

## **Secteur St-Raymond et abords du futur CUSM**

*Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce*

### **Building a healthy, engaged neighbourhood around the MUHC Glen Site with youth at the centre**

#### **Rooted in NDG since 1970**

[À deux mains](#) / [Head & Hands](#) is a community organization that was formed by local youth, parents and community organizers in 1970. We have occupied several spaces over the years, including a house on Girouard, and more recently space in the Empress Cultural Centre (formerly known as Cinema V). Our roots are very deep, and we are a household name – having offered front-line, bilingual services and community engagement opportunities to youth 12-25, young parents, their children, families and youth workers - spanning over two generations. (Annual report to be presented during public audience)

Our main administrative offices are currently located at 5833 Sherbrooke Street West (corner of Melrose), however we also run a Young Parents' Program (YPP) in the Rosedale United Church (Terrebonne and Rosedale) and run Jeunesse 2000 (J2K) an after-school drop-in centre in the NDG Rec Centre (Cote-St-Antoine and Decarie). Given our history, our current mission, and our community support, our services are offered to youth across Montreal, however the majority of those who use our services live or go to school in NDG, CDN, Ville St-Pierre, Montreal West, Verdun, St-Henri, Pointe-St-Charles, West-Island, Westmount, Cote-St-Luc, Centre-Ville, Plateau, Lasalle, and Lachine.

#### **Accessibility & Approach**

We offer extended hours because we recognize that the needs in our neighbourhood and across the Island are high. If a youth calls, or drops-in, Monday- Thursday between 10am-9:30pm, Friday between 10-5 and Saturday at the drop-in centre, they will immediately be able to speak to one of our skilled staff. When youth are in crises, they deserve immediate support. We know that having easily accessible services in the neighbourhood can help de-escalate situations that can become increasingly stressful and even dangerous for youth.

All of our services for youth are free & confidential. If ever there is an exception to this, youth are given the information ahead of time. Bus tickets are provided to participants of the Young Parent's Program.

We regularly offer support to staff of other youth centres to bolster their capacity when faced with more challenging psycho-social intervention needs. We provide workshops and tailored training on a range of issues, from drug and sex education for youth who are 12-18 years old, to organizational development and fundraising.

In addition to our regular programs and services, we contribute to the cultural health of our community by hosting events throughout the year: from drawing 1000+ people into Girouard park through the Samedi in the Park, to our For-Youth-By-Youth music showcase series, to our annual Volleyball tournament gathering 400+ people to celebrate & support sex education. Unfortunately, due to a lack of accessible, affordable space for special-event planning, these are often booked outside of NDG.

The PPU offers a unique opportunity to look at strengthening the diversity and accessibility of services and programs available to youth. All youth should not only have their basic needs met (food, housing, income, educational security) as we proceed in building this world-class facility, but these youth need to be inspired become active in their community and to see themselves as a part of the MUHC Glen Site, not as 'being in the shadow' of the project, as we've heard in the media. We would like to see specific sites in and around the Glen ear-marked for inter-sector community-development purposes, accessible to local youth. We are very concerned about the future of the NDG Food Depot, for example, and know all too well that other organizations' housing status can change overnight.

We have been renting for 42 years and often feel that this isn't the most sustainable solution, given the changing tides in property management in the neighbourhood, increasing prices and gentrification. We would like to see an opportunity for the MUHC to truly open its doors to those organizations who have been offering front-line, evidence-based, cutting-edge medical and social services for decades in our community – by contributing to the sustainability that we have in our own community.

### **Additional concerns and requests:**

1. **Accessible, expanded Vendome metro & bus routes;** Youth, staff and volunteers who access our services come through Vendome daily. We are concerned that the funding hasn't yet been committed from the MTQ for an expanded, inter-modal station. We expect the volume to increase by over 5,000 commuters/day and have experienced this metro, and the adjoining bus routes, at full capacity far too many times. We need the new facilities to be accessible to people with reduced mobility and to young parents' with strollers. The proposed closure to Upper Lachine means significant increases in commuting time for youth & families living along St-Jacques, Benny area and Westhaven. This needs to be managed in a responsible manner (e.g. staggered closures) given the impending changes to Turcot.
2. **Safety around Vendome and super-hospital.** A young woman was raped behind the building where MNA Kathleen Weil's office is located (about five years ago). The proposed closer to Upper Lachine to all traffic (including buses) would mean that there will be a 'gray-green zone' created. Anyone wanting to walk West/East, accessing Vendome and beyond, will want to choose this route as it is the most direct. Many people, including members of the St Raymond Residents Association and the Director of the St Raymond Community Centre, are concerned that this will become even more dangerous and that many women, such as staff working late at the Centre, won't feel comfortable walking through there. Mock-ups shown at the info session on Feb. 12<sup>th</sup> showed an elevated walk-way with trees & bushes, but it looks like there are too many places where aggression and sexual assault could happen.

3. **Inter-sector harmonization of services:** We are aware that services at the Glen Site will commence in 2015. We have a history of working collaboratively with staff at the Montreal Children's Hospital, and would like an opportunity to have a clinical committee established to explore issues pertaining to access, approach, continuity of care, gaps, challenges & most importantly - opportunities for stronger collaboration in the future. This could tie-in well with the already existing Table Jeunesse NDG and the various Tables at the CSSS Cavendish (Petite-Enfance, 6-12 etc.)
4. **Improved and new bike paths & bridges;** Youth, staff and volunteers who access our services use the bike paths daily. The MUHC has proposed that their staff use bike paths as well. We are concerned about safety now, and would like to see improved safety at Girouard/deMaisonneuve, Sherbrooke/Girouard, Sherbrooke/Decarie intersections in particular. Systems that promote the safest possible transit solutions for cyclists and pedestrians must be prioritized, given the emphasis on sustainability that has been voiced by the MUHC and all key partners.
5. **JOBS and internships for youth.** Former Borough Mayor Applebaum went on public record several times promising jobs for local youth and families as a result of the super-hospital development. We have yet to see any measures of local recruitment in place e.g. through the Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi NDG. We regularly see construction workers returning to other neighbourhoods via the metro, and wonder why the young men in NDG weren't offered these jobs, given the high rate of unemployment they face. We would like to see active recruitment strategies that target youth who are facing systemic barriers to employment, and the doors of the MUHC Glen Site truly open up as a result.
6. **Space for community organizing / local events within and around the new Glen Site:** As mentioned above, many well-rooted community organizations and grassroots initiatives are deeply concerned about a lack of affordable, safe, accessible space wherein which we can offer our programs and develop new ones. (See also the NDG Community Council and Action Communitaire briefs). We are aware that tax incentives have been awarded by the local Borough, to encourage economic and business development around the Glen Site. What about community, social-economy and citizen-drive initiatives? We would like to see at least one, dedicated multi-faceted building (and property) to this end. There is 6767 Cote-des-Neiges on the other side of our borough. Where is the equivalent in NDG?

For more information, please contact:

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