

Faubourgs area (South of sector), Montreal

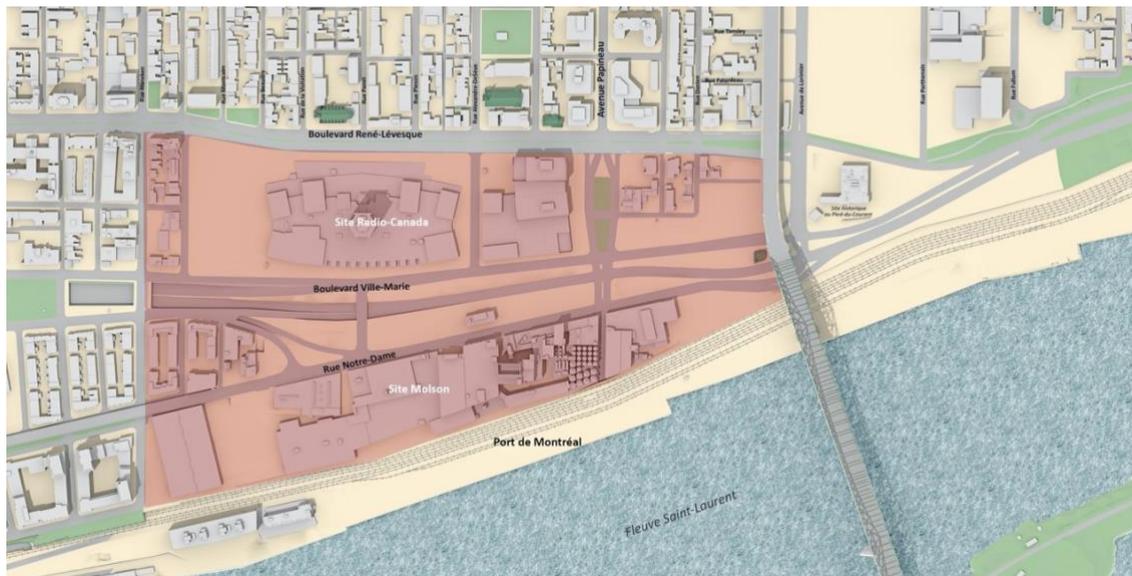
Ville-Marie arrondissement

The Faubourgs area is located east of downtown Montreal, close to the business district. Its rich history and complex identity stretch back to the city's industrial boom in the 19th century. The southern part of this area bears the marks of the major urban redevelopment and highway construction that took place between 1950 and 1980, and led to the demolition of large swathes of the old neighbourhoods previously found there.

The City of Montreal now wishes to seize a unique opportunity to redevelop this area, following the closure of the Molson-Coors Brewery -one of Canada's oldest industries- and the relocation of Maison de Radio-Canada, and to correct major disruption left by previous urban development projects. With this in mind, the City of Montreal has undertaken a major

planning exercise, with the aim of re-establishing links between this neighbourhood and the river, Old Montreal and the eastern part of downtown. The vision for this redevelopment programme, which is based on a public consultation process, focuses on three main objectives: 1/ Perpetuating the neighbourhood's heritage and social and architectural identity; 2/ Land consolidation; 3/ Fostering a pleasant, sustainable and environmentally-friendly living environment.

In short, the objective is to make the most of the structure of the historic Faubourgs neighbourhoods, to develop a model project for the eco-friendly transition of these industrial and institutional wastelands. The project will aim to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and inspire an environmentally-friendly lifestyle.



Approx. site area:

The site covers a total of approximately 20 hectares, including Molson-Coors Brewery (12 ha) and Radio-Canada Island (7 ha).

Background:

Areas undergoing redevelopment, including several large institutional and industrial properties that are vacant or whose occupants are to relocate.

Priority areas & main City expectations:

The aim of redevelopment in this area is to create a pleasant, sustainable and environmentally-friendly living environment. This will include:

- creating a mixed-use development project, including new employment and housing centres on the vacant lots of Molson-Coors Brewery and Maison de Radio-Canada;
- redesigning the urban layout in relation to the banks of the Saint Lawrence River;
- sustainable development of streets and public spaces, with a park on the site of the former Sohmer Park.

Presentation of the site

Boundary of the redevelopment site

Located in the arrondissement of Ville-Marie, the proposed redevelopment site is bordered by rue Atateken to the west, the St Lawrence river to the south, Jacques Cartier bridge to the east and René-Lévesque boulevard to the north.



History and background

In the late 18th century, John Molson established his first brewery on the outskirts of Faubourg Quebec, a village nucleus built on the outer edge of Old Montreal's fortifications. In 1801, the demolition of the fortifications allowed the development of new public spaces, providing the structure for urban expansion. The arrival of railway infrastructure in the late 19th century led to the disappearance of the urban fabric along the river in favour of industrial activities. The natural shoreline was then gradually replaced by wharves and railways that isolated the residential development from the river. In the post-war years, the neighbourhood's original urban core underwent one of the largest urban renewal operations in Montreal. First, a large trench was created to widen René-Lévesque boulevard. Then, 19 blocks were demolished to accommodate the new home of Radio-Canada. This was then followed by the eastward expansion of Molson brewery. More recently, the construction of the Ville-Marie expressway which further separates the Centre-Sud neighbourhood, Old Montreal and the river.

Specific redevelopment sites

The current redevelopment efforts specifically focus on two plots which are divided by the Ville-Marie expressway.

Molson-Coors brewery

Founded in 1786, Molson brewery is the oldest brewery in North America. Considering its longevity and its contribution to the urban landscape, Molson brewery is arguably the most significant example of Montreal's industrial heritage. Its emblematic presence in the foreground of the city-centre panorama, on the banks of the St Lawrence river, makes it a major landmark marking the city entrance. The cessation of business on the site now presents an opportunity to reconfigure the road network to improve accessibility to the St Lawrence river and to reduce the heat islands caused by parking areas. The recommended approach for the redevelopment of the Molson-Coors site is to enhance the site's historic and heritage appeal by rebuilding public spaces and converting Îlot des Voltigeurs, namely the portion considered to be the founding site of the brewery.



Îlot des Voltigeurs – founding site of Molson brewery



View of Jacques Cartier bridge – Molson-Coors and Radio-Canada sites

Radio-Canada site

In the 1950s, Radio-Canada's production and office space was distributed over several locations. At that time, the creation of a "city of soundwaves" was proposed in the east of the city centre. The project sponsors wanted to develop the French-speaking part of the city to counterbalance the more English-speaking west. However, the establishment of Radio-Canada near Jacques Cartier Bridge involved demolishing a central part of the former Faubourg Quebec – a neighbourhood that was almost three hundred years old. Today, the opening of the new Maison de Radio-Canada in the eastern portion of the block is helping to revitalise the previous living environment, through the construction of housing, commercial premises, community facilities and parks.



Radio-Canada

The city's environmental and climate priorities

Across the world, major cities are taking note of the climate crisis and implementing different strategies to transform themselves, to ensure the well-being of their citizens and take practical steps to preserve the environment. The City of Montreal is part of this global movement and has already made significant commitments to achieve this. The Montréal agglomeration first adopted a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (2013–2020), then a Climate Change Adaptation Plan (2015–2020), illustrating the six climate hazards to which the agglomeration is vulnerable or will be vulnerable in the future: rising average temperatures, heavy rainfall, heat waves, destructive storms, droughts and floods. Finally, the City of Montreal has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 (Paris Climate Summit) and by at least 55% below 1990 levels by 2030 (Climate Action Summit 2019 - United Nations).

The redevelopment of the Faubourgs area is a perfect opportunity to act on the various factors that could improve Montreal's climate record: mobility, urban planning, development and built environment. Five challenges related to these factors should be considered in the redevelopment of the southern part of the Faubourgs area.

- This site comprises a huge heat island in the immediate vicinity of the city centre, which it is essential to correct.

- Despite the proximity of the river, access to it is completely restricted because of the significant barrier created by the Molson-Coors brewery buildings and the east-west expressways (Ville-Marie expressway and René-Lévesque boulevard).
- The target of becoming carbon-neutral by 2050 is a priority for the City of Montreal. To achieve these greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets, renovation and new development projects will need to confirm that operational Zero Carbon has been achieved and will also have to choose materials that confirm a significant reduction of intrinsic GHGs through life cycle analyses.
- It is necessary to correct the food desert that this area represents in its current form. This is an essential requirement for promoting active, sustainable travel and for creating a real living environment.
- The redevelopment of this area also offers the opportunity to plan for more resilient infrastructure. The city wishes to include multi-network galleries that can be visited, and to implement a heat-sharing system powered by recovered or renewable energy sources as far as possible.

In fact, why not turn the Faubourgs site into an eco-neighbourhood?

Other city priorities and expectations for the site's redevelopment

The general planning aims for the redevelopment of the southern part of the Faubourgs area are to create a mixed living environment that would open up the existing neighbourhoods – Centre-Sud, Faubourg Québec – on to the river. Although these aims must take into consideration the presence of the Port of Montreal and its yard, the proximity of the Old Port and its topography mean that visual and physical links with the river can be envisaged. In addition, the creation of a river-oriented street layout and new green spaces will enhance the neighbourhood's heritage, as well as views of interest towards the river or Jacques Cartier bridge.

To achieve this vision, several sites have been identified which present a specific opportunity.

The Molson and De la Gauchetière employment hubs

In addition to changing part of the Molson site to residential use, the city would like to keep significant economic activity on site. Among other things, Molson brewery should continue some of its activities (administration and museum). The city has also identified a space on the Molson site for use as an economic hub. A model will be developed to enable a sustainable supply of affordable premises. In addition, the route of rue de la Commune and rue Notre-Dame, which faces the river and the former Sohmer park, would be an ideal site for terraces, while a grocery store could be opened in the western part to serve the population of Faubourg Quebec.

On the other side of the Ville-Marie expressway, the former Radio-Canada tower offers an opportunity to host, under its new image, a diversity of use models for office and retail space, as well as housing. One of the site's unique features is the presence of several underground floors over a vast area. The opportunity to occupy the basement with appropriate services that do not compete with the above-ground activities could be identified.

Rue de la Commune linear walk

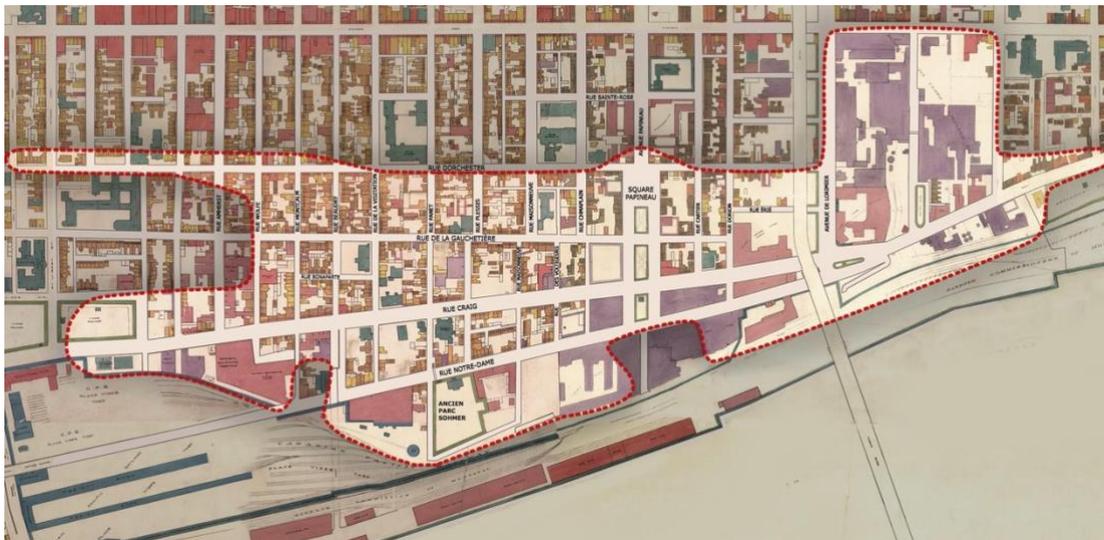
To offer a panoramic view of the river, the islands and Jacques Cartier bridge, a linear walk could form part of the extension of rue de la Commune.

Sohmer park

The redevelopment of the Molson site provides an opportunity to recreate a park on roughly the same site as the former Sohmer park. This park, which opened in 1889, was the city's first leisure and entertainment park. It had a terrace overlooking Saint Helen's Island and hosted many concerts and gatherings. It closed following a fire in 1919, and the land was sold to the city, which sold it in 1967 for the expansion of Molson brewery. The restoration of Sohmer park would once again offer a view over the St Lawrence river for residents of the Faubourgs area.

Beaudry tunnel

In the late 19th century, with the arrival of the railway in the port, it was necessary to create a link to connect the port to the rest of the district. Thanks to the topography, a tunnel was built in 1895, along the route of rue Beaudry, between rue Craig and rue du Port. The tunnel was permanently closed in the 1970s. Although the general condition of the structure is now considered critical, it is recommended that unbuilt pedestrian crossings be maintained along the route of the neighbourhood's old streets. The tunnel is located along the route of the former rue Beaudry. This above-ground no-construction zone means part of the structure could be conserved, especially through the inventive occupation of the space.



Neighbourhood which disappeared between the 1960s and 1980s (1949 map)

Specific principal rules related to city planning and others

The redevelopment site for the call for proposals forms part of the Faubourgs *Programme Particulier d'Urbanisme* (Special Urban Planning Programme, PPU) project, which is expected to be adopted in 2021. The Faubourgs PPU proposes a new vision for the development of the area, as well as a framework for revising zoning and construction regulations. As an indication, some of the main intentions of the Faubourgs PPU are identified below.

Reconnecting the street layout

The redevelopment of these two major sites should make it possible to reconnect the area to surrounding neighbourhoods by taking inspiration from the former street layout, which is no longer in use, thus recreating blocks at pedestrian level.

Maximum density and height

The city plans to allow a medium-density development across almost all of the Molson-Coors brewery and Maison de Radio-Canada sites. To this end, a soil occupancy coefficient (SOC) of 6, and height limits ranging from 45 to 65 metres, are envisaged. It could also be possible to increase building height limits to 80m on a small part of the land along the Ville-Marie expressway, if it is converted back into an urban boulevard.

Protected views

To conserve important views on the river or local attractions, certain views will be protected under the Faubourgs PPU. In the redevelopment area, these views will include the Radio-Canada tower on the

rue Panet route, the church of St. Peter the Apostle and the St Lawrence river from rue Atateken and rue Dorion.

Revitalisation of commercial streets

Planning regulations must establish that commercial premises located on or below the ground floor must have a main entrance which is directly accessible from the street.

Greening, rainwater management and energy efficiency

The Faubourgs PPU aims to incorporate standards for greening and permeable coating on outdoor courtyards into planning regulations, with the aim of ensuring plant growth and resilience. The city also wants to develop energy efficiency requirements for new buildings.

Language requirements

Proposals must be submitted in French. It is possible to file an English version in addition to the French version of the documents. In this case, the French version will prevail in the event of a conflict of interpretation.