

ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE CITIZENS' COMMITTEE OF MILTON PARC

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



COMITÉ CITOYEN /MILTON PARC
MILTON-PARK /CITIZEN COMMITTEE

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MISSION

The MPCC is a membership-based, not-for-profit and non-partisan organization, made up of members who aim to encourage and contribute to the creation of participatory democracy and collective autonomy. The Milton Parc neighbourhood is bounded by Sherbrooke Street, University Street, Avenue des Pins and Saint-Laurent Boulevard.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors is made up of the following members, all of whom are local residents of the neighbourhood. Together, they represent a combined history of 220 years of community activism and civic engagement.

Dimitrios Roussopoulos

(President, member of Coop Milton Parc)

Nathan McDonnell

(Vice-president)

Terrence Regan

(former executive director of the ARMP, member of Coop Rue des Artistes)

Oliva Torres

(member of Coop du Chez Soi)

Pascal Huynh

(Treasurer)

Dimitri Ohandjanian

(co-coordinator of the mutual aid committee)

Wayne Wood

(active on the issue of homelessness, member of the Coop Tour des Alentours)

Adam Gwiazda-Amsel

(active on the issue of homelessness, former vice- SSMU External President)

Ayo Ogunremi

(Observer, SSMU External VP)

TEAM

In 2020 we had several interns:

- Adam Amsel (Canada Summer Jobs)
- Aidan Gilchrist-Blackwood (Canada Summer Jobs)
- Bless Dejillo (Concordia Coop Institute)
- Tristan Surman (My Media Creative)

In 2019 we had the following interns:

- Isabelle Sawyer (Emploi Quebec)
- Assia Malinova (Canada Summer Jobs)
- Dominique Leblanc (Canada Summer Jobs)

We also have a team of several dozen volunteers who contribute to all our different projects! The CCMP has 280 local citizens living in the neighbourhood who support its activities. Around 50 people volunteer at least 2-3 hours of their time per month, and at least 20 volunteer less than 10 hours per month. If all these people were paid \$15 per hour for their involvement, that would equate to \$63,000 in salary per year!



OUR MAIN PROJECTS:

HOTEL DIEU HOSPITAL

Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Hôtel Dieu Hospital is the second oldest hospital in North America (after the Mexico City Hospital) and an important institution for many Montrealers.

Dismantled when health services were moved to the CHUM super-hospital, the community has been arguing for a decade that it should not be privatized. Instead, we believe that the site can be used to provide essential social services such as health care, cooperative housing for families, social non-profit housing, and spaces for community services, art, culture and urban agriculture.



To this end, we are part of the Communauté Saint-Urbain, a coalition of several community organizations based in Montreal (and especially in the Plateau). The Communauté Saint-Urbain argues that the redesign of the site should be based on the following core principles:

- A design concept which highlights the exceptional heritage of the Hôtel-Dieu site
- An inclusive, open, dynamic, and diverse community where people of all backgrounds can live together under the same roof
- An urban setting that positively contributes to individual and collective health
- A green living environment with lots of vegetation and a low ecological footprint
- An innovative model of consultation and development led by and for the community.

For more information, go to: <https://communaute-saint-urbain.org/>

The project has been paused this year due to COVID, but we continue to monitor the file.



THE ROYAL VIC COALITION FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

www.royalvic.org/

We have helped create a coalition of community groups from across Montreal to ensure that the former Royal Victoria Hospital serves the common good and is managed both democratically and ecologically.

<https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/dozens-demonstrate-outside-old-royal-victoria-asking-not-to-sell-iconic-montreal-site-to-developers-1.5093665?cache=ngyhfxv>

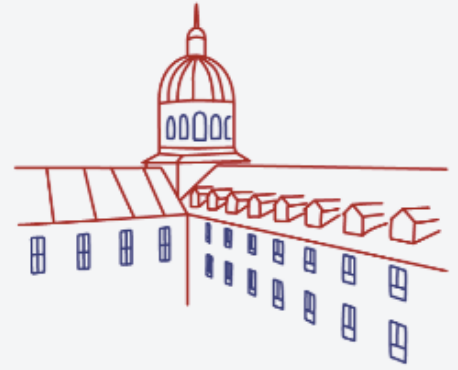
Dismantled in 2015, the Royal Victoria Hospital is about to be the subject of crucial decisions about its future use. The Société Québécoise des Infrastructures (SQI) is developing a strategic plan for the site. Their plan would grant half of the buildings on the site to McGill University, which proposes to use them to expand its campus.

We are fighting to ensure that this site is not privatized, like so many other decommissioned hospitals, government buildings, and churches have been. As with many other projects being considered in Greater Montreal, the eventual fate of the Royal Victoria must be decided with due consideration to real community needs. Future plans for the site must address the ravaging impacts of Montreal's gentrification crisis on low-income communities, people experiencing homelessness, and those who aspire to build a united community with enough space to accommodate services and activities.

To bring these goals to life, the entire property, both land and buildings, must remain in the public domain: either in the hands of the province of Quebec, the city of Montreal, or under community control (in the model of a community land trust, a non-profit organization or a cooperative). To this end, we organized the following events:

- **INFORMATION SESSION:** We organized a virtual consultation session with 40 members of our community, who insisted on the need for social housing, community spaces, health care, democratic enterprises and democratic and ecological planning. [Watch the video here.](#) (1h45)
- **MARCH:** On September 4, 2020, we organized a march of around 100 people from Milton Parc. We started at the Royal-Victoria Hospital and followed avenue des Pins, stopping in front of the Hôtel Dieu Hospital, the Chest Hospital and the Institut des Sourdes-Muettes. See the [report on CTV NEWS](#)
- **OPEN LETTER:** [We have an open letter](#), signed by over 55 community organizations, that we are publishing in the media. Now [published in the Journal de Montreal.](#)
- **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND FEASIBILITY STUDY:** We are working with QPIRG McGill's Community University Research Exchange (CURE) to conduct a community consultation and then a one-year feasibility study on the potential for community control of pavilions on the site. [See more information here.](#)

LA CITÉ DES HOSPITALIÈRES



In the summer of 2017, the City of Montreal acquired the property of the Religieuses Hospitallers de Saint-Joseph. It officially took possession of the site on May 1. We are actively participating in public consultations about the future of the site, guided by the five following principles:

1. The preservation of the spirit of the place
2. Respect for the values of the Religieuses and their spiritual mission
3. Protecting the site's natural and architectural heritage
4. Ensuring future uses of the site are consistent with its history
5. Openness to the community and responsiveness to its needs

The development plan for the Cité des Hospitalières envisions a transitional occupation of the premises, with a permanent vocation to be established starting in 2022. We are following this process with great interest and we insist that the site be used to serve the local community needs, particularly the need for a reading room and a community meeting room. We also hope that the site's exceptional gardens will soon become accessible to the public.

For more information on the public consultation and the transitional occupation procedures, see the Réalisons Montréal website:
<https://www.realisonsmtl.ca/citedeshospitalieres>





MUTUAL AID BETWEEN NEIGHBORS DURING COVID-19 (THE MUTUAL AID NETWORK)

The Milton Parc mutual aid network was created at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic to support our neighbors in need. These are people who help each other in a spirit of solidarity to ensure that everyone can meet their basic needs and to offer community support to break social isolation.



WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

Meal delivery Each week, we cook 35 meals that we deliver to our neighbours' doors every Sunday evening. We offer free personal protective equipment (PPE), including fabric masks and visors.

Pop Up Shop / Organic Food Bank: Free distribution of food and fabric masks

Montreal's most organic, fair trade and local food bank!

We organize a bi-weekly pop-up shop / food bank on Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Galeries du Parc community center (3590 Jeanne Mance). The next ones will take place on December 10 and 24, 2020. Organic vegetables are harvested from local farms by our volunteers. Non-perishable food comes from zero-waste stores like Frenco's and Nous Rire.

Subsidized organic vegetable baskets Bioloaux, Second Life and Lufa continue to provide local, organic vegetable baskets even during the winter! To help make sure everyone has access to fresh, local and organic vegetables, we subsidize 10% to 40% of the cost of a basket subscription from any of these three producers, on a sliding scale basis. Visit our [website](#) for more information.

Free Reusable Menstrual Products Save the planet and your money! We can provide you with free menstrual pads, tampons, panty liners, menstrual cups ("Diva cups") or reusable cotton pads. Please register with Tiffany (djswiggy22@gmail.com) or visit us at our bi-monthly food bank on Thursday from 5pm to 7pm.

Reading Group: Mutual Aid by Peter Kropotkin: Contact Assia if you wish to join us: assia_malinova@hotmail.com.

COMING SOON: Buyers' club to bulk-buy organic, non-perishable food at very low prices! Contact Assia: assia_malinova@hotmail.com

Future projects: We hope to organize collective kitchens, cooking and food conservation workshops, and soon a free clothing exchange for used children's clothing. We will need your help to make it all happen! Contact us to get involved ccmp.miltonparc@gmail.com.

HOMELESSNESS

For a more detailed portrait of the political situation of homelessness in Milton Parc and a summary of our advocacy over the past year, please see this [three page report](#) prepared by our board member Adam Amsel.

On the issue of homelessness, we have been strong advocates for adequate services to be provided for those in the homeless community; for long-term, systemic solutions to address the root causes of homelessness and colonialism; and for the accountability of political authorities and organizations in the area to the needs of the wider housed population.

We bring a grassroots citizen perspective and liaise with organizations like the Open Door, Plein Milieu, the CDC ASGP, the Montreal Indigenous Community NETWORK, and the police, civil servants, and the Plateau borough.

We are actively involved in providing direct aid like sleeping bags and winter jackets to people who need them, as well as collaborating with Solidarity Milton Parc and Meals for Milton Parc to organize volunteers for the weekly distribution of meals.

In the summer of last year, we organized a community picnic-discussion to talk about homelessness and cohabitation between housed and unhoused residents of Milton Parc, as well as other discussion and education events with other community organizations and politicians.

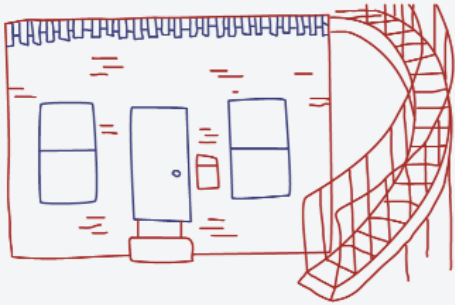
We also prepared a 40-page policy report on the issues of Indigenous homelessness and housing. In December, we will be presenting the report to politicians at a tripartite meeting between the Hon. Marc Miller, MP and federal Minister of Indigenous Services; the Hon. Steven Guilbeault, MP and federal Minister of Canadian Heritage; MNA Jennifer Maccarone; and mayor of the Plateau Luc Rabouin.

See the full report [here](#).



New Policy Report on
Homelessness
ccmp-mpcc.com

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY



CITIZEN ASSEMBLY: À NOUS LE PLATEAU

We participated in the creation of À nous le Plateau! Together, we want to build a new citizens' movement on the Plateau and develop collective solutions to the challenges we face.



ANLP organizes citizens' assemblies where the participants determine the agenda through open forum processes, in order to empower citizens to participate in democratic decision-making. The inspiration for these assemblies came from our first visit to Vermont in March of 2019, where we participated in a series of local town meetings. These meetings are held every year by many communities in this state: a direct democratic tradition with over 400 years of history!

In September 2019, just before the Canadian federal elections and the elections for mayor of the Plateau borough, we hosted a very inspiring one-day event attended by 250 people and 14 politicians from all levels of government. Ten discussion groups were formed around corresponding themes. See the conclusions from each discussion group that met at our 2019 assembly.

In 2020, our second citizens' assembly was held on August 28th, 29th, and 30th with online and in-person meetings. Citizens exchanged views in the 9 discussion groups they created, covering a wide variety of themes.

Participatory budget for the ecological transition of the Plateau-Mont-Royal:

À Nous le Plateau! is involved in the participatory budget process for the ecological transition organized by the Urban Ecology Centre of Montreal and by the Plateau Mont-Royal borough. In November, we organized an information session alongside these groups to give residents more information about the participatory budgeting process and collect ideas. This meeting was well-attended and generated many interesting project ideas!

Here is the preliminary analysis of the 94 proposed projects.



DEMOCRATIC ECONOMY

How do we build a democratic economy based on solidarity? How can we build community wealth and create jobs for each other? Can we have bossless businesses, run by workers and citizens instead?



In Milton Parc, there is so much potential for transformative change. We have 1,500 people living downtown in co-op and non-profit housing on a community land trust, with a combined value of \$200 million. How can we go beyond housing and democratize the economy as a whole? How can we use community commercial properties (via SDC Milton Parc, which manages them) to promote collective businesses?

We have organized many community consultations to transform a former neighborhood bar, the Bar des Pins, into a community-based economy space. It could be a community bistro, a café, a coworking space, a collective kitchen, a performance space, a community center...the possibilities are limitless! See the results of a preliminary survey of 100 people on the potential uses of the bar here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2hpzt55>.

No matter its eventual use, we are fighting to make sure that the new project is managed in a democratic and cooperative manner that directly involves workers, consumers, and the community at large.



ECOLOGY

To solve the recurring problem of massive waste accumulation during the student move-out period in the neighborhood, we worked with the Student Association of McGill University to develop Trash2Treasure, a carbon neutral collection service for students and residents of the Milton Parc neighbourhood.

We also campaigned to convert the zoning of two community green spaces (Lucia Kowaluk Park and Notman Gardens). We succeeded! Now they are both officially public parks.



LUCIA KOWALUK PARK

We saved a park and renamed it in honour of our late community leader, Lucia Kowaluk.

For many decades, Parc Léo-Pariseau (at the southwest corner of Parc / des Pins) was zoned for housing and the motorway (former Parc-des Pins interchange). In the early 2000s, politicians attempted to sell it for high-rise buildings, which caused an uproar in the community. These plans were quickly canceled.

In 2019, the Milton Parc Citizens Committee decided to take action to save the park from development once and for all. We therefore launched a petition asking to change the zoning of the green space so that it officially becomes a public park. More than 1,100 citizens signed the petition, which was submitted to the Plateau Borough Council in early Fall 2019. In early 2020, the Borough Council proceeded to change the zoning of the green space into a public park and on September 21, 2020, the United Nations World Day of Peace, the City officially underlined this symbolic gesture by organizing an inauguration ceremony for the new Lucia-Kowaluk Park.

Oak trees will be planted at the edge of the park and an agora has been proposed to facilitate gatherings of residents. The citizens of Milton Parc are invited to submit other ideas to the Milton Parc Citizens' Committee as part of an upcoming public call for projects.



EARTH DAY

For the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, we celebrated the Earth and the Community ... online! Our event featured song and prayer from Mi'kmaq artist Ivy Valerie Hamelin, as well as dance, piano, the People's Choir, Norman Nawrocki's performances, rap, and Middle Eastern storytelling.

THE MILTON PARC ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (CEMP)

The Milton Parc Environment Committee (CEMP) is a local network freely organized by citizens concerned about environmental issues and the climate crisis. The committee seeks to put in place different means to address these issues within the community.

The CEMP brings together members of Milton Parc housing cooperatives, as well as other local residents, NGOs, workers, and students in order to share information, ideas and practices related to the environment.

Our mandate is to identify and implement solutions that mitigate environmental impacts linked to human activities at the local level, strengthen our community, and contribute to the health and well-being of the neighborhood and the individuals who live here.

Some of our current projects:

- Developing a community garden
- Greening Milton Parc and transforming its concrete spaces by planting trees and other plants
- Installing green roofs
- Seeking government funding to make local homes more energy efficient
- Publishing and distributing information pamphlets

The committee meets regularly, online or in person, and is open to anyone interested in environmental issues who wishes to take action in their neighborhood. For more information or to join the committee, contact Norman Nawrocki: nawrocki@primus.ca



TRASH 2 TREASURE

Trash 2 Treasure is a carbon-neutral collection service for students and residents of the Milton Parc neighbourhood who wish to donate their reusable household items such as furniture, clothing, and electronic devices. The initiative began in April 2018 as a pilot project aiming to recover reusable objects that would otherwise have been sent to the landfill. Trash 2 Treasure's goal is to solve the recurring problem of waste that is generated when students move away from the neighbourhood at the end of the school year, often leaving their unwanted furniture and other belongings in the street.

To give new life to the items we collect, the Student Association of McGill University (SSMU) has developed a collection program where recovered goods are sent to charities like Renaissance and the Bienvenue Collective (which provides furniture to asylum seekers in Montreal). Unusable items are sent for recycling by Matt Canada or to local Eco-centers.

<https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1388046&jwsourc=cl>



PARTICIPATION

OUR MEMBERS



The CCMP has 180 local citizens among its members, of whom 50 get involved at least 2-3 hours per month, and 20 get involved at least 10 hours per month. If all these people were paid \$ 15 per hour for their involvement, that would be equivalent to \$ 63,000 in salary per year!

We regularly organize events with a total participation of around 700 people per year. At our annual general meeting, we usually have between 60 and 100 people. In 2019, 65 people attended our Annual General Meeting. Due to the pandemic, our 2020 AGM was held on November 26, not in March as usual.



ACCESSIBILITY

We do not currently have a permanent location, but we are working on obtaining office space at 3516 Parc in the near future. Between all of our different projects, we offer programming almost every day of the week. We are currently reachable at any time by phone and email, and we hold monthly board meetings which are open to all of our members. Thanks to the talented team at My Media Creative, we have developed a great new website. Check out the site here!



OUR PARTNERSHIPS

The CCMP has many partnerships. We are a member of the CDC Action Solidarité Grand Plateau, and we also maintain close collaborative relationships with other local organizations such as: the Milton Parc Community, the Recreational Association of Milton Parc (ARMP), the Yellow Door, Solidarité Milton Parc, the Montreal Urban Ecology Center, the Table de Quartier Peter McGill, the McGill University Student Society (SSMU), and many others. We are co-founders of important community coalitions: the Communauté Saint Urbain (for the future of the Hôtel-Dieu hospital), the Royal Vic Coalition for the public good, À Nous les Quartiers and À Nous le Plateau.

NOTES



A series of horizontal grey lines for writing notes.

MERCI THANK YOU!



WWW.CCMP-MPCC.COM/



COMITÉ DES CITOYEN(NE)S
MILTON PARC
CITIZENS' COMMITTEE