



Activity Report **2011 · 12**

for green, democratic  
and healthy cities

## OUR MISSION

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre (MUEC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to develop and propose urban policies and practices that will help create green, democratic and healthy cities.

## OUR APPROACH

Our approach is inspired by social ecology. We consider social, economic, environmental and public health issues to be inherently related. We envision just, inclusive, green and democratic communities. We promote participatory democracy and consider ourselves to be a stakeholder in transforming urban communities. We want to re-establish a connection between society and nature.

## OUR TERRITORY OF ACTION

- We experiment and take action in Montréal
- We work primarily at the neighbourhood level
- We share our knowledge with other organizations and communities from Montréal and around the world

## OUR MAIN AREAS OF EXPERTISE

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre is recognized as an expert in sustainable neighbourhood planning for its areas of expertise and participatory planning processes. The MUEC has developed an expertise in

- Urban planning in favour of active and public transportation
- Greening and urban agriculture: Integrating nature into the city
- Participatory democracy and citizenship: Citizens participating in decisions concerning the future of their neighbourhood

## MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS 2011-2012

Over the past year, the MUEC team invested in a number of projects, four of which stood out in particular:

- The Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods project continued to be implemented in Montréal and was introduced in other areas of Quebec, with pilot projects in Brossard and Granby.
- La Ville en vert continued to carry out greening and urban agriculture projects in Montréal social housing complexes, including five "Projects that Change Lives." A chapter of La Ville en vert is now being implemented in Longueuil.
- Culti-vert, the Palais des Congrès de Montréal's rooftop garden, was replanted and expanded with the addition of beehives and medicinal plants. A guide to planting rooftop container gardens was also published.
- The MUEC participated in a number of public consultations, such as the one on the *Land Use and Development Plan for the Montréal Metropolitan Community* (PMAD) and the one on urban agriculture. Also, Groupe de Travail en Agriculture Urbaine (GTAU), of which the MUEC is a member, received the Mayor of Montréal's Democracy Award.

## A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

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 Dominique Sorel, engineer  
President, Board of Directors, MUEC  
(since December 2012)

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre underwent major changes in 2012. I write to you as the new president of the Board of Directors. I was recently elected to replace Nathalie St-Pierre, who was president for most of the year but had to step down due to her new professional obligations. I would like to thank Nathalie for her long-time contribution and involvement at the Centre. In addition, Luc Rabouin, the executive director of the MUEC, left in December 2012 to focus on establishing his family and work in France. We would like to thank Luc for the energy he invested to make the MUEC a key player in transforming Montréal and other cities in Quebec and around the world into green, healthy and democratic communities. While he was executive director, his engagement, political flair and incredible ability to unite civil society actors allowed the MUEC to carry out major projects. Julie Rocheleau,

operations and human resources director, was recently nominated as interim executive director. She worked closely with Luc and our team over the course of last year. We are lucky to be able to rely on such an experienced team. Year after year, I am so impressed with their ability to carry out such high-quality projects in a context that demands innovation. My dear MUEC team, I am so grateful to you. Our solid foundation of support will make this transition a smooth one.

**Here's proof: the MUEC's achievements in 2011-2012.** The MUEC has continued to focus its activities on greening and urban agriculture, urban planning and active transportation, and participatory democracy and citizenship. This year, the MUEC began to take its expertise and actions outside of Montréal by providing coaching for Longueuil neighbourhoods and training for professionals in Montérégie and elsewhere in Quebec.

La Ville en vert program transformed backyards, greened walls and roofs and created meeting places in a number of social housing complexes. The Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods (GHAN) project, which is aimed at promoting safe, active transportation in four Montréal neighbourhoods, was featured at a day-long event, which allowed our partners to take stock of the GHAN project's achievements over the last three years. The MUEC is also actively involved in concerted civil society groups, such as TRANSIT: Alliance pour le financement du transport collectif au Québec, Mobilisation Turcot and the liaison committee of the *Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan*. Bravo to GTAU, which won the Mayor of Montréal's Democracy Award, for having successfully obtained the first public consultation in accordance with the *Montréal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities*.

This year's changes are a real opportunity to turn our civil society projects, our citizens' ambitions and the dreams of every MUEC community member into a reality. Let's start 2013 with confidence and our eyes on the future. I am honoured to work with all of you: the Board of Directors, the MUEC team, volunteer citizens, and EVERYONE who is committed to improving our living environment.

## A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Luc Rabouin, Executive Director

Dear friends and partners of the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre,

Last August, I started a new family adventure in Paris, while continuing to work part time as the executive director of the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre. What a challenge! Thanks to the Internet, I was able to follow all of the particularly intense and shocking details of Montréal political news. In November, I told the Board of Directors and the team that I would be leaving the MUEC to take on a new professional challenge: director of Mobizen, a Parisian car-share company similar to Communauto.

I've taken a step back and am looking at the progress the MUEC has made over the last six years. I'm particularly proud to have been involved in building an organization that can rely on more than one person. The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre exists thanks to the participation of dynamic, skilful, committed and experienced individuals, on all levels: our team, our Board of Directors and our network of different partners. I'm certain that the MUEC will continue to be a key player in building green and democratic cities.

Ecology and democracy are the pillars of our organization. MUEC founder, Dimitri Roussopoulos, has always talked about ecology and democracy as being like two legs, or two wheels on a bike, that must move forward together at the same speed. Over the last few years, our ecology component has grown and become more professional. We have integrated citizen participation into the projects and urban planning processes that we support, and we are recognized for our knowledge of participatory planning. Recently, we participated in a networking project with other Montréal civil society organizations. The MUEC must continue providing leadership in this area to reduce the fragmentation of the Montréal social movement and develop real progressive, green power.

I encourage the MUEC to continue providing Montréal citizens with tools, to help them take ownership of the "keys to the city" and to influence municipal decisions. I still dream of a school of urban citizenship for Montréal: something to think about for the future.

Without popular opposing forces, it is too easy for economic and political elites to walk hand in hand towards economic development that only benefits the minority and to ignore the social, environmental and public health challenges that must be met to ensure the well-being of the population.

I wish you all good luck. You will always have my support.

Paris, December 18, 2012



## SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Many of the MUEC's projects address all aspects of sustainable neighbourhood development. After the 2011 Ecocity World Summit, the MUEC focused on the municipal order of government by participating in the liaison committee of the *Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan*, Collectif quartier and a coalition of organizations working on the *Land Use and Development Plan for the Montréal Metropolitan Community* (PMAD). The MUEC was also involved in writing a book on territorial approaches in sustainable development.

## ACHIEVEMENTS – SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT



### ECOCITY WORLD SUMMIT

After the Ecocity World Summit, the MUEC posted over a dozen videos of the important keynote conferences on its website. It is also in contact with the organizers of the next Summit, which will be held in Nantes, France, and is sharing the lessons that it learned from its experience in Montréal.

## PUBLIC ACTIONS – SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The MUEC has continued its involvement in the liaison committee of the *Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan* (PDD), which is made up of around 20 representatives from different areas of action. Its mandate is to advise the elected official in charge of sustainable development (Alan DeSousa) and the City of Montréal's sustainable development team. As a partner, the MUEC is committed to implementing the plan and has contributed to achieving the plan's goals.

The MUEC is also part of the Advisory Partners Group for Collectif quartier, created in 2008 by the City of Montréal. The group aims to support local development actors and the implementation of an integrated territorial approach.

A few weeks before the Montréal Metropolitan Community (MMC) adopted the first PMAD in the fall of 2011, the MUEC was actively involved in setting up a coalition of organizations. It reminded MMC elected officials of the need to quickly adopt a structuring plan that would provide a development framework for the region. A statement signed by 24 organizational representatives and experts was presented at a press conference, receiving widespread local and national media coverage. The MUEC is also part of the PMAD monitoring committee, made up of eight representatives from civil society organizations and eight elected officials.

Université du Québec à Chicoutimi also asked the MUEC to write an article about the Milton-Parc sustainable development laboratory for a book on territorial approaches of sustainable development. The MUEC team wrote the article with the help of Joshua Wolfe, a long-time MUEC collaborator and someone who contributed greatly to the "green lab." The article was published in the electronic publication, *Territoires durables en devenir*<sup>1</sup>.

1. Gagnon, Christiane (director), 2012. *Territoires durables en devenir*. Presses de l'Université du Québec, 257 pg.

# SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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## PERSPECTIVES 2012-2013 – SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

- Continue to participate in the liaison committee, with a focus on harmonizing the new *Montréal Development Plan* with the *Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan*. Contribute to implementing the *Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan* by carrying out actions that comply with the plan's commitments.
- Play an active role in the Agora citoyenne steering committee, which is responsible for organizing a public meeting to monitor the implementation of the PMAD.
- Participate in different public consultations held for the major development projects currently being planned in Montréal, such as the Hippodrome Project, to help turn these future neighbourhoods into model communities.
- Closely follow the *Montréal Development Plan* project and invest resources in creating a group of Montréal civil society organizations in order to promote common analyses and propositions relevant to the *Montréal Development Plan* and the next municipal election campaign.



## GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

Every year, the MUEC expands its areas of expertise in greening and urban agriculture. In 2011-2012, the MUEC led public actions to promote and support urban agriculture. It published a guide on planting rooftop container gardens, sat on a committee for the implementation of a food system and participated in the public consultation on the state of urban agriculture in Montréal. In addition, the MUEC's efforts to reduce urban heat islands gained some ground with a new program called Verdir les murs et les toits and La Ville en vert, one of the MUEC's existing major programs.

## ACHIEVEMENTS – GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

### LA VILLE EN VERT



For the third year in a row, La Ville en vert, a program that aims to reduce urban heat islands, allowed the MUEC and its partner, the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM), to work together to **green, cool down** and **promote better community living** in a number of social housing complexes on the Island of Montréal. The program is aimed at improving the living environment in social housing complexes and offers residents the opportunity to participate directly in the planning and construction of their new living environments, with the support of professionals from partner organizations.

### Projects that Change Lives!

La Ville en vert continued the work that it started in the summers of 2010 and 2011 by carrying out five major landscaping projects as part of "Projects that Change Lives." The backyard of Habitations Lenoir-Saint-Antoine and Jacques-Cartier, the inner courtyard of Habitations Delorimier and the exterior spaces of Habitations De la Merci and Des Érables all underwent major transformations. The work included excavating around 1,200 **m<sup>2</sup> (13,000 ft<sup>2</sup>)** of asphalt to build a permeable parking lot, install a community garden and urban agriculture planters, plant some 1,500 plants (trees, shrubs, perennials and climbing plants), and set up outdoor furniture (pergolas, arbours, benches, tables, etc.) to make the spaces more inviting to residents. These developments created new meeting places for residents, who actively participated in the planning and design process through different workshops, while increasing their sense of belonging.

Also, more technical projects made it possible for Habitations Jarry to install the first extensive green roof on an OMHM building and Habitations des Îlots Saint-Martin to green its walls with climbing plants. Outdoor furniture was also added to provide shade at Habitations Cartier-Chabot and Habitations des Îlots Saint-Martin.

La Ville en vert team continued to provide training sessions to encourage Montrealers to use climbing plants.

# GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

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BEFORE



📍 The landscaping project at the Habitations Delorimier.

AFTER



BEFORE



📍 The landscaping project at the Habitations Lenoir-Saint-Antoine.

AFTER



📍 The green roof at Habitations Jarry.

## Financial partners – *La Ville en vert*

La Ville en vert is made possible by Action 21's Green Fund from the Government of Quebec's 2006-2012 Climate Change Action Plan. The OMHM has also made a significant financial contribution to the project.

## VERDIR LES MURS ET LES TOITS

In the coming year, the MUEC will continue to highlight the ideas and concepts that it developed in its most recent publications through a new program called Verdir les murs et les toits. The program's main goal is to contribute to the collective effort to reduce urban heat islands by using urban agriculture techniques and greening walls and roofs. One of the MUEC's tasks will be to encourage citizens and owners of commercial and institutional buildings to green their environments. The program will involve workshops on climbing plants, around 10 presentations on greening roofs and coaching support for three building owners or managers who want to install a vegetable garden on their roofs. Verdir les murs et les toits will also allow the MUEC to set up a "helping hand" service to continue providing citizens with the information that they need to carry out their greening and urban agriculture projects successfully.

### Financial partner

Verdir les murs et les toits is part of the "Verdir" (greening) campaign of the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal (CRÉ).

## PUBLIC ACTIONS – GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

### PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON URBAN AGRICULTURE

Over the past year, the MUEC continued its involvement in GTAU, a group that aims to support and encourage the development of urban agriculture in Montréal. In December 2011, after months of citizen mobilization, GTAU submitted a petition with more than 29,000 signatures to the City of Montréal in order to take advantage of Montréal citizens' right to initiate a public consultation. It was a first in Montréal history. The City of Montréal mandated the Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM) to hold public consultations in the spring of 2012.

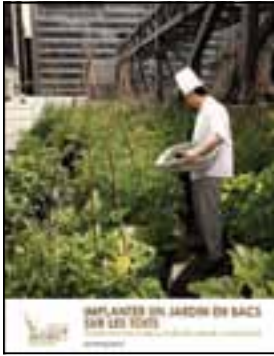
In June 2012, the MUEC published a memorandum called *Montréal : une ville nourricière et productive* (Montreal: a nourishing and productive city), which was submitted and presented orally at the OCPM's public consultations. The memorandum outlined the MUEC's recommendations for developing urban agriculture and the necessary measures for integrating urban agriculture into the City of Montréal's development policies. The major mobilization efforts made by GTAU resulted in widespread engagement: 1,500 citizens participated in the consultation process and 103 memorandums were submitted. In October 2012, the OCPM published a detailed report outlining citizens' aspirations for the development of urban agriculture in Montréal and proposing many different avenues for the City and its boroughs.

Since 2011, the MUEC has been actively involved in GTAU, which was founded by Action Communiterre, Alternatives, the MUEC, Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal, Marché Solidaire Frontenac, CRAPAUD and Santropol Roulant. GTAU had the support of some 50 organizations and around 100 volunteers in collecting the 29,000 signatures for the petition requesting the public consultation.

# GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

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## GUIDE TO PLANTING A ROOFTOP CONTAINER GARDEN



Since 2005, the MUEC has published an impressive number of documents on greening buildings. In the summer of 2012, after already producing four reports on green roofs and a guide to climbing plants, the MUEC published a guide to planting rooftop container gardens in industrial and commercial contexts. The guide covers the numerous benefits of rooftop gardens and promotes urban farming. It is aimed at informing building managers and owners about the different steps involved in creating a container garden, while encouraging them to convert their building's roof into an urban garden.

### Financial partner

The guide was financed in part by the Conférence régionale des élus de Montréal



On the MUEC website: [www.ecologieurbaine.net/jardins-bacs](http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/jardins-bacs)

## PERSPECTIVES 2012-2013 – GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

- Carry out the actions planned for Verdir les murs et les toits, for example, coaching support for the creation of three new urban vegetable gardens.
- Distribute the guide on planting rooftop container gardens to encourage building owners and managers to take action and help increase the amount of urban vegetable gardens.
- Wrap up the La Ville en vert program in Montréal social housing complexes and write a publication on the experience in order to inspire other actors to do the same.
- Carry out the Vert un habitat durable program in Longueuil, which includes participatory planning processes for the redevelopment of three sites *that change lives*.
- Ensure the implementation of the OCPM's urban agriculture recommendations.

## URBAN PLANNING: ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Although there is now widespread agreement that we must shift to using active and public modes of transportation in order to reduce the health and environmental impacts of transportation and improve the quality of life in neighbourhoods, urban space is still being designed and built to facilitate automobile traffic. Designing a city for people instead of cars involves rethinking the place of cars in public spaces and giving more thought to active and public transportation.

### ACHIEVEMENTS – URBAN PLANNING: ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

#### GREEN, ACTIVE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOODS

## *Green, Active, Healthy* Neighbourhoods

The **Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods** (GHAN) project proposes a new approach to understanding cities and neighbourhoods on a pedestrian and cyclist level. Initiated in December 2008, the GHAN project is aimed at teaching the public, community workers, and elected officials about potential key solutions and demonstrating how to design neighbourhoods in favour of active transportation. It also strives to generate political will and initiate change in professional standards and practices. The GHAN project has three phases: providing support to communities, sharing best practices related to urban planning and citizen participation, and promoting change in public policies, standards and professional practices.

#### Starting Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods

To experiment planning green neighbourhoods in Montréal, the MUEC began four yearlong participatory planning pilot projects in Montréal between 2009 and 2011. Each of the processes resulted in the adoption and launch of a GHAN plan. The four plans are currently being implemented. The MUEC has committed to collaborating with its local partners to ensure that the plans' actions are carried out in favour of active transportation and to promote change in current practices, such as planning processes and the choice of development solutions. The MUEC will work with urban planning advisory councils and community organizations, as well as share knowledge, network, promote the GHAN project's progress and achievements, and document and share best practices.

## ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

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📍 For the GHAN project in the Plateau-Est, the first actions were aimed at improving the safety of areas frequented by children. This priority was decided during the planning process.



📍 For the GHAN project in Parc-Extension, actions were taken to improve the ambiance and feeling of community on Jean-Talon Street, the neighbourhood's commercial artery.

At the MUEC's invitation, the people in charge of green neighbourhoods at the City of Montréal (elected officials from the executive committee and public servants), representatives from the boroughs hosting the GHAN projects (elected officials and public servants), and the GHAN project's local partners met on June 12, 2012, to take stock of the GHAN projects' achievements over the last three years. The meeting focused on actions that had already been taken and those that were scheduled for the following months. Also, the City of Montréal formally acknowledged the green neighbourhoods approach. Representatives from the four boroughs involved in the GHAN projects summarized their achievements and shared their commitment to implement the GHAN plans.



On the MUEC website: <http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/bilanqv>



📍 More than 70 people participated in the overview of the GHAN projects to highlight the progress of the green neighbourhood approach in Montréal.

## Implementing the green neighbourhoods approach in Montréal and Quebec

During the four pilot projects, the MUEC team acquired unique knowledge by developing a participatory methodology for analysing the built environment, creating design scenarios in favour of active transportation and implementing green neighbourhoods. Today, there is a growing number of initiatives aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles, reducing obesity and creating healthy urban environments. While many of these projects focus on promoting active transportation, their partners (local actors) have limited knowledge of urban planning and active transportation.

The MUEC developed an implementation strategy that uses knowledge sharing to teach communities and certain networks of influential actors how to use the GHAN methodology and tools. The MUEC designed a training session called *Rethinking neighbourhoods for pedestrians and cyclists – creating a neighbourhood portrait for communities in favour of active transportation*. The training was provided in three phases:

- Half-day pilot training session given to 17 development officers from Québec en Forme.
- Half-day training session given to 45 key actors in Montérégie.
- Two-day training session given to some 40 actors from community and public health organizations in Montréal and Montérégie involved in the following projects: Revitalisation urbaine intégrée (RUI), Quartiers 21 and Saines habitudes de vie.

In addition to the training sessions, the MUEC offered the Montréal communities that participated in *Rethinking neighbourhoods for pedestrians and cyclists* 20 hours of coaching on how to carry out certain steps in their neighbourhood portrait.

The MUEC provided coaching to four Montréal organizations in 2011-2012.

- Solidarité Saint-Henri for the reconstruction of the Lionel-Groulx metro station (finished)
- Concertation en développement social de Verdun for the Quartiers 21 program: S'engager ensemble pour un quartier plus convivial (in progress)
- Regroupement Jeunesse en Action du territoire L'Île-Bizard–Sainte-Geneviève–Pierrefonds-Ouest for the Saines habitudes de vie project (starting up)
- Table de développement social de LaSalle for the RUI Airlie/Bayne project (starting up)



More than 140 professionals from municipal governments and public health and community organizations attended the training sessions in 2011-2012.

# ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

## Coaching outside of Montréal

The MUEC developed a valuable partnership with the Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie, allowing it to connect with the Brossard and Granby municipalities. The MUEC provided these municipalities with coaching support to help them hold consultation activities for their transportation plans and further develop portraits of their citizens' needs using qualitative data. Also, the GHAN Plan for the Plateau-Est was translated into English so that the MUEC could share the project and its approach with Anglophone partners in Quebec and Canada.

## Documentation and sharing of best practices

The long-awaited GHAN project toolbox is now available online. The toolbox has nine examples of participatory activities and field studies, as well as many complementary tools. The goal is to help local actors integrate new approaches into their practices.



**On the MUEC website: <http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/qvas/ressources>**

Two editions of the new GHAN newsletter have been sent out to more than 5,000 Montréal citizens and professionals to promote inspiring ideas and share the concrete actions that have been taken in the neighbourhoods. Sixteen new examples have also been added to the online collection of "Cool Ideas," and five reference documents on the project's actions have been created for the partners.



**On the MUEC website: <http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/node/881/news>**

## Financial partners – Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods

The Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods project is made possible by the financial support of Québec en Forme, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

## People friendly streets: making the exception the norm



For the third year in a row, the MUEC hosted a series of activities for Mobility Week. This year the theme was "People friendly streets: making the exception the norm." The event focused on designing arterial roads, an issue that the MUEC has been working on since the beginning of the GHAN projects.

To start people thinking about applying the concept of people friendly streets to arterial roads, the MUEC held different activities, such as a workshop on September 19, which was attended by more than 60 professionals from urban planning, transportation, public health and community organizations. At the workshop, professionals from Toronto and Montréal presented portraits of different arterial roads, the factors dictating their design, and the tools used to transform them. Case studies were also presented, and discussions allowed participants to identify the conditions that make it possible or impossible for cities to create people friendly streets: an action that improves the safety and comfort of all.

The MUEC also held a public conference in collaboration with the URBA 2015 forum called *Streets for everyone: making the exception the norm* – the example of Toronto. Two hundred fifty citizens and professionals from the Greater Montréal Area attended the conference to learn about the current transformation of arterial roads in Toronto. After the keynote presentation, public health experts gave a brief presentation on Montréal arterial roads.



**On the MUEC website:** <http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/node/1740/activity>

**On the MUEC website:** <http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/conference-arteres-conviviales>

### The streets that we want – September 22, 2012

The MUEC held a public event as part of In Town Without My Car Day to promote and highlight Montréal examples of urban design and give citizens the tools they need to take action in their neighbourhoods.

The MUEC closed off a section of Milton Street between Parc Avenue and Hutchison Street, inviting citizens to discover Montréal examples of urban design through a photo exhibit, posters and information sheets. Other activities – a photo booth, a creative activity for children on “the streets that we want,” and Park“ing” Day – and the participation of different partners (Fruxi and Éco-quartier du Plateau-Mont-Royal) attracted citizens, despite the rain.



**On the MUEC website:** <http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/la-rue-que-nous-voulons>



Passers-by answer the question: “What does ‘people friendly street’ mean to you?”



Milton Street open to pedestrians only.

## PUBLIC ACTIONS— URBAN PLANNING: ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- The MUEC continued its involvement in the Mobilisation Turcot coalition. It developed an alternative proposal, named “Cure minceur pour l’échangeur Turcot,” with experts from Groupe en Recherche Urbaine Hochelaga-Maisonneuve and Concordia University. If implemented, the proposal would save around \$1.5 million and reduce construction time by two years. “Cure minceur” was made public and presented to the new Transportation minister, who showed a clear interest.

## ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

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- In October 2011, the MUEC, Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal and Vélo Québec took action when the municipal council announced that it was going to give the City of Montréal the power to implement traffic-calming measures, which is currently the boroughs' responsibility. The decision was made after a study carried out by the Montréal fire department confirmed that speed bumps slow down emergency response time. All three organizations sent out a joint press release, underlining the benefits of traffic-calming measures for pedestrian safety. Also, the MUEC argue its points in a document, which was sent with the press release to a number of elected officials. Supported by the opposition, these actions made the municipal council step down and gave more leeway to local elected officials. If the decision had gone through, it would have paralyzed the efforts of the boroughs that are trying to implement traffic calming measures.
- The MUEC also reminded the City of Montréal that it should take advantage of road construction projects to make roads safer and more pleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. In 2012, the City of Montréal carried out major construction work on a section of Parc Avenue, which was a golden opportunity to improve the street at a low cost. The road, however, was redone as before, without the introduction of any traffic-calming measures or other developments in favour of active transportation. The MUEC sent out a press release to underline the City's failing and remind the City of its commitment to making the built environment safer for pedestrians.
- With five partner organizations, the MUEC released a report on the first four years of the implementation of the *Montréal Transportation Plan*, which was supposed to be revised in 2012. The report showed that although some areas of the plan were advancing briskly, others, such as green neighbourhoods, were far behind schedule. It also said that the City needed to work twice as hard to honour its commitments.
- The MUEC continued its participation in the steering committee of TRANSIT: l'Alliance pour le financement des transports collectifs. The MUEC was involved, in particular, in the public consultation on financing public transportation, led by the **Montréal Metropolitan Community (MMC)** in February 2012. In its memorandum, the MUEC reiterated the analysis and recommendations developed by the TRANSIT steering committee.

### PERSPECTIVES 2012-2013 – URBAN PLANNING: ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

- Support the implementation of the four GHAN plans by working together with local partners, the boroughs and the City of Montréal.
- Continue to implement the GHAN approach by sharing knowledge with other groups in Montréal and Quebec.
- Continue to stimulate public debate and take a stand on changing policies and practices in favour of designing neighbourhoods that promote active transportation.
- Continue to work with Mobilisation Turcot towards actions that will turn Quebec's largest highway construction site into a sustainable development project.
- Influence municipal party programs in Montréal and other major cities in Quebec for the November 2013 elections.
- Follow the implementation of major plans, such as the *Montréal Transportation Plan* and the *Land Use and Development Plan for the Montréal Metropolitan Community*.

# PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

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## PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

Although participatory democracy and citizenship is key to the MUEC's mission, it is still the poor relation when it comes to available resources. Citizen participation is a central part of the MUEC's projects and its DNA. The MUEC plans to request funding for the development and implementation of a participatory democracy and citizenship program.

## ACHIEVEMENTS – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

### JANE'S WALK 2012



May 5 and 6, 2012, the MUEC hosted the fourth Jane's Walk in Montréal. In honour of activist Jane Jacobs, Jane's Walk takes place every year on the first weekend in May. The event is an opportunity for citizens to learn more about their city regarding local history, urban planning and **civil**

engagement by simply walking and observing. The event started in Toronto in 2007 and is now held in 19 countries and 85 cities.

This year, more than 1,700 people participated in 52 guided neighbourhood visits held in 12 boroughs on the Island of Montréal. The walks are led by passionate citizens who plan the route and theme of their walk. The MUEC takes care of advertising and provides walk organizers with tools to help them prepare and lead their walk.



More than 30 participants took part in the *Immigration et occupation de l'espace dans un quartier urbain : le cas de Parc-Extension* walk, led by Regroupement en aménagement de Parc-Extension (RAMPE).



Isabelle Giasson, landscape architect, invited participants to discover the past and present of certain public spaces in downtown Montréal, such as Dorchester Square.

## PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

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### Partners – Jane's Walk

Jane's Walk was made possible by the financial support of the Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal. The MUEC would like to thank all of the walk organizers, many of which are volunteer citizens: Les Amis de Meadowbrook, Les Amis du boulevard St-Laurent, Association des résidents du quartier de la santé de Montréal, Alliance de recherche universités-communautés, Making Megaprojets Work for Communities (McGill), the Montréal Youth Coalition Against Homophobia, Collectif de recherche en aménagement paysager et agriculture urbaine durable (CRAPAUD – UQÀM), Milton Parc Citizens' Committee, Comité logement de la Petite-Patrie, Comité pour la protection du patrimoine – Île des Sœurs, Comité des Citoyens du Village des Tanneries, McGill University—School of Architecture and School of Urban Planning, Écoquartier Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Écoquartier Sainte-Marie, Écoquartier de Rosemont–La Petite-Patrie, Écoquartier du Plateau-Mont-Royal, Écoquartier du Sud-Ouest, Écoquartier de Montréal-Nord, Optative Theatrical Laboratories, La Maison d'Aurore, La Maissonnette des Parents, Mile End Memories, Interactive Museum of Jewish Montréal, Prévention CDN-NDG, Prévention Sud-Ouest, RAMPE, Société d'histoire de Parc-Extension, Société environnementale de Côte-des-Neiges, Société pour la Sauvegarde du Patrimoine de Pointe-Claire, Tandem Rosemont–La Petite-Patrie, and Villeray en transition.



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On the MUEC website: [www.ecologieurbaine.net/promenades](http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/promenades)

### **PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING: AN ANTIDOTE TO MUNICIPAL CORRUPTION? A CONFERENCE BY YVES CABANNES**

Scandals and allegations have seriously shaken citizens' confidence in municipal institutions. To rebuild confidence, citizens are demanding good governance and more transparency in the management of public funds. In search of solutions, Quebec municipalities are beginning to discover a new approach: participatory budgeting – a participatory democracy process proven effective in cities around the world. The MUEC invited Yves Cabannes, professor and Chair of the Development Planning Unit at University College London, to talk about this innovative initiative. Mr. Cabannes is a world-renowned specialist in participatory budgeting processes. He gave a conference at HEC Montréal with Groupe de recherche interdisciplinaire en développement durable (GRIDD), a conference at McGill University with the School of Urban Planning and a conference to the members of the Task Force on Democracy of the City of Montréal. He also gave the entire MUEC team a training workshop on the "Right to the City."

# PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

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## **PUBLIC ACTIONS – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP**

In the spring of 2012, the MUEC invited citizens and representatives from a dozen key Montréal civil society organizations to come together to brainstorm possible collective actions that could influence the *Montréal Development Plan* (MDP) (currently being developed) and the 2013 municipal elections. An emerging coalition, this group of organizations wrote to the Mayor of Montréal to insist on the importance of widespread citizen participation in the development of the MDP and to request that he mandate the Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM) to hold a consultation. In August, the president of the executive committee confirmed that the OCPM had been ordered to hold the consultation. Also, a video describing six aspects of participatory budgeting was produced and posted on the MUEC website.

## **PERSPECTIVES 2012-2013 – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP**

- Set up a task force to develop a vision and a program of activities to help citizens take back their city (Right to the City).
- Take action, when necessary, to ensure open and effective citizen participation in planning and city management processes (major urban development projects, MDP and municipal budget and policies).
- Assist Montréal civil society organizations with networking in order to influence public policies, especially regarding the MDP and the November 2013 municipal election campaign.

## CONSULTING SERVICES

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### CONSULTING SERVICES

The MUEC's influence and credibility have generated new service requests, especially from municipalities and boroughs. Some of them are ready to pay for the MUEC's services. The business plan, created by the MUEC in 2010, showed that there was a market for consulting services in the MUEC's areas of expertise using its participatory approach. The MUEC's Board of Directors agreed to develop the consulting services project because it is another way for the MUEC to carry out its mission, and it brings in independent revenues that ensure greater financial independence.

### ACHIEVEMENTS – CONSULTING SERVICES

#### CULTI-VERT

For the second year in a row, the Palais des congrès de Montréal hired the MUEC to work on Culti-vert, which started in the summer of 2011. Culti-vert is a greening project on the roof of the Palais des congrès de Montréal that features different rooftop greening techniques. In addition to the five different examples of green roofs, each 28 m<sup>2</sup> (300 ft<sup>2</sup>), structures for climbing plants and three container gardens of 150 planters and bags for growing vegetables, three beehives and 50 additional planters were added to grow plants used in dyeing, as well as medicinal and heritage plants. The financial support of three restaurants, which benefit from the harvest, contributed to caring for the vegetable garden throughout the growing season.



**On the MUEC website: [www.ecologieurbaine.net/culti-vert](http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/culti-vert)**



📍 Green roof section of Culti-vert.



📍 Rooftop garden section of Culti-vert.

### **OMH LONGUEUIL**

The MUEC has started a consulting contract with the Office municipal d'habitation de Longueuil (OMHL) for a project to reduce urban heat islands. The OMHL has received funding as part of the health component of the 2006-2012 Climate Change Action Plan and has hired the MUEC until March 2014. This partnership will highlight the tools and knowledge that the MUEC's greening and urban agriculture team has developed over the course of the La Ville en vert program. The OMHL's housing stock will benefit from three developments that change lives, six green parking lot projects, and an urban agriculture initiative. All three projects will be carried out using participatory practices and the technical advice of the MUEC's greening and urban agriculture team.

### **PERSPECTIVES 2012-2013 – CONSULTING SERVICES**

- Update the MUEC's business plan by specifying the goals, professional services offered, rates, target clientele and key areas of intervention.
- Gradually continue creating professional services to share the knowledge that the MUEC has acquired in areas such as urban planning in favour of active transportation, greening and urban agriculture (walls and roofs) and participatory processes.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-2012

**Nathalie St-Pierre\***, president / vice-president, Retail Council of Canada (Quebec chapter) • **Dominique Sorel**, vice-president / engineer, S.S Papadopoulos & Associates inc. • **Paul Shay**, treasurer / national executive director, The Kidney Foundation of Canada, Montréal • **Raquel Peñalosa**, secretary / landscape architect • **Nik Luka**, administrator / professor, School of Urban Planning, School of Architecture, McGill University • **Cédric Jamet**, administrator / coordinator, Eco-internship, Katimavik • **Annie Rochette**, administrator / public policy advisor, MUEC • **Jayne Engle-Warnick**, administrator / urban planner/doctoral candidate, urban planning, McGill University • **Pierre-Olivier Pineau\***, administrator / professor, quantitative management methods, HEC Montréal • **Owen Rose**, administrator / associate architect, atelier TAUTEM • **Ray Tomalty\***, administrator / assistant professor, urban planning, McGill University

\* Missing from photo



### VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE 2011-2012

This year, the Volunteer Committee, made up of around 10 people, continued to participate in various MUEC projects. The committee had about 15 meetings and focused on cyclist safety. It developed and produced a humoristic video to demonstrate the lack of infrastructure for cyclists, encouraging citizens to take action and demanding that better infrastructure be installed.

The volunteers also held two photo booth activities related to urban agriculture in Montréal. The first was with McGill University students during McGill's volunteer engagement week and the second with the general public at the Maisonneuve market. The results and photos taken during the activities helped illustrate the memorandum submitted to the Office de consultation publique de Montréal for the public consultation on urban agriculture in Montréal.

Occasional volunteers were an enormous help to the MUEC team. With their help the MUEC was able to achieve the incredible success of the petition for the public consultation on the state of urban agriculture in Montréal, gathering 29,000 signatures, and they also participated in activities such as the Annual General Assembly, the Milton Street closure and text editing.



📍 Annie, Anne-Laure and Olive, three very committed members of the Volunteer Committee, leading their Jane's Walk on public spaces.



📍 Adrian and Olive at an urban agriculture activity at McGill.

### PERSPECTIVES 2012-2013 – VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE

Define citizen engagement opportunities at the MUEC and the role of the Volunteer Committee. Finish and broadcast the video produced by the Volunteer Committee.

### INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

**Arca Arguelles • Olive Bailey • Aurélie Barbe • Nicolas Bernier (intern) • Themila Boussoualem • Mobarek • Richard Chambon • David Chedore • Sebastian Christ • Mylène Guay • Adrian Gould • Oriane Guidot • Dagoberto Hernandez • Jeannine Joyal • Stéphanie Lessard (text editor) • Emma Neill • Maryse Poisson (intern) • Geneviève Puskas • Annie Thongphanith • Elizabeth Thongphanith • Anne-Laure Touchais • Meltem Top • Linda Vallée • Lindsay Wiginton**

## COMMUNITY LIFE

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### EMPLOYEES 2011-2012

Marie-Hélène Armand • Catherine Aubry\* • Émilie Bernier\* • Tristan Bougie • Myriam Cloutier\* •  
Alexandra Coelho • Odile Craig • Isabelle Gaudette • Patrice Godin • Pascoal Gomes\* •  
Alexandre Guertin • Saleema Hutchinson • Anne Juillet\* • Marie-Pierre Labelle\* • Marc-Émile  
Perron\* • Boris Pintado\* • Luc Rabouin • Julie Rocheleau • Annie Rochette

\* Missing from photo



## MEMBERS OF THE GREEN, ACTIVE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOODS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Marie-Soleil Cloutier**, assistant professor, Centre Urbanisation Culture Société, INRS • **Chantal Dagenais**, project manager, traffic engineering, CIMA+ • **Marie Demers**, researcher, Research Chair on evaluation and implementation of sustainability in transportation, École Polytechnique de Montréal • **Monique Dubuc**, national coordinator, Kino Québec • **Jayne Engle-Warnick**, urban planner, doctoral candidate, urban planning, McGill University (Member of the MUEC Board of Directors) • **Sébastien Gagné**, transportation network development advisor, Société de transport de Montréal • **Lise Gauvin**, professor, Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, Université de Montréal • **Marc Jolicoeur**, research director, Vélo Québec • **Paul Lewis**, director, Groupe de recherche Ville et mobilité, Institut d'urbanisme, Université de Montréal • **Nik Luka**, associate professor and coordinator, urban design program, School of Urban Planning, School of Architecture, McGill University (Member of the MUEC Board of Directors) • **Paul Mackey**, president, Ruesécurité inc. • **Thierry Mallette**, program officer, Capacity Building,

Quebec, Green Municipal Fund, Federation of Canadian Municipalities • **Catherine Morency**, chairholder, Research Chair on evaluation and implementation of sustainability in transportation, École Polytechnique de Montréal • **Patrick Morency**, medical specialist, trauma prevention, Direction de la santé publique de Montréal • **Sophie Paquin**, urban planning and public health advisor, Direction de santé publique de Montréal • **Owen Rose**, associate architect, atelier TAUTEM. (Member of the MUEC Board of Directors) • **Dominique Sorel**, engineer, S.S Papadopoulos & Associates inc. (Vice-president of the MUEC Board of Directors) • **Ray Tomalty**, urban planner, associate professor, School of Urban Planning, McGill University (Member of the Board of Directors) • **Juan Torres**, assistant professor, Institut d'urbanisme, Université de Montréal • **Sylvie Tremblay**, urban planning advisor, Service des infrastructures, du transport et de l'environnement, City of Montréal • **Valérie Vivier**, development officer, regional projects/coaching sector, Montréal region, Québec en forme







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