What we need to do, December 3rd 2010 v.1

Montreal Metropolitan land use and development plan

What we need to do

with regard to the guidelines regarding natural and naturalisable areas for the Montreal Metropolitan land use and development plan

and the revision and updating of the

Montreal Master Urban Plan and the local city and borough urban plans
for the greater Montreal region

Why were these suggested guidelines written?

Preparing for the Montreal Metropolitan land use and development plan and for the City master plansOver the next two years, with the coming into force of Bill 58, we will be entering the consultation phase that will lead to the adoption of the first land use and development plan of the Montreal Metropolitan Community (MMC). At the same time, there will be revisions and updates of the Montreal Master Urban Plan and the urban plans for the local cities and boroughs of the island of Montreal.

The Montreal Metropolitan land use and development plan is based on general guidelines that will then be used to determine specific aspects sector by sector, site by site. As a result, these general guidelines while identifying some of the sites to be protected, should present general policy directions, objectives and criteria which correspond to the environmental values of our groups and which will inspire the planning documents to be adopted.

Possibly for the first time ever in Quebec, Bill 58 includes the *protection and enhancement of the natural* and built environment, and of landscapes (article 2.24) as part of the considerations for the land use and development plan. This means that we now have a unique opportunity to create clear guidelines in regards to protecting and enhancing the natural environment. These guidelines will, as a result, have a huge impact since they will determine how all cities in the MMC deal with natural areas for years to come.

It is only through a spirit of collaboration that we will reach our common goals.

Together, our organisations represent thousands of residents. Though many will try to convince us otherwise, the values we share are representative of a large portion of the population. The simple fact that 1.9B\$ are spent by residents of the Metropolitan Montreal Community annually doing nature related activities demonstrate this clearly. That being said, we must combat a deeply engrained perception in the business and political communities that nature and natural areas do not have intrinsic economic or social value. This document will give us one common voice so that together our values will be amplified and not simply be drowned out by the other opinions which will be brought up throughout this consultation process.

At the same time we have to be aware that grand principles, however well articulated, do not effect change. Only action at the local level can do that. We must make sure that our policies can be easily translated into action, and insist that all decision-makers focus on their practical application.

Bill 58

An Act to amend the Act respecting land use planning and development and other legislative provisions concerning metropolitan communities

Bill 58 provides that the Metropolitan Montreal Community (MMC) must adopt a strategic vision statement according to article 2.3, for the "cultural, economic, environmental and social development in its territory".

Bill 58 also requires that, according to article 2.23, "every metropolitan community must at all times maintain in force a land use and development plan for its territory". The plan is called the "Metropolitan land use and development plan".

This Metropolitan Plan, according to article 2.24, "shall define policy directions, objectives and criteria to ensure the competitiveness and attractiveness of the territory of the metropolitan community, in keeping with sustainable development"

What will we need to do?

Step one, our mutual objectives recognized in the Montreal Metropolitan land use and development plan

The present process does not aim to identify or protect specific sites in specific ways but to recognize general guidelines applying to the whole of the MMC. Though the various organisations working to protect natural areas may have different priorities, we all have similar general objectives If we propose guidelines that correspond to our main goals and present them clearly, then together we will send the same clear message throughout the consultation process. This will ensure that our common goals are considered in the Montreal Metropolitan land use and development plan. This will also ensure that these mutually accepted objectives then become the guiding principles for all of the master plans of the cities of the MMC.

Step two, our mutual objectives and individual key projects recognized in the city master plans

As each master plan for the various cities of the MMC is being developed, each individual and environmental organisation will need to remind the cities that these objectives have become a part of the strategic vision and guiding principles for their master plans. This will then allow us to promote all the specific projects in each city or borough that correspond to these guiding principles, whether it be the protection of a key site or the development of a greenway corridor. We invite you to add identify the guideline which would best protect your space and we can include it as example in our document of why this guideline is so needed and should be adopted in the policies and objectives of the MMC and cities' urban plans. As well of course we invite you to add your name to the groups who support these guidelines.

The toolboxes

Designed to help you!

We have included a few tools, in text boxes in order to provide information pertinent to the various recommendations. They cover the most important elements you need to know in order to promote the policies objectives and criteria which will protect natural areas.

These guidelines are supported by:

- Les amis de Meadowbrook
- Héritage Laurentien
- La Coalition Verte
- Sierrra Club Quebec
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Document written by les Amis de Meadowbrook and Héritage Laurentien

Need a few more explanations about some of the proposals here?

Want to learn more about the importance of natural areas, about greenways or techniques for naturalizing areas?

Call 514-367-6540