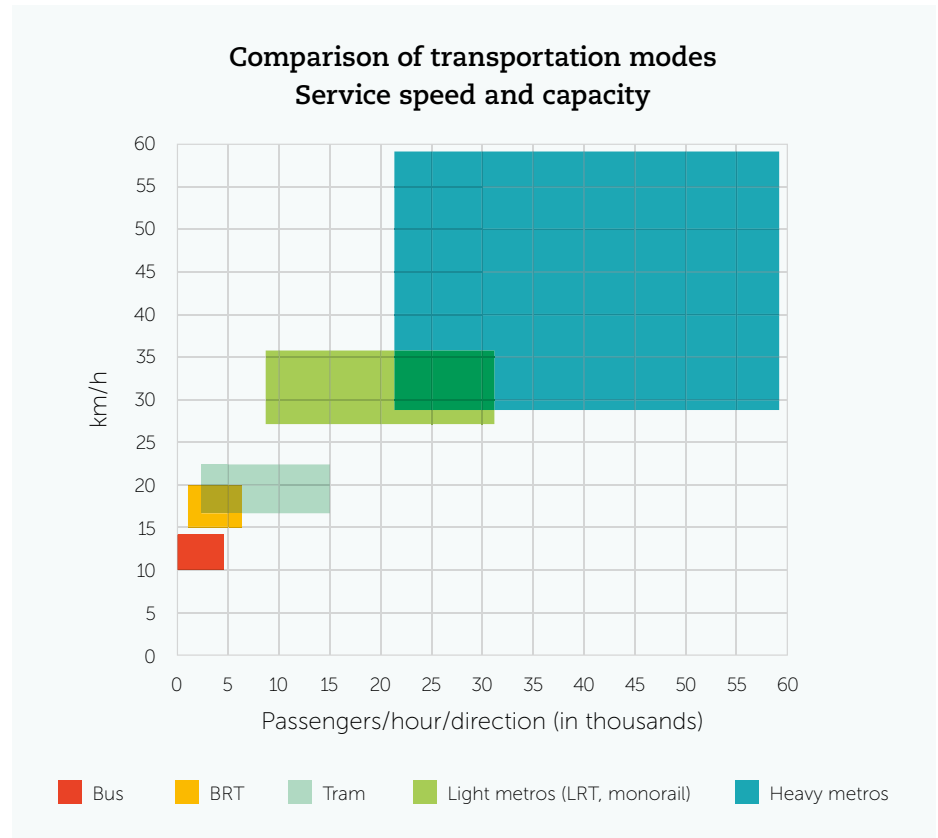
The introduction of new modes of heavy transportation must strengthen the radial road network while offering new route options to avoid bottlenecks near downtown. New lines will make it possible to absorb the strong growth in ridership and optimize the operation of the existing network. Inter-network connections, along with lines making several downtown stops, are required for efficient mobility downtown.

The proposed metropolitan electric network (Réseau électrique métropolitain – REM) fits perfectly with the aims of the Strategy, as it meets a need for more efficient transportation via the Champlain Bridge and to/from the airport while increasing capacity on the overburdened Deux-Montagnes line. This new REM line will eventually include several downtown stops and will be connected to the entire metro system to ensure that it fulfils its role of serving downtown transit needs and contributing to efficient intermodal connections. Special attention will also be given to integrating stations into the dense downtown urban fabric.

The REM project points to a future based on sustainable mobility from all central neighbourhoods toward downtown. The introduction of new networks, along with suitable urban planning, will be a vector of development, boosting commercial activity and the repurposing of vacant spaces.

The Strategy calls for:

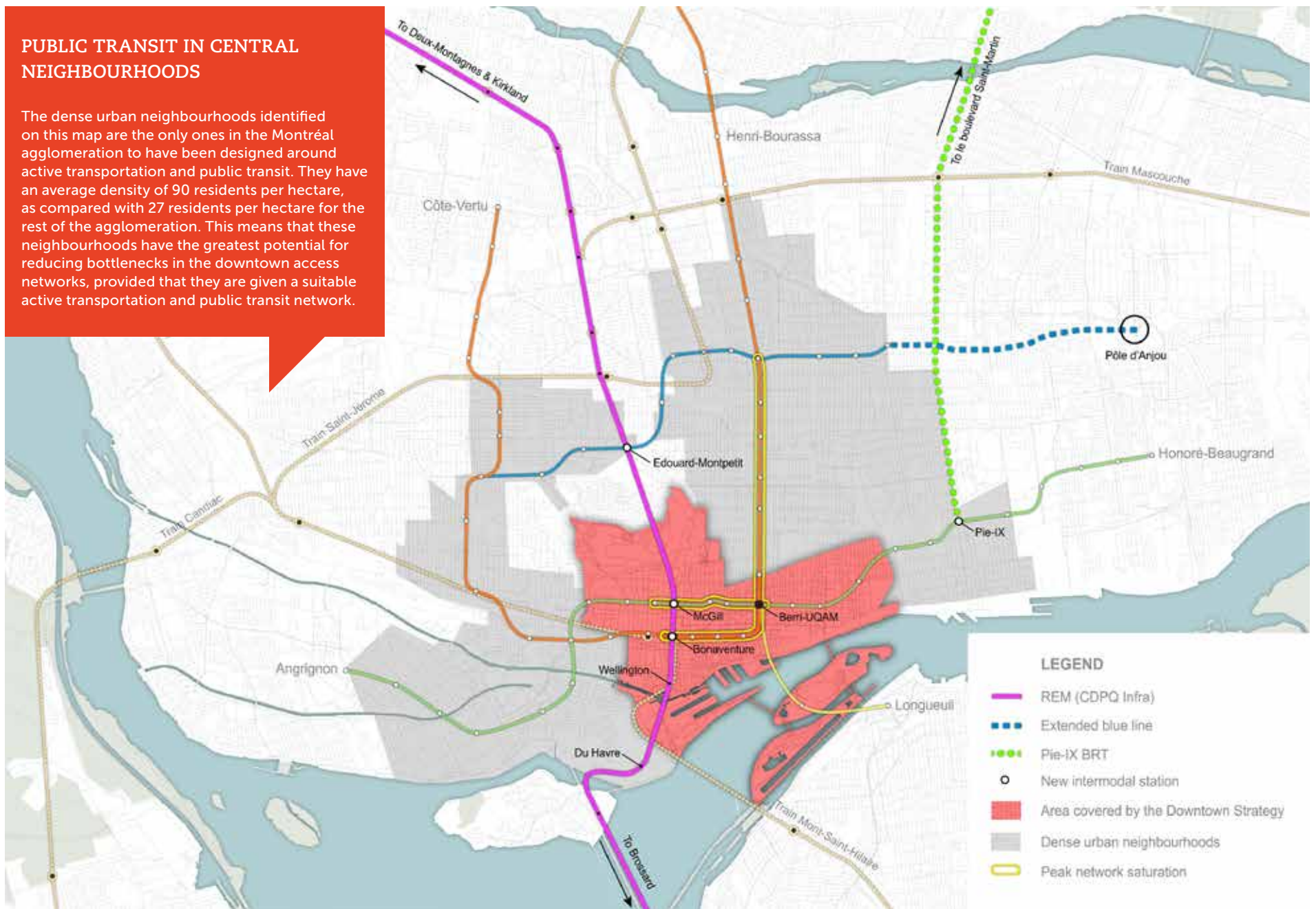
- Supporting plans for the metropolitan electric network (REM) including several stops downtown providing a direct connection to the blue line (planned stations: du Havre, Bridge-Wellington, McGill and Édouard-Montpetit)



CURRENT AND PROPOSED NETWORK

PUBLIC TRANSIT IN CENTRAL NEIGHBOURHOODS

The dense urban neighbourhoods identified on this map are the only ones in the Montréal agglomeration to have been designed around active transportation and public transit. They have an average density of 90 residents per hectare, as compared with 27 residents per hectare for the rest of the agglomeration. This means that these neighbourhoods have the greatest potential for reducing bottlenecks in the downtown access networks, provided that they are given a suitable active transportation and public transit network.





TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT 2

OPENING UP DOWNTOWN TO THE RIVER

In Montréal, efforts to repurpose the abandoned harbour facilities began in the late 1980s with the Old Port. Today this transformation must be continued by making the shoreline accessible to all of downtown. This window on the river is one of the keys to downtown development, increased activities and residential density. Sectors near the shoreline also have unique potential for high-value-added development projects.

The Strategy proposes upgrading and developing the waterfront sectors on either side of the Old Port. First of all, technical studies will have to be conducted to evaluate this development potential. This will be followed by detailed planning exercises for the eastern waterfront sector, including the entrance to the Jacques Cartier Bridge, and for the Bridge-Wellington sector, leading to the adoption of special planning programs.

In tandem with this process, concerted efforts will be pursued with the other levels of government, the Port of Montréal, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific with a view to reaching a collaborative shoreline redevelopment agreement. To guarantee consistency in developing the waterfront adjacent to downtown, responsibility for managing the Old Port will have to be restored to the City of Montréal.

Given these areas' strategic location, the projects must be exemplary in environmental, social, economic and aesthetic terms. The key principles for revitalizing these sectors will focus on unimpeded public access to the river, sustainable resource management and mixed development including recreational and tourist activities, retail, housing, institutional facilities and a suitable amount of green space.

The Strategy calls for:

- Conducting the necessary technical studies to plan the waterfront sectors and adopting special planning programs for the two sectors
- Transferring responsibility for the Old Port and the related budgets to the City of Montréal
- Launching negotiations with the other levels of government to reach a collaborative shoreline redevelopment agreement

Converting harbour infrastructure

With changes in the economy and shipping in the 20th century, numerous major ports entered a period of decline. The technological shift to containers made much of their infrastructure obsolete and meant that harbour activities were relocated away from urban centres. This gave port cities an opportunity to rethink their connections and interfaces between their shorelines and adjacent neighbourhoods at a time of mounting environmental concerns and interest in industrial heritage.

Projects to revitalize port facilities vary from one city to another, but they all share two features: a public waterfront promenade and a mixed real estate program including facilities, office buildings and housing. Some cities have emphasized recreation and tourism, building cruise ports, marinas and hotels, while others have installed showpiece cultural facilities, university buildings or public buildings.

SHORELINE REVITALIZATION SECTORS

LOOKING AT INITIATIVES IN RECENT DECADES AROUND THE WORLD, WE CAN IDENTIFY A NUMBER OF PRINCIPLES AND SUCCESS FACTORS FOR THIS TYPE OF PROJECT:

- The role of the public sector in preserving and protecting the shoreline
- Public access to the waterfront
- A mix of uses and an emphasis on ensuring the fit between them
- Connections with adjacent neighbourhoods and integration with the city's public transit and active transportation networks
- Recognition of the site's maritime identity and its character
- A dedicated governance structure where the local community is included in the planning process





TRANSFORMATIONAL PROJECT 3

CONVERTING INSTITUTIONAL COMPLEXES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS: A MODEL OF URBAN REGENERATION

At present there are a number of large downtown sites to be converted. These sites are publicly owned by either municipal, provincial or federal authorities. They include surplus hospitals (Royal Victoria, Miséricorde, Montréal Chest Institute, Hôtel-Dieu, Shriners, some Hôpital Notre-Dame buildings), the Radio-Canada property, the Voyageur bus terminal and several municipal buildings.

These public properties dotted around downtown are all within walking distance of at least one metro station, with parks and public facilities nearby. They represent a major opportunity for developing mixed-use projects, including private and public components and taking into account needs for housing, community facilities, green spaces and creative spaces, thereby helping to consolidate downtown as an attractive, sustainable living environment.

This special potential, including certain buildings with heritage value, also creates an opportunity to come up with new and unusual ideas, generate innovative projects and involve a wide range of public and private partners. These sites offer many possibilities that could be realized through innovation and collaboration. They could encourage people to think about sharing spaces, mixed uses and architectural inventiveness.

To ensure that this potential is realized in the best interests of the Montréal community, negotiations regarding the process and framework for converting these public sites will be launched with the authorities concerned. Vacant or underutilized downtown properties and buildings owned by the city could be examined with a view to repurposing them, in consultation with other parties.

TO MEET NEEDS DOWNTOWN, THE CONVERSION OF PUBLIC SITES MUST TAKE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES INTO ACCOUNT:

■ Showcase heritage sites

The sites' heritage value must be evaluated before the conversion process begins. Some buildings date from the 19th century and played an important role in the city's history; these elements typical of Montréal's identity deserve special attention.

■ Integrate residential projects for families, along with social and community housing

The Strategy calls for more housing for households with children, mainly in the eastern and western parts of downtown. Sites to be converted or redeveloped, like the Radio-Canada site and some of the old hospitals, are especially targeted for family-friendly projects (large units, outdoor spaces).

In keeping with the municipal strategy for the inclusion of affordable housing in new residential projects, emphasis will be placed on including some units meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable Montrealers (affordable, social, community, supervised or halfway housing) in conversion projects for some of the old hospitals, in particular the Montreal Children's Hospital and the Miséricorde Hospital, and for other public properties that are vacant or to be converted, like the Radio-Canada site.

■ Add to community services and green spaces

In the centre and western part of downtown, negotiations will be conducted to integrate elementary schools, daycare centres, community centres, libraries and other necessary facilities in conversion projects for institutional buildings like the Montreal Children's Hospital or the Ignace-Bourget building. In Old Montréal, we will be looking at several vacant or underutilized buildings owned by the city, with a view to integrating public facilities that are currently lacking. Planning for the Radio-Canada site could also include neighbourhood facilities.

■ Help increase the amount of affordable workspace available downtown

Some underutilized public properties and buildings could act as levers for projects to create and offer affordable shared workspace, places conducive to interaction and creativity, and spaces for formal exchanges (innovation laboratories, incubators, continuing education) and informal exchanges (cafés, restaurants). The artistic, scientific and social economy communities could be priority targets for these projects.

■ Focus on environmental innovation

The public site conversion projects will all aim to reduce their ecological footprint (energy efficiency, reduced drinking water consumption and rainwater management) and will adopt innovative solutions. These projects will also integrate best practices in terms of universal accessibility.

CONVERSION PROJECTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY OR UNDER STUDY, SUPPORTED BY THE STRATEGY:

- Conversion of the Saint-Sulpice library into an incubator (library for teens and innovation laboratory) by the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications and the City of Montréal.
- Creation of the Peter McGill integrated community centre and a new green space by the City of Montréal as part of the conversion of the Montreal Children's Hospital.
- Conversion of the Royal Victoria Hospital site by McGill University to a largely institutional vocation.

The Strategy calls for:

- Launching a joint process with the provincial and federal governments to come up with an innovative formula for converting the institutional buildings and other vacant or underutilized sites they own
- Mixed projects for these sites, including various aspects such as collaborative workspaces, family housing, social and community housing, community facilities and public green spaces
- Projects showcasing heritage and sustainable resource management
- The adoption of a clear position by the City on the future of its vacant or underutilized downtown properties



STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS THEME 1 COMPLETE, INCLUSIVE NEIGHBOURHOODS

THE QUALITY OF NEIGHBOURHOODS – WHETHER THEY ARE PLACES TO LIVE OR WORK – DEPENDS ON MANY DIFFERENT FACTORS INCLUDING GREEN SPACES, WALKABILITY, MAINTENANCE AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, ACCESS TO LOCAL BUSINESSES AND GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN RESIDENTS, VISITORS AND THE HOMELESS. MAKING NEIGHBOURHOODS FAMILY FRIENDLY BY FOSTERING SUITABLE CONDITIONS IS ANOTHER CENTRAL PRIORITY.



1.1 Meet families' needs for housing and public services

The Strategy calls for residential projects for families and incentives aimed at boosting the construction of both privately developed and social and community housing for families. Special attention will be paid to creating innovative styles adapted to the downtown urban setting and attracting families at a range of income levels (large units, open outdoor spaces, greenery, soundproofing, etc.). Moreover, because public services, including local public schools, are key to quality family life, the Strategy also calls for new public schools and community facilities, especially in the western and southern sectors of downtown.

1.2 Help improve relations between marginal groups and other users of public spaces

Public spaces will be designed as open, inclusive spaces (free, safe and clean) able to accommodate multiple uses (sports, recreation, art, culture, social activities, mobility, etc.). The Strategy supports initiatives in keeping with this vision, sponsored by residents, community organizations, companies or institutions. In addition, it supports the intervention sectors initiated by the Ville-Marie Borough and the creation of other integrated intervention sectors, in Viger Square, for instance.

1.3 Create green spaces and reduce heat islands

To maintain and enhance biodiversity downtown while combatting the heat island effect, a greening campaign will be conducted on public and private property in partnership with various players, including building owners and managers, universities and community organizations. This could include tree planting, urban agriculture and green walls and roofs, to create green corridors throughout downtown. Rainwater management will also be included in planning these corridors.

For private property, partnerships will ensure public access to certain new or existing institutional and private facilities and green spaces. Agreements will also cover the maintenance of these green spaces. New partnerships will give the public access to downtown facilities and spaces (gardens, playing fields, halls) belonging to downtown universities, schools and religious communities.

Finally, on public property, various pedestrian-friendly routes similar to the first urban promenade will make north-south movement more pleasant: enhanced tree canopy, pedestrian crossings, safer intersections and wider sidewalks.

1.4 Make major arteries more pleasant and safer

The Strategy also calls for more pedestrian-friendly design and for the bike path network to be fully linked up. In addition, priority is to be given to revamping the gateway into the city from the Jacques Cartier Bridge and several major arteries, including the adjacent public spaces. Measures aimed at enhancing safety, convenience and universal accessibility will be systematically applied: greening, new street furniture (benches and bike racks), wider sidewalks, and traffic lights better adapted to pedestrians.

1.5 Take action with property owners to improve the built environment

Efforts to upgrade the built environment must be supported by new by-laws and incentives. Apartment towers dating from the 1950s and 1960s require particular attention in view of the challenges in maintaining them because of their age and height and the large number of units they contain. Vacant or rundown commercial buildings also adversely affect the vitality and appearance of downtown streets, and new measures targeting negligent property owners will be drafted.

1.6 Step up coercive and incentive measures aimed at preserving and enhancing at-risk heritage buildings

The Strategy calls for new coercive and incentive measures, both regulatory and financial, aimed at encouraging property developers and owners to preserve and enhance at-risk heritage buildings, and thereby contribute to beautifying the built environment and maintaining its diversity. More generally, it will encourage owners to maintain and renovate older buildings that constitute the modest heritage characterizing our city's central neighbourhoods.

1.7 Improve the retail mix in some sectors

The Strategy aims to offer local shopping meeting the needs of residents and workers in the different neighbourhoods. In particular, the focus will be on ensuring that basic services are available and that stores do not remain vacant for long. Downtown business tax policy could be adapted for this purpose, to attract a broader range of stores, including independent merchants. Recruitment efforts and an analysis of the labour market could be planned for this purpose. Finally, urban planning by-laws could be revised for some sectors to enhance the retail mix.

The Strategy calls for:

- Launching family-centred projects with city partners in the eastern and western sectors of downtown
- Developing financial and regulatory measures to ensure that family housing is included in new residential projects
- Supporting the construction of new public schools and community facilities, especially in the western and southern sectors of downtown
- Supporting existing intervention sectors and the creation of other integrated intervention sectors, in particular in Viger Square
- Developing partnerships to ensure public access to certain existing institutional and private sports facilities and green spaces
- Increasing the amount of space reserved for pedestrians and cyclists when streets are upgraded, to make them more inviting and safe
- Prioritizing efforts to make the main arteries more convenient and safe: René-Lévesque, Sherbrooke, De Maisonneuve, Côte-des-Neiges, Guy, Peel, Saint-Urbain, Saint-Laurent, Saint-Denis, Berri, Papineau, De Lorimier
- Encouraging upgrades to the apartment building stock, in particular in the Quartier des grands jardins
- Providing incentives for renovations to rundown commercial buildings
- Studying the possibility of levying fines on the owners of vacant buildings
- Ensuring the quality and maintenance of public spaces, with budgets adjusted to the particular needs of downtown
- Studying the possibility of establishing and using regulatory incentives, including amendments to zoning by-laws, or coercive measures such as additional fines to ensure that at-risk heritage properties are maintained and enhanced by their owners
- Studying the possibility of establishing financial incentives (tax credits, municipal tax policy) to encourage improvements to at-risk heritage
- Studying the possibility of amending the urban planning by-law to improve the retail mix in target sectors, with quotas, for instance





STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

THEME 2

A DISTINCTIVE ECONOMIC ENGINE

THE ECONOMIC VITALITY OF MONTRÉAL'S DOWNTOWN IS ESSENTIAL NOT ONLY FOR THE CITY, BUT FOR THE REGION AND QUEBEC AS A WHOLE. TO CONSOLIDATE THIS ROLE AS AN ECONOMIC ENGINE IN THE CURRENT METROPOLITAN CONTEXT, EFFORTS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTRACT MORE JOBS DOWNTOWN, ESPECIALLY IN CERTAIN CATEGORIES.

Accessibility and the quality of neighbourhood life are prerequisites for creating an attractive business environment. The city intends to make more targeted commitments in terms of economic development by focusing on the area's strengths, which include its high concentration of head offices and internationally oriented activities, its creative and innovation hubs and, of course, Montréal's iconic downtown street, Rue Sainte-Catherine.



2.1 Support the innovation and creativity ecosystem in downtown neighbourhoods

The intense activity of the downtown area, its vital research and educational institutions and its rich cultural and artistic network all offer innovation potential that the Strategy aims to develop. The objective is to make downtown an environment that fosters the emergence and long-term success of businesses, organizations and dedicated spaces in the innovation and creativity niches. To do so, it will focus on supporting the players who are most sensitive to the cost of real estate (start-up companies, artists, performance venues, etc.) and on promoting collaborative spaces. In addition, given that digital connectivity is essential, steps will be taken to guarantee access to very high speed telecommunications throughout the downtown core. Telecommunication networks will be taken into account in development and conversion projects.

2.2 Develop the distinctive character of Rue Sainte-Catherine

The redevelopment of Sainte-Catherine Ouest is an opportunity to profoundly rethink the street's role, not only as the commercial hub of the metropolis, but also as a city icon. Showcasing its history, its public spaces and the buildings that line the street will be a priority. The future of its churches will be given special attention. The street's strategic position in relation to major cultural and educational institutions, heritage buildings and sectors, and numerous tourist attractions will be emphasized. Finally, the part of the street located in the business district could become more highly specialized in the high-end retail sector.

2.3 Strengthen Montréal's international image

The Strategy aims to strengthen the position of the business district and the surrounding area as *the* place for senior management jobs, including in international organizations, by highlighting the availability of top-quality office space and its exceptional location. In co-operation with such key players as the municipal economic development department, Montréal International and the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, the objective is to position downtown and promote it to large firms. If necessary, communication efforts will be launched to clarify the regulatory framework for property development projects.

Municipal taxes account for a growing share of the operating costs for companies located downtown. The taxation rate is the same in all Montréal boroughs. As part of the review of municipal taxation of the non-residential sector, the specific circumstances of downtown, in terms of property values and density, will need to be considered.

The Strategy calls for:

- Supporting the development of Montréal as a cultural metropolis, and specifically the Quartier des spectacles, a world-class destination, in part by creating an urban digital laboratory
- Encouraging and strengthening emerging creativity venues, including the Des Faubourgs creativity hub
- Installing a high-speed fibre optic data network when streets are redone
- Supporting and promoting the institutions of higher learning downtown
- Identifying Rue Sainte-Catherine as the heart of the downtown cultural, heritage and recreational and tourism network
- Attracting and retaining high-profile, high-end retail stores in the heart of the business district
- Promoting downtown as a place for international organizations to locate
- Enhancing the tourist appeal of downtown in partnership with players in the tourism, cultural and entertainment industries
- Supporting the development of the necessary infrastructure to host major international conventions



STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

THEME 3

SMART, SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

ALONGSIDE THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW PUBLIC TRANSIT LINES, THE OPTIMIZATION OF THE EXISTING NETWORK AND THE EXPANSION OF THE BIKE PATH NETWORK ARE ESSENTIAL FOR ENSURING INTEGRATED, INTELLIGENT MOBILITY TO, FROM AND WITHIN DOWNTOWN.

The city will stay abreast of the latest transportation technology and adapt its actions to ensure continued downtown access and mobility.

3.1 Continue electrifying transportation modes

Recharging stations for electric vehicles will be added when downtown streets are redone. In addition, ongoing collaboration with the various players in electric transportation (buses, trains, taxis, car-sharing and delivery vehicles) will make it easier to install the necessary infrastructure to meet needs and opportunities downtown. Finally, the municipal fleet will be gradually replaced with electric vehicles.

3.2 Optimize and improve safety on the main downtown bus corridors

Integrated management systems will be installed for the main bus access corridors, namely the Côte-des-Neiges, Parc, Saint-Laurent, Sherbrooke, René-Lévesque, Papineau and De Lorimier lines. A review of the way the public space is shared (for each of the transportation modes and parking) will also be conducted for these corridors. An intermodal intervention model will integrate improvements in public, active and automobile transportation. Intelligent management tools will be used to optimize traffic and reduce the impact of disturbances, including making real-time adjustments (intelligent traffic lights and recharging infrastructure, for instance) or better sharing information with users on the status of transportation networks.

3.3 Develop and link up the downtown bike path network

The Strategy favours the use of bicycles for day-to-day transportation and calls for new bike paths linking up with adjacent sectors, with a view to creating a radial bike path network. The Strategy also plans to make the network within downtown more coherent by linking up existing paths, to allow cyclists to cross downtown on continuous paths.

3.4 Optimize parking

Optimizing parking appears to be a pressing issue for the business district, especially near Sainte-Catherine Ouest. The Strategy therefore supports the measures identified in the draft parking policy, including dynamic on-street signage, real-time information via apps, developing the possibility of both short-stay and monthly parking in private off-street lots and managing delivery spaces. Adjusting the amount of on-street parking on a seasonal basis is an idea that could be applied when Sainte-Catherine Ouest is redone, and then extended to other streets as appropriate.

The Strategy calls for:

- Completing the electrification of transportation networks, in particular by speeding up the installation of taxi recharging stations for taxis and for private car-sharing and delivery vehicles, when streets are redone
- Introducing, with the partners concerned, integrated and intelligent mobility corridors for buses, including the installation of intelligent traffic lights and recharging stations
- Electrifying the city vehicle fleet and rolling stock, with priority going to the Ville-Marie Borough
- Adding bike paths to connect downtown paths with the existing network in neighbouring boroughs
- Supporting the introduction of measures to optimize parking downtown, in particular by moving toward intelligent parking (dynamic signage and other measures)





STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

THEME 4

INFRASTRUCTURE THAT INTEGRATES MORE SEAMLESSLY INTO THE URBAN FABRIC

DOWNTOWN'S ASSETS, NAMELY ITS DENSITY, MIXED USES AND PROXIMITY AND THE PRESENCE OF THE RIVER, ARE CONSIDERABLY WEAKENED IN A NUMBER OF SECTORS BY OBSTACLES OR INADEQUATE CONDITIONS ALONG THE PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE PATH NETWORK DUE TO THE PRESENCE OF HEAVY ROAD OR RAIL TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

The fact that downtown is served by two expressways and a bridge is a crucial advantage in connecting it with the rest of the metropolitan region. However, this infrastructure must be better integrated in order to limit the disruptions it causes in the dense downtown living environment.

4.1 Finalize plans to cover the Ville-Marie Expressway and revitalize the surrounding area, from the Palais des Congrès to the Jacques Cartier Bridge

The Strategy supports covering the expressway at the foot of City Hall and upgrading Viger Square. Moreover, to continue linking up Old Montréal, Faubourg Québec and the rest of downtown, the Strategy calls for the immediate launch of discussions on the future of the remaining trench portions of the Ville-Marie Expressway. Viger and Saint-Antoine streets will be redone at the same time as the expressway is covered. Integrating the expressway more harmoniously into its surroundings will restore the urban stature of these two streets, making them more attractive for active transportation, for visitors to public spaces like the renovated Viger Square, and for property development in the vicinity.

4.2 Complete the Bonaventure – Quartier des gares gateway to the city

The Bonaventure – Quartier des gares sector is the main downtown intermodal hub as well as a gateway to the business district and a residential neighbourhood. The sector has great potential for revitalization, which would require significant work on public property. The Strategy thus calls for the Bonaventure Expressway to be lowered, the public property in the Quartier des gares to be upgraded and the railway overpasses to be fixed up, as provided in the Special Planning Program (SPP) for the Quartier des gares.

4.3 Revamp the gateway to the city from the Jacques Cartier Bridge

The Jacques Cartier Bridge is one of the symbols of Montréal, and its presence in the Sainte-Marie and Saint-Jacques neighbourhoods should be an asset to their landscape. The junction between the bridge and Papineau and De Lorimier streets makes north-south and east-west travel somewhat complicated and even unsafe. The bridgehead will thus be revamped to improve the appearance of this gateway to the city, enhance pedestrian and bicycle mobility, upgrade neighbouring public spaces and improve automobile traffic flow, while celebrating this historic structure.

The Strategy calls for:

- Launching negotiations with the Quebec Ministère des Transports (MTQ) regarding a timeframe and options for covering the trench portions of the Ville-Marie Expressway
- Completing the revitalization of the Bonaventure axis and the initiatives planned in the SPP for the Quartier des gares
- Planning and carrying out the revitalization of the entrance to the Jacques Cartier Bridge, in partnership with the Jacques Cartier and Champlain Bridges Corporation (JCCBC)



Ville-Marie | Credit: © Marc Cramer



Downtown: a place to live, work, study and play!