

**Recommendations of the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal to the  
Commission sur le transport et les travaux publics as part of consultations  
on the draft Montréal Parking Policy**



**March 7, 2016**

## **Preamble**

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal (the Board of Trade) has over 7,000 members. Its mission is to be the voice of Montréal's business community and to promote the city's prosperity. The Board of Trade is involved in key areas of economic development, promoting a philosophy of action based on engagement, credibility, proactivity, collaboration and innovation. The Board of Trade is the largest private economic development organization in Québec.

## **Background**

Like many other major cities around the world, Montréal has a serious parking problem. Either due to a lack of space or inadequate use of the space available, it is becoming harder and harder to find parking in the central areas of Montréal, particularly downtown. No less than 30%<sup>1</sup> of traffic downtown is the result of cars driving around looking for somewhere to park.

The difficulty of quickly finding parking near one's destination is a check on the competitiveness of Montréal's commercial arteries, particularly those downtown. Commercial arteries are predominantly affected because they face intense competition from suburban shopping centres, where parking is abundant and free. Even businesses that do not offer services directly to consumers suffer the effects of parking problems, whether through limited productivity in their shipping and receiving of merchandise or through their attractiveness to labour for whom public transit is not a realistic option.

Parking problems have been aggravated over the years with the rising number of vehicles in the metropolitan area. There is a general consensus that it is a good idea to concentrate activities in higher density economic centres, downtown or elsewhere in the city, using a transit-oriented development model, and that this justifies major investments in the public transit system in Greater Montréal. Unfortunately, this has prompted some stakeholders to argue for limiting parking, whether downtown or along commercial arteries. The Board of Trade is opposed to this idea, which is not in line with what consumers and many workers want. For central neighbourhoods, this approach does not reflect many residents' desire to have at least one car per household, even though they use public transit or other modes of shared transportation for day-to-day travel within the city.

While greater use of public transit is part of the solution, it is not a panacea that eliminates the need to offer parking for residents. In fact, the impact of public transit on parking is dispersed. As the data in the following table shows, many Montrealers ("residents") have a car and leave it parked in their neighbourhood ("immobile") even though they have easy access to the metro and use it frequently.

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Shoup, *The High Cost of Free Parking*, 2005

**Table 1: Relationship between public transit and parking: access to the metro does not proportionately reduce the number of cars and results in more immobile cars.<sup>2</sup>**

	<b>Metros</b>	<b>Immobile</b>	<b>Residents</b>	<b>Peak</b>	<b>% immobile</b>
<b>Ville-Marie</b>	14	11,589	45%	127,557	9%
<b>Plateau</b>	3	14,712	45%	41,180	36%
<b>Sud-Ouest</b>	5	9,015	35%	29,160	31%
<b>CDN-NDG</b>	6	22,647	38%	72,752	31%
<b>Hoch.-Maison.</b>	4	17,091	32%	52,180	33%
<b>Villeray-Parc-Ext.</b>	6	17,507	37%	49,219	36%
<b>Ahuntsic</b>	2	16,930	31%	60,893	28%
<b>Verdun</b>	3	10,508	35%	27,445	38%
<b>Rosemont</b>	1	16,802	25%	55,084	30%
<b>Saint-Laurent</b>	2	12,249	33%	80,487	15%
<b>Lachine</b>	0	5,427	27%	20,880	26%
<b>Saint-Léonard</b>	0	11,788	34%	31,917	37%
<b>Anjou</b>	0	5,053	25%	26,214	19%
<b>Pierrefonds</b>	0	9,543	25%	28,555	33%
<b>Pointe Claire</b>	0	4,552	26%	26,525	17%
<b>Beaconsfield</b>	0	2,822	23%	8,709	32%

**Source:** Aecom Transport, April 2015. "Élaboration de la politique de stationnement: portrait, diagnostic et assistance à la rédaction de la politique. Rapport de diagnostic sur le stationnement," April 2015. Processing by the Board of Trade, particularly metro data.

Parking should not be pitted against public transit or alternative transportation, but should instead be seen as a way to help users transfer from cars to public or active transit. So it is essential that we pursue our thinking about the importance of incentive parking, which enables modal shifts.

The consultation document prepared by the Ville de Montréal provides an effective diagnosis when looking at the impact of parking on the vitality of commercial arteries. The diagnosis is equally accurate when it points to the precarious situation in the business district, where the parking offer is saturated.

Generally speaking, the Board of Trade agrees with the Ville de Montréal's main orientations and supports its efforts. We believe that deliberations are well under way and headed in the right direction. The suggestions we would make in terms of governance, signage, the optimization of space and the addition of multi-level parking structures follow the same lines and are meant to add to the Ville de Montréal's reflections by conveying the business community's concerns.

<sup>2</sup> Data from the 2008 Origine-Destination study, as reported in the "Rapport de diagnostic sur le stationnement" produced by Aecom on behalf of the Ville de Montréal. In the table: "metros" indicates the number of metro stations in the territory of the borough or city in question; "immobile" means the number of vehicles that remained immobile for at least 27 hours during the investigation; "residents" refers to the percentage of residents within the territory who left their vehicle immobile; "peak" means the maximum number of cars that parked at the same time within the territory; and "% immob." refers to the percentage of immobile vehicles during the peak.

## 1. Governance of parking and history of Stationnement de Montréal

The Board of Trade has two concerns about the new governance the Ville de Montréal has indicated it will put in place in its new Parking Policy. First, as the voice of the business community, we want to ensure that parking management in Montréal is efficient, to better serve the interests of our members and all Montrealers. Second, we have an even more direct interest as an organization, because the Board of Trade has been involved in the governance of Stationnement de Montréal since 1994.

To outline the Board of Trade's role for the past 22 years, we should remember that Stationnement de Montréal is a limited partner of Accesum, which is financed by the Board of Trade. Our organization's mission is to ensure the sound governance of Accesum and its subsidiary, Stationnement de Montréal. As such, the Board of Trade appoints eight members to Accesum's board of directors, two of whom are designated by the Ville de Montréal. Stationnement de Montréal does not have its own board of directors because it is the operating arm of Accesum. The choice of this governance structure met the Ville de Montréal's objectives when it decided to hand over the governance and management of parking operations to an external body.

The Board of Trade is not involved in the day-to-day management of Stationnement de Montréal. Stationnement de Montréal management – overseen and supported by the Accesum board of directors – is responsible for managing and operating paid municipal parking, both on the street and off-street, based on terms set by the Ville de Montréal. The city administration determines rates, schedules for paid parking, locations of paid parking, associated regulations and their application.

Since 1994, the Board of Trade has been ensuring the sound governance of this company, and we are proud of the work that has been done. During the first 22 years of a 30-year agreement, Stationnement de Montréal has been efficient and diligent. It is important to remember that until credit card and online payment were introduced, parking operations involved collecting and handling large amounts of cash. During all those years, Stationnement de Montréal was carefully managed.

Furthermore, the contributions paid to the Ville de Montréal keep growing. Stationnement de Montréal now pays close to \$50 million per year to the Ville de Montréal, and the last annual increase was \$5 million. The privatization of municipal parking generated substantially higher revenues for the Ville de Montréal than projected when it was created.

**Table 2: Compared earnings before distribution between the original structure and Stationnement de Montréal's limited partnership structure**

Original projection	1993 to 2023 (30 years)	\$106 million
SCSM projections	1995 to 2014 (20 years)	\$440 million

Source: Stationnement de Montréal, internal analysis

Therefore, as at December 3, 2013, Stationnement de Montréal had paid the Ville de Montréal a cumulative \$459 million, including tax, permits and interest on debentures, funds that can be used for a variety of purposes.

One of the positive developments created by Stationnement de Montréal is the technological shift made in recent years. Moving from traditional parking meters to new terminals that enable card payments has made parking easier for users, as has the new mobile app that allows them to pay

for parking remotely. While developing this mobile app involved significant up-front costs, it can be used as a platform to develop future solutions for parking in Montréal. This innovation enables a more effective collection of revenue and helps position Montréal as an intelligent city by capturing permanent data.

The Board of Trade is aware that the Ville de Montréal wants to bring the governance and management of parking back into its fold. The Board of Trade believes that the current situation has effectively served Montréal and the goals the Ville de Montréal was pursuing in 1994. However, the governance structure, which is hard to explain and hard for most citizens to understand, has created confusion over responsibilities and, as a result, has undermined the accountability of decision makers. This is why the Board of Trade believes that the reform proposed by the Ville de Montréal is positive. Furthermore, we believe that recentralizing the management of parking with the Ville de Montréal will likely make parking policies more consistent throughout the city, an objective the Board of Trade supports.

However, in doing this, we encourage the Ville de Montréal to safeguard and harness the expertise Stationnement de Montréal and its teams have developed over the years. This transition to a new governance model should tap into the years of experience acquired by Stationnement de Montréal.

**Recommendation no. 1: Harness the expertise Stationnement de Montréal has acquired over the past 22 years to better develop the new governance model.**

## **2. Clear regulations and signage: much-needed simplification**

If there is one part of the Ville de Montréal's draft Parking Policy on which there is consensus, it is reviewing parking signage. A pole with up to six signs cannot communicate clearly, particularly when each of the signs is hard to decipher.

The city's governance structure further complicates the situation, because parking regulations are different between boroughs.

Since the Côté-Seguin Report was published in 2010, the Board of Trade has regularly come out in favour of greater standardization in Ville de Montréal practices. The current administration has made efforts in this direction by harmonizing the management of snow removal. We are confident the same will be done for parking regulations.

Information on signs must be both complete and easy to understand. People need to be able to quickly ascertain whether or not they can park in a particular spot. New panels deployed in Los Angeles are an example of a best practice in the area. The respected magazine *Wired* devoted an article to them.

## Illustration 1: New parking panels in Los Angeles

**Recommendation no. 2: Repatriate responsibility for parking regulations to the central city to make them more consistent throughout the agglomeration.**

**Recommendation no. 3: Simplify parking signage and make it easier to understand.**

### 3. Optimize existing space: real-time information and partnerships

Experts agree that there is a shortage of street parking when the occupancy rate reaches 85%, because that is when it becomes hard to find a spot. For off-street parking, there is no agreed-upon number, but we can assume that the number is higher because the problem of finding a spot arises less often.

What is the occupancy rate for parking spaces downtown? We have included results from Aecom's diagnosis for the Ville de Montréal in the form of a table.

**Table: 2: Occupancy rate for downtown parking (2014)**

Area	Off-street	Paid street parking
1-North of business district	68%	71%
2-Business district	78%	81%
3-South of business district	82%	52%
4-Quartier des spectacles	65%	56%
5-Sud-Est	97%	57%
6-Old Montréal	56%	75%

Source: Aecom Transport, "Élaboration de la politique de stationnement," April 2015

In light of this information, at first glance we would conclude that only off-street parking in the Sud-Est (courthouse and *La Presse* area) and paid street parking in the business district are saturated. With such apparently abundant parking, how do we explain that 30% of the traffic downtown is caused by people driving around trying to find parking?

- **Provide real-time information**

Three main factors determine the choice of a parking spot: location, price and duration. Drivers are looking for a parking spot as close as possible to the destination, generally for a specific period of time, at the best price. Drivers will reject available paid street parking if they think they can find free parking nearby or if they think they can park closer to their destination for the same price.

The parking spot must be located within 500 metres of the final destination, because the average person can walk this distance in six or seven minutes. This basic information also applies for commuters who want off-street parking near their workplace and for visitors looking for street parking near a store. Within this perimeter, drivers therefore want a spot as close as possible to their destination.

The second important decision-making factor is price. While street parking rates are identical within a given borough, off-street parking rates are not, with prices often varying a great deal. According to the Aecom study, daily rates can vary by a factor of two within the same area and can be four times higher for monthly parking.

Finally, depending on how long they need to park for, drivers will wonder whether it is cheaper to park for a few hours in off-street parking or to put more money in a parking meter after the first parking period has ended.

As a result, many drivers drive through the streets of downtown looking for a free parking spot based on location, duration and price. Given this, information technology has to play a major role in optimizing the use of the parking space currently available. These technologies must be at the centre of the Ville de Montréal's Parking Policy.

The use of dynamic signage in Old Montréal is a step in the right direction that makes parking easier for drivers and reduces unnecessary traffic in the area. We applaud the initiative to introduce dynamic signage soon in the Quarter des spectacles.



But we can do more when it comes to sharing real-time information through mobile applications. In Montréal, the company Prkng has developed an application by the same name that lets you see, in real time, where and when you can park for free, find off-street parking nearby and even pay for parking with a smartphone. This user-friendly, efficient application is already available for Montréal, Québec City, New York and Seattle. For Montréal, the most recent version of the app indicates the location of areas reserved for residents (stickers) and takes into account snow removal schedules.

The City of San Francisco, known for having adopted one of the most effective, progressive parking policies in North America, relies a great deal on real-time dissemination of information about the location of available parking spaces as well as rates for each of those parking spots. This information is made available on different platforms, allowing drivers to quickly decide where to park their car.

Information about rates is an important piece of information the City of San Francisco wanted to include in its system. According to a study of best practices in the U.S. commissioned by San

San Francisco's Metropolitan Transportation Commission in 2007,<sup>3</sup> price was at the top of the list of factors likely to affect demand for parking. Real-time information on these two key factors (location and price) allows drivers to make an informed choice about where to park, substantially reducing unnecessary traffic in downtown San Francisco.

**Recommendation no. 4: Make information technologies central to the next Parking Policy.**

**Recommendation no. 5: Inform drivers in real time of locations and rates of available parking.**

- **Expand the existing offer efficiently through private sector partnerships**

Generally speaking, drivers who need parking fall into three distinct categories: residents, commuters and visitors.<sup>4</sup> These three groups differ in the amount of time they need a given parking spot for. Residents stay the longest in the same place, sometimes parking their car for more than a week without moving it. Commuters typically need a parking spot for 7 to 10 hours. They arrive and leave en masse during the morning and evening rush hours. As for visitors, they park at different times of the day, from one hour to four hours.

Currently, each group predominantly uses a certain type of parking: residents park for free on the street, commuters tend to use off-street parking and visitors use street parking. Existing rates in Montréal reflect this approach to directing each group to a certain type of parking. First, the Ville de Montréal subsidizes parking for residents who tend to leave their car immobile in free spots. Second, off-street parking often involves an initial charge that is three times higher than a parking meter, but with a ceiling after two or three hours. Finally, paid street parking offers reasonable prices, but requires paying again after a short period of time.

In theory, there is nothing dictating this rigidity in the parking offer, which we attribute in large part to the aforementioned lack of information. Looking at the data in table 2, we see that this rigidity can lead to serious imbalances between supply and demand in the same area. In the Sud-Est, while off-street parking is saturated at 97%, paid street parking is only 57% occupied. On the other hand, it is hard to find a spot with a parking meter in Old Montréal at noon, where the occupancy rate exceeds 80%, while off-street parking in the area is only 56% occupied.

We believe that by having the same policy address street and off-street parking, and by sharing information in real time for these two types of parking, we will optimize the space currently available. For example, off-street parking lots in Old Montréal could try to offer a special two-hour rate at lunchtime, which drivers would be quick to take advantage of if they knew about it. And a paid spot on the street in the Sud-Est could be offered at a fixed rate for the entire day.

This integrated approach between street and off-street parking was taken by the city of Aspen, Colorado, which relies on a few major ski resorts to attract visitors for short and long stays. Integrating these two types of parking allows it to better manage the space available based on

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<sup>3</sup> San Francisco Metropolitan Transportation Commission, "Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth: Parking Best Practices and Strategies for Supporting Transit Oriented Development in the San Francisco Bay Area," June 2007.

<sup>4</sup> In a more thorough study, we would divide residents into two subgroups: immobile, who leave their cars parked virtually permanently near their home, and resident commuters, who take their car to go to work every day.



needs in the moment. San Francisco also took this integrated approach with its application that informs people in real time about availability, location and rates of practically all parking available downtown.

Greater alignment between street and off-street parking in Montréal would require greater cooperation between the new Ville de Montréal entity, which will control paid street parking, and private owners who control the vast majority of off-street parking. The Board of Trade believes that this partnership would benefit all parties, along with the entire business community and all Montrealers.

But we believe that it would be counterproductive to adopt a punitive approach of imposing a surtax on off-street parking, as the draft Parking Policy suggests. Far from reducing imbalances between supply and demand for the two types of parking, such a move would risk accentuating them and hamper efforts to optimize space.

Finally, we need to understand that an information system that directs cars to the right place for parking grows stronger and more efficient as more parking lots take part in the program. Flexibility increases with numbers. Montréal would develop a more efficient program by working with private owners.

**Recommendation no. 6: Integrate the street and off-street parking offer in the next Parking Policy, including in the dissemination of information to drivers.**

**Recommendation no. 7: Establish partnerships with owners of private parking lots rather than imposing a surtax.**

- **Show vision and creativity**

Since price is an important factor in choosing parking, it is no surprise that many cities have instituted price modulation policies to redirect demand. Price modulation takes different forms.

In New York, for example, to encourage a higher turnover of cars parked along the commercial arteries of Midtown, the rate for parking meters is \$2 for one hour, \$5 for two hours, \$9 for 3 hours and \$12 for four hours. The results speak for themselves: the average parking time in this area dropped from four hours to 90 minutes.

In San Francisco, price modulation is done periodically based on supply and demand. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority has the power to increase rates for parking lots that are full and reduce rates for those with less demand, which it does once a month. These modulations apply for all street and off-street parking. The experience was conclusive in downtown, and SF Park now intends to expand this price modulation policy to the entire city.

Could we apply a similar policy for our commercial arteries? Here is an overview of the occupancy rate for seven streets, during the week and on the weekend.

**Table 3 – Occupancy rate for certain commercial arteries in Montréal**

<b>Commercial artery</b>	<b>Occupancy rate: week</b>	<b>Occupancy rate: weekend</b>
<b>Mont-Royal Ave./Saint-Denis St.</b>	50%	60%
<b>Côtes-des-Neiges St.</b>	81%	62%
<b>Ontario St.</b>	47%	45%
<b>Masson St.</b>	76%	86%
<b>Fleury St.</b>	57%	57%
<b>Décarie Blvd.</b>	55%	33%
<b>Laurier Ave. West</b>	76%	76%

Source: Ville de Montréal, "Politique de stationnement: version préliminaire pour consultation," December 2015

While Côte-des-Neiges St., Masson St. and Laurier Ave. West are doing well, the same cannot be said for the four others, and they would benefit from a reduction in parking meter rates.

Ultimately, technology can exploit price modulation to the fullest. One can imagine an algorithm that could modulate prices for parking spaces in real time. An indoor parking lot in the business district could make spots available for an hour or two during lunchtime at prices lower than at parking meters. The shared information system could adjust the prices of participating parking lots based on parameters they agree to and send this information in real time to drivers who are looking for parking.

As far as we know, no city in the world has taken this idea this far. This could become part of the signature of Montréal: an intelligent city.

Another innovation born in California being adopted elsewhere is shared parking. The idea involves having two or more organizations with complementary activities and clienteles that do not park at the same time share parking lots. While this is basically a policy of assigned parking spots by the Ville de Montréal, there is nothing to prevent existing parking lots from benefitting from it too.

An interesting example for Montréal is the natural fit between the Complexe Desjardins parking lot and the Place des Arts parking lot in the Quartier des spectacles. The Aecom study noted that while the former is often full during the day, the latter, which has more than 1,000 spots, has an occupancy rate of only 27%. The situation is the reverse the evenings of shows: the Place des Arts parking lot fills up, and the workers from Complexe Desjardins are no longer there.

Finally, technological innovation allows residents to help make the best use of space. Mobile applications such as Park Circa, Spot and JustPark – commonly called the "Airbnbs" of parking – allow residents to rent out their parking spot. In Montréal, there are residents who have a parking spot at home but no car. People who drive to work could also make their parking spot available during the day.

**Recommendation no. 8: Reduce parking rates on certain commercial arteries.**

**Recommendation no. 9: Develop an algorithm to modulate prices for participating parking spots in real time.**

**Recommendation no. 10: Foster innovative initiatives, such as shared parking and parking “Airbnbs.”**

#### **4. Create more parking and take future needs into account**

- **Electric cars**

Electricity will increasingly be part of the landscape of personal transportation and will definitely affect the parking offer.

According to data from the Association des véhicules électriques du Québec, there are over 8,300 electric or hybrid vehicles in Québec, 16% of them in Montréal. Between 2014 and 2015, this sector increased by 36.7%.<sup>5</sup> The year 2015 was also an exceptional one for the use of Hydro-Québec’s electric circuit: in one year, the number of monthly charges rose from 2,600 to 6,300.<sup>6</sup> The Ville de Montréal’s Parking Policy has to take this growing need into account. The Board of Trade is encouraged to see that the municipality has set an ambitious objective of providing 1,000 electric charging stations for street parking in Montréal by 2020.

Electric charging stations should also be part of any major construction or renovation of underground or multi-level parking.

**Recommendation no. 11: Implement the plan to provide 1,000 electric charging stations on the street by 2020 and include charging stations in underground and multi-level off-street parking.**

- **Create multi-level parking as required**

Real estate development downtown is experiencing a boom the likes of which Montréal has not seen in 50 years, since the first skyscrapers were built in the 1960s.

The recent opening of the Deloitte Tower and the ongoing construction of two QoS towers and the Maison Manuvie will break a 22-year streak during which no new major office towers were built in downtown Montréal. Cadillac Fairview also wants to build two office towers in the next 15 years.

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<sup>5</sup> AVEQ, “Statistiques SAAQ-AVEQ sur l’électromobilité au Québec en date du 31 décembre 2015:” <http://www.aveq.ca/actualiteacutes/statistiques-saaq-aveq-sur-lelectromobilite-au-quebec-en-date-du-31-decembre-2015-infographique>.

<sup>6</sup> Hydro-Québec, January 8, 2016 press release: <http://news.hydroquebec.com/en/press-releases/954/nearly-50-000-charges-carried-out-at-electric-circuit-charging-stations/>

From the point of view of parking, these office towers will be new destinations that will attract more commuters and occasional visitors to downtown. Their own indoor parking lots will not fully meet this demand.

Real estate development downtown also attracts thousands of new residents, and many condominium projects are currently under construction. The following table shows the main condominium projects with over 100 units that are on the market downtown.

**Table 4 – Projects with over 100 units on the market downtown**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Number of units</b>	<b>Area</b>
<b>Le Drummond</b>	400	Business district
<b>Le 1248 condos urbains</b>	143	Quartier des spectacles
<b>YUL</b>	800	South of the business district
<b>Le Métropole</b>	199	Quartier des spectacles
<b>Le Peterson</b>	250	Quartier des spectacles
<b>Douze05 Mackay</b>	129	South of the business district
<b>Roccabella</b>	600	Business district
<b>Tours des Canadiens</b>	800	Business district
<b>Icône</b>	360	Business district
<b>Muse</b>	160	North of the business district
<b>L'Avenue</b>	300	Business district
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4141</b>	

Source: "Comparez tous les projets de condominiums neufs à vendre au centre-ville, île de Montréal," *Guidehabitation.ca* (February 24, 2016)

This real estate development is positive for the city. Aside from the fact that these towers represent major private investments, they are often built where off-street, outdoor parking lots used to be. This sort of parking lot has a place in outlying neighbourhoods, but it is a less natural fit for a city centre that aspires to be a higher-density area. These sorts of real estate projects will substantially improve the urban fabric of downtown.

However, development projects put additional pressure on parking in an already saturated business district. While the optimization measures suggested will improve the situation, according to current and planned development, it will not be enough to maintain or increase the competitiveness of downtown.

One only needs to understand the change that occurs when a residential tower is built where a public outdoor parking lot used to be: the parking space is now reserved for new residents, reducing availability for commuters and, to a lesser extent, occasional visitors.

While nearby businesses can benefit from the influx of new residents, the same cannot be said for destination businesses that need accessible parking for their customers who live further afield. And yet destination businesses are part of the commercial offer of any downtown worthy of the name.

Likewise, a shortage of parking for commuters could make downtown less attractive as a work destination and encourage the relocation of some jobs. It is important that the Ville de Montréal's new Parking Policy follow suit with office tower developers whose investments demonstrate their confidence in the future of downtown.

Given the context, we believe that new public parking spaces may need to be added in the coming years. This additional space can be developed from the perspective of increasing the density of downtown by building multi-level parking lots at strategic locations.

There are relatively few parking structures in Montréal. Obviously, there are those at the airport and Central Station, which meet the needs of travellers. There is also one at Université de Montréal, on Jean-Brillant St. Downtown, the Autoparc Stanley has three indoor levels and provides outdoor parking on the roof.

Building parking structures downtown may raise concerns about aesthetics. But there are international examples that show that parking structures can be aesthetically pleasing and blend in with the urban fabric. Two in particular illustrate this point: a multi-level parking lot in Santa Monica, California and one in Sheffield, U.K.



We are confident that there are plenty of internationally renowned Montréal designers who could tackle the challenge of designing parking structures that would add visual interest to downtown's urban fabric.

Finally, two areas of downtown are particularly in need of more parking space. The first is the Sud-Est, where off-street parking is 97% occupied. A multi-level parking structure could be built on the land of an existing outdoor parking lot to increase the capacity in the area. In the heart of the business district, the block of Peel/De Maisonneuve/René-Lévesque/Robert-Bourassa is also saturated. Paid street parking has an occupancy rate of 99% between noon and 3 p.m. on weekdays.

The area around Phillips Square also has a lot of traffic. A potential agreement with Canderel to build a multi-level parking structure adjacent to Phillips Square<sup>7</sup> is a promising solution for relieving congestion in the area.

**Recommendation no. 12: Build aesthetically pleasing multi-level parking structures at strategic locations to relieve traffic in the busiest parts of the city.**

## Conclusion

We support the Ville de Montréal's general approach in its draft Parking Policy. We believe that deliberations are already well under way and that we are headed in the right direction. We particularly support the intention to harmonize parking practices and regulations throughout the boroughs and cities connected to the agglomeration of Montréal.

We hope that our brief has effectively conveyed the business community's primary concerns about the parking situation in Montréal, particularly downtown. We wanted to help find concrete solutions to optimize the use of the existing parking space in Montréal. We believe that we have to remain open to the idea of adding parking lots in strategic locations, as dictated by demand.

We are convinced that a partnership between the Ville de Montréal and the owners of private parking lots is the best way to achieve our parking objectives. The business community is prepared to do its part.

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<sup>7</sup> "Square Phillips: un stationnement étagé plutôt qu'une tour à bureau," *La Presse*, February 23, 2016: <http://affaires.lapresse.ca/economie/immobilier/201602/23/01-4953587-square-phillips-un-stationnement-etage-plutot-quune-tour-de-bureaux.php>.

## **Summary of Recommendations**

Recommendation no. 1: Harness the expertise Stationnement de Montréal has acquired over the past 22 years to better develop the new governance model.

Recommendation no. 2: Repatriate responsibility for parking regulations to the central city to make them more consistent throughout the agglomeration.

Recommendation no. 3: Simplify parking signage and make it easier to understand.

Recommendation no. 4: Make information technologies central to the next Parking Policy.

Recommendation no. 5: Inform drivers in real time of locations and rates of available parking.

Recommendation no. 6: Integrate the street and off-street parking offer in the next parking policy, including in the dissemination of information to drivers.

Recommendation no. 7: Establish partnerships with owners of private parking lots rather than imposing a surtax.

Recommendation no. 8: Reduce parking rates on certain commercial arteries.

Recommendation no. 9: Develop an algorithm to modulate prices for participating parking spots in real time.

Recommendation no. 10: Foster innovative initiatives, such as shared parking and parking "Airbnbs."

Recommendation no. 11: Implement the plan to provide 1,000 electric charging stations on the street by 2020 and include charging stations in underground and multi-level off-street parking.

Recommendation no. 12: Build aesthetically pleasing multi-level parking structures at strategic locations to relieve traffic in the busiest parts of the city.