

Montreal, 20.03.2017

Opinion on the Children's Hospital Redevelopment Project

By Anton Dubrau

Dear OCPM,

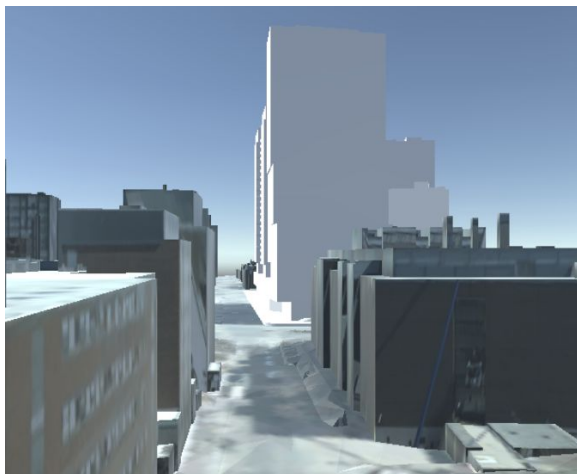
I would like to voice my opinion regarding the Children's Hospital Redevelopment Project.

In-Human-Scale Skyscrapers

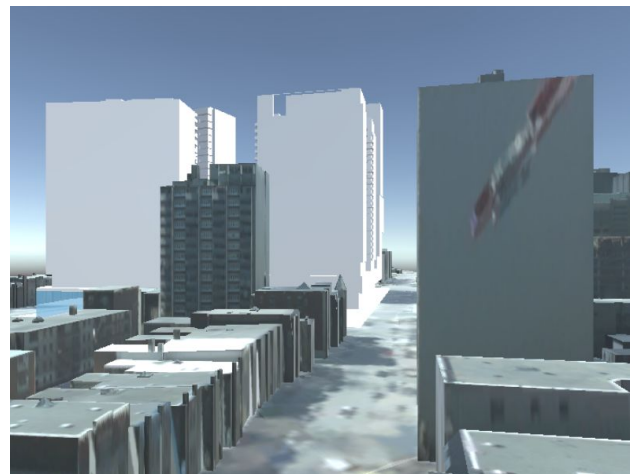
The project proposes to tear down the existing children's hospital and replace it with several skyscrapers. The project is presented as "green" because it should increase residential density in downtown, and because it allocates about a third of the space to "green spaces".

In reality, the extreme height of the condo-buildings will undo some of the supposed environmental friendliness. The higher buildings are, the more energy they require per square meter of usable space, compared to midrises. This is true both for the original construction as well as the maintenance.

At the same time, the buildings are too large, not human scale at all. For people to want to live in the area, the city needs to provide a good quality of life. Large towers are antithetical to that. Given the large height of the buildings, we will miss the goal of building a sustainable, human-scale city that is friendly to families.



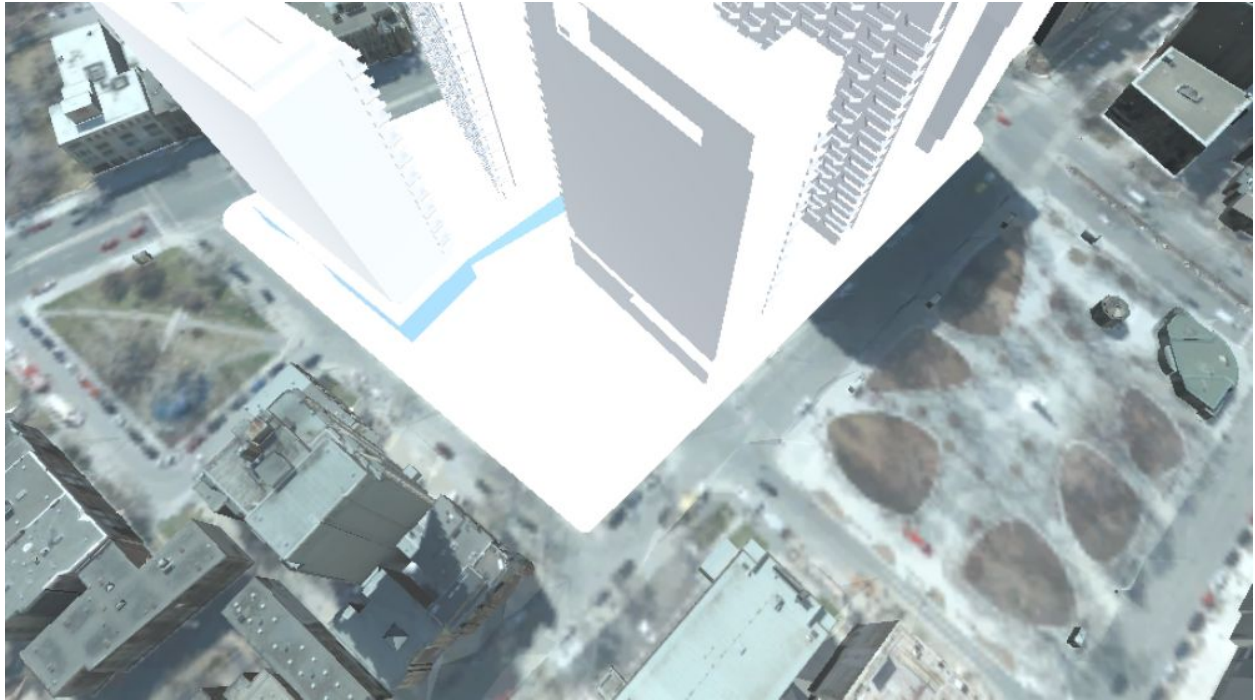
View from West



View from East

Questionable Greenspaces

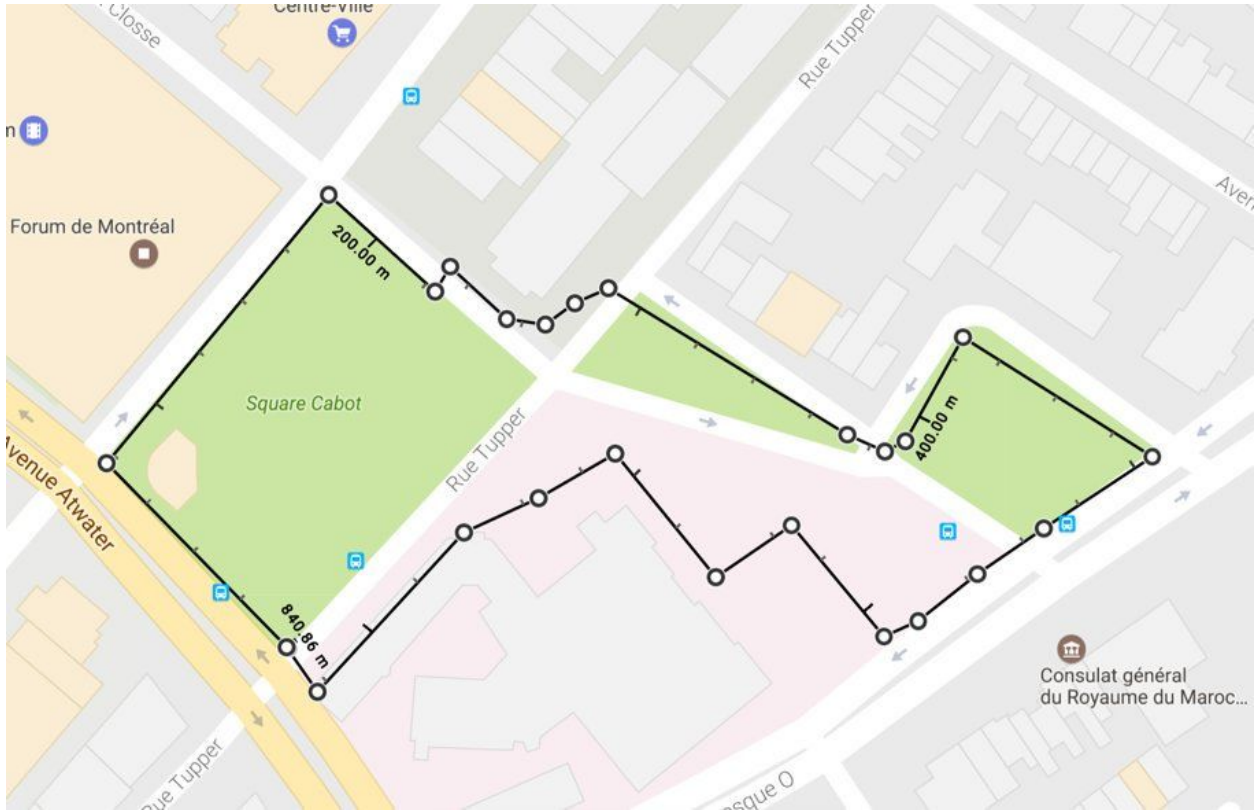
We were told there are about 33% green spaces. Looking at the plan, I wonder where those 33% are. It looks only like about 10% at most, and it's all disconnected. Instead of usable green spaces, we get skyscrapers-in-the park. Or are the concrete areas and the areas on top of the two-storey base counted as green spaces?



View from North

Instead of providing patches of Green in the separation-space of the skyscrapers, we should seize the opportunity the complete reconstruction of the area represents by connecting connecting the three patches of 'park' immediately adjacent to the square (Cabot square, Place Henri-Dunant, Place Hector-Toe-Blake). By using some of the area of the Children's Hospital site and some of the adjacent streets, it is possible to create a continuous, non-trivial park.

Green spaces that are too small simply do not work, they have little to no recreational value. They do not act as an oasis in the city. Visitors need some amount of space large enough that actually provides some separation from the surrounding traffic, in order for it to work. This could bring back some of the necessary human-scale and quality of life back to the area.



Connected downtown park, as proposed by me, constructed by connecting existing, small green spaces and by closing a couple of streets, view from South

Thank you very much,
Anton Dubrau