



Activity Report **2010 · 11**

For green, democratic,  
and healthy cities

## **OUR MISSION**

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre 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 an urban movement for social change. We want to re-establish a connection between society and nature.

## **OUR TERRITORY OF ACTION**

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

## **OUR MAIN AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre is recognized as an expert in sustainable neighbourhood development planning as much for its areas of expertise as for its participatory planning processes.

The MUEC has developed an expertise in:

- Urban planning in favour of active transportation
- Greening and urban agriculture
- Participatory democracy and citizenship

## **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2010-2011**

This past year, the MUEC was involved in many projects. Four were particularly important:

- Montréal Ecocity World Summit 2011
- Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods
- La ville en vert
- Culti-vert



 Owen Rose, Architect  
President of the MUEC's board of directors

### ALTRUISM<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning, in 1996, the board of directors has been very involved in the activities of the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre (MUEC). The interaction of the board with the MUEC's team is the strength behind the Centre and a reflection of our work as a non-profit civil society organization. Commitment on behalf of the team and the board members is rooted in the knowledge that there are better ways to live together. Even in a world where the values of social democracy are increasingly undermined, altruism still exists. It is deeply rooted in humanity and the driving force behind the Centre's passionate desire for "living well."

Ten years ago, I became a member of the Comité de citoyens Mont-Royal Avenue Verte. In 2004, when Lucia Kowaluk, coordinator of the MUEC at the time, invited me to join the MUEC's board of directors, I was a young architect and urban activist. As part of the Centre's renewal, I became president of the board of directors in 2007. Today, the Centre is full of activities with a dynamic, committed team that grew from one and a half people in 2006 to over a dozen in 2011! After so many wonderful years, I am proud to pass on the torch of the presidency and look forward to remaining a member of the board of directors.

Through our work on greening, urban agriculture, and Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods, we have successfully made visible what was previously hidden. But what was invisible? We see the potential in shared and public spaces (streets, alleyways, parks, courtyards, gardens, walls, balconies, roofs, etc.) to improve welfare, health, safety, and a sense of community. Such spaces let us create and encourage urban density on a human scale. We thus give ourselves the permission to see differently, question differently, and live differently. Our work brings to light actions that then inspire other actions. This virtuous cycle starts with altruism. Collectively we breathe on the sparks to light the fires of our dreams.

Despite the success of the petition for a public consultation on the state of urban agriculture in Montréal (29,068 signatures!), the Centre still needs to put more energy into fuelling the fire of its third field of action: participatory democracy and citizenship. Although less visible and tangible than Green Neighbourhoods, participatory democracy and citizenship are the foundations of social ecology and our collective well-being. This is because defending public interest and collective good are ways to counterbalance, among others, the predominance of private interests. The MUEC (its team, its board of directors, its members, and its hundreds of volunteers) illustrates by example the role of a civil society actor and a defender of public interest in Montréal.

I am convinced that our devotion to urban ecology goes even further. It expresses our passionate desire to live well on this blue planet. And this is what motivates our loyal contribution to the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre.

#### 1. Altruism

Altruism: Devotion to the welfare of others; opposed to egoism or selfishness (Oxford English Dictionary).

## A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Luc Rabouin, executive director

### **TWO YEARS IN ONE!**

The year 2010-2011 was without a doubt the most "hyperactive" year in the history of the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre. We took on many more projects and actions, several of which were major undertakings that received widespread public attention.

We improved around 10 social housing complexes in collaboration with the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) as part of La ville en vert; we accompanied four neighbourhood pilot projects as part of Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods; we launched two publications on green roofs and climbing plants; we carried out a demonstration project on the roof of the Palais des congrès de Montréal (Culti-vert); we inaugurated an educational terrace on the roof of our building that we dedicated to Lucia Kowaluk; we organized more than 25 Jane Jacob's Walks in Montréal neighbourhoods; we hosted the second Car-Free Week; we mobilized thousands of citizens to initiate a public consultation on urban agriculture; we took a stand on several issues, including the reconstruction of the Turcot interchange; and we organized the ninth Ecocity World Summit, which brought together more than 1,500 people from 70 countries in Montréal, from August 22 to 26, 2011.

These projects were made possible by the incredible involvement of the members of our board of directors and our team, who demonstrated availability, professionalism, and only just a bit of FLEXIBILITY! Some of our projects involved a great amount of risk and unpredictability, and I would like to thank everyone for their trust and support. Because everyone took on more responsibility than usual, we were able to turn our challenges into great successes. I would also like to thank our financial partners. Good ideas are not enough: you need financial resources to turn ideas into reality. Financial resources are not enough: you need competent, dedicated, and creative people who can turn those resources into beautiful and inspiring projects. We have a lot of this at the Montréal Urban Ecology Centre.

In addition to our projects, we also developed a strategic plan for 2011-2015. We revised our mission, revisited our values, and redefined our roles and objectives for the coming years. Although we will continue to work towards our vision of green, democratic, and healthy cities, we will also organize our different projects around three specific areas of expertise:

- Greening and urban agriculture
- Urban planning in favour of active transportation
- Participatory democracy and citizenship

In 2012, we will continue the work we have started in our first two areas of expertise, in particular by bringing some of our projects to communities outside of Montréal. We will need to invest more energy in developing the third area, participatory democracy and citizenship. And we will also put great effort into strengthening our in-house team after experiencing a period of rapid growth.

## SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Several of the MUEC's sustainable neighbourhood development projects include elements of all three areas of expertise: the Montréal Ecocity World Summit 2011, the *Living in a Sustainable City* exhibition, the sustainable neighbourhood development training workshop, and Imagine Milton-Parc (Quartier 21).

## ACHIEVEMENTS – SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

### MONTRÉAL ECOCITY WORLD SUMMIT 2011



The MUEC had the privilege of hosting the Montréal Ecocity World Summit 2011 from August 22 to 26 at the Palais des congrès de Montréal, bringing together 1,500 delegates from 280 cities and 70 countries. The delegates came from extremely diverse backgrounds: elected officials, professionals from the public and private sectors, representatives from civil society organizations, students, and university researchers.

Conference speakers and participants shared their knowledge of sustainable urban planning, governance and participatory democracy, the role of urban agriculture and biodiversity in urban ecology, sustainable economic models, and the direct relationship between the built environment and health. The MUEC played a big role in choosing content for the Ecocity program, especially with its suggestion to use its vision of **Ecocities for Everyone** as a building block for the conference. The ninth Ecocity World Summit focused on six major themes:

- Climate change and the ecocity
- Ecomobility, urban planning, public space
- Governance and democracy in the ecocity
- Economics of the ecocity
- Health and the built environment
- Biodiversity and urban agriculture

The Summit stressed that cities, whether located in the northern or southern hemispheres, face similar issues, especially those regarding vulnerability to the consequences of climate change and socio-environmental inequality. Ecocity 2011 was an opportunity for representatives from businesses, municipalities, and communities to share hundreds of ideas and innovations from all over the world. Close to half of the Summit's participants were from Canada, which brought to mind the possibility of creating a pan-Canadian network of ecocities. The MUEC plans to play a role in creating this network over the next few years.

# SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

## Partners – Montréal Ecocity World Summit 2011

The MUEC would like to thank everyone near and far who contributed to the success of the Montréal Ecocity World Summit: its major financial partners, Bombardier, TD Group, the City of Montréal, and the Government of Quebec; its partner organizations and the many committee members who worked on planning the Summit for more than a year; Opus 3 who managed the event's secretariat, promotion, and logistics; the MUEC's volunteers, employees, and members of the board of directors; and finally the conference speakers, participants, and those who helped out during public activities. The MUEC could not have organized such an important event in Montréal without the participation of everyone involved. It hopes that Ecocity 2011 will provide the momentum we need to make serious changes to how we design, plan, and build our cities.



**On the Internet:** [www.urbanecology.net/ecocity2011](http://www.urbanecology.net/ecocity2011)



The Montréal Urban Ecology Centre kiosk in the exhibition room.



The ninth Ecocity World Summit brought together 1,500 delegates from 280 cities and 70 countries at the Palais des congrès de Montréal.



Janice Perlman and Jan Gehl, honorary co-presidents of the Summit, welcome Summit participants at the opening ceremony on August 22, 2011.



Jayne Engle-Warnick and Luc Rabouin, co-presidents of Ecocity 2011.

# SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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## LIVING IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES



From 2009 to 2010, the Écomusée du fier monde and the MUEC presented *Living in a Sustainable City*, a museum exhibition that explores sustainable development in urban areas. In order to share this exhibition with cities outside of Montréal, the Écomusée and the Service aux collectivités de l'UQAM will present the exhibition under the name *Living in Sustainable Cities* in four cities in Quebec: Laval, Longueuil, Sherbrooke, and



The exhibition will hit the road in Quebec in 2012.

Québec. The exhibition will be adapted to each city with the help of community groups and citizen participation. The MUEC will join the executive committee of the new exhibition.

## SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT TRAINING SESSION



In collaboration with the Service aux collectivités de l'UQAM and Normand Brunet, a lecturer at the Institute of Environmental Sciences at UQAM, the MUEC presented for the second time, on April 5, 2011, at the Institute of Environmental Sciences, a training session on sustainable neighbourhood development for community workers from community organizations, neighbourhood roundtables, community economic development corporations, and Éco-quartiers. With the help of five resource people, some 20 participants explored how to go beyond current neighbourhood

visions and adopt intervention approaches that address social, economic, and environmental issues. The training session touched on themes such as urban planning, health, citizen participation, the history and theory of sustainable development, and current approaches to socio-territorial development being experimented with in Montréal.

### Partners – Sustainable Neighbourhood Development Training Session

This project was made possible by the support of the Service aux collectivités de l'UQAM and Normand Brunet, a lecturer at the Institute of Environmental Sciences at UQAM.

# SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

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## **IMAGINE MILTON-PARC (QUARTIER 21)**

The *Imagine Milton-Parc (Quartier 21) Sustainable Development Plan* is part of the Milton-Parc Sustainable Development Laboratory. It aims to develop solutions for ecological change in the Milton-Parc neighbourhood.

The Lucia-Kowaluk Educational Terrace was built as part of the Milton-Parc Laboratory. Construction took place in the fall of 2010 on top of the MUEC's building and plants were added in the spring of 2011. The official inauguration took place in June 2011.



Even though funding for Quartier 21 ended more than a year ago, the MUEC has continued to support neighbourhood residents in order to help them reach the goals outlined in the *Imagine Milton-Parc Sustainable Development Plan*. For example, in 2011, the MUEC supported Milton-Parc residents in their fight to save Parc Oxygène, a green space that has been cared for by citizens for more than 20 years and is now under threat of property development. The MUEC wanted to protect this space by giving it back to the community, but it was unsuccessful. Negotiations between the property owner and the borough are still underway.

This year, some 40 people attended two Jane's Walks in the Milton-Parc neighbourhood. The walks focused on some of the neighbourhood's unique characteristics: greening, green alleys, green roofs, the history of housing cooperatives, and transportation issues.

## **Partners – Imagine Milton-Parc (Quartier 21)**

The Lucia-Kowaluk Educational Terrace was made possible by the financial support of the SDC Milton-Parc, Soverdi, the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, the Canadian Institute of Planners, the Borough of the Plateau-Mont-Royal, Provencher Roy + Associés Architects, Atelier Tautem, Pasquin St-Jean et Associés, Home Depot, and La ligne verte – Toit vert.

## PUBLIC ACTIONS – SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The MUEC has continued its involvement in sustainable neighbourhood development through the liaison committee of the *Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan*. The committee 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. The MUEC also suggested that the second version of the *Sustainable Development Plan* include chapters on traffic calming and urban agriculture. Their proposal was accepted.

## PERSPECTIVES 2011-2012 – SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT

- Closely follow the development of the new *Montréal Development Plan*, participate in the revision of *Montréal's Master Plan*, and help implement the *Land Use and Development Plan for the Montréal Metropolitan Community*.
- Explore the possibility of creating a pan-Canadian network of ecocities and bringing the future International Ecocity Institute to Montréal. Several videos of conferences from the Ecocity World Summit 2011 are available on the MUEC's website, and the team also has other ideas on the go.
- Present the *Living in Sustainable Cities* in Laval, Longueuil, Sherbrooke, and Québec.
- Continue to support Milton-Parc residents in preserving Parc Oxygène, and, more importantly, in meeting the goals outlined in the *Imagine Milton-Parc Sustainable Development Plan*. In particular, the MUEC plans to revive the Plan's suggestions concerning active transportation.



📍 Parc Oxygène is a cool island of vegetation in the Milton-Parc neighbourhood that neighbourhood residents are trying to save.



📍 The Lucia-Kowaluk Educational Terrace is an educational tool that demonstrates different ideas for greenening and urban agriculture.

# GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

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## GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

Over time, the MUEC has developed an expertise in greening and urban agriculture. Last year, in addition to carrying out public actions concerning green roofs and climbing plants, the MUEC supported the right of initiative to a public consultation on the state of urban agriculture in Montréal. It continued with its major projects, La ville en vert and Culti-vert, and made sure that urban agriculture was a major theme of the Ecocity World Summit and the Montréal Community Sustainable Development Plan.

## ACHIEVEMENTS – GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

### LA VILLE EN VERT



For the second year in a row, the MUEC and the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) continued to collaborate on La ville en vert, a project that aims to reduce urban heat islands and improve living environments in social housing complexes in Montréal with the participation of residents and professionals.

### *Projects that change lives!*

With a new landscape architect in their ranks, La ville en vert continued with the work it started in the summer of 2010 by carrying out three major landscaping projects as part of Projects that Change Lives. The backyard of the Habitations Sainte-Marie, the terrace of the Habitations Jarry, and the interior courtyard of the Îlots Saint-Martin all underwent a change of face. The work included excavating around 41.8 m<sup>2</sup> (450 ft<sup>2</sup>) of asphalt, planting vegetation (trees, shrubs, perennials, and climbing plants), installing two container gardens, and adding structures to provide shade. These developments created new meeting places for residents, who actively participated in the planning and design process through different workshops.

Special intervention projects also took place in eight other social housing units: Habitations Plateau-Mont-Royal, Jardins Angevin, Émilien-Gagnon, Gérard-Poïtras, Des Oblats I and III, Manoir Gouin, and Saint-André. The projects involved planting more than 500 trees, shrubs, perennials, and climbing plants, which more than one hundred residents can now enjoy.

La ville en vert team also produced a publication called *Climbing Plants: a refreshing solution*. Written by Anne-Marie Bernier and available for free on the MUEC's website, the guide demystifies certain concerns about climbing plants and invites Montrealers to plant more climbing plants.

# GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

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BEFORE



AFTER



📍 The landscaping project at the Habitations Sainte-Marie in Ville-Marie.



📍 With the help of an MUEC team member, a resident plants tomato plants in self-watering planters at the Habitations Îlots Saint-Martin.

## Partners – La ville en vert

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



On the Internet: [www.urbanecology.net/ville-en-vert](http://www.urbanecology.net/ville-en-vert)

# GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

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## CULTI-VERT



Patrice Godin presents Culti-vert at the Montréal Ecocity World Summit 2011.

In the spring of 2011, the MUEC and the Palais des congrès de Montréal started Culti-vert, a greening project on the roof of the Palais des congrès de Montréal. In addition to helping reduce the urban heat island effect and adding a green space in downtown Montréal, Culti-vert also features different ways to green roofs. Currently, there are five different sample green roofs of 28m<sup>2</sup> (300 ft<sup>2</sup>), structures for climbing plants, and three container gardens of 150 planters and bags. Over the summer, the harvest from these 450 containers was distributed to local restaurants and food security organizations.

With an area of 557m<sup>2</sup> (6,000 ft<sup>2</sup>), Culti-vert has received extensive media coverage and increased the awareness of many local and international actors, such as the members of BOMA Québec and participants of the Ecocity World Summit 2011. It demonstrates the incredible potential of roofs to make our cities greener, more nourishing, and more beautiful.

### Partners – Culti-vert

Culti-vert is financed in part by the Green Fund of Action 21 of the Climate Change Action Plan 2006-2012 of the Government of Quebec.



**On the Internet:** [www.urbanecology.net/culti-vert](http://www.urbanecology.net/culti-vert)



Culti-vert on the roof of the Palais des congrès de Montréal.



Several hundreds of kilos of vegetables and herbs were produced for the benefit of the restaurants associated with this project: Capital Traiteur, Crudessence, InterContinental Hotel. Left: a container garden. Right: different green roof technologies.



## PUBLIC ACTIONS – GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF GREEN ROOFS



Since 2005, the MUEC has been actively involved in documenting, implementing, and promoting green roofs in Montréal. In addition to installing a green roof on a housing cooperative in the Milton-Parc neighbourhood, the MUEC published a series of publications to share the diverse characteristics of green roofs with the public. In the summer of 2011, the MUEC published its fourth publication. The publication is an abridged version of the thesis *Energy Efficiency of an Extensive Green Roof in Downtown Montréal*, presented by Sébastien Jacquet to the École de technologie supérieure as part of the requirements for his master's in engineering. The publication provides citizens and professionals with a more scientific understanding of the energy efficiency of green roofs. The comparative study examines the energy consumption of a duplex with a roof divided

into three sections (conventional, irrigated green-roof and dry green-roof) and shows that green roofs drastically reduce the energy consumption of air conditioning and heating while increasing the life span of roofs.



**On the Internet:** [www.urbanecology.net/green-roofs](http://www.urbanecology.net/green-roofs)

### URBAN AGRICULTURE IN MONTRÉAL

This past year, the MUEC joined other Montréal civil society organizations involved in environmental issues and food security to create the Work Group on Urban Agriculture (GTAU). The group's goal is to reflect on the best ways to support the development of urban agriculture in Montréal.

After having established the obstacles that slow down the development of urban agriculture, for example, the pressure created by property development and the lack of an urban agriculture strategy for Montréal, the GTAU explored different urban agriculture practices and policies in effect in other cities. Finally, in August 2011, the GTAU started a signature collection process for the right of initiative to a public consultation, a right granted to Montréal citizens by the City of Montréal. The right states that with the collection of 15,000 signatures in 90 days, the City of Montréal is obligated to hold a public consultation on the subject in question. In the case of the GTAU, it was the state of urban agriculture in Montréal.

After several hundred hours of collecting signatures, the GTAU and its partners reached the required number of signatures, making the GTAU the first group in the history of Montréal to have successfully completed a right of initiative process. The City of Montréal announced that the public consultation will take place in the spring of 2012 and will be organized by the Office de consultation publique de Montréal. The MUEC played a very active role in the process; it was interested in both supporting urban agriculture and testing out the right of initiative to a public consultation as a new democratic tool.

# GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

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## Partners – Urban Agriculture

The GTAU was founded by Action Communiterre, Alternatives, the MUEC, the Conseil régional de l'environnement de Montréal, Marché Solidaire Frontenac, CRAPAUD (Collectif de recherche en aménagement paysager et agriculture urbaine durable), and Santropol Roulant. Some 50 organizations and 100 volunteers supported the GTAU by collecting written signatures in 19 Montréal neighbourhoods over 90 days.



**On the Internet:**  
[www.ecologieurbaine.net/agriculture-urbaine](http://www.ecologieurbaine.net/agriculture-urbaine)



Submission of signatures at City Hall in Montréal on November 15, 2011.

## PERSPECTIVES 2011- 2012 – GREENING AND URBAN AGRICULTURE

- Carry out six Projects that Change Lives and four special intervention projects as part of La ville en vert. The first green roof will be installed on a social housing complex in Montréal, and training sessions will also be offered to professionals of the OMHM on different sustainable urban developments, such as green parking.
- Explore the possibilities of bringing La ville en vert to a social housing complex outside of Montréal.
- Collaborate with the Palais des congrès de Montréal to consolidate and improve the Culti-vert project as well as promote this type of project to other property owners and building managers in Montréal.
- Develop and lead a campaign to green the walls of the city.
- Participate in the public consultation on the state of urban agriculture in Montréal.
- Continue to promote urban agriculture to citizens, stakeholders, and elected officials.
- Add permanent resources to the MUEC's team in the fields of horticulture and landscape architecture to increase the chances of participating in innovative, inspiring, and influential projects, such as Culti-vert.

## ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

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. This past year, the MUEC invested a lot of energy in actions related to this important issue through the Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods project and the numerous public actions that it carried out in collaboration with multiple partners such as the Coalition québécoise sur la problématique du poids, Mobilisation Turcot, and Transit: l'Alliance pour le financement des transports collectifs au Québec.

## ACHIEVEMENTS – ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### GREEN, ACTIVE, AND HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOODS

#### *Green, Active, Healthy* Neighbourhoods

Although there is now widespread agreement that we must shift to using modes of active and public 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.

The Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods project (GHAN) proposes a new approach to understanding cities and neighbourhoods on a pedestrian and cyclist level. Initiated in December 2008, the GHAN project aims to teach the public, community workers, and elected officials about potential priority solutions and to demonstrate how to design neighbourhoods that favour active transportation. It also strives to create a political will and initiate a change in professional norms and practices. The GHAN project has three phases: documentation and sharing of best practices, participatory planning of the GHAN pilot projects, and public actions.

#### **Documentation and Sharing of Best Practices**

In 2010, the MUEC created "Cool Ideas," an online collection of some one hundred examples of projects, public policies, and programs that are currently underway in Montréal, Quebec, and all over the world. Each example illustrates how our neighbourhoods could be redesigned to improve shared public space and favour active and public transportation. Over the last year, examples from Quebec and Canada were added, and the collection now features best practices from Montréal.

Several presentations of the GHAN project took place through conferences, posters, or kiosks, in particular at the Ecocity World Summit, the annual conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the annual conference of the Canadian Public Health Association, and the second national conference on obesity. The MUEC also gave a training workshop on methodology at the annual conference of the Réseau québécois de Villes et Villages en santé and a scientific workshop at the Ecocity World Summit. The scientific workshop was carried out in collaboration with the Observatoire SITQ du développement urbain et immobilier de l'Université de Montréal. The Public Health Agency of Canada selected the GHAN project as part of its Innovation Strategy, giving the MUEC the opportunity to bring its approach to two communities outside of Montréal.

## ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

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The MUEC published an article in the issue of *Urbanité* entitled "La Rue." *Urbanité* is published by the Ordre des Urbanistes du Québec and the Canadian Institute of Planners. The article, called "Changing the City, One Neighbourhood at a Time: the Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods Project," presented the project's vision and approach.

Also, as part of the second Car-Free Week, the GHAN team organized a professional design workshop for urban planning professionals on "People-Friendly Streets: How do we get there?," which attracted some 40 professionals from different backgrounds. Posters of different pedestrianization projects and conference presentations are available on the MUEC's website.

### **Participatory Planning of the GHAN Pilot Projects**

Once again, this phase was filled with a wide variety of activities. With the GHAN Plans for the project's first two pilot projects in Mercier-Est and Parc-Extension all finished, the GHAN team monitored the implementation of the Plans in both communities. In Mercier-Est, the MUEC participated in the six follow-up committee meetings, led by the mayor of Mercier-Est. Creating pedestrian and cyclist crossings over the railway is now a priority, and several measures have been taken, such as the installation of curb extensions and speed bumps. The MUEC's local partner was chosen for the *Quartier 21* program, which will help rally up local support for implementing the GHAN Plan.

In Parc-Extension, the MUEC's local partner, Vrac environnement, an action and research group for sustainable development, was also chosen for the *Quartier 21* program. The funding it received will help support the implementation of the GHAN Plan, especially in the areas around Jean-Talon Street West and the transportation hub at the Parc metro station. It is also important to underline that, in its sustainable development plan, the borough committed to systematically integrating traffic calming measures into road construction projects. Measures were also taken to increase safety around a neighbourhood elementary school.

This year, two other pilot projects were underway in the Plateau-Est and Southeastern Notre-Dame-de-Grâce neighbourhoods. In the Plateau-Est, partners, citizens, and the borough worked together to develop a GHAN Plan for the Plateau-Est, which was launched on April 13, 2011, to a crowd of 180 people. At the launch, the borough's city councillor announced that she would lead a follow-up committee and see to the implementation of around 10 of the Plan's proposed actions before summer 2011.

In Southeastern Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, the MUEC organized several activities in collaboration with its local partner, Mobiligo. Professionals from the borough of Côte-des-Neiges-Notre-Dame-de-Grâce invested greatly in developing a GHAN Plan for Southeastern NDG, which was launched in November 2011.

The MUEC also experimented with providing assistance on a smaller scale to two communities through knowledge sharing and technical support. In Villeray, the MUEC organized a professional workshop on redesigning the De Castelnau neighbourhood in favour of pedestrians and cyclists in collaboration with a citizen's committee and the Regroupement pour le développement de Villeray. In Saint-Henri, the MUEC shared knowledge with two community workers (who are also lecturers) so they could teach and apply the GHAN approach to a master's course in urban planning at McGill University.

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## Partners – Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods

In partnership with the Coalition québécoise sur la problématique du poids, the GHAN pilot projects are made possible by the financial support of Québec en Forme, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

### On the Internet:

Cool Ideas: [www.urbanecology.net/cool\\_ideas](http://www.urbanecology.net/cool_ideas)

Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhoods:

[www.urbanecology.net/green-active-and-healthy-neighbourhoods](http://www.urbanecology.net/green-active-and-healthy-neighbourhoods)



Launch of the GHAN Plan for the Plateau-Est, April 13, 2011.



Cover of the GHAN Plan for Southeastern NDG, launched November 10, 2011.



Professional workshop, De Castelnau neighbourhood, April 19, 2011.

# ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

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## **PUBLIC ACTIONS – ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

- In collaboration with the Coalition québécoise sur la problématique du poids, the MUEC participated in the public consultation on the revision of the *Act Respecting Land Use Planning and Development* to request that the new version include concerns about health issues related to urban planning.
- The MUEC also participated in the public consultation of the Planning Commission of the Montréal Metropolitan Community (MMC) on the *Land Use and Development Plan for the Montréal Metropolitan Community*. Once again, the MUEC underlined the need to design and plan greater Montréal in a way that will reduce our dependence on cars, favour active and public transportation, slow urban sprawl, create quality communities, and protect natural areas.
- The MUEC joined the Mobilisation Turcot Coalition, a group of stakeholders from Sud-Ouest, in October 2010 and its committee in December 2010. The MUEC participated in the Coalition by writing press releases and helping to organize a public conference on April 14, 2011, and a walk on June 4.
- Finally, the MUEC joined Transit: l'Alliance pour le financement des transports collectifs au Québec, created in the summer of 2011, and its board of directors.

## **PERSPECTIVES 2011- 2012 – ACTIVE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

- Work with Transit to obtain adequate financing for public transportation in Quebec.
- Support the implementation of the four GHAN pilot projects in collaboration with local partners, boroughs, and the City of Montréal.
- Bring the GHAN approach to other neighbourhoods in and outside of Montréal.
- Continue documenting and sharing best practices, especially in Quebec and Canada.
- Continue to speak out and stimulate public debate in favour of changing policies and practices to create neighbourhoods that foster active transportation.



## PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

The MUEC recognizes the right of citizens to participate in decisions that will affect the future of their neighbourhoods and their city. In keeping with this recognition, it creates practices that allow citizens to actively and effectively participate in the Green, Active, and Healthy Neighbourhood project and La ville en vert. In addition to its projects, the MUEC also proposes innovative participatory democracy practices, such as participatory budgeting. It organizes different educational activities (workshops and conferences) that aim to teach and encourage citizens how to collectively transform their communities into just, inclusive, green, and democratic environments. The MUEC's involvement in the right of initiative to a public consultation was motivated in part by its interest to test this new democratic tool available to citizens.

## ACHIEVEMENTS – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

### JANE'S WALK



On May 7 and 8, 2011, the MUEC organized 27 Jane's Walks (three in the Milton-Parc neighbourhood) in honour of Jane Jacobs' heritage and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. This annual event now takes place in 75 cities worldwide.

For the third year in a row, the MUEC invited citizens to organize an exploratory walk in their neighbourhood on the theme of their choice. This year, more than 700 people participated in Jane's Walk and discovered different aspects of Montréal neighbourhoods from the sounds of Rosemont, the Portuguese culture in the Plateau, to local food in Villeray. Jane's Walk also received widespread media attention.



Twenty-seven different Jane's Walks were organized for Jane's Walk 2011.



Jane's Walk 2011 was a huge success with more walks and more participants than ever!

# 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. We would like to thank all of the walk organizers and especially the following organizations: the Coalition jeunesse montréalaise de lutte à l'homophobie, the Comité catalyseur de Villeray en transition, the artist's coop Audiotopie, CURA: Making Megaprojects Work for Communities, Éco-quartier NDG, PICAPP, McGill University, Mile End Memories (in collaboration with Les Amis du boulevard Saint-Laurent), the citizens and the citizen's committee of Milton Parc, Optative Theatrical Laboratories, Prévention Sud-Ouest, Transport actif à Villeray, Regroupement en aménagement de Parc-Extension, the Association du Village Shaughnessy, the Société d'histoire de Parc-Extension, Vrac environnement (in collaboration with the Parc-Extension citizen's committee), and the Westmount Historical Association.



On the Internet: [www.urbanecology.net/janeswalk](http://www.urbanecology.net/janeswalk)

## CAR-FREE WEEK



From September 18 to 24, 2011, the second Car-Free Week stimulated discussion about pedestrian streets in Quebec. Once again, there were presentations and activities.

A public conference called *Pedestrian-friendly Streets: How do we get there?* was held on September 20. Using examples of commercial streets in Montréal and Quebec, conference speakers from Agence Concercté and the Rues Principales Foundation presented different approaches to pedestrianization, the processes and partnerships that encourage the move to action, criteria for choosing what streets to pedestrianize, the impacts of pedestrian streets, and possible challenges.

Car-Free Week also includes Car-Free Day. This year, five one-day pedestrian streets took place in Montréal neighbourhoods thanks to the assistance of local neighbourhood organizations who organized a wide variety of activities. One-day Pedestrian Streets took place in these neighbourhoods: Saint-Viateur Street West in Le Plateau-Mont-Royal, De Castelnau Street East in Villeray, the borough parking lot in Verdun, Athéna Park and Greenshields Street in Parc-Extension, and André-Dumas Avenue in Pointe-aux-Trembles.



A one-day pedestrian street in the borough of Rivière-des-Prairies-Pointe-aux-Trembles on September 24, 2011.

## Partners – Car-Free Week

Car-Free Week was made possible by the financial support of the Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal and the Agence métropolitaine de transport. The Schools of Urban Planning and Architecture of McGill University, Agence Convercité, and the Rues Principales Foundation were partners in organizing the professional workshop and public conference.



📍 Saint-Viateur Street West transformed into a one-day pedestrian street on September 18, 2011.



On the Internet: <http://www.urbanecology.net/car-free>

## PUBLIC ACTIONS – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

For the revision of the Montréal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, the MUEC submitted a memorandum underlining the need for the City of Montréal to democratize its budgeting process and teach its citizens about urban issues and democratic processes. A crisis has developed because citizens have lost faith in their municipal government.

The MUEC organized two workshops on participatory budgeting, a keynote conference on the right to the city, and a public conference on citizen participation and urban planning at the Ecocity World Summit. Thanks to the many international experts who attended the Summit, the MUEC was also able to organize a special session on participatory budgeting for Montréal elected officials. The MUEC has requested (without success) that the borough of Le Plateau-Mont-Royal reintroduce their participatory budgeting process.

## PERSPECTIVES 2011-2012 – PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP

- Invest in more resources to help develop a clearer vision of participatory democracy and citizenship and develop a related structuring project. Finding financial partners will be a major challenge.
- Car-Free Week and Jane's Walks will be back in 2012.

# CONSULTING SERVICES

## CONSULTING SERVICES

The MUEC's strategic planning exercise helped it confirm its intention of offering consulting services. The MUEC believes that its knowledge is extremely valuable. Taking on contracts will allow the MUEC to pursue its mission and have more financial freedom.



**On the Internet: [www.urbanecology.net/consulting](http://www.urbanecology.net/consulting)**

### **THE SAINT-PIERRE WOONERF IN THE BOROUGH OF SUD-OUEST**



The borough of Sud-Ouest called on the MUEC's consulting services to organize citizen participation activities for the Woonerf Saint-Pierre development project. The MUEC organized and hosted an information session and a citizen consultation workshop on transforming the parking lot in the Sud-Ouest neighbourhood into a green space. Citizen participation helped improve the development plans for the Woonerf. Citizens decided that the pedestrian walkway would be narrower than initially planned and made of fine gravel instead of asphalt. They also asked for more areas without trees to create open spaces for activities and relaxation.



Public consultation on design possibilities for the woonerf.



**On the Internet:** [www.goo.gl/p1Djh](http://www.goo.gl/p1Djh)

## **SEMI-BURIED WASTE CONTAINERS**

The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal called upon the MUEC to plan and supervise the installation of semi-buried waste containers at the Habitations Saint-Michel Nord. These containers have only recently started appearing at the OMHM's social housing complexes and are still rare in Montréal.

The goal was to replace around 50 rolling waste containers with 12 semi-buried waste containers at four locations. The semi-buried containers not only help keep the grounds clean and reduce bad odours but also benefit vegetation. As of spring 2012, residents and their neighbours will begin to benefit from their improved living environment.

## **PERSPECTIVES 2011-2012 – CONSULTING SERVICES**

Progressively develop professional services for projects that take advantage of the MUEC's knowledge of participatory processes, greening, urban agriculture, and active transportation.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010-2011

**Owen Rose**, president / architect, Atelier TAUTEM • **Jayne Engle-Warnick**, vice-president / urban planner • **John Cawley**, treasurer / senior project leader, McConnell Foundation • **Marco Viviani**, secretary / director of development and public relations, Communauto. • **Marcela Escribano**, administrator / project leader of Latin American and Caribbean projects, Alternatives • **Nik Luka**, administrator / assistant professor and program coordinator, McGill University

• **Katia Opalka**, administrator / environmental lawyer, Blakes • **Raquel Peñalosa**, administrator / landscape architect • **Annie Rochette**, administrator (employee representative) / project manager of sustainable development, MUEC • **Dominique Sorel**, administrator / engineer, S.S. Papadopoulos & Associates, Inc. • **Ray Tomalty**, administrator / adjunct professor at the School of Urban Planning, McGill University



**i** The MUEC's board of directors is made up of 11 administrators who are elected by members at the annual general assembly.

**VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE**

**i** The Active Citizen: ideas for action, organized by volunteers on March 28, 2011, was an opportunity to exchange ideas and work together.

The MUEC's Volunteer Committee continued its community awareness-raising activities by organizing three evenings of film screenings and discussion: *The Street*: a space to share; *The Active Citizen*: ideas for action; *The City*: a space to green. Around 60 people participated in these activities and learned how to make seed bombs and self-watering planters. The committee, made up of five people, also organized two activities for third and fourth grade children at the Étoile filante school in NDG for the GHAN project in Southeastern NDG.

The MUEC keeps a list of current volunteers in order to offer volunteers different

ways of getting involved with the MUEC or other similar organizations. This year, many volunteers helped collect signatures for the public consultation on the state of urban agriculture in Montréal.

In 2011-2012, the MUEC hopes to increase opportunities for collaboration between the volunteer committee and its projects so each group can benefit from the other.

**INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS 2011-2012**

**Blandine Betton • Frédéric Chais • Stephen Charters • Mariane Frandsen • Kiley Goyette • Sarah-Maude Guindon • Cynthia Jacques • Sébastien Jacquet • Jordan Kemp • Julie Larocque • Mitchell Lavoie • Stéphanie Lessard • Mona Luxion • Adrien Martin-Lauzier • Cecilia de la Mora • Véronique**

**Paradis • Manon Pawlas • Christina Peltier • Tatiana Philipchenko • Mona Poon • Brendan Rahman • Léonie Rouette Tétreault • Yousaf Shah • Tahria Sheather • Jessie Smith • Annie Thongphanith • Elisabeth Thongphanith • Linda Vallée • Mathieu Vick • Chris Wise.**

## COMMUNITY LIFE

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### STAFF 2010-2011

**Marie-Hélène Armand • Catherine Aubry • Anne-Marie Bernier\* • Tristan Bougie • Myriam Cloutier • Alexandra Coelho\* • Marie-Ève Dostie\* • Patrice Godin • Pascoal Gomes • Saleema Hutchinson • Anne Juillet • Marie-Pierre Labelle\* • Caroline Laganière\* (maternal leave) • Judy Murphy\* • Roger Perron\* • Luc Rabouin • Annie Rochette.**

\* Absent from the team photo



### MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE FOR GREEN, ACTIVE, AND HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Marie-Soleil Cloutier**, adjunct professor, Centre Urbanisation Culture Société, INRS • **Chantal Dagenais**, project manager, traffic engineering, CIMA+ • **Marie Demers**, associate researcher, Centre de recherche clinique du CHUS • **Sébastien Gagné**, network development advisor, Société de transport de Montréal • **Lise Gauvin**, researcher, Interdisciplinary group research in health and social and preventative medicine, Université de Montréal • **Paul Lewis**, director, Groupe de recherche ville et mobilité, Institut d'urbanisme, Université de Montréal • **Nik Luka**, assistant professor and program coordinator of urban design, School

of Urban Planning, School of Architecture, McGill University • **Paul Mackey**, president of Rue sécurisée inc. • **Catherine Morency**, researcher, MADITUC, École Polytechnique de Montréal • **Patrick Morency**, doctor, specialist in trauma prevention, Direction de Santé Publique de Montréal • **Sophie Paquin**, urban planner, Direction de la santé publique de Montréal • **Ray Tomalty**, urban planner, professor, School of Urban Planning, McGill University • **Juan Torres**, assistant professor, Institut d'urbanisme de l'Université de Montréal • **Sylvie Tremblay**, transport service, City of Montréal

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[www.urbanecology.net](http://www.urbanecology.net)



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