

AVENUE MCGILL COLLEGE PROJECT

Overview Summary presented to the Office
de consultation publique de Montréal
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1. BACKGROUND

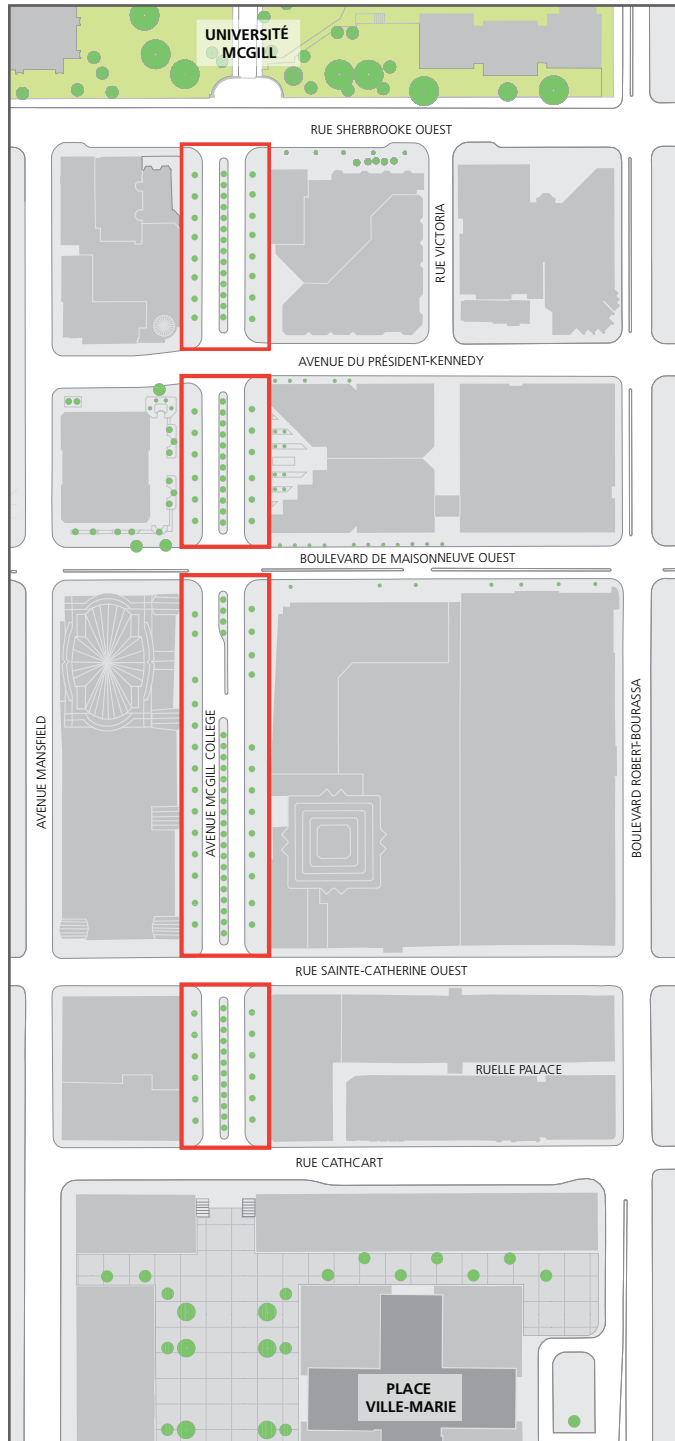
Avenue McGill College is rich in history. For a century, almost without interruption, promoters, property owners, citizens and designers have envisioned a multitude of projects to transform the street. In 1984, this avenue was at the heart of one of the first public stances taken to change a development project. Avenue McGill College, as we know it today with its magnificent views of Mount Royal, was protected thanks to citizen action.

In April 2018, Ville de Montréal announced its intention to transform Avenue McGill College into a vast downtown public space. Almost 35 years after the first stance taken by citizens, it seems vital for the City to hold a public consultation at the start of the design phase of the new development and major transformation of the space. In doing so, the goal is that all stakeholders will be able to express their hopes for this new place so that, once completed, it will be a space that meets the needs of all users, Montrealers, workers, business people and tourists alike, for decades to come.

This document summarizes the most relevant information to help understand the context of the project and fuel thoughts and discussion about the future development of Avenue McGill College.

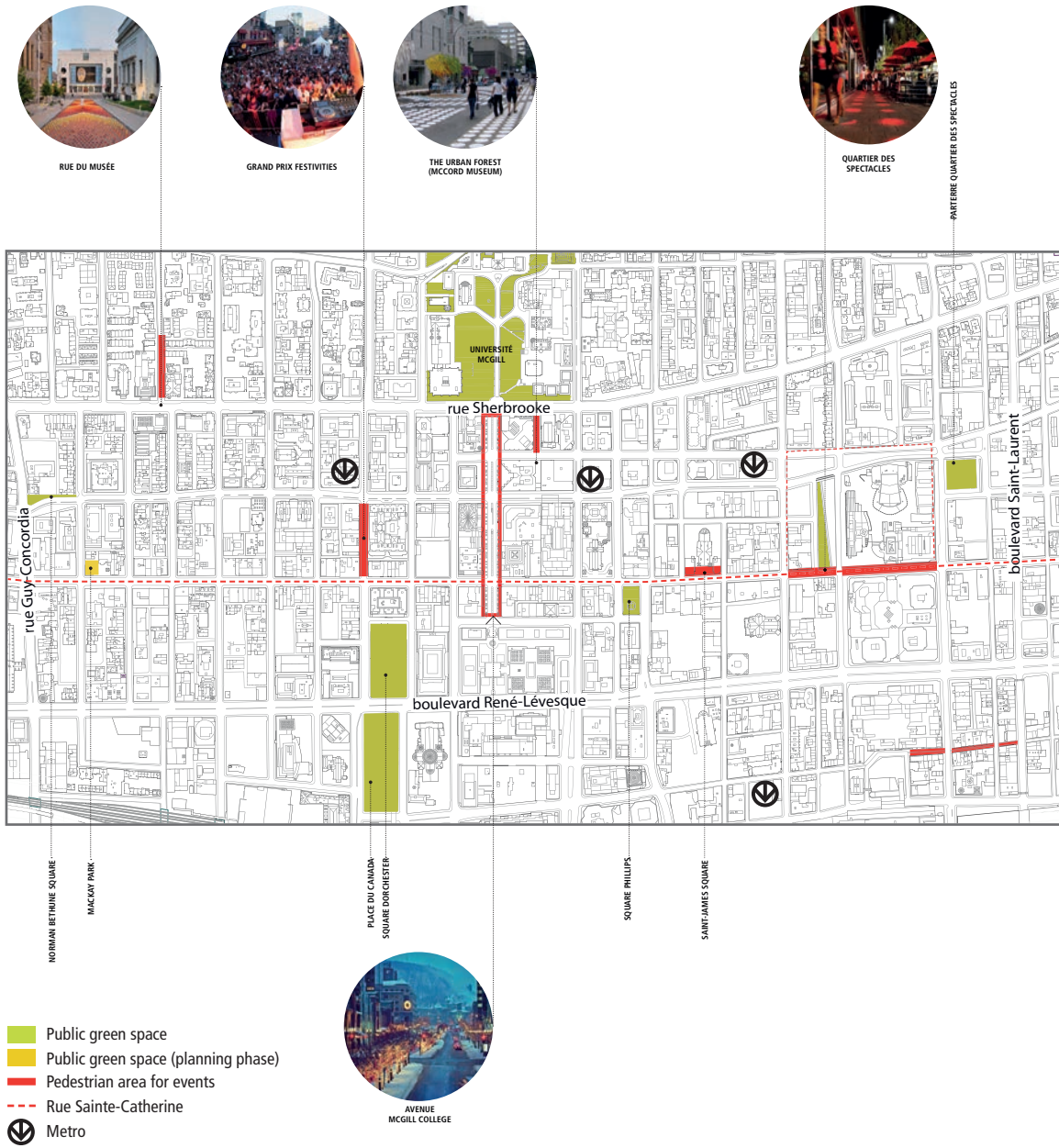
1.1 Intervention Sector

The project involves Avenue McGill College between Rue Cathcart, on the south end, and Rue Sherbrooke Ouest, on the north end. The redevelopment of this public space will link the Place Ville Marie Esplanade with the main entrance to McGill University.



1.2 Event Areas and Green Spaces

Completion of the redesigned public space will be the focal point of a rich combination of event and pedestrian areas and green spaces. This project falls within the Administration's desire to link six downtown public spaces. Two new places will be created: Avenue McGill College and near Concordia University. Three other downtown spaces will be completely redeveloped: Phillips Square, Place du Frère-André and Dorchester Square. This linking of public places will be complemented by Place des Festivals, further to the east. Once completed, the creation of these quality public places will be an incentive for Montrealers, workers and tourists to take advantage of and enjoy life downtown in new ways.



1.3 Image of Downtown

Avenue McGill College is at the centre of a dynamic economic, commercial, university and tourism landscape.

As mentioned in the Stratégie centre-ville (downtown strategy), this sector of the city, which includes the business centre and its adjacent neighbourhoods of Griffintown, Wellington Bridge sector and Old Montréal to the south, Saint-Jacques and Sainte-Marie neighbourhoods to the east, Milton-Parc to the north, and the Quartier des grands jardins to the west, is booming.

"Downtown Montréal is home to close to 100,000 residents and welcomes more than 300,000 workers, 150,000 students and thousands of tourists daily. In all, some 720,000 people travel each day to the downtown area.¹"

"Downtown Montréal is Quebec's largest employment hub. Almost half of the jobs in the downtown area are tied to the high value-added sectors of innovation and creativity.²"

"With more than half of the office space in the Metropolitan region, Montréal ranks second to New York City as the North American city with the highest concentration of office space in the downtown area.³"



1.4 Image of the Immediate Surroundings of the Avenue

Located within close proximity to the study sector, Avenue McGill College is bounded to the south by Place Ville Marie, a 3,384,000-square-foot (314,384 m²) complex comprising four office buildings and an upscale shopping gallery with nearly 70 shops, services and dining venues.⁴ Based on data from property owner Ivanhoé Cambridge, a captive clientele of nearly 25,000 people work in buildings adjacent to Place Ville Marie.⁵

Avenue McGill College is also bounded by two major shopping malls, Montréal Eaton Centre and Place Montréal Trust. Numerous office towers are also located nearby, housing the offices of Bell Media, Rogers, Industrial Alliance, the Laurentian Bank, BNP Paribas and others. To the north of Avenue McGill College is the main entrance to McGill University, home to more than 40,000 students in fall 2017.⁶

According to the Portail d'information sur les établissements d'Emploi-Québec, or PILE (information portal on businesses), more than 23,000 people work for businesses and shops having their address on Avenue McGill College or in the various offices of Place Ville Marie. A large portion of these jobs (4,200, or 19%) are tied to the financial and insurance fields.

Avenue McGill College has numerous access points to RÉSO (Montréal's underground city), especially the McGill metro station, the second-busiest station in the Société de transport de Montréal's metro system, with 11.3 million riders in 2017.⁷

Table 1 : Busiest Metro Stations - Yearly Rider Entries

Stations	2017	2016
Berri-UQAM	12,110,105	11,928,442
McGill	11,305,307	11,077,863
Guy-Concordia	8,976,542	8,493,242
Bonaventure	8,710,407	8,310,714
Longueuil – Université-de-Sherbrooke	7,913,616	7,663,408

With the arrival of the future McGill station of the Réseau express métropolitain, or REM (light rail transit line), which will be located on the avenue, the number of riders is bound to increase in the coming years. The prediction is that the future public place will be used by a large number of workers, shoppers, public transit users and tourists.

2. OPPORTUNITY

Avenue McGill College has undergone major transformations in its history. The most recent changes date back to the late 1980s, when the avenue was widened from 60 to 120 feet, and to the early 1990s, when the development as we know it today was completed.

2.1 Projects in the Sector

This downtown sector is currently flourishing. Four major projects are either in the planning or in the completion stage.

The REM

To connect the REM to downtown, plans are to build a station beneath Avenue McGill College, between Place Montréal Trust and the Eaton Centre. The building of this station will require the demolition of part of the existing surface of the avenue, between Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest. In a desire for efficiency and optimization, the City hopes to start the development work of Avenue McGill College at the end of work on the REM.

Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest Project

Ville de Montréal has currently begun major work to replace the infrastructure of Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest and to redevelop a 2.2-kilometre stretch between Rue De Bleury and Avenue Atwater. A broad-based public consultation was held in 2014, and many citizens and stakeholders mentioned the enormous development potential that Avenue McGill College represented. The first phase of the work on Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest, which began in 2018, involves the area between Rue De Bleury and Rue Mansfield. This first phase will include, in the coming years, the completion of the key intersection of Avenue McGill College and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest.



New development of Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest, Ville de Montréal, 2018.

Major private investments

Private investments are planned in this sector, specifically Ivanhoé Cambridge's *Projet Nouveau Centre* with planned total investments over \$1 billion, of which \$200 million will be earmarked to revitalize the Esplanade and renew the commercial offerings at Place Ville Marie.⁸ This major transformation of Place Ville Marie includes the addition of a spectacular architectural stairway in the axis of Avenue McGill College and the relocation of vehicle access to parking at the complex, on both sides of this stairway. The new development will create a large axis linking McGill University campus to the heart of Place Ville Marie, the newly renovated Fairmont Queen Elizabeth Hotel and Central Station. The *Projet Nouveau Centre* also includes major renovations to the building housing the Eaton Centre, which borders Avenue McGill College on one side. In turn, Ville de Montréal is looking to seize the favourable opportunity that these major investments offer to develop Avenue McGill College.



Newly designed stairway leading up to the Place Ville Marie Esplanade, Ivanhoé Cambridge, 2017.

Redevelopment of Rue Cathcart

The City also plans to redevelop Rue Cathcart between Avenue Union and Rue Mansfield. Some of the work on Place Ville Marie (moving access to parking and adding the stairway) will require major changes to the intersection of Rue Cathcart and Avenue McGill College.

2.2 Integration into the Stratégie centre-ville

Ville de Montréal wishes to support the current momentum and excitement surrounding downtown. In 2016, it launched the *Stratégie centre-ville* and hopes to benefit from the Avenue McGill College project to achieve several of the strategy's objectives, the most important of which are to:

1. Encourage active transportation and public transit:
 - Ensure good integration of the REM infrastructure into downtown
2. Support economic development:
 - Consolidate the attraction of downtown as a business district
 - Support a diversified commercial offering
3. Ensure the user-friendliness and greening of streets and public places:
 - Create a network of neighbouring public spaces and facilitate access to these places
4. Enhance urban heritage:
 - Showcase Mount Royal, the city's element of identity

2.3 Draft Objectives

Draft objectives were established to launch the thought process on this project:

- Generate a new, unique and dynamic public place that expresses the vitality of downtown
- Guide this great avenue in its transition to a core downtown transportation hub
- Offer a unique experience and views to pedestrians in this sector of downtown

It is important to mention that these objectives will evolve in accordance with the results obtained from the current public consultation.

Given the many projects and constant evolution of lifestyles, a unique opportunity presents itself today to rethink the vocation of this majestic space.



New Place Ville Marie Esplanade, Ivanhoé Cambridge, 2017.

3. HISTORY

3.1 Avenue McGill College: 160 Years at the Heart of the City

Avenue McGill College has a rich history that must be taken into consideration in its future design. Since its creation in 1856, the avenue has always been at the heart of the city, whether as *New Town* at the end of the 19th century or the more modern downtown that, from 1980 to 1992, witnessed the rise of numerous skyscrapers.



Row houses on Avenue McGill College, circa 1850–1885, John Henry Walker, McCord Museum, M930.50.8.464.

A study of the evolution of the architectural, urban, landscape and identity characterization of Avenue McGill College was conducted in 2017.⁹ This study, rich in historical information and archival images, is available for consultation. The main conclusions of the analysis of the history and development of Avenue McGill College can also be found on page 354.

3.2 Public Consultation of 1984

In 1984, Avenue McGill College was the subject of one of the first public stands taken on changes to a development project.

The thinking regarding the development of Avenue McGill College had already begun several years earlier, with the construction of large office towers in the northern sections of the avenue. A development concept that favoured the visual link with Mount Royal and the creation of a direct axis between McGill University and Place Ville Marie garnered the consensus of all Montréal's social players and governed all the construction. Avenue McGill College was also the subject of a decision to widen the avenue to 120 feet.

In 1984, against this backdrop, Cadillac Fairview Corporation presented a project to construct the largest shopping centre in the country in the quadrangle bounded by Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest, Rue Mansfield, Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Avenue McGill College. The project planned to link the shopping centre to the Simpson's store on the west and the Eaton Centre on the east with huge walkways spanning Rue Mansfield and Avenue McGill College, which would block the view of Mount Royal. The project also included an office tower, a shopping centre on the metro level and a performance hall for the Montréal Symphony Orchestra (OSM). To do this, Avenue McGill College would no longer be widened to 120 feet, but rather 60 or 90 feet. The project also planned for the creation of a pedestrian mall on the avenue between Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest. The City Administration was in favour of this project, especially the walkways, which were presented as a kind of winter garden.

However, since the project proposed by Cadillac Fairview went against the consensus already reached, it triggered strong protests from the various Montréal communities, which led the promoter, Cadillac Fairview, to hold consultations.

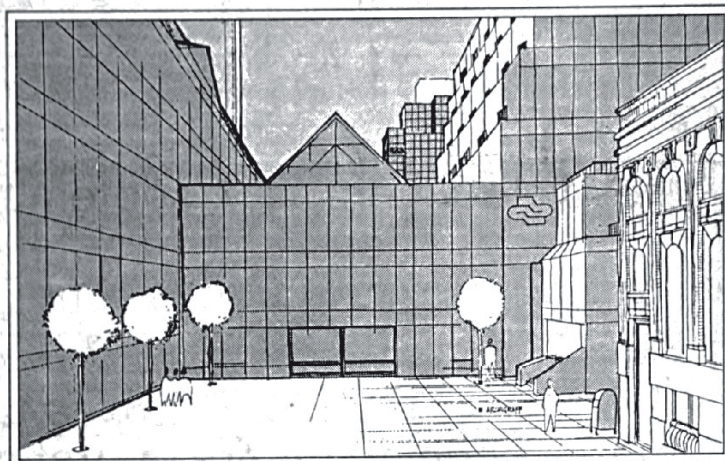
The Comité consultatif pour le design urbain du secteur McGill College (advisory committee on the urban design of the McGill College sector) was thus created, with representatives from the business community (the Bureau de commerce de Montréal and the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montréal), Heritage Montréal, the OSM, the promoter Cadillac Fairview and a professor of architecture from McGill University.

A revised project came out of all these consultations. The project was approved by the City's Service de l'urbanisme, but on the day before the release of its study to the executive committee, Mayor Jean Drapeau announced that Avenue McGill College would not be home to the OSM's concert hall but instead would be joined to another project.

Cadillac Fairview Corporation then suggested a new project for the McGill College quadrangle, this time without the concert hall. The \$125-million project consisted mainly of a 30-storey office tower and a shopping centre featuring 120 stores. Presented to the City's Service de l'urbanisme in late October 1985, the project was finally accepted and completed. The Bell Media Tower and Place Montréal Trust opened their doors in May 1989.

This spontaneous mobilization of various Montréal stakeholders forced a major promoter to revise its proposal, becoming one of the first to encourage the implementation of a process of public consultation. This process led to a consensus of stakeholders with varied interests.

IL FAUT EMPÊCHER LA FERMETURE DE L'AVENUE MCGILL COLLEGE...



Sans consultation auprès du public, l'administration municipale se propose d'entériner un projet de construction comprenant une structure sur l'avenue McGill College qui formera un écran impénétrable devant le Mont Royal.

Ce concept est d'autant plus inacceptable que, depuis longtemps déjà, les édifices construits aux alentours respectent des normes qui devaient permettre de transformer l'avenue McGill College en une élégante artère s'étendant de la Place Ville-Marie jusqu'au campus de l'Université, avec vue imprenable sur la Montagne.

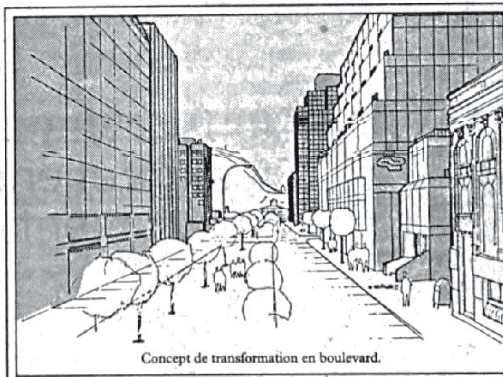
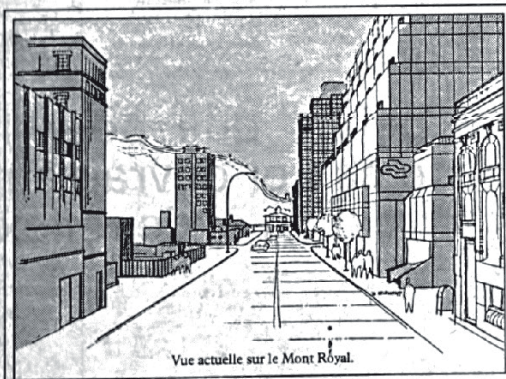
IL FAUT AGIR IMMÉDIATEMENT. LE TEMPS PRESSE. CAR LE CONSEIL MUNICIPAL, LORS DE SA RÉUNION

DU 17 MAI PROCHAIN, DOIT APPROUVER LE PLAN DE FERMETURE DE L'AVENUE MCGILL COLLEGE.

Si vous êtes d'accord avec nous sur l'effet désastreux qu'aurait cet aspect du projet, faites connaître votre désapprobation aux responsables en utilisant le coupon ci-dessous.

D'autres aspects dudit projet mériteraient d'ailleurs d'être étudiés de plus près avant de procéder: une large passerelle enjambant la rue Mansfield; l'emplacement de la salle de concert; l'effet sur la circulation et sur l'activité des commerces existants.

NOUS ACCUEILLONS AVEC FIERTÉ LES PROJETS DE DÉVELOPPEMENT BIEN PLANIFIÉS. AIDEZ-NOUS À AMÉLIORER CE PROJET.



Insert to prevent the closing of Avenue McGill College, which appeared in Le Devoir, June 5, 1984.

3.3 Agreement with the Neighbourhood Property Owners of Avenue McGill College

At the same time as discussions were under way between the City and the promoter Cadillac Fairview regarding the building project, other talks were being held between the City and the property owners of Avenue McGill College about the future development of the street. In April 1986, the City found common ground with the neighbourhood property owners. The study by Jonathan Chan describes this agreement, as follows:

"The two parties set out the main actions to be taken to develop the avenue:

- The redevelopment of Avenue McGill College will be upscale in character given its strategic location in the heart of Montréal's business district;*
- The redevelopment will allow for a stunning view of Mount Royal;*
- The redevelopment will be designed with pedestrian traffic in mind while meeting the minimum traffic criteria recommended by the two parties;*
- The redevelopment will set aside an adequate amount of underground area to allow for the eventual implementation of an intermodal station.¹⁰"*

In the wake of this consensus, an association of 18 property owners of buildings bordering Avenue McGill College was created and, in October 1989, the City signed an agreement with this association. "The goal of the agreement was to share the costs of beautification and horticultural maintenance of the avenue for the next 20 years".¹¹

In return, the neighbourhood association of property owners of Avenue McGill College was given the right to take part in planning the redevelopment of the avenue. The association asked the City to prohibit parking on Avenue McGill College. It was also specified in the agreement that the City was required to inform the association of all events, shows and public attractions to be held on the avenue. Finally, the agreement stipulated that the two parties agreed to collaborate regularly on embellishment projects.

The association paid an initial amount of \$500,000 to the City in two instalments, in 1988 and 1989, in the form of local improvement taxes. In the agreement, the association also agreed to pay \$100,000 a year (plus indexing) for 20 years.¹² The agreement ended in 2009 and, while some discussions took place between the City and the association, it was never renewed.

3.4 Project Completed in 1988–1989

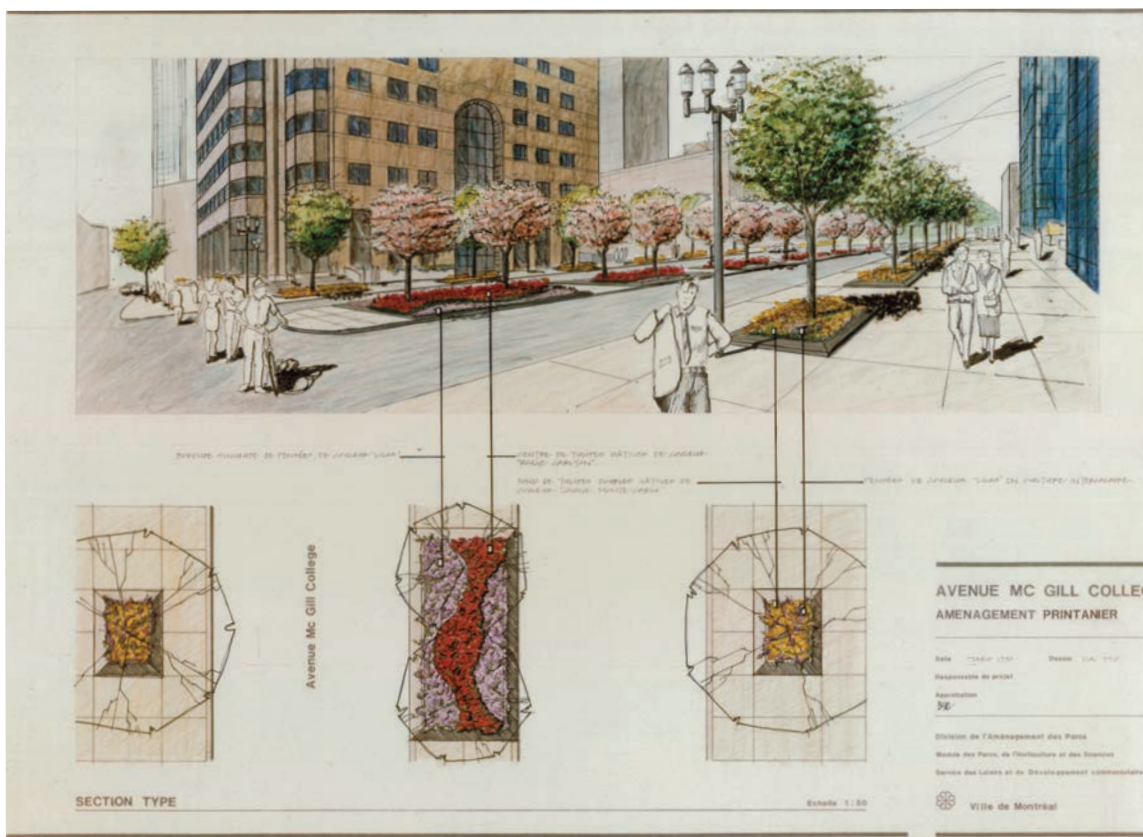
According to the study by Jonathan Cha, once the criteria for the development of the avenue were agreed upon by the City and the neighbourhood property owners, the City began implementing the redevelopment plans in early 1987.

The work encountered some delays, with Phase 1 (from Sherbrooke to Sainte-Catherine Ouest) completed in 1988 and Phase 2 (from Sainte-Catherine Ouest to Cathcart) completed in early 1989. The installation of street furniture and the planting of trees and flowers were completed in April 1989.

Upon completion, the avenue featured exclusive street furniture, as well as containers planted with maple trees along the edge of the avenue and crabapple trees in the centre mall. The containers were embellished with flowers. In an effort to vary the species of flowers from spring to fall, the City suggested three distinct floral arrangements, according to the seasons.

Today, the landscaping completed 30 years ago is still visible on Avenue McGill College. Crabapple trees are still planted in the centre mall. Some trees along the edge of the street have been replaced with other species, but the tree pits have remained in place. The City no longer systematically creates three different floral arrangements but continues to ensure that the avenue is generously adorned with flowers each year.

The distinctive street furniture has made way for furniture more suitably designed for urban promenades. For more details about the current design, the reader is invited to consult Section 4.3, “Development.”

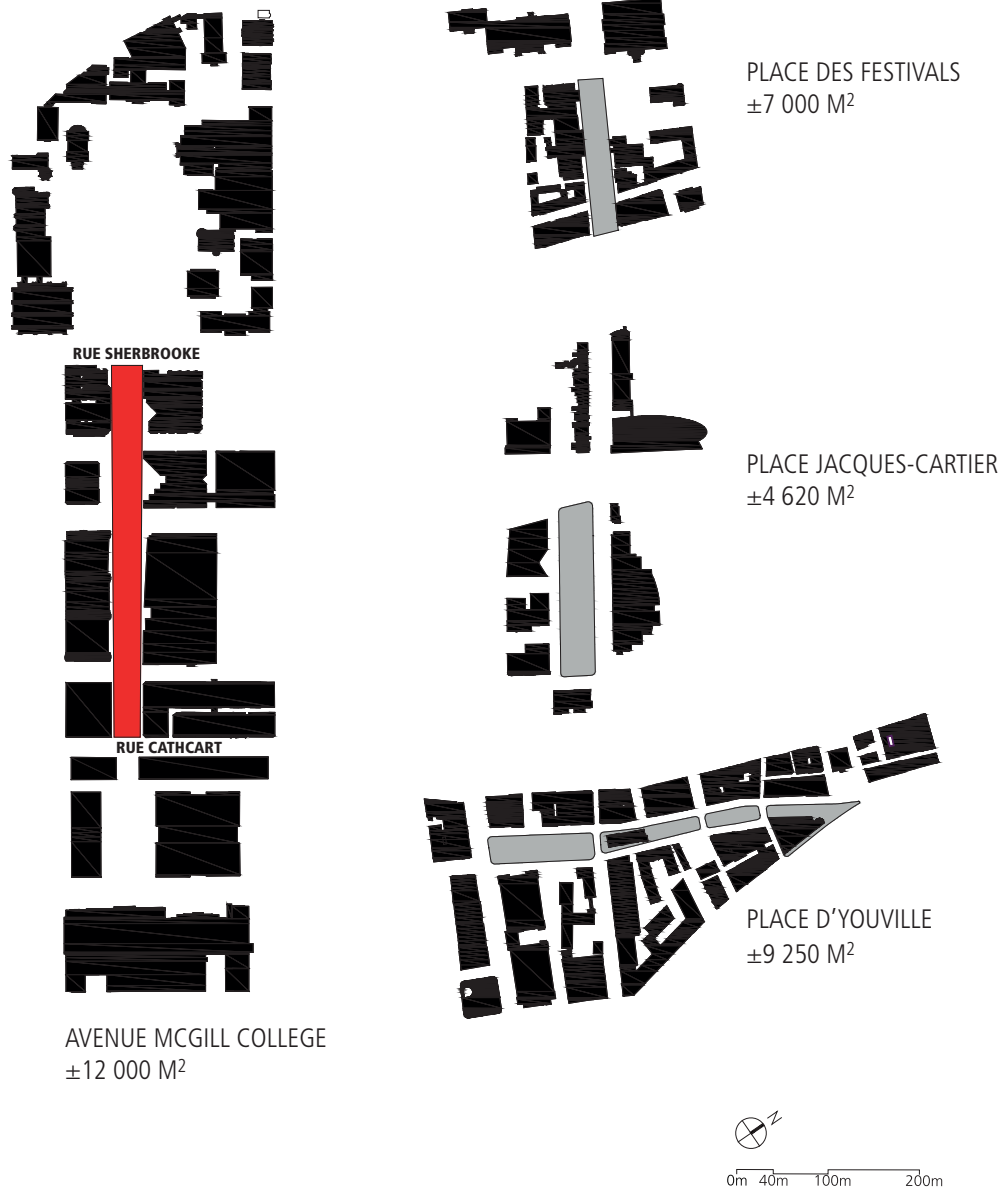


Spring arrangement, Avenue McGill College circa 1990, Ville de Montréal Archives.

4. CURRENT SITUATION

4.1 Surface Area

The surface area to be developed, including all four sections, is more than 12,000 square metres. By way of comparison, this represents almost twice the surface area of Place des Festivals in the Quartier des spectacles.

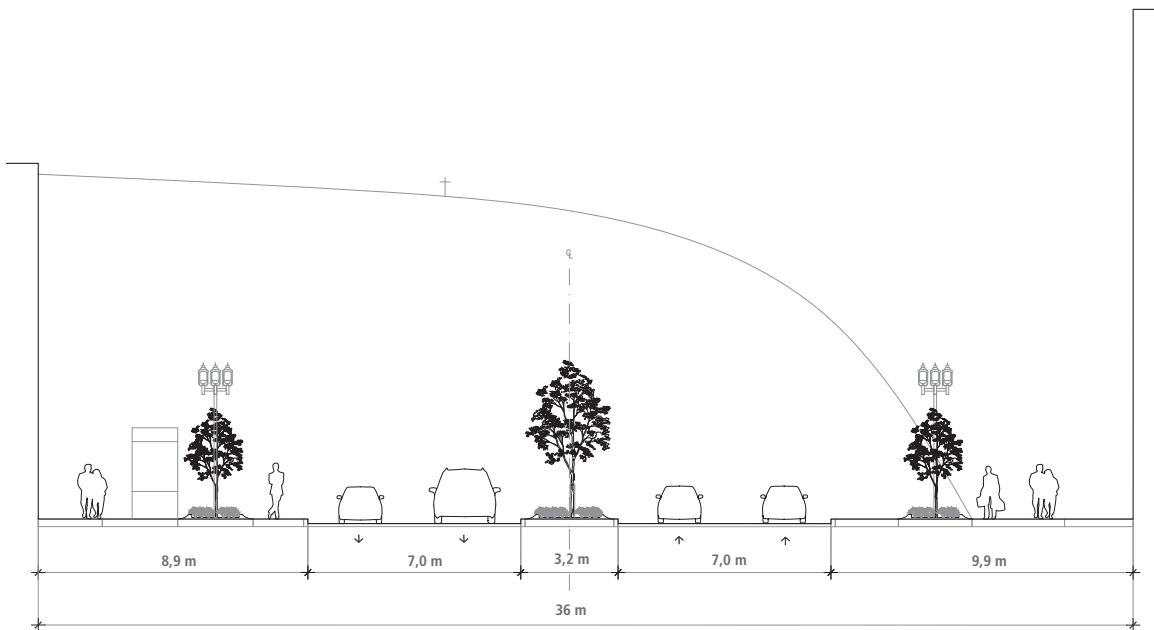


4.2 Configuration

Avenue McGill College is a 425-metre-long north-south axis between Rue Cathcart and Rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Traffic is two-way, with two lanes per direction, on each side of a treed centre median. The sidewalks on either side of the mall are approximately 6.8 metres wide. This width varies and can reach up to 7 metres in certain places.

The central mall is approximately 3.2 metres wide and the sidewalks are expansive, with widths ranging from 8 to 10 metres on both sides of the avenue. The sidewalks contain tree wells located 1.7 metres from the edge of the sidewalk. Completely to the north of the axis are the Roddick Gates, which give access to McGill University. This access is closed to vehicle traffic. On the opposite south side is Place Ville Marie and access to its underground parking.

Cross-section of the current street – between Boulevard De Maisonneuve and Avenue du Président-Kennedy



4.3 Development

Avenue McGill College has a fairly large centre median planted at regular, almost continuous, intervals along its length. The tree wells hold flowers and crabapple trees. There are also trees on the sidewalks, on both sides of the avenue. The tree wells on the sidewalks create an informal place to rest; passersby can sit on their edges. Decorative street lamps light the street.



Trees planted in the centre median of Avenue McGill College, M. Markus, flickr.com, 2011.

Street furniture has been added as part of the framework of city walks that were completed in 1989. In 2017, Ville de Montréal inaugurated the Promenade Fleuve-Montagne, which forms a pedestrian link between the city's two natural icons, the St. Lawrence River to the south and Mount Royal to the north. This route travels along Avenue McGill College, between Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest and Rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Special accommodations had to be made. Huge platforms to sit and relax, as well as information panels and altitude-measuring posts, were installed on both sides of the avenue.

In addition to the development of the public domain, several private property owners created small landscaped areas between the entrances of their buildings and the sidewalks. These numerous small spaces feature plants and, sometimes, fountains and works of art.



Development of the BNP Paribas tower, Avenue McGill College, Alibay, 2018.

4.4 Architectural Characterization

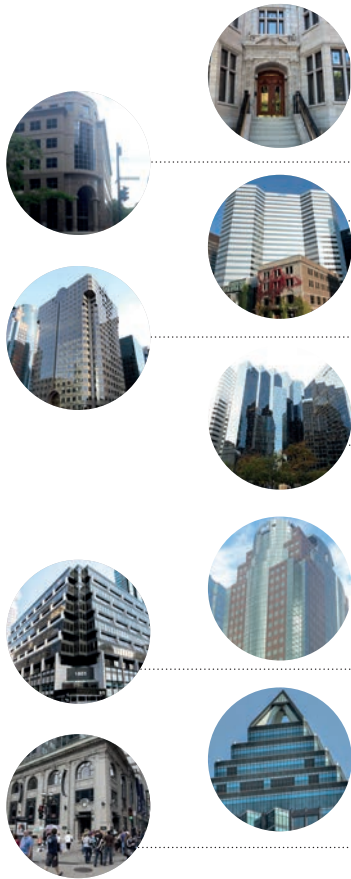
Avenue McGill College is surrounded by buildings of various architectural styles. Some vestiges of the 19th and 20th centuries survived the passage of time at the corner of Avenue McGill College and Rue Sherbrooke Ouest, in particular the Maison Molson (1905–1906). But the avenue underwent a major transformation in the early 1980s. Its immediate surroundings feature a dozen post-modern buildings and skyscrapers, the largest concentration of its kind in Montréal. These buildings, in which several architectural styles intermingle, were constructed between 1980 and 1992. Added to this broad architectural diversity is the variety of sizes and heights of the buildings. For example, the shorter buildings at the intersection of Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest allow for an unobstructed view of Mount Royal.



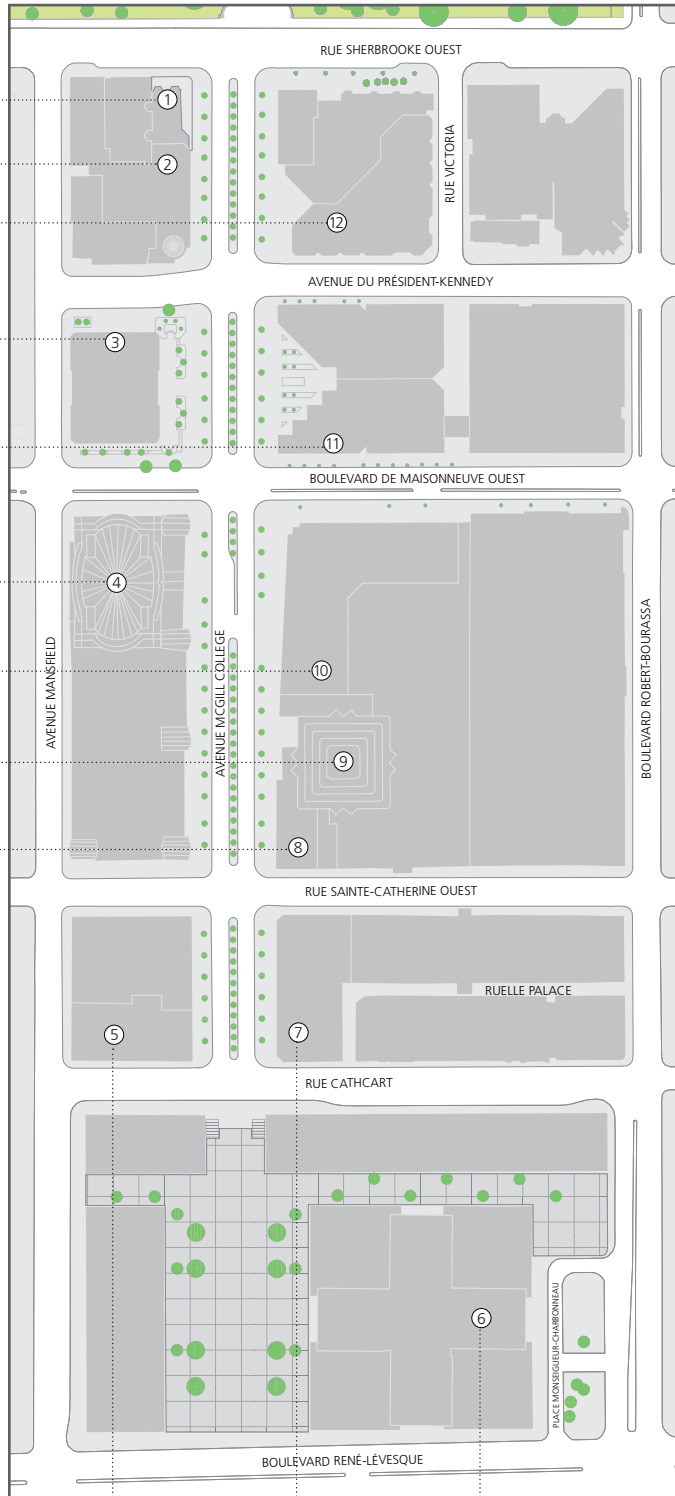
Avenue McGill College, M. Michelle, flickr.com, 2006.

According to the Borough of Ville-Marie’s urban planning bylaw, the built environment of this artery has architectural characteristics that reflect a unique identity. The sector corresponds to landscape units called “Centre-ville” and “Sainte-Catherine–Centre.” Specific requirements exist for these landscape units. For example, the ground floor must encourage animation on the street, especially pedestrian access and multiple openings, and the building’s siting must align with the right-of-way of the street.

Bâtiments principaux



- ① Maison Molson
1906, 4 storeys
- ② 2200, Avenue McGill College
1990, 6 storeys
- ③ 2000, Avenue McGill College (Industrielle Alliance Tower)
1986, 26 storeys
- ④ 1600-1800, Avenue McGill College (Bell Media Tower)
1988, 30 storeys
- ⑤ 1200-1230, Avenue McGill College (Rogers Tower)
1976, 25 storeys
- ⑥ Place Ville-Marie
1962, 44 storeys
- ⑦ 1253, Avenue McGill College
1942, 10 storeys
- ⑧ 1401, Avenue McGill College
1931, 3 storeys
- ⑨ 1501, Avenue McGill College (McGill College Tower)
1992, 35 storeys
- ⑩ 1801, Avenue McGill College
1992, 10 storeys
- ⑪ 1981, Avenue McGill College (BNP Tower and Laurentian Bank)
1982, 23 storeys and 19 storeys
- ⑫ 2001, Avenue McGill College (HSBC Tower – McGill University)
1983, 24 storey tower



4.5 Uses

Bylaw

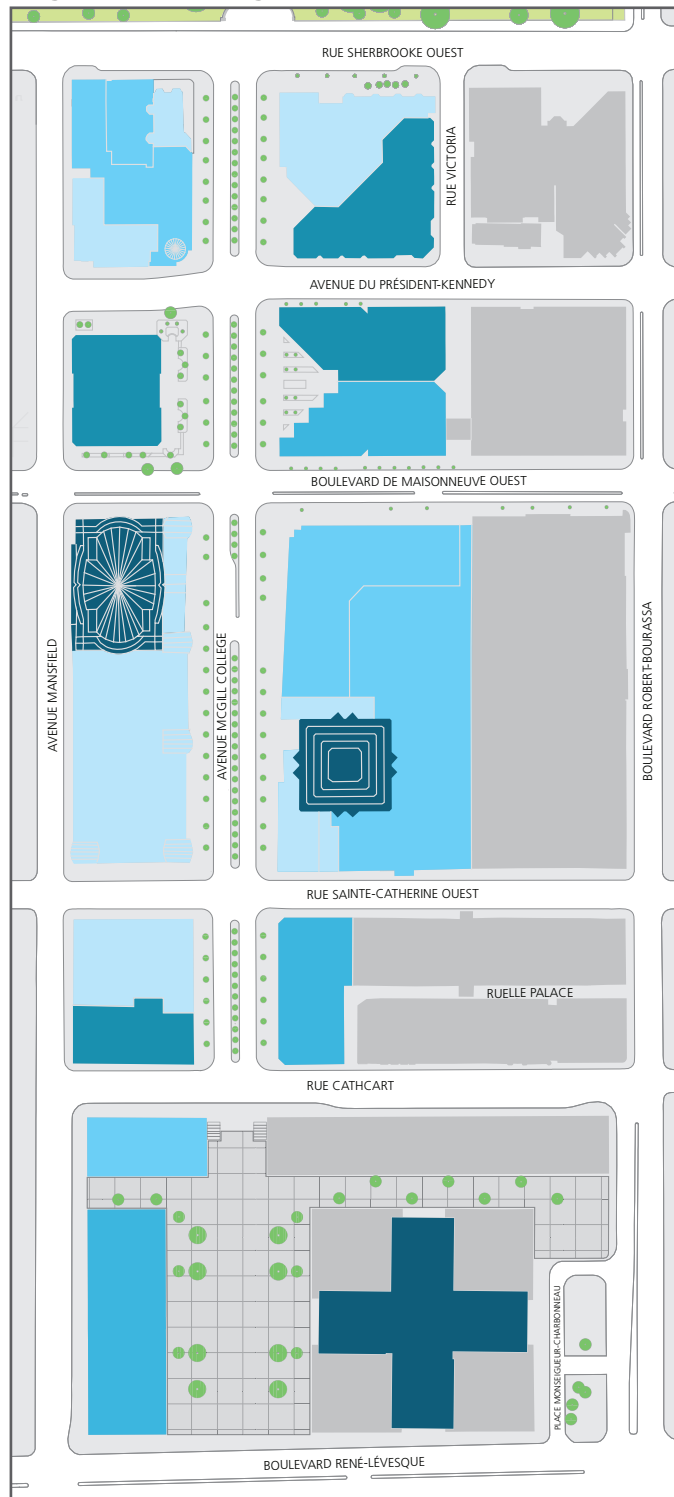
According to the Borough of Ville-Marie's urban planning bylaw, Avenue McGill College is marked by two sectors of categories of uses. The southern portion brings together the characteristic activities of Rue Sainte-Catherine, that is, service and retail sales establishments and light industries specific to downtown (M.9C). For its part, the section close to Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest is home to average-intensity shops and services. These two mixed areas also include residential uses and public and institutional facilities. Finally, McGill University's campus is part of the public and institutional facilities.

The maximum allowable height of buildings on the avenue varies between 30 and 44 metres and an overheight can reach 65 to 120 metres, provided that it respects the architectural character and urban scale of the sector. The buildings have the highest allowable density (9 or 12). It should be noted that the surface area of shops located on the ground level and directly accessible from Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest are specifically excluded from the density calculation.

Number of storeys



Height of the buildings



Uses

Avenue McGill College is home to many office towers, several of which are Class A or prestige buildings. The avenue has a commercial offering, although less important than that of Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest. The Eaton Centre and Place Montréal Trust are located here, between Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest and Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest. There are also several restaurants. Many of these restaurants and cafés have set up terraces on the wide sidewalks bordering the avenue. The highest density of terraces is found between Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest and Place Ville Marie. All commercial activity contributes to the natural animation of the street.

Main uses



- Restaurants (ground floor)
- Offices
- Shops
- Terrace
- Mixed use

4.6 Functionality of the Street

Avenue McGill College features two-way traffic, with two lanes in each direction on either side of a centre median. Heavy trucking is permitted between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. To ensure traffic in both lanes, stopping is not allowed at any time along the entire length of the avenue, with the exception of the section between Rue Cathcart and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest.

Underground parking

The avenue provides access to two major underground parking garages. Access to parking at the Eaton Centre is 50 metres south of Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest, on the east side of Avenue McGill College. This 492-stall parking garage¹³ is accessible from the north, thanks to an opening and a turning bay in the centre mall, as well as from the south. Access to the parking garage at Place Ville Marie is at the extreme south end of the avenue. This 900-stall parking garage¹⁴ generates a high volume of vehicle traffic in the sector at rush hour. Given the work on Place Ville Marie, which includes relocating the parking garage access ramps on both sides of the new central stairway, the configuration of Rue Cathcart at the intersection of Avenue McGill College should be rethought.

Taxis

Two taxi stands are located on the cross streets of Rue Cathcart and Avenue du Président-Kennedy, both west of Avenue McGill College. Since several office towers have their main entrances on Avenue McGill College, taxis drop passengers off there.

Bicycles

In recent years, the creation of a bicycle lane on Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest has enabled cyclists to access the sector more easily. Two Bixi stations are located in the sector, one on Avenue McGill College and the other on a cross street, thereby improving multimodal access. Some 20 bike stands are also available on the avenue.

4.7 Vehicle and Pedestrian Flows

A count of vehicles was done in 2009 by Ville de Montréal’s Direction des transports. These counts, carried out at five intersections on Avenue McGill College, established that, over a one-year period, average vehicle flows ranged from 6,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day. The highest flows were recorded between the access to the Eaton Centre’s parking garage and Avenue du Président-Kennedy.

Analysis of these counts would suggest that this axis serves mainly to access the sector rather than to encourage through traffic. The two main magnets are the entrances to the Place Ville Marie and Eaton Centre parking garages. During morning rush hour, between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m., the count recorded 220 entrances of vehicles per hour into the Eaton Centre’s parking garage and 290 entrances of vehicles per hour into Place Ville Marie’s parking garage.¹⁵

A new traffic study is under way, which will help understand the impact of creating a passenger mall on Avenue McGill College on traffic in this sector. The results will be available in fall 2018. To conduct this study, flows were adjusted in 2018 based on models, since it was not possible to do new counts because of major impediments in the sector studied.

If vehicle traffic is mainly linked to the magnets mentioned above, pedestrian volume is very high, especially at the intersections of Cathcart–McGill College and Sainte-Catherine Ouest–McGill College.

Below are the results of a study conducted on accessibility to Place Ville-Marie,¹⁶ which shows the flows of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists at the intersection of McGill College and Cathcart during various rush-hour periods. These flows take into consideration all movements in the four directions.

Table 2: Vehicle, Pedestrian and Cyclist Flows – Cathcart-McGill College Intersection

Period	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Ratio Car/ Pedestrian
A.M. rush hour (8–9 a.m.)	669	2,277	99	1:3
Noon rush hour (12–1 p.m.)	518	3,844	45	1:7
P.M. rush hour (4:30–5:30 p.m.)	645	2,575	35	1:4
Saturday peak period (4–5 p.m.)	692	1,013	35	1:1.5

In addition, according to data from the current traffic study, pedestrian flows were also very high at the McGill College–Sainte-Catherine intersection.

Table 3: Vehicle and Pedestrian Flows – Sainte-Catherine-McGill College Intersection

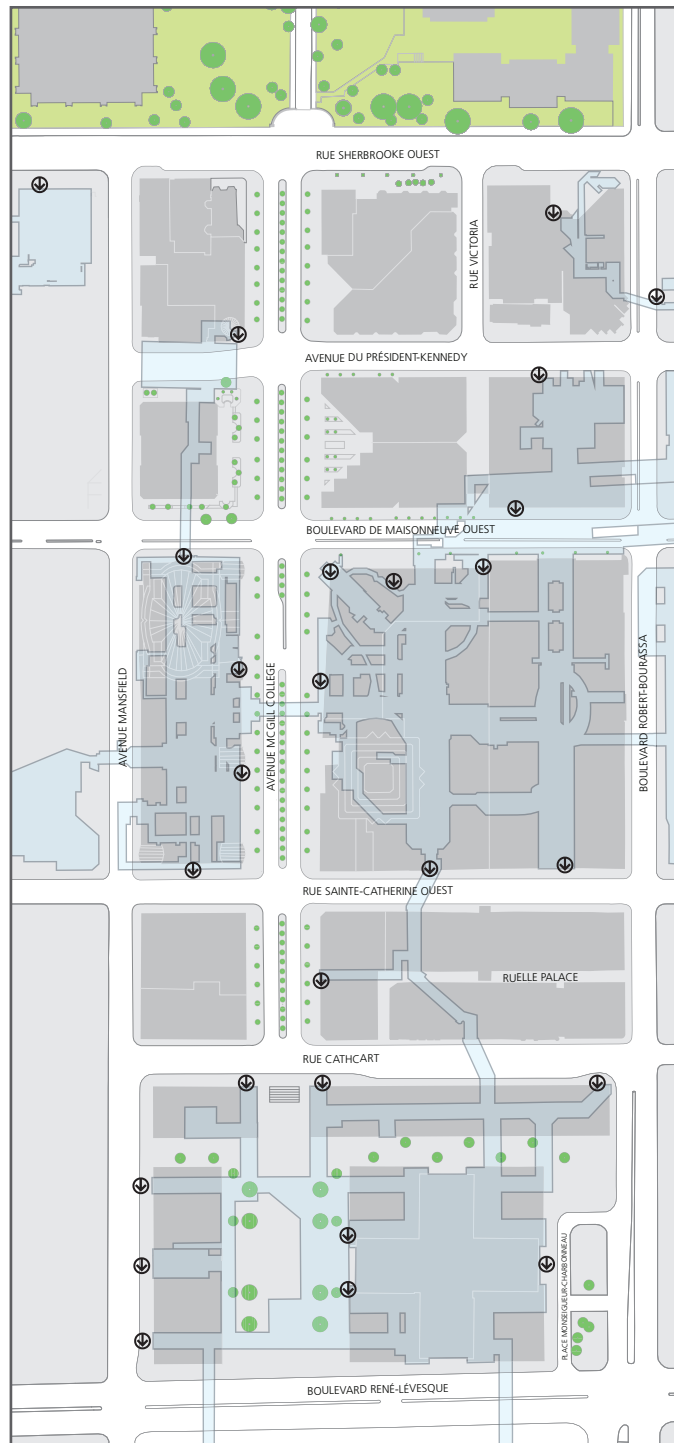
Period	Drivers	Pedestrians	Ratio Driver/ Pedestrian
A.M. rush hour (8–9 a.m.)	1,135	3,739	1:3
P.M. rush hour (4:45–5:45 p.m.)	1,126	9,290	1:8

4.8 Intermodal Transportation Hub

RÉSO

Avenue McGill College has many access points to Montréal's underground network (RÉSO). "The network consists of 33 kilometres of passageways, representing the largest surface area of indoor pedestrian tunnels in the world. RÉSO links the metro and many buildings, shopping malls, university pavilions, indoor parking, major hotels, museums and other places of interest. It is also connected to railway stations and terminuses"¹⁷ (translation). Moreover, most underground parking garages in the major office towers of Avenue McGill College are interconnected to provide access to RÉSO.

Underground Montréal

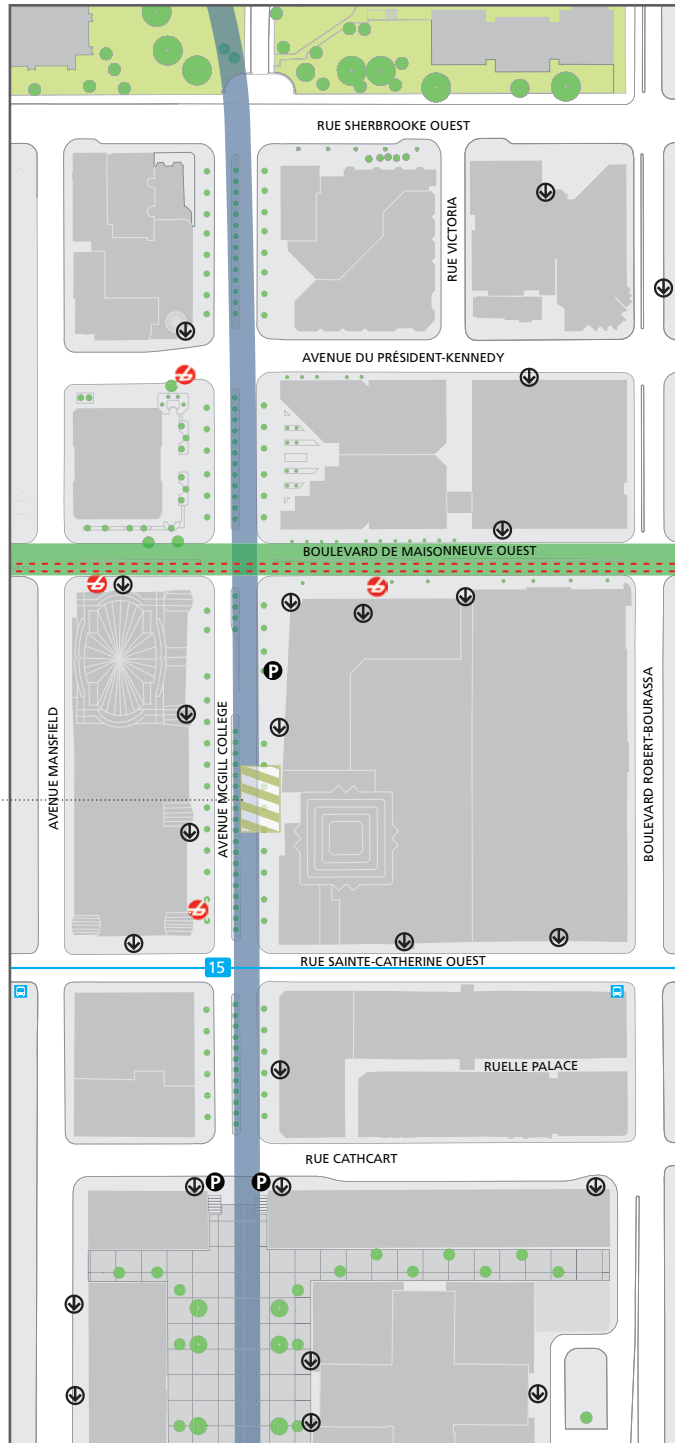











Access to the various public transit networks

Avenue McGill College is very well served by public transit and is an intermodal transportation hub in the downtown area. Two transportation infrastructures cross this avenue underground, the Montréal metro's green line at Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest, and the CN tunnel, where suburban trains travel in the central axis of the avenue. In future years, the REM will be added to these and McGill station will be created using the CN tunnel to provide the REM with access to downtown.



Modes of transportation



-  Bixi station
-  Bus stop
-  RÉS0 access
-  Indoor parking
-  Metro – Green Line
-  No. 15 bus route
-  REM route
-  Bicycle path
-  Future REM station

5. IDENTITY CHARACTERIZATION

5.1 Views

Avenue McGill College provides an incomparable view of Mount Royal, one that has been protected for 35 years thanks to public action. The natural slope of the street highlights the effect of the height of the mountain and the many buildings frame the view. The focal point is the cross on Mount Royal, more specifically at night when it is lit up.¹⁸

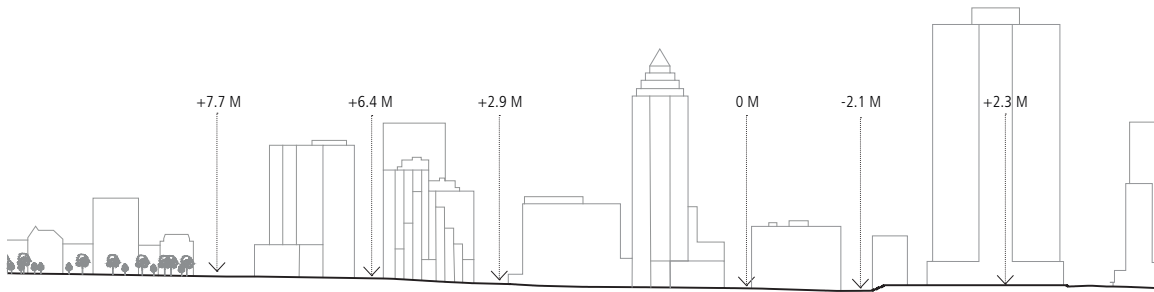


Mount Royal in fall, M. Markus, flickr.com, 2001.

5.2 Topography

One of the distinctive characteristics of Avenue McGill College is its sharp drop-off. The campus of McGill University is located on the southern flank of Mount Royal, and Avenue McGill College is located in this topographic continuity. The sharp drop-off is very visible, especially to pedestrians walking toward McGill campus. This slope increases between the intersections of Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest. Each street that crosses Avenue McGill College perpendicularly creates a slight levelling off, reinforcing the impression of the avenue sloping between each intersection.¹⁹

Slope of Avenue McGill College



5.3 Public Art

Bordering Avenue McGill College is an impressive quantity of works of art, sculptures and fountains. While these are all located on private property, they add to the character of the space. Some are very well known, especially *La Foule illuminée* by Raymond Mason in front of 1981 Avenue McGill College and *Female Landscape* by Gerald Gladstone on the Place Ville Marie Esplanade.

More recently, information panels have been installed on the west sidewalk of the avenue, between Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Avenue du Président-Kennedy. These panels feature photos or works of art on display at the McCord Museum.



McCord Museum information panels, Alibay, 2018.

Works of art and points of interest



- ① Roddick Gates
1924
- ② *La leçon*
C. Loth, 2012
- ③ Fountain
- ④ McCord Museum
information panels
- ⑤ *Le banc du secret*
L. Vivot, 1989
- ⑥ New configuration
of Place Ville Marie
- ⑦ *Female landscape*
G. Gladstone, 1972
- ⑧ *La foule illuminée*
R. Mason, 1986
- ⑨ Monument to John F. Kennedy
P. Lantz, 1986
- ⑩ Fountain
- ⑪ Cascades sculpture
- ⑫ Urban Forest

6. ANALYSIS BY SECTIONS

6.1 Cathcart–Sainte-Catherine

The section between Rue Cathcart and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest is home to a few office buildings but is mostly characterized by its offerings of restaurants and terraces. The animated activities on Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest reverberate more in the south section, toward Rue Cathcart, rather than the north section of Avenue McGill College. This short segment of street allows deliveries at all times and has a greater flow of vehicles because of the in- and out-ramps to Place Ville Marie’s parking garage.

Characteristics

- Surface area: 1,915 m²
- High pedestrian traffic
- Entrance to Place Ville Marie for pedestrians and drivers
- Abundant restaurants
- Numerous terraces



Terrace, Avenue McGill College, Alibay, 2018.

6.2 Sainte-Catherine Ouest–De Maisonneuve Ouest

This section between Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Rue Sainte-Catherine Ouest is marked by the presence of large shopping malls: the Eaton Centre to the east and Place Montréal Trust to the west. The entrance to the Eaton Centre’s parking garage is the main reason for vehicle traffic on the east side of the avenue. This section also has two skyscrapers, the Bell Media Tower (1800 Avenue McGill College) and the McGill College Tower (1501 Avenue McGill College).

The section is characterized mainly by its length and abundant commercial offerings. The latter influences the type of clientele and reasons for visiting the avenue.

Characteristics

- Surface area: 5,055 m²
- Longest of the four sections
- Access to RÉSO
- Access to Place Montréal Trust and the Eaton Centre
- Entrance to the Eaton Centre’s parking garage
- Terraces on the east sidewalk
- A Bixi station on the west sidewalk



Access to RÉSO, Avenue McGill College, Alibay, 2018.

6.3 De Maisonneuve–Du Président-Kennedy

The section between Boulevard De Maisonneuve Ouest and Avenue du Président-Kennedy includes two tall buildings, each of which occupies its entire block. Each building is adorned with a work of art: *La Foule illuminée* by Raymond Mason to the east and *Le banc des secrets* by Lea Vivot to the west.

The entrances to the two towers in this section are festooned with plants, seating and rich city furniture.

Characteristics

- Surface area: 2,455 m²
- Two tall buildings that occupy their entire block (1981 and 2000 Avenue McGill College)
- Distinctive adornments at the entrance to the buildings
- Sharp drop-off effect from the street toward the buildings' entrances
- Information panels from the McCord Museum



The section between the Tour BNP Paribas, 2015.

6.4 Du Président-Kennedy–Sherbrooke

The avenue's northernmost section is marked by McGill University's Roddick Gates. Two former mansions dating from the late 19th century and early 20th century, as well as shorter buildings, can be seen. The use is mixed, but the section houses primarily institutions and office buildings. There are works of public art on both sides on Rue Sherbrooke Ouest. Planted flowers decorate the street around the art and the Maison Molson.

Characteristics

- Surface area: 2,810 m²
- McGill University's Roddick Gates
- Maison Molson, dating from the Edwardian era (1905–1906)
- Distinctive adornments of private property on the street: terraces and plants
- Shorter buildings on the west sidewalk



McGill University's Roddick Gates, Alibay, 2018.

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