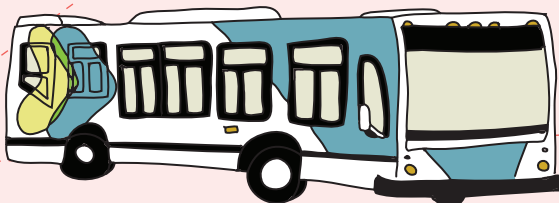
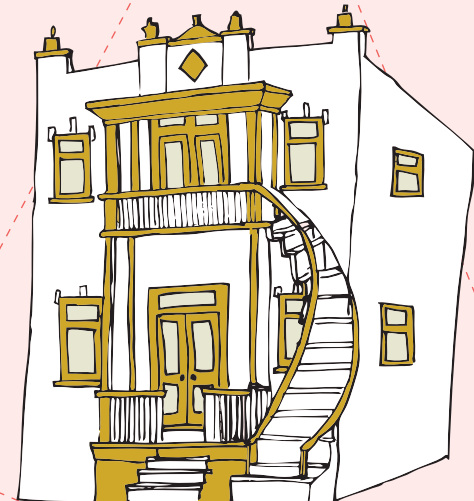
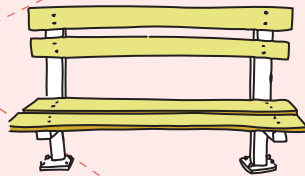
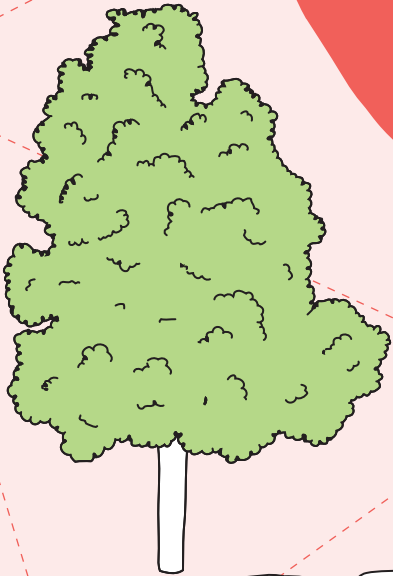


THE Guide to the MASTER PLAN

What it is, how it works and
why it's important

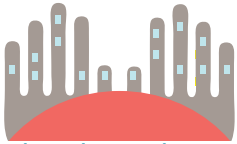




OFFICE
DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE
DE MONTRÉAL

The Office de consultation publique de Montréal is an independent organisation whose mission is, most notably, to hold public consultations relating to urban planning and development projects under municipal jurisdiction, as well as any project designated by council or the executive committee.

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[bricolage urbain](http://bricolageurbain.ca)

Bricolage urbain creates educational tools and activities to explain how our city works.

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ISBN 978-2-924002-69-8 (print)
ISBN 978-2-924002-70-4 (PDF)

Published by:
Office de consultation publique de Montréal
Cours Mont-Royal
1550 Metcalfe Street – Suite 1414
Montreal (Quebec) H3A 1X6
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WHAT IS THIS GUIDE ABOUT?



This guide aims to help Montrealers understand urban planning in everyday language and learn how they can have a say in Montreal's present and future.



Read this guide to find out how **Montreal's Master Plan** affects you and your neighbourhood, why you should care, and how you can participate and keep up with changes.



CONTENTS



1 What is the Master Plan?

3 What is inside the Master Plan?

5 What types of concerns can be addressed in the Master Plan?



7 How is the Master Plan made & at what moments can you take part?

9 How does it relate to other plans and regulations?



11 Where do bylaws fit in?



WHAT IS THE MASTER PLAN?

Made by the City of Montreal, the Master Plan is the main guidebook used to plan our city for the next 10 years.

It helps build, organise, maintain and improve our neighbourhoods.

Its content doesn't appear out of nowhere - it is heavily inspired by the policies, the laws and the plans that already exist in Montreal.

The Master Plan affects all Montrealers and its effects can be felt in small and big ways.

The Master Plan is organised around goals for the city as a whole and for each of the boroughs. It includes a list of actions that need to be taken to reach these goals.



It's used as a reference by lots of people and organisations, including: residents, city officials, developers, engineers, urban planners, architects, business owners, policymakers, as well as community, heritage and environmental groups, government departments, transportation bodies, companies and large institutions.

Like our city, parts of the Master Plan are always changing. Every proposed change is an opportunity for you to have a say in shaping your city. When this happens, you can express your opinion at public consultations.

So as to conform to regional urban plans, the entire Master Plan is revised — in principle — every five years.



WHAT IS INSIDE THE MASTER PLAN?

These are the areas of Montreal life that the Master Plan affects and addresses:



OTHER BITS & PIECES

The Master Plan includes sections on borough-level planning:

Borough chapters

Each of Montreal's 19 boroughs has its own section containing action plans, information on building density and land use, and maps of protected spaces (like parks and heritage). These chapters are regularly updated to adapt to neighbourhood changes.

URBAN PLANNING GUIDELINES

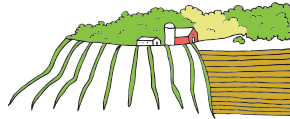
The Master Plan sets the limits and the possibilities for how Montreal develops. It does this in part by applying land use and building density guidelines.

Land use determines what type of activities can happen in specific areas.

Major green space or waterside park



Rural area:
agriculture activity and housing



Mixed use area:
housing, businesses, offices, institutions and light industry



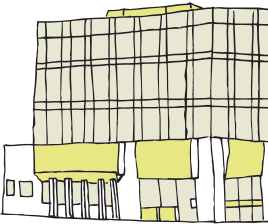
Residential area:
mainly housing with some businesses



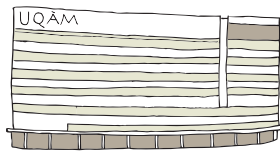
Convent, monastery or place of worship



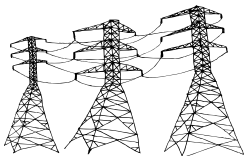
Employment area:
offices, industrial, commercial and institutional buildings with no housing allowed.



Major institutional facility: university, hospital, etc.



Public utilities



Major transportation corridor

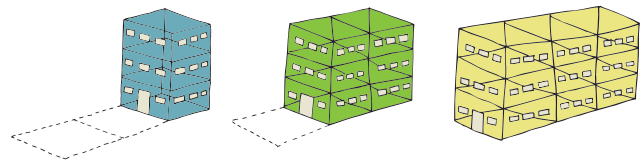


Building density decides:

- **building height:** the minimum and maximum number of storeys aboveground
- **building type** and how it aligns with others (detached, semi-detached, in a row)
- **building footprint:** amount of space the building takes up on a lot
- **Floor-Area-Ratio (FAR):** limits the shape and number of storeys of a building on a lot

$$\text{FAR represented as a number} = \frac{\text{total floor area of building}}{\text{total floor area of lot}}$$

So: small buildings on big lots = low FAR
big buildings on small lots = high FAR

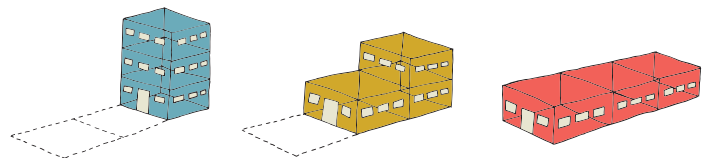


FAR = 1

FAR = 2

FAR = 3

Buildings with the same FAR can look very different. For example :



FAR = 1

FAR = 1

FAR = 1

Detailed planning areas

A borough can decide to plan an area at a later date by designating it a "Detailed Planning Area". When the time is right, a local strategic development plan — like a Special Planning Program (SPP) or a Social, Economic and Urban Development Plan — is created especially for the area.

Complementary document

This is an on-the-ground application guide that makes specific recommendations to boroughs on how to turn various Master Plan actions into urban planning bylaws. By establishing minimal guidelines for boroughs to follow, the complementary document aims to create basic consistency across the city.

WHAT TYPES OF CONCERNS CAN BE ADDRESSED IN THE MASTER PLAN?

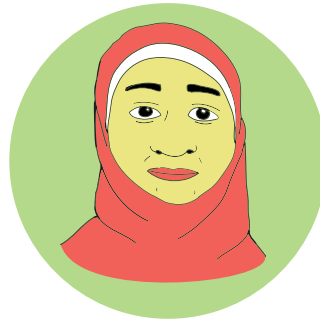
The city is in charge of bringing the Master Plan to life, but many other people have a role as well — including you. Together, we can help decide what types of actions need to be taken and who should be responsible for carrying them out.

Public consultations are an important opportunity for you to speak up, share your ideas and concerns, and learn about the Plan. Here are some examples of how your ideas can be included in the Plan:



Developer

Because of the heat island effect, high density areas risk getting too hot during the summer months. The city should provide subsidies to encourage property owners to build green roofs on their existing buildings.



Urban Planner

More people need to live downtown. Many downtown parking lots could be used instead for housing.



Resident

Montreal should be a source of architectural pride. We need to raise our evaluation standards to include more ambitious design criteria when approving new construction projects.



Environmental Organisation

Montreal should be a leader in urban agriculture. We need to encourage urban agriculture projects by creating new types of bylaws, programs and policies.



Heritage Organisation

Too many historical buildings risk being demolished because of neglect. The city needs regulations and subsidy programs that encourage property owners to look after buildings that have a heritage value.



Housing Committee

The city's affordable housing policy has to adapt to the different realities facing each neighbourhood. We cannot just build condos for new residents — we must also ensure that we develop social and affordable housing for current residents.



Large Institution

Our presence generates a lot of foot, car, bus and bicycle traffic into surrounding neighbourhoods. We need to work with the city to create or improve crosswalks, bikepaths, sidewalks, signage, streetlights, parking and traffic lights around our site.



Community Organisation

If we want to make the city family-friendly, the city needs to offer more community spaces. In areas undergoing development, it's important to set aside certain lots for community uses (like parks, schools or recreational centers). We must also offer to families affordable housing that meets their needs.



City Councillor

Once public consultations are finished, it is then up to me, fellow city and borough councillors and other decision-makers to evaluate how to use these ideas or justify why they cannot be used.

CITY DOCUMENTS CONTRIBUTE TOO

These initiatives also contribute to the Master Plan by guiding goals and actions, creating regulations and providing funding and incentives like:

Plans

- Transportation Plan and Cycling Action Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Sustainable Development Strategic Plan
- Keeping Families in Montreal Plan
- Integrated Urban Revitalization Strategy
- Water Strategy
- Recreational Facilities Development Plan
- Waste Management Plan
- Wire and Pole Elimination Plan
- Imagining-Building Montréal 2025
- Green neighbourhoods Plan
- Action Plan for Seniors
- Mount Royal Protection and Enhancement Plan

Programs

- Financial aid programs for the improvement, construction and maintenance of residences
- Contaminated Land Rehabilitation
- Investment and development funds for major projects, and business area improvement programs (revitalisation, business support)
- Water Quality

Policies

- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Municipal Housing Strategy
- Parking
- Universal Accessibility
- Pedestrian Charter
- Charter of Rights and Responsibilities
- Commercial Signage
- Trees
- Heritage
- Noise mitigation
- Cultural development
- Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment

It's a two-way street: the Master Plan is influenced by and influences these documents.

HOW IS THE MASTER PLAN MADE & AT WHAT

Three-Year Capital Works Budget

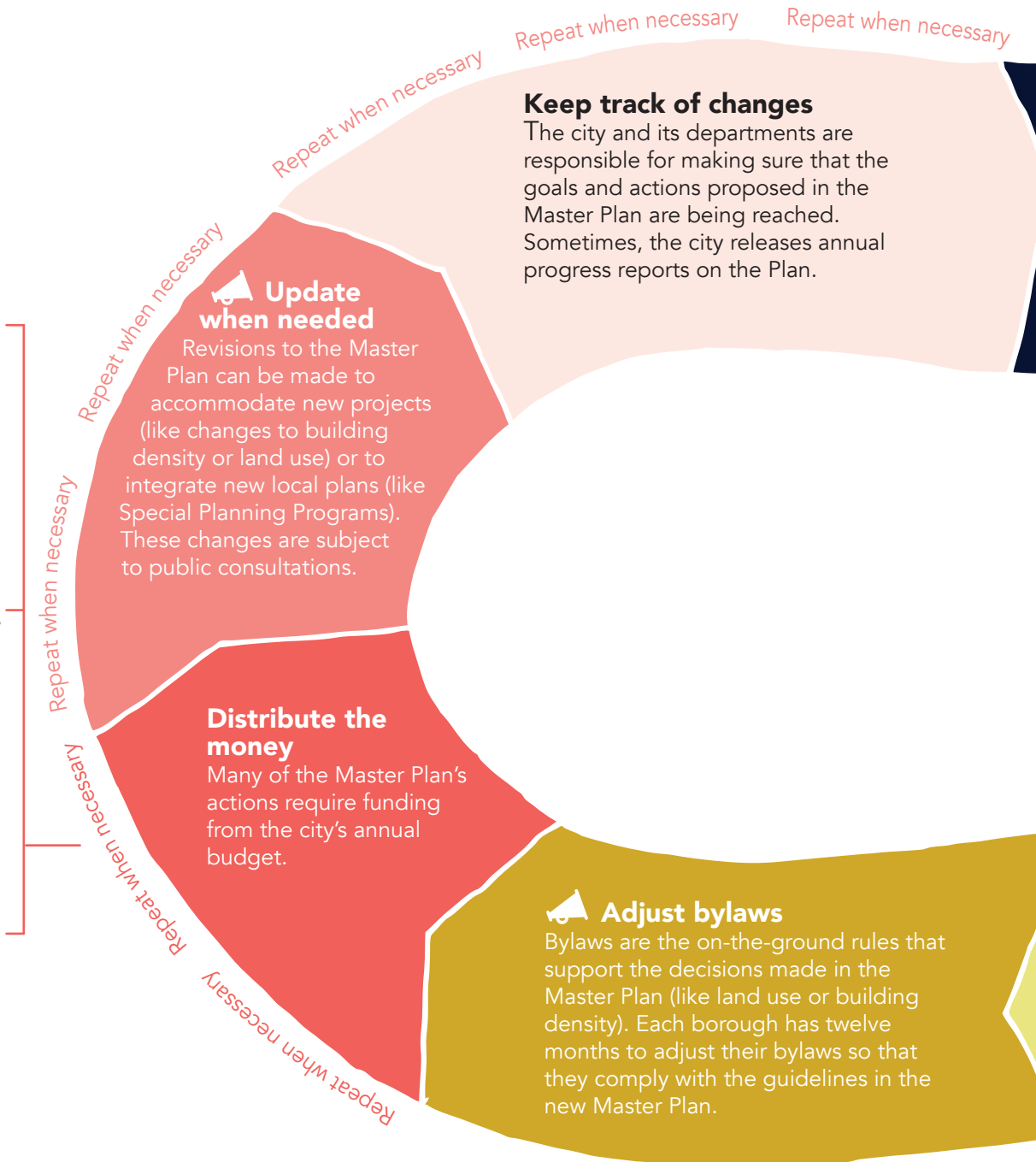
This city budget is for major improvement projects (like building a new library or bike path network) that require a long-term investment. A public consultation is held on this budget before it is adopted by city council.

Operating Budget

This city budget covers the regular expenses needed to run the city (like snow removal or waste management).

Project-specific Funding

This funding comes from the federal, provincial and regional budgets and can be used for infrastructure projects like building new bridges or highway overpasses.



Update when needed

Revisions to the Master Plan can be made to accommodate new projects (like changes to building density or land use) or to integrate new local plans (like Special Planning Programs). These changes are subject to public consultations.

Distribute the money

Many of the Master Plan's actions require funding from the city's annual budget.

Keep track of changes

The city and its departments are responsible for making sure that the goals and actions proposed in the Master Plan are being reached. Sometimes, the city releases annual progress reports on the Plan.

Adjust bylaws

Bylaws are the on-the-ground rules that support the decisions made in the Master Plan (like land use or building density). Each borough has twelve months to adjust their bylaws so that they comply with the guidelines in the new Master Plan.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS FAQ

What is a public consultation?

When a public consultation is required by law, it must be publicly announced and include a public hearing event where you can:

- find out about the project (via a presentation);
- have a chance to ask questions to urban planners and other experts; and
- express your opinion out loud or in writing.

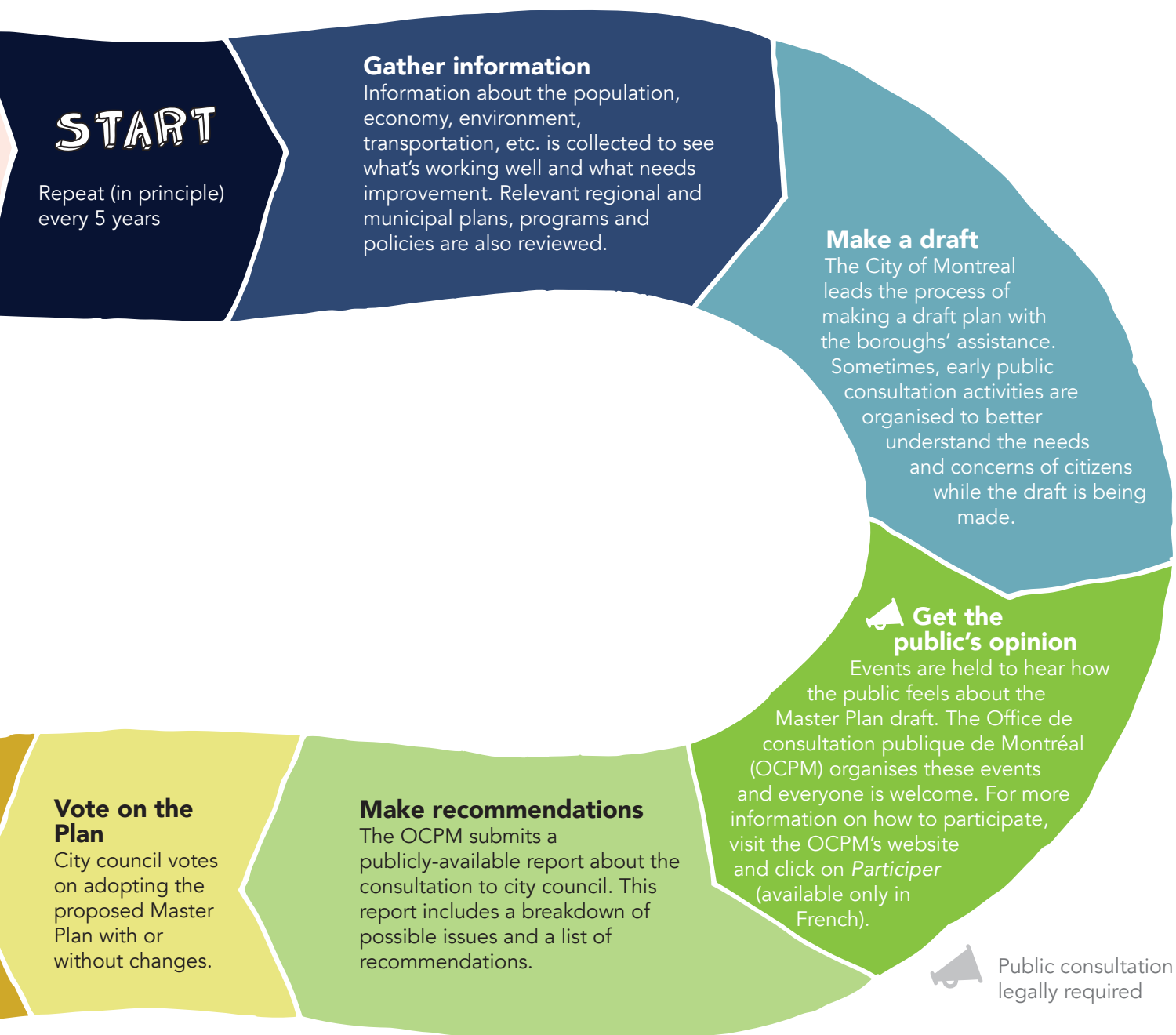
Are there other types of public consultation activities besides public hearings?

Yes, but they are not part of the legally required process. Other activities can include surveys, co-creation workshops, online collaborations, participatory budgeting, etc.

Does a public consultation have any decision-making power?

No. Public consultations help those in power (like elected officials, heads of public bodies or developers) make informed choices.

WHAT MOMENTS CAN YOU TAKE PART?



Who leads a public consultation?

- The city or boroughs
Elected municipal officials and/or civil servants lead these public consultations, sometimes with help from hired organisations. The post-consultation report usually provides a summary of citizen concerns.
- The Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM)
- The OCPM is an independent body that is responsible for holding public consultations, notably on some urban development projects and policies. In order to

lead a public consultation, it needs to be mandated by city council or the executive committee. The post-consultation report includes a summary of the hearings, an analysis of community concerns and recommendations.

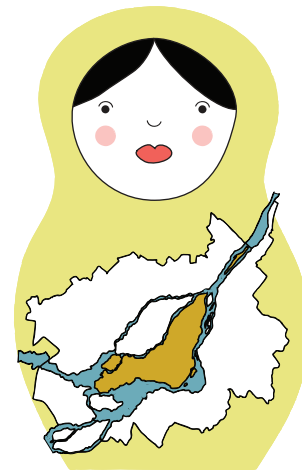
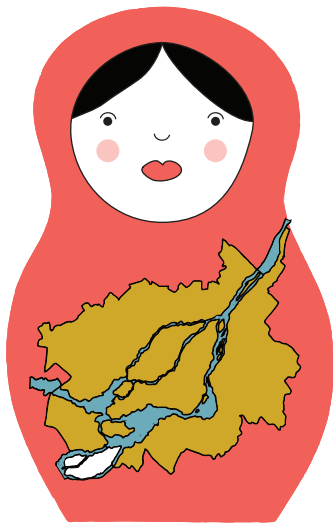
- City council standing committees
The city has different committees made up of elected officials who are responsible for examining issues like finances, transportation and public works, etc. They can hold public hearings, which are followed by recommendations.

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO OTHER PLANS AND REGULATIONS?

It's complicated... the Master Plan is not a stand-alone urban planning document. The Montreal region has many plans. Each one affects different geographical areas and is influenced by decisions made at different levels of government.

Regional planning documents (required by the Land Use Planning and Development Act) directly address and influence the Master Plan's goals and actions, and with it, our local bylaws.

Moving from the general to the specific, each of the plans and regulations below must align with the one before:



Metropolitan Land Use and Development Plan (2012)

Also known as the Plan métropolitain d'aménagement et de développement - PMAD

Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal (CMM)

This 20-year plan sets regional objectives for:

- urban development (like increasing the number of homes, jobs and services around transit stations)
- transportation (like offering more public transit during rush hours or improving the road network)
- the environment (like protecting forests, greenways, wetlands and other conservation areas)



After being reviewed in public consultation, the PMAD is adopted by the CMM council.

Land Use and Development Plan (2015)

Also known as the Schéma d'aménagement et de développement - SAD

Urban Agglomeration of Montreal

This 10-year plan ensures collaborative and coordinated decision-making between the City of Montreal and its surrounding municipalities on Montreal Island. It deals with:

- urban development and constraint areas
- spatial organisation of the territory (like general land use and residential density)
- major public infrastructure (like sanitation, electricity, gas networks)
- protection of sites of historic, cultural, aesthetic, ecological or natural interest
- organisation of ground transportation, etc.



After being reviewed in public consultation, the SAD is adopted by the Urban Agglomeration of Montreal council.

AND THERE ARE MORE PLANS...

Although these plans are not part of the legally-required urban planning process, they still have an impact on the way we plan our city:

Montreal Development Plan (2013)

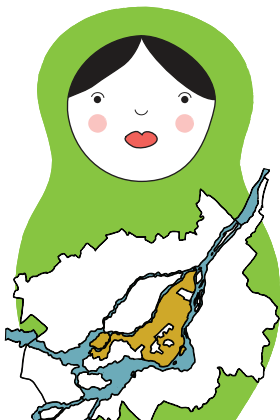
City of Montreal

This strategic visioning document includes environmental, transport, community, cultural, financial, economic and social development goals. With a 20-year scope, it has no legal or regulatory impact. It is meant to be used as a frame of reference for other policies and planning documents, including the regional Land Use and Development Plan and Montreal's Master Plan.

Community Plans (ongoing)

Local and community organisations


Community plans cover only a portion of what the Master Plan deals with, like revitalisation, greening, economic development, housing or public safety issues. Although not legally binding, these plans contain valuable information on local needs and concerns, and offer innovative solutions.



Master Plan (2004; 2015)

City of Montreal


The Master Plan defines the city and boroughs' urban planning guidelines for a ten-year period. It establishes regulatory parameters (building density and land use) and actions affecting housing, transportation, economic development, heritage and the built environment, infrastructure, parks and recreational spaces and the environment. It provides the framework for a borough's bylaws.

 After being reviewed in public consultation by the Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM), the Master Plan is adopted by Montreal city council.

Urban Planning Bylaws (ongoing)

City of Montreal's 19 boroughs

Bylaws are legally binding rules that must conform to the Master Plan. Each borough uses bylaws to regulate what, how and where you can build, and what types of activities are allowed in specific areas.

 In general, almost all bylaw changes require a local public consultation, and then are adopted by borough council.

ONE MORE THING!

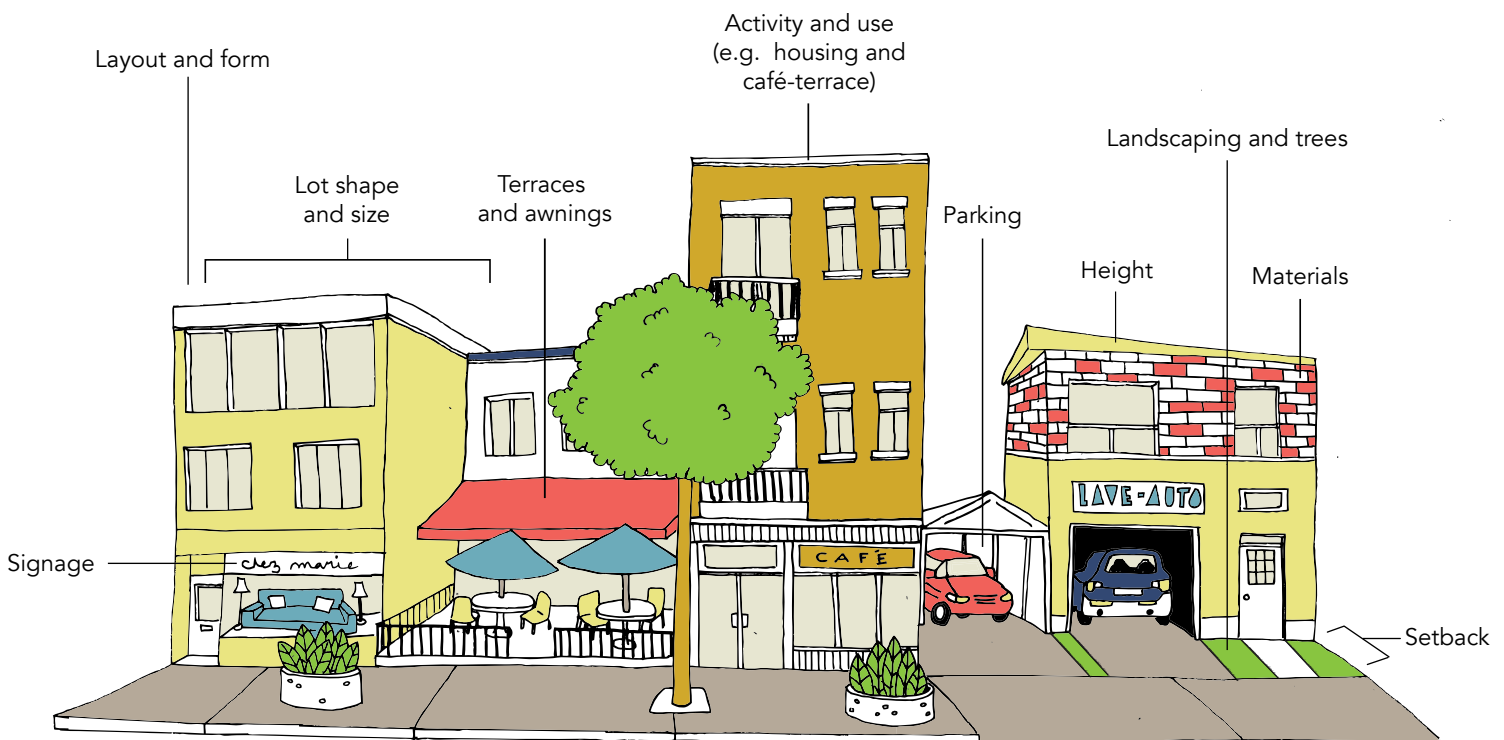
The city does not have control over everything. For example, things like highways, bridges, airports and ports are decided by provincial and federal governments.

WHERE DO BYLAWS FIT IN?

Urban planning bylaws are not part of the Master Plan — they are a separate borough planning document. The Master Plan lays the foundation for your borough's urban planning bylaws. It's important that bylaws be able to adapt to a neighbourhood's needs and concerns as they arise, while conforming to the goals established in the Master Plan.

Understanding your borough's bylaws and their changes helps you see how your neighbourhood is being developed.

Bylaws influence things like:



WHY YOU SHOULD CARE ABOUT BYLAWS

It's the law

Basically, the Master Plan is a guidebook without any jurisdictional power over neighbourhood planning. This means that bylaws are the only legally contestable component for what happens at the local planning level.

Stay alert: bylaws can change

Proposed bylaw changes are legally required to be announced in a newspaper and also appear online. Changes happen often — it can sometimes be hard to keep up with proposed bylaw changes.

You have a say!

Proposed bylaw changes are (mostly) subject to a public consultation process, and sometimes even a referendum. Public consultations are your main official opportunity to have a say in ongoing local planning issues and changes that are occurring in your neighbourhood.

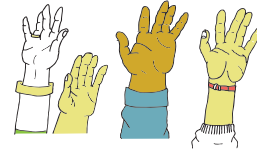
HOW TO CHANGE A BYLAW

There are times when projects are not allowed because of bylaws. In some cases, it is possible to change bylaws. Anyone, including residents, developers or city councillors, can initiate or apply to change a bylaw so that a new project can happen.

START

Apply for a change

An application is submitted to the borough by the owner of the property where the change is desired.

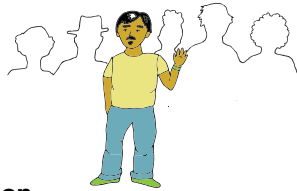


Vote to move forward

Borough council votes on passing a motion to draft an amendment to the bylaw. The proposed change must conform to the Master Plan's goals.

The borough also has the power to initiate and propose a bylaw change (also called an amendment), even if it is not the owner of the affected area.

In certain cases, the borough's Planning Advisory Committee (also known as the comité consultatif d'urbanisme - CCU) is responsible for giving a recommendation to the borough council on the proposed change.

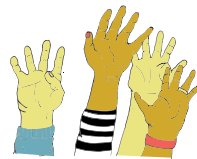
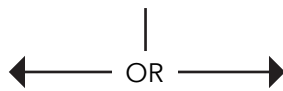


Hold public consultation

After posting a notice in a newspaper and online, the borough or the OCPM present the proposed bylaw and hold a public consultation. Anybody from anywhere is invited to attend and express their opinion.



When the OCPM leads a public consultation, an information pamphlet on the project and the consultation is distributed in the affected area and a post-consultation report is released. This report includes a summary of the hearings, an analysis of community concerns and recommendations.



Referendum?

Some bylaw changes include the option for a referendum. When a referendum is held, residents in the area vote on whether or not to approve the bylaw change.

Borough council votes again

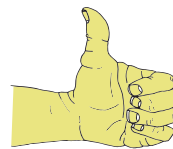
While taking into consideration the post-consultation report, the borough council adopts the bylaw change with or without changes.

END

NO

YES

Note: when the OCPM is in charge of organising a public consultation, there isn't any option for a referendum.



It's done!

Bylaw changes are added to the borough's urban planning bylaws (available on your borough's website).

If necessary, the Master Plan is also revised to reflect the change (for example, a change to the land use or building density maps).

END



WHY YOU SHOULD TAKE PART IN A PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 1 Learn more about projects, the neighbourhood and how urban planning works.
- 2 Meet with people, businesses and organisations that care about the same issues as you.
- 3 Share your opinion and hear different points of view and the reasons behind them.
- 4 Take part in Montreal's future development.



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WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Official planning documents

- **Montreal's Master Plan** (City of Montreal) <http://goo.gl/licR5v>
- **Montreal's Development Plan** (City of Montreal) <http://goo.gl/Qc0Tsj>
- **Schéma d'aménagement et de développement de Montréal** (available only in French - Urban Agglomeration of Montreal) <http://goo.gl/IO1s2V>
- **Plan métropolitain d'aménagement et de développement - PMAD** (available only in French - Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal) <http://goo.gl/feURvq>

Guides on urban planning & public consultation

- **Planning and Development Powers in Quebec** (MAMOT - Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire) <http://goo.gl/uWtHDA>
- **A Quick Guide to Special Planning Programs** (OCPM with Bricolage urbain) <http://goo.gl/1afv69>
- **What is the Three-Year Capital Works Budget?** (Apathy is Boring and City of Montreal)
- **Wikicité - alternative forms of public participation** (available only in French - OCPM) <http://goo.gl/7gFrdd>
- **Practical Guide - Citizens: Taking Part to Public Consultations** (City of Montreal) <http://goo.gl/7ZZVW1>
- **Réussir votre consultation publique_ : Guide à l'intention des promoteurs immobiliers** (available only in French - OCPM) <http://goo.gl/oLWSYH>
- **Practical Guide - Promoters: Interaction with the Public** (City of Montreal) <http://goo.gl/YVMHMx>
- **Right of Initiative to Public Consultations** (City of Montreal) <http://goo.gl/LXlnzd>

