

Please Protect l'Anse-à-l'Orme

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Anse-à-l'Orme in Pierrefonds-Roxboro is a 220-hectare expanse of wet meadows, forest and fallow agricultural lands. It is also home to more than 270 species of fauna and flora, including several endangered species such as the bobolink bird and Canadian Black Snakeroot, a wild plant.

L'Anse-à-l'Orme is part of the largest wildlife corridor on the Island of Montréal, a network of forests and fields that includes Cap-Saint-Jacques, the Morgan Arboretum, Parc-Agricole du Bois-de-la-Roche, the Ecoterritory of Senneville Forest, and Angell Woods. The diverse habitats of the l'Anse-à-l'Orme corridor include Montréal's only remaining inland river (rivière à l'Orme) and support the richest biodiversity and the last unprotected large wild green space on the Island of Montréal.

Unfortunately, this last refuge of exceptional intrinsic value is threatened by an invasive species—developers, who want to undertake a 185-hectare, 5500-house development project.

This housing project would be a disastrous example of urban sprawl. It would compromise the integrity of the existing ecosystems of that area, and species that live there now would have nowhere to go. They would be doomed: loss of habitat is the main cause of animal and plant extinctions.

In addition, the proposed construction project would do nothing to improve the life of Montrealers—in fact, it would increase traffic and pollution, it would increase the heat island effect and contribute to global warming, and it would change irremediably the future of Montréal. Other former industrial sites or parking sites could instead be used for the construction of housing, including social housing.

What will the Montréal of the future look like?

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is based in Montréal. This would indicate that Montréal should be at the forefront of sustainable practices that preserve precious ecosystems and biodiversity like l'Anse-à-l'Orme.

I am asking the City of Montréal to cancel this project, which is unacceptable whether one looks at it from a moral, legal or practical point of view. In taking steps to protect the l'Anse-à-l'Orme ecoterritory in its entirety, the City of Montréal would be moving closer to honouring its own promise and objective to conserve 17 percent of its land. I would urge city officials focus their attention on sustainable development and on finding innovative, progressive projects to optimize the use of the existing

space occupied by humans on the Island of Montréal.

I join my voice to all the other caring Montréal citizens who are beseeching the City of Montréal to preserve this entire space and thereby protect and assure the future of our natural flora and fauna and of future generations of Montrealers.

Sincerely,
Jody Freeman