

Montreal claims to promote urban biodiversity, yet it plans to turn l'Anse à l'Orme, the last truly wild area of the island, into a housing development. This project will destroy the habitats of birds, mammals, plants and aquatic species, and it will destroy the natural shoreline of the river. It will also deprive Montrealers of a chance to walk there and enjoy nature.

I feel strongly that l'Anse à l'Orme should be turned into a park so I can take my young grandson there to watch the birds and breathe the fresh air. Those of us who live in cities need access to green spaces to maintain our physical and mental health. There are many brown fields in the city where new houses can be built.

The mayor of Montreal likes to compare this city to Toronto, but Toronto is far ahead in terms of preserving its green spaces. It has the 80-square-kilometer Rouge National Urban Park, while Montreal has not even reached its commitment to preserve a minimum of 10 percent of the island as green space.

Please recommend against allowing this housing project to proceed. Give Montreal the opportunity to preserve this beautiful area of undeveloped shoreline, meadows and woods.

Janice Hamilton

author of "The St. Lawrence River: History, Highway and Habitat", Redlader Publishing, Montreal: 2006