

# The Development of our Major Boulevards

Thematic workshop held on November 8, 2023 at the Civic Centre of the City of Dollard-des-Ormeaux

## Were present:

- Nearly 70 citizens,
- TQSOI – Table de Quartier Sud de l'Ouest-de-l'île
- Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton (RCGT)
- Municipal Council and City professionals



## Executive Summary

After exploring the evolution of our boulevards from agricultural rural roads dotted with stone farmhouses, barns and orchards, to major urban boulevards lined with apartment buildings, office edifices and commercial malls, participants were introduced to the urban planning hierarchy in place today and the responsibilities and obligations



of the City to develop its territory in an intelligent and responsible way, taking into account the requirements for densification around the four future Réseau Express Métropolitain (REM) stations and the need for affordable housing.

To enrich the round-table discussions, two fictitious development examples were presented to illustrate possible building volumes, and the representative of RCGT provided the financial impacts of three possible real estate development scenarios.

Armed with this information and a plan of the boulevards, citizens were then asked to work in round-tables of eight on brainstorming ideas around the characteristics that should be considered for new real-estate projects, the uses that should be found in these developments, and the streetscape design improvements that are needed to make the boulevards more liveable, lively and pleasant.

## According to participants:

### New real estate developments should include:

- **Mixed-use buildings** with stores and services on the ground floor, residential units above, and indoor and outdoor recreational activities;
- **Diverse housing options** to respond to the needs of a range of families and budgets, with restrictions on short-term rentals;
- **An adequate density:** Enough people living in an area to support local shops and efficient public transport;
- **Attractive architecture at a human scale** featuring unique and timeless signature buildings designed for comfort, safety, and accessibility;
- **Underground parking** for cars and bicycles, including charging stations, car-sharing facilities and bike storage;
- **Concealed mechanical equipment**, that is out of sight and without noise for nearby homes.

- **Well-designed public spaces** such as gardens, parks, and community areas that are linked and connected to the larger community;
- **Green building practices** for energy efficiency, water savings and the sustainable development of the site;
- **A harmonious transition with existing neighbourhoods** through careful and innovative building design and landscaping;
- **Control of building heights** for a harmonious streetscape, and a modulation of building heights respectful of existing neighbourhoods.

### To create complete, walkable communities, we need:

- **Sports installations, community and roof-top gardens**, parks and playgrounds, and bike and walking path to promote a healthy lifestyle;
- **Proximity services**: Daycares, dry cleaners, hairdressers, banks, clinics and pharmacies;
- **Neighborhood businesses**: Convenience stores, local and specialty grocery stores, bakeries, and fresh produce markets to meet the everyday needs of families;
- **Shops and restaurants**: Florists, bookshops, cafés, terraces and boutiques to enhance pedestrian routes, encourage socialization and render the streets lively;
- **Cultural destinations**: Art galleries and museums to draw visitors.
- **Public spaces**, town squares, piazzas, open markets and gathering spaces for the community and for intergenerational social interaction.

### Additional Ideas:

- **Authorize accessory rental units** in single-family homes (soft densification);
- **Limit car-related commerce and services** along the boulevards.

### Improving the Boulevards should include:

- **North-South bike paths** to the REM stations that are accessible year-round and connected to the existing bicycle network;
- **Landscaped and treed buffers** and wider sidewalks for pedestrian safety, noise attenuation, improved rainwater capture, and to make the streets more attractive to all;
- **Pedestrian Crosswalks** at all intersections with sufficient crossing times;
- **Burying overhead wires and installing larger signs** to improve the aesthetics and navigation of streets;
- **Addition of street furniture and lighting** and rest areas with shelters to encourage walking;
- **Green spaces and landscaping** to beautify the front yards of buildings;
- **Works of art** such as sculptures and fountains for visual interest.
- **Improved traffic flow** (see the executive summary of workshop #1 on mobility).

