

This contribution towards the public consultation comes from an ordinary, concerned citizen who dreams of living in a carbon-neutral Montreal by 2042 or sooner. True carbon neutrality includes emissions generated on our territory and also takes into account the carbon footprints of the products that we import from far and wide.

Clearly we need to reduce consumption, both individually and collectively, and learn to do more with less. There is an incredible amount of waste, including food waste, on the island of Montreal and surrounding areas. One has only to take a look at what is put out on garbage days to understand that we are light years from living in a circular economy.

Although Montreal communities have had access to recycling services since the 1980's, it seems that far too many Montrealers still have not understood the importance of limiting the amount of garbage that goes into the land fill and simply do not recycle. Though the city of Montreal has wonderful services such as Éco-quartiers and Éco-centres, for a variety of reasons some citizens opt to throw everything, including recyclables, into the garbage.

Perhaps these citizens don't have access to a vehicle to bring renovation refuse to the Éco-centre. Possibly they are not aware of the important role a successful recycling program plays towards conserving natural resources, reducing the amount of waste entering landfills as well as the amount of greenhouse gas emissions going into the atmosphere. Unfortunately, as well, there are those who just do not care about the preservation of the environment.

It has been proven over and over that education has little impact on people's recycling behaviour so what can be done? It seems that the best way to encourage reducing and recycling is to implement a strategy that rewards sustainable behaviours and punishes polluters. One way to do this is to follow Beaconsfield's example and introduce an automated waste collection and incentive tariff system <http://www.beaconsfield.ca/en/waste-and-recycling/incentive-tariff-approach.html> where the fees for waste collection are determined by the amount of garbage generated per household. This approach would quickly increase recycling and composting behaviours and would have limitations only as it pertains to apartment buildings.

Another way to "force" individuals to recycle would be to hire a few inspectors to randomly inspect what is being disposed of. If garbage containers were digitally identified, as in the incentive tariff program, inspectors could distribute warnings and/or fines to those who throw recyclables in the waste collection.

While there are those who frown at limiting the freedom of citizens, it can be argued that the well-being and health of the community at large should be considered a right of the majority. When seat belt laws were first introduced many disagreed while today few would argue that it was a bad idea. Sometimes people just need to be coerced into doing the right thing and fortunately Montreal has the authority to adopt and enforce municipal laws that benefit all of us who live here.

Many Montreal area businesses, as well, choose not to recycle if they don't have to; for example many fast food restaurants do not recycle aluminum cans and the large medical centre where my family doctor practices medicine does not even recycle paper! The laws that govern this behaviour must be reformed to close the loopholes that give businesses permission to send countless recyclables into the landfill. Citizens and business need to get the message that it will cost them money to pollute.

Other observations regarding waste disposal in Montreal:

- Many cities, like Toronto, have had compartmentalized recycle bins beside their public garbage bins for over twenty years. In Montreal, in most areas, such as in Lachine where I live, public garbage bins are rare (some are removed in winter) and most are missing the option for recycling attached.
- Many boroughs, such as Lachine, still do not have curbside composting.
- Items that should be recycled or brought to an Éco-Centre, such as cardboard boxes or televisions, end up in the landfill as they are routinely picked up by the garbage trucks.
- Many citizens convert their taxpayer-funded recycle bins to garbage containers with impunity



Clearly there are many avenues that must be addressed in order to reduce Montreal's greenhouse gas emissions in the coming years; public transportation needs improvement and expansion, buildings require retro-fitting to become more energy efficient and industry must find ways to do business in a sustainable fashion. Many solutions exist and new ones have been proposed via the public consultation.

As far as the personal habits of the population are concerned, the habit of recycling properly still needs improvement in Montreal as outlined above. Stronger municipal laws to ensure higher levels of compliance may indeed be necessary. If Montreal is to become carbon neutral by 2042 a more sustainable attitude and habits must be adopted by ALL citizens, perhaps with the help of a widespread approach such as an automated waste collection and incentive tariff system.

In order to succeed in bringing about an ecological transition for Montreal a social transformation must also take place, whereby each and every citizen is invested in a clean future for our city.