



Memoire du

Sierra Club Quebec

Sousmis a

L'Office de Consultation Publique de Montreal

Dans le cadre du

**Quartiers Avoisinant Turcot
St-Henri Ouest, Emard, Cote Saint-Paul**

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In September 2011, Sierra Club Quebec submitted a brief to the Montreal Metropolitan Community, the focus of which was, in part, the protection of Montreal's last remaining natural spaces. The current mandate of the OCPM and the object of this brief targets a residential area that borders on one of the areas that Sierra Club Quebec (SCQ) addressed in 2011 and it will be the main focus of this brief to the OCPM.

The current mandate given by the OCPM and the objective of this brief is to submit ideas that could possibly be incorporated into an urban plan for the region of Montreal known as the southwest borough. In April 2016 Sierra Club Quebec participated in a workshop on the future of these areas that are next to the Turcot Yards. The mandate of that workshop did not include the future of the Turcot Yards itself. Sierra Club Quebec insists that any neighbourhood cannot be considered as an island, independent of its surroundings. The future of the Turcot Yards has not yet been determined and therefore must be considered in the planning for the future of the existing neighbourhoods of St-Henri Ouest, Emard and Cote-St-Paul. Although not part of the OCPM mandate we include in the discussion the southern part of Notre-Dame-de-Grace, the portion between the Canadian Pacific railway tracks and rue St-Jacques be included in this submission. The focus of our brief will be the future of the Turcot Yards and the impact that it will have on its surrounding neighbourhoods.

Earlier in the Spring of 2016 the OCPM held a workshop on the future of the neighbourhoods of St-Henri Ouest, Emard and Cote Saint-Paul and on that night there was much discussion on transportation, including active transportation in the form of bicycles and bicycle paths, and services such as grocery stores, banks, schools, recreational facilities, etc., but these discussions are best left to the citizens who know the area. Sierra Club Quebec does, however, have a concern for the possible gentrification of the area that seems to be happening in St-Henri east. Real estate and rents are subject to market forces and SCQ does have a concern that changes to the urban plan may result in an area that may be unaffordable to its current residents. Great care and thought should be taken in making all changes.

Why is an urban forest useful to us?

There are a number of reasons why trees and forests are very important to us and even more important in an urban setting. Richard Louv writes about a newly recognized phenomenon that is having a profound impact on our children and us. He writes that for our mental and physical health and for our socialization we need access to a natural environment and that increasingly our natural spaces are being removed from us.¹ In his book Dr Scott Sampson mirrors many of the same arguments; we need access to nature for our development.²

In June 2014, the Toronto Dominion Bank Economics produced a report on the value of trees in Toronto and the demand was high enough that they produced a second report covering the cities Halifax, Montreal and Vancouver. For Toronto the conclusions considered "Urban forests do more than beautify the scenery. They represent an important investment in environmental condition, human health and the overall quality of life" and "Toronto's urban forest provides residents with over \$80 million, or about \$8 per-tree, worth of environmental benefits and cost savings each year. For the average single family household, this works out to \$125 of savings per annum." Among the benefits of trees listed in the report are wet weather flow (rain and wet-weather intercepted), air quality, energy savings, energy savings through shade and climate moderation, carbon sequestration (an important function with two major highways running next to a revitalized Turcot Yards) and energy emission abatement.³

¹ Last Child in the Woods : Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, Richard Louv, Algonquin Books, April 2005

² How to Raise a Wild Child : The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature, Scott Sampson, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, March 10 2015

³ Urban Forests: The Value of Trees in the City of Toronto, Special Report, Toronto Dominion Bank, TD Economics, June 2014

Urban forests produce oxygen, absorb air pollutants, and capture particulate matter like dust, ash, dirt and pollen in their canopy and this should be of utmost importance and a high priority for the three neighbourhoods that are the subject of this memoire. At the workshop presented by the OCPM the participants who lived in the neighbourhood all stated that dust, noise and pollution from the highways was a constant irritant.

On April 16, at the Forum Nature Montreal, Dr. Stephen Vida stated that every tree absorbs and returns to soil 20 KG of particulates per year and every tree produces enough oxygen for 4 people.⁴ For the 300, 000 square meters of the Turcot Yards⁵ whose future is yet to be determined this could represent as many as 4,500 trees that would produce oxygen for 18,000 citizens and absorb 90,000 Kg of particulates.

The situation in the Southwest Borough

On February 3, 2015, SCQ attended the workshop, Plan de Mise en Valeur de la Falaise St-Jacques, hosted by Convergite and the Services des grand parcs, du verdissement et du Mont-Royal. Despite the title of the workshop the emphasis was on the design of the remaining area of the Turcot yards after the changes to the highway and rail lines were complete. As a result of the workshop the Services des grand parcs produced, March 2015, a summary of the day but nothing has happened since. Sierra Club Quebec as a result of the workshop felt that there was a strong sentiment toward conserving the remaining land of the Turcot Yards and transforming it into park space that would be central to a western green belt. It is important to remember that the PMAD report promised a green belt for Montreal. Refer to Appendix A and Appendix B for views of the Turcot Yards and the western green belt.

Since the date of the workshop Sierra Club Quebec has joined with CRE Montreal to promote the idea of a green Turcot, a beautiful park that will serve the citizens of both the Southwest Borough but also the people of the southern portion of Notre Dame de Grace.

“Le chantier Turcot est loin d’être terminé mais c’est dès maintenant qu’il faut intégrer les aménagements qui permettront d’améliorer la qualité de vie des citoyens vivant à proximité et d’assurer une connexion aux espaces verts et aux infrastructures de transport actif existantes car après lorsque l’autoroute sera construite, il risque d’être trop tard »⁶

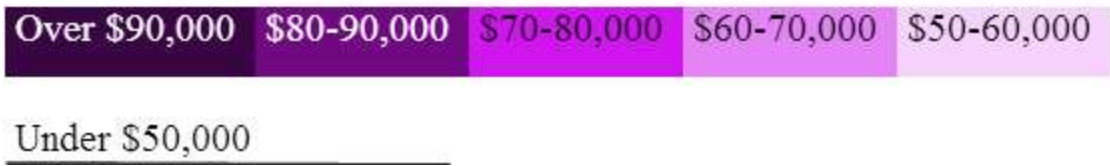
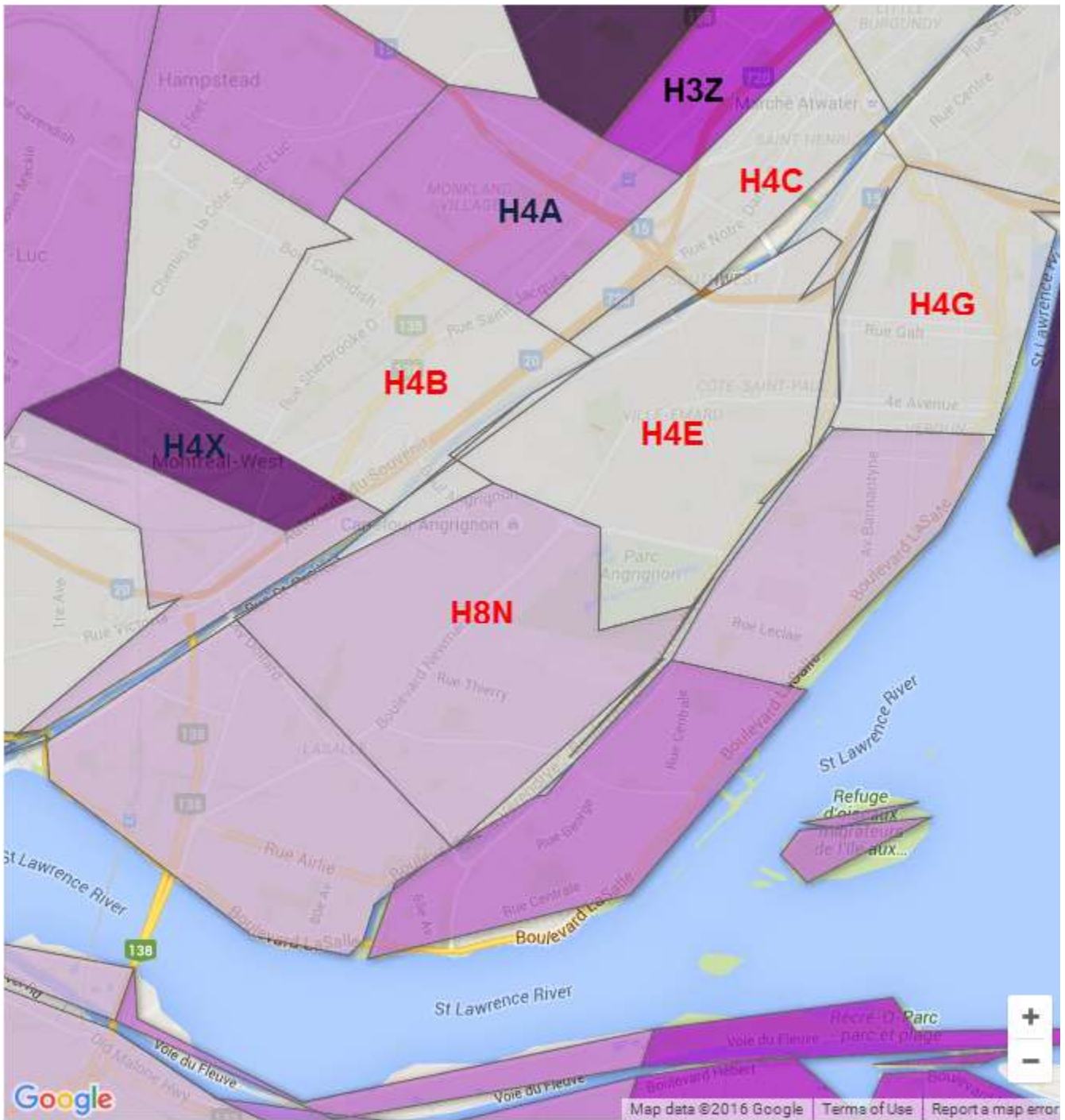
The economy of the Southwest Borough is in a period of transition; the once booming manufacturing sector has collapsed and is slowly being replaced by a service sector. From the profil économique for the southwest borough “Le Sud-Ouest vit une importante reconversion de sa structure économique, qui est passée d’une économie essentiellement manufacturière à une économie de services et à la nouvelle économie. »⁷ The reality of the situation is that the areas that touch the Turcot Yards are among the areas with the lowest family incomes and therefore their access to natural spaces may be reduced to other citizens of Montreal.

⁴ Presentation to Forum Nature Montreal, Stephen Vida, April 16, 2016, Maison Développement Durable

⁵ « Échangeur Turcot et sa trame verte et bleue active : une promesse qui doit être tenue », <http://www.cremtl.qc.ca/publication/entrevues/2015/echangeur-turcot-sa-trame-verte-bleue-active-une-promise-qui-doit-etre>

⁶ « L’avenir de la falaise Saint-Jacques se joue maintenant », <http://www.cremtl.qc.ca/publication/entrevues/2015/lavenir-falaise-saint-jacques-joue-maintenant>

⁷ http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=7757,84779858&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL



Median salary by postal code; see accompanying chart on next page.¹ Postal codes highlighted in red would most benefit from the Turcot Yards being converted into a large park for all Montrealers.

FSA		Median Family Income	Median for Canada
H3J	Petite-Bourgogne	43,412	66,343
H3K	Pointe-Saint-Charles	40,514	
H3Y	Westmount	220,578	
H4A	Notre-Dame-de-Grace	69,952	
H4B	Notre-Dame-de-Grace (south)	42,291	
H4C	Saint-Henri	40,362	
H4E	Ville-Emard	45,482	
H4G	Verdun	39,135	
H4H	Verdun	53,554	
H4V	Cote St-Luc (east)	47,920	
H4X	Montreal West	87,904	
H8N	Lasalle (northwest)	53,795	
H8P	Lasalle (southeast)	60,445	
H3Z	Westmount (south)	79,432	

Median salary by postal code; Postal codes highlighted in red would most benefit from the Turcot Yards being converted into a large park for all Montrealers.

Conclusions

1. The Communauté Métropolitaine de Montréal, in the PMAD document, promised Montrealers a green belt and the connection of Meadowbrook, the Falaise Saint-Jacques, a renaturalized Turcot Yards, Angrignon Park, the Douglas Hospital grounds and finishing on the St-Lawrence River with the green space along Lasalle boulevard and Parc des Rapides will give a boost to the citizens of the southwest region of Montreal and to its economy.
2. The five neighbourhoods that are identified in this document and which border the Turcot Yards do not necessarily have the means to travel to natural spaces and the concept of a Western Montreal green belt will provide then unprecedented access to nature.
3. A Western Montreal green belt would provide an incentive for people living outside of Montreal to visit. Compare Montreal to Chicago with its vast park space along Lake Michigan. Chicago is not necessarily a beautiful city but that ark never fails to seduce.
4. The recreational and health benefits for the residents would be immeasurable. The cleaner and cooler air and the reduction in noise levels from the highways would be a great health benefit.
5. The reduction in the number of heat islands on the island of Montreal would have a benefit for all Montrealers.
6. The recreational value of the park would be a benefit to all

Appendix A: Meadowbrook, Falaise St-Jacques, naturalized Turcot yards and a green corridor connected to the St-Lawrence River.



Example 4. Meadowbrook, Falaise St-Jacques, renaturalized Turcot yards connected to St-Lawrence River

Appendix B: Proximity of the Turcot Yards to the neighbourhoods of the Southwest Borough



Appendix C: Turcot Yards Imagine the Possibilities

