

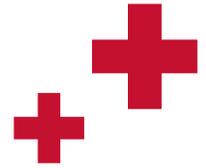


# SOUTHEAST PROJECT PARTICIPATORY PROCESS

## SUMMARY REPORT

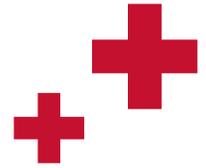


OCTOBER 5, 2016



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. OVERVIEW</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH</b>	<b>1</b>
2.1. PURPOSE	1
2.2. SUMMARY	2
<b>3. WORKSHOP</b>	<b>2</b>
3.1. PURPOSE	2
3.2. COMMUNICATIONS	2
3.3. SUMMARY	2
<b>4. TASK FORCE</b>	<b>3</b>
4.1. PURPOSE	3
4.2. SUMMARY	3
<b>5. PUBLIC MEETING</b>	<b>4</b>
5.1. PURPOSE	4
5.2. COMMUNICATIONS	4
5.3. SUMMARY	5
<b>6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>APPENDIX A: UPDATE ON THE SOUTHEAST PROJECT AND FIRST INVITATION TO THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: SECOND INVITATION TO THE WORKSHOP</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>APPENDIX C: MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>APPENDIX D: INVITATION TO THE PUBLIC MEETING</b>	<b>9</b>



## 1. OVERVIEW

The Westmount City Council has made the revitalisation of the Southeast Sector a priority. The City intends to revitalize the area, with a focus on the sector located between Sainte-Catherine Street and Dorchester Boulevard. The objectives guiding the redevelopment process are:

- + Re-connect the Southeast Sector with the urban fabric of the City;
- + Create a link between the homes south of Dorchester and Sainte-Catherine street;
- + Stimulate commercial activity through the re-design of Sainte-Catherine street;
- + Incorporate sustainability and promote walkability into the new design.

The City has sought input from the local community through a stakeholder engagement process (see Figure 1). This report summarizes the main steps of the participatory process as well as the main outcomes.

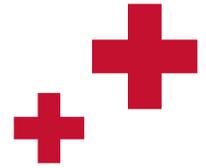


Figure 1 : Stakeholder engagement process

## 2. INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH

### 2.1. PURPOSE

The goal of the interviews and preliminary research was to **validate the process, help identify key players, and highlight outstanding issues.**



## 2.2. SUMMARY

**Seven (7) local stakeholders** identified by the City of Westmount **were interviewed** by Acertys<sup>1</sup>, the City's public engagement consultant, in December 2015. One of the interviewees was an institutional stakeholder (Atwater Library), and the remainder were long-term residents of the area located south of Dorchester Boulevard. The following points were identified as the **main issues** with the area:

- + Pedestrian safety
- + Nuisances (noise and vibrations from car and train traffic)
- + Aesthetics of the area north of Dorchester
- + Commercial life on Sainte-Catherine Street
- + Social issues (homelessness, public use of drug and alcohol)

A review of media articles and the results from the City's 2014 online survey on the future of the Southeast sector **revealed similar issues**, as well as some concerns over the density of future development in the area. However, since survey responses were not limited by IP address or email address, individuals could make multiple comments.

## 3. WORKSHOP

### 3.1. PURPOSE

The workshop aimed to **bring issues, similar views, and development options to light among local stakeholders.**

### 3.2. COMMUNICATIONS

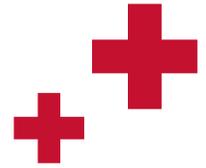
The residents of the Southeast sector received two invitations (see Appendices A and B) by mail on November 20, 2015 and January 16, 2016, and emails were sent to stakeholders. An invitation was also posted on the City's website and on the City's Facebook page. On February 8, 2016, a summary of the workshop ([http://westmount.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Southeast-Project\\_Workshop\\_v05.pdf](http://westmount.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Southeast-Project_Workshop_v05.pdf)) was sent to local stakeholders (workshop participants, interviewees and other stakeholders identified by the City) by email, and it was posted on the City's website and Facebook page.

### 3.3. SUMMARY

More than **40 Westmount residents** attended the workshop, which took place on the evening of January 19, 2016 in Centre Greene, a local community centre. Most of the workshop participants lived south of Dorchester Boulevard. A few shop owners from Greene Avenue were also in attendance.

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<sup>1</sup> Acertys relations citoyennes was acquired by Hill+Knowlton Stratégies in January 2016.



Representatives from the City, Provencher-Roy (the City's urban planning consultant) and Acertys gave a **presentation on the objectives of the Southeast Project, the planning context and the participatory process.**

Participants were split up in small groups of up to eight (8) individuals and they were asked to indicate on a map of the area what they saw as the **main strengths and weaknesses** of the area. They then shared **ideas for the City to consider** in their planning process for the Southeast Sector.

The main strengths of the area were identified as the **quality of life**, the **character**, the **greenery**, and the **accessibility** (walkability to shops and services, and access to public transportation and major roadways).

Some of the challenges that were highlighted were: issues related to **car traffic** (pedestrian safety in alleyways, crossing Dorchester, as well as noise generated by motor vehicles), the **visual environment on Tupper and north of Dorchester** (facing the back of buildings, large parking lots), the **vacant commercial buildings** on Sainte-Catherine, as well as **social issues** (homelessness, public use of drugs and alcohol).

Most of the ideas that were mentioned by the participants belong to the following categories:

- + Introduce more greenery in the area
- + Make the area more amenable to active transportation
- + Slow down car traffic
- + Enhance the public realm in keeping with the character of the area

**Some questions remained** regarding the **type of development** that should take place (mixed-use vs. only residential). Moreover, there was no clear agreement as to whether the **median on Dorchester** should be left in place or not.

Those who were interested in being involved in the next steps of the participatory process were asked to stay at the end of the workshop. **Seven (7) participants volunteered to be part of a Task Force** (see Appendix C) to help define the project parameters and provide feedback on the options presented by the City.

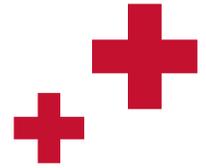
## 4. TASK FORCE

### 4.1. PURPOSE

The objectives of the Task Force were to **help define the project parameters** and to **provide feedback on potential concepts.**

### 4.2. SUMMARY

**Three meetings** were held between the Task Force and representatives from the City of Westmount, Acertys and Provencher-Roy. As shown in Figure 2, the preliminary concept was developed following an **iterative process with feedback loops.** After defining the project parameters with the City, the Task Force reviewed the design alternatives



and the preliminary concept that was developed by the City's design team. The preliminary concept was further refined in order to be presented by the City at the Public meeting.

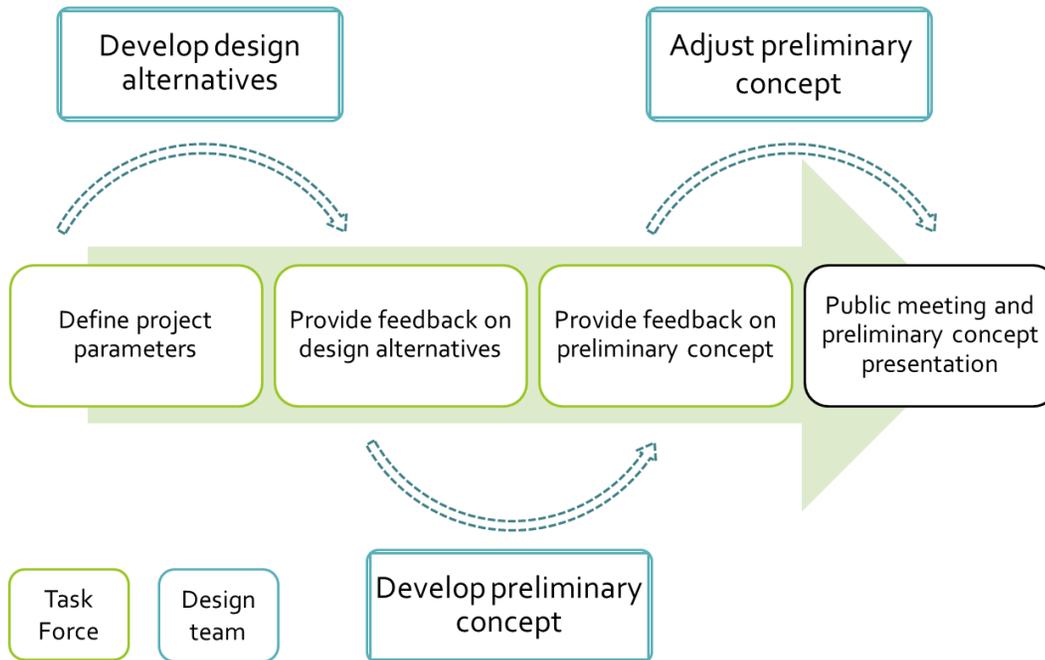


Figure 2: Preliminary concept development process

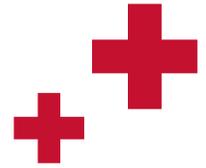
## 5. PUBLIC MEETING

### 5.1. PURPOSE

The Public meeting was an occasion for the City of Westmount to **present the preliminary concept to the public** and to **gather feedback** on the concept.

### 5.2. COMMUNICATIONS

The residents of the Southeast sector received an invitation (see Appendix D) by mail on May 30, 2016, and emails were sent to stakeholders. It was also posted on the City's website and Facebook page. On July 21, 2016, a summary of the Public meeting ([http://westmount.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Southeast-Project\\_Public-Meeting.pdf](http://westmount.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Southeast-Project_Public-Meeting.pdf)) was sent to stakeholders via email, and it was posted on the City's website and Facebook page.



### 5.3. SUMMARY

More than **40 Westmount residents** attended the Public meeting. During this activity, the City of Westmount **presented the preliminary concept** as well as the next steps of the participatory process.

The vision that came out of this exercise was to “**Recreate a street configuration of local scale—a liveable, secure and green neighbourhood**”. The preliminary concept is articulated around four (4) key features:

1. The reconfiguration of Dorchester Boulevard (narrowing street width and median and improving street edge);
2. The strengthening of north-south links (adding pedestrian crossings and bike links, formalizing existing passageways, and strengthening the Gladstone link);
3. The development of the Tupper lots (adding residential housing of similar height to the houses south of Dorchester along the street and slightly higher buildings in the back to transition towards Sainte-Catherine, and allowing mixed uses on Tupper Street);
4. Sustainable design features (e.g. rain gardens, shared streets, permeable paving, etc.).

## 6. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

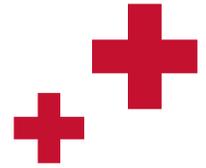
A few observations can be made at this point in the process. On the one hand, the Tupper lot redevelopment project and the proposed density level were well received by most stakeholders who were consulted. Most of them were also satisfied with the participatory process.

On the other hand, many residents expressed concerns over the nuisances (noise, dust, property damage) that could result from the construction work on the Tupper lots and on Dorchester Boulevard. Some of them also fear that the narrowing of Dorchester may result in a loss of green space in the area.

Representatives from interest groups have expressed concern over the impact of narrowing Dorchester on cyclist safety. On a similar note, the City of Westmount should check if the City of Montreal plans to build a bike path on René-Lévesque Boulevard east of Atwater Avenue, as some stakeholders suggested. If that was the case, it would be advisable for the City of Westmount to take it into account in the planning of the Southeast project.

Furthermore, some residents would like the commercial life on Greene Avenue and Sainte-Catherine Street, as well as the presence of institutional and office buildings (e.g. RCMP and Visa buildings) to be better taken into consideration in the planning process.

Over the next months, the City of Westmount will undertake a traffic study as well as a detailed infrastructure study in order to acquire all the information that is needed, and it will incorporate the feedback from the public meeting. Once the concept is finalized, it will be presented to the residents of the Southeast Sector.



# APPENDIX A: UPDATE ON THE SOUTHEAST PROJECT AND FIRST INVITATION TO THE WORKSHOP



November 20, 2015

Dear residents,

Since being elected in 2013 this Council has made the revitalisation of the Southeast Sector a priority.

The objectives guiding the redevelopment process are:

- Re-connect the South-East Sector with the urban fabric of the City;
- Create a link between the homes south of Dorchester and Sainte-Catherine street;
- Incorporate sustainability and promote walkability into the new design.

One year ago, I sought your initial input on what you thought should be the priorities for the redevelopment of the South-East Sector. Since that time the City has been analyzing some of the potential options and assessing their impacts on the infrastructure of the City. We are now ready to come back to the community and continue the next steps of the consultation process.

### YOUR PARTICIPATION

Within this process, a workshop will be taking place to bring issues, similar views, and development options to light among local stakeholders. The workshop will take place at Greene Centre on January 19, 2016 from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Please contact Jennifer Heaps to sign up to this event by emailing [southeast@westmount.org](mailto:southeast@westmount.org) or calling 514 989-5278 before January 13, 2016. A detailed agenda will be sent out to all participants at that time.

Following the workshop, a Task Force made up of engaged local stakeholders and City representatives will be set up to work on design recommendations. Those recommendations will be presented to the public in the spring of 2016.

More details about the project and the consultation process will be posted on the City's website in the coming weeks: [westmount.org/southeast](http://westmount.org/southeast). In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us for any questions about the consultation process.

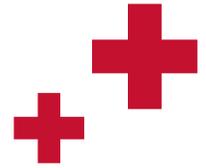
This is a unique opportunity to contribute directly to improving the quality of our built environment and ultimately our quality of life in Westmount. I hope that you will join me!



Sincerely,

Theodora Samiotis  
Urban Planning Commissioner





## APPENDIX B: SECOND INVITATION TO THE WORKSHOP



### REMINDER - INVITATION

Please join us for a community workshop organized by the City of Westmount in order to bring issues, similar views and development options to light regarding the revitalization of the Southeast Sector, as well as to set up the project Task Force. Please note that places on the Task Force are limited, and workshop attendees will be given precedence over other interested parties.

**Tuesday, January 19, 2016,  
from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**

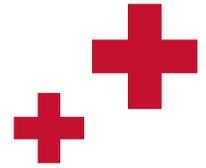
**Centre Greene,  
1090 Avenue Greene,  
Westmount, H3Z 1Z9  
(wheelchair accessible)**

**Refreshments will be served**

Please RSVP before January 13, 2016  
at [southeast@westmount.org](mailto:southeast@westmount.org)  
or by phone with Jennifer Heaps  
at **514 989-5278**

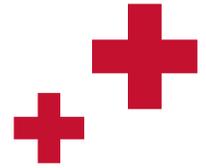
Visit our website at  
[westmount.org/southeast](http://westmount.org/southeast)  
for more information on  
the South-East Project.





## APPENDIX C: MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCE

- + Jocelyne Andrews, resident
- + George Bowser, resident
- + Patrice Corneau, resident
- + Yannick Duval, resident
- + Miguel Escobar, architect and resident
- + Kathleen Kez, resident
- + Sara Pedersen, resident



## APPENDIX D: INVITATION TO THE PUBLIC MEETING



May 30, 2016

Dear residents,

A few months ago, I reached out to you to invite you to a workshop on the South-East Sector as part of the City's goal to revitalize this area. On Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, over 40 Westmount residents gathered at Centre Greene to discuss what they like about the area as well as what they believe should be improved.

Participants interested in serving on a focus group were recruited to be part of a joint City/stakeholder Task Force. Between February and April, the Task Force met three times to help identify the project parameters and objectives and to provide feedback on the planning options that were generated by the City.

I would now like to invite you to a Public Meeting to present the preliminary concept as well as the next steps of the participatory process. The meeting will take place on **Tuesday June 14<sup>th</sup> at Centre Greene, 1090 Greene Avenue, from 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm.**

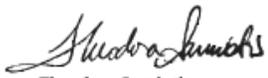
Please contact Gitta Dom to sign up to this event by emailing [southeast@westmount.org](mailto:southeast@westmount.org) or calling 514 989-5278 before June 10.

More details about the South-East Project can be found on the City's website: [westmount.org/southeast](http://westmount.org/southeast). In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact us at [southeast@westmount.org](mailto:southeast@westmount.org) for any questions about the consultation process.

I hope to see you on June 14<sup>th</sup>,



Sincerely,

  
Theodora Samiotis  
Urban Planning Commissioner



**Prepared by:**

Simon Chauvette

Consultant, Engagement Strategies

[simon.chauvette@hkstrategies.ca](mailto:simon.chauvette@hkstrategies.ca)