Localized Redevelopment, Borough-Wide Reach: A Transit Vision for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve

[redacted] Kourosh Moini

May 1, 2025

We would like to acknowledge that our working spaces and study site are located on unceded Indigenous lands. Hochelaga itself derives its name from the original Iroquois village that once stood on the island near our study site. The Kanien’kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we operate today. Tiohtià:ke, commonly known as Montréal, is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples representing a wide range of cultures, languages, and worldviews.

This vibrant urban environment is where we live, work, and share hopes for the future. We respect the ongoing connections to the past, present, and future in our relationships with Indigenous and other communities within Montréal. We recognize that colonialism has significantly shaped contemporary urban planning .

We would like to thank Dr. [redacted] and all the other instructors and mentors who guided us in the creation of this report.

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Context Indroduction

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, located in the eastern portion of the Island of Montreal, was historically developed as a suburban extension of the city and shaped by its proximity to the Port and prolonged industrial activity. Throughout North America, many cities faced deindustrialization, which deeply affected their local economies. Hochelaga-Maisonneuve shares a similar story of decline, as “the neighbourhood underwent major deindustrialization, both in terms of speed and scale. All these closures directly impacted the pride of the area’s residents.” In the decades that followed, “festive activities were two ways for the reconversion of the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve’s neighbourhood,” particularly around cultural anchors like the Olympic Stadium and the Botanical Garden, which were seen as potential catalysts for revitalization (Géronimi, 2006). This project focuses on a section of the neighbourhood characterized by extensive brownfield and industrial land, identified as the redevelopment zone within the broader study area (see Figure 1). These conditions present both significant challenges and unique opportunities for reimagining the area as a vibrant, mixed-use neighbourhood that reconnects with its community and urban fabric.



(**Figure 1** - *Hochelaga-Maisonneuve study area and redevelopment focus.*)

Background: History & Ecology

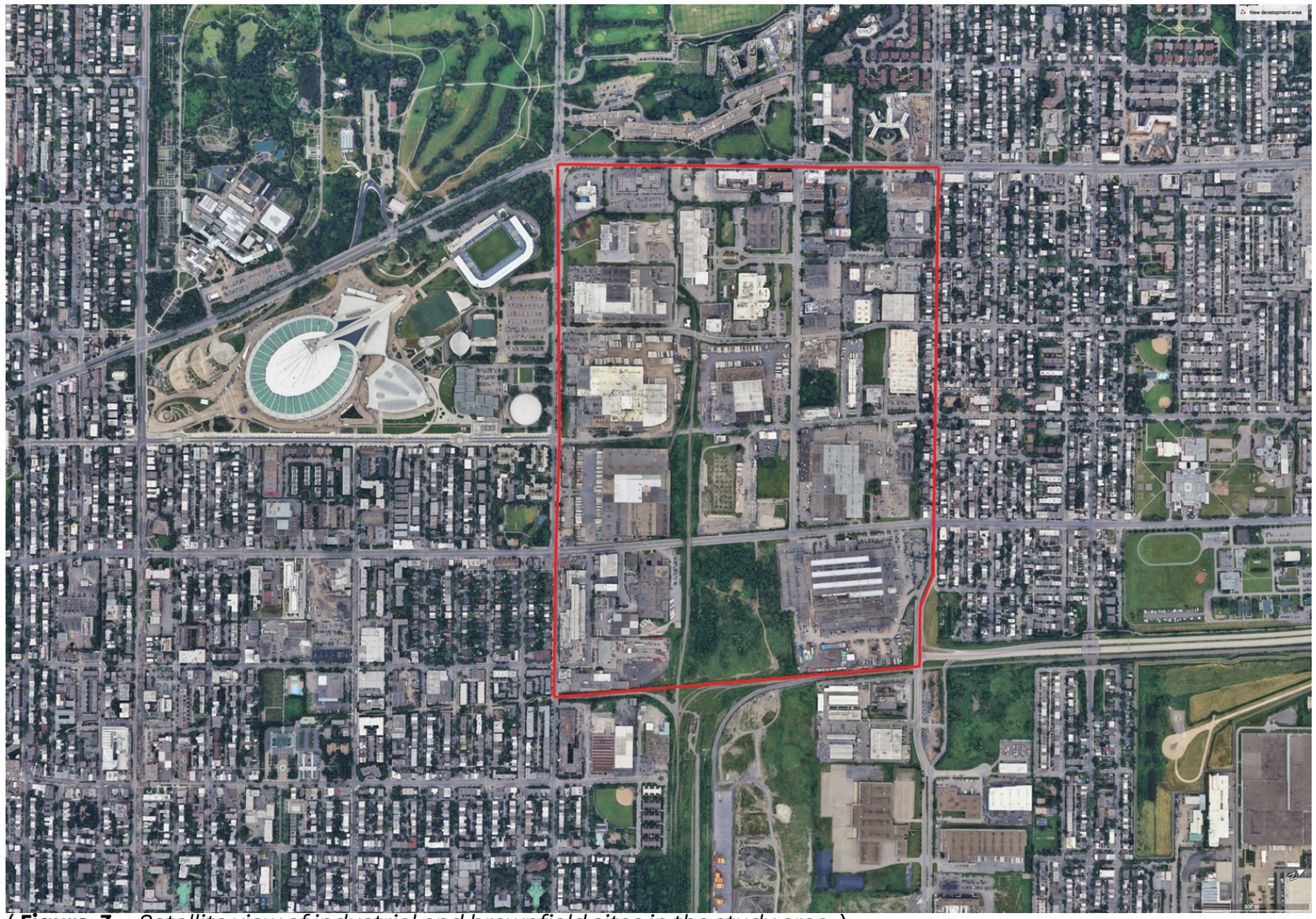
The background analysis of the site was approached primarily from an environmental sustainability perspective, with historical context serving as a secondary lens. The map (see Figure 2) highlights several factors reflecting both the ecological and built history of the area. Initial European settlements in the neighbourhood were established near the historic matrix route of Notre-Dame Street, which extends across much of the island and played a central role in shaping early development patterns. The site has since seen continuous transformation, transitioning from agricultural partitions to wartime factories and rail infrastructure. In addition to features such as undulated topography and remnants of wooded areas, the most critical ecological element is the disappearance of historic stream and river systems through urbanization. The loss of this hydrological network has contributed to localized flood risk, presenting an opportunity for sustainability-focused design interventions.



(**Figure 2** - *Ecological and historical features of the study area.*)

Background: Industry & Brownfields

The extent of existing brownfield sites and industrial land is apparent in the enhanced satellite image through the presence of large, uninterrupted plots with sparse vegetation and extensive building footprints (see Figure 3). The area comprises a mix of industrial uses, with a significant portion functioning as storage facilities for goods transported from the Port. Other buildings are occupied by manufacturers and distributors, including the Pom bakery and Coca-Cola facilities located within the site. The brownfield parcels present clear opportunities for redevelopment, offering both physical land use transformation and potential environmental benefits. Together, the altered ecological landscape, concentration of industrial buildings, and underutilized brownfields reflect the site's industrial legacy.



(**Figure 3** - *Satellite view of industrial and brownfield sites in the study area.*)

Redevelopment Vision

The northeastern sector of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, currently characterized by industrial land and brownfield sites, presents a significant opportunity for intervention. The proposed vision is to transform this area into a mixed-use neighbourhood that functions as a new urban pole for surrounding districts and the Greater Montreal Area. Anchored by key destinations such as the Olympic Stadium, Stade Saputo, and the Botanical Gardens, the plan aims to extend the existing urban fabric of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve through deliberate and cohesive development. The introduction of a new tram line plays a central role in this strategy by improving access to the site, enhancing connectivity, and supporting higher-density development. The new neighbourhood would support a complete urban environment where residents can live, work, and enjoy recreational amenities. It would also encourage longer visits from those attending events in the Olympic Complex by offering opportunities to dine, socialize, and explore public spaces. Over time, the area is expected to emerge as a destination in its own right, attracting both residents and visitors beyond the draw of adjacent landmarks.



(**Figure 4** - *3D view of proposed redevelopment and tram alignment*.)

SWOC Analysis

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints (SWOC) analysis identified key conditions shaping Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, with findings that inform redevelopment strategies for the industrial area. The existing residential and commercial fabric reveals a strong and diverse community, but one that lacks physical and social connectivity. This limits the neighbourhood's potential to function as a complete urban environment that retains residents and attracts visitors from across the Greater Montreal Area.

Building on identified opportunities, the plan sets out four overarching aims for the site: increasing connectivity, improving brownfield conditions, reducing noise pollution, and expanding green infrastructure. Each aim is supported by targeted objectives, illustrated in the diagram on the next page (see Figure 5). Together, these aims provide a framework for creating a more cohesive, accessible, and ecologically resilient neighbourhood for both residents and visitors.

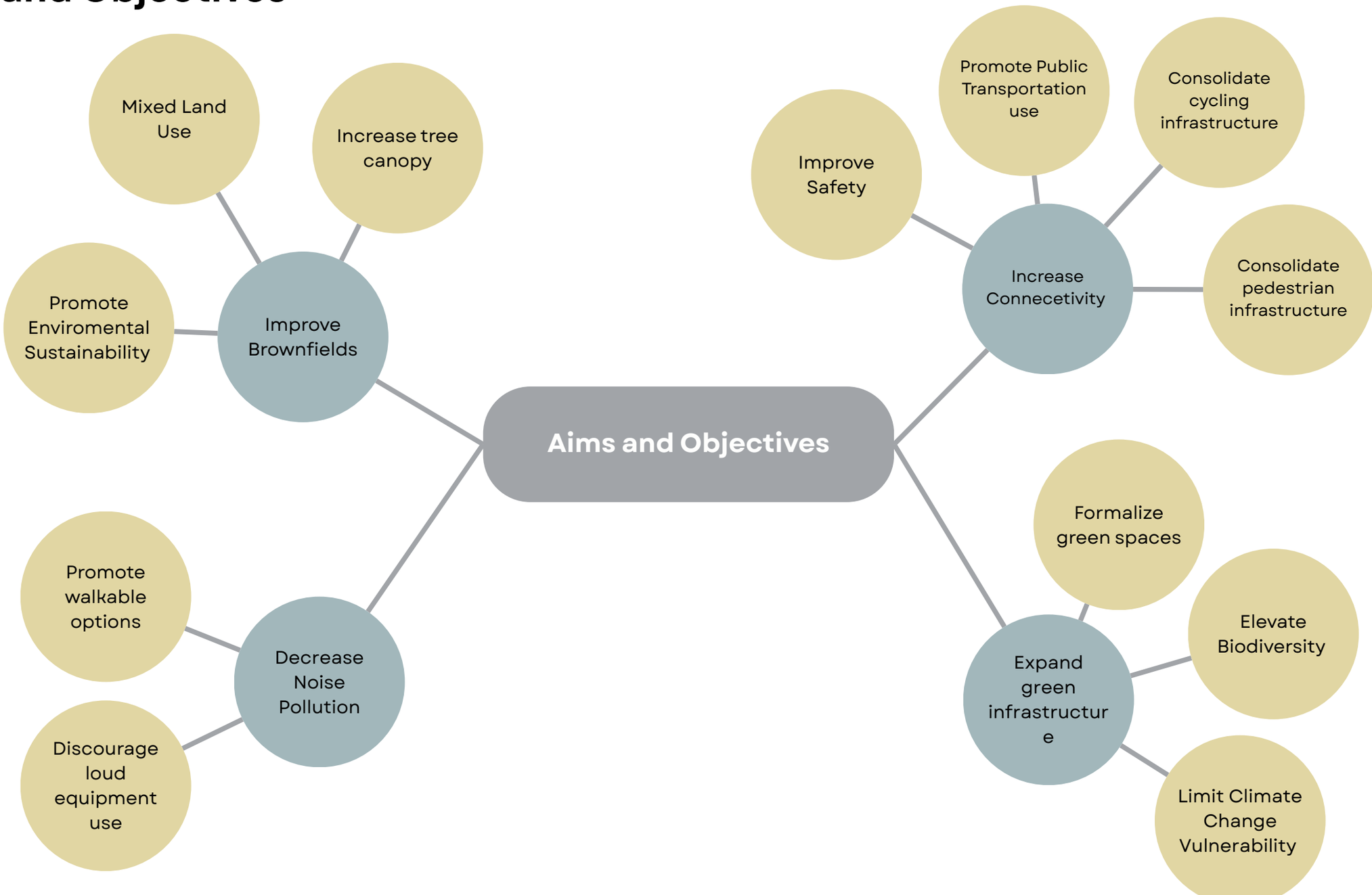
Strengths

- Dense housing
- Walking/cycling distance to shops
- Safe pedestrian corridors on commercial streets
- Historic roots
- Strong community feel
- Affordable when compared to other neighbourhoods
- Close to popular attractions (Parc Olympique, Jardin Botanique)
- Empty lots provide opportunity

Weaknesses

- Physical borders on east and west (train tracks)
- Underserved: Transit Gap
- Far away from metro stops
- Densely developed
- Vulnerability to climate change
- Underutilized industrial lots

Aims and Objectives

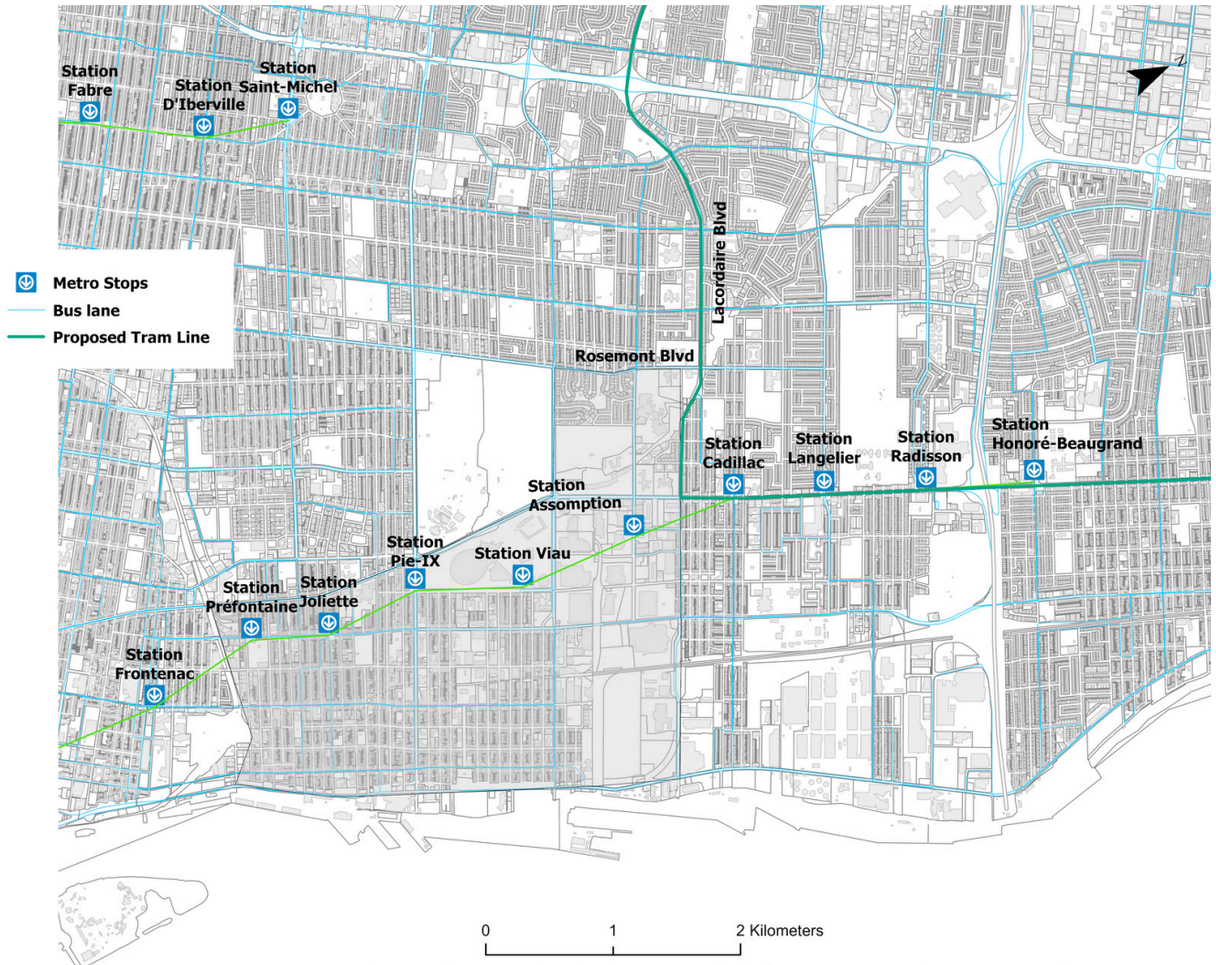


(**Figure 5**- *Aims and objectives for the redevelopment project.*)

Current Transit Landscape

Hochelaga-Maisonneuve is currently served by the STM's Green Line (See Figure 6), with key metro stations including Préfontaine, Joliette, Pie-IX, Viau, and Assomption. The neighbourhood and its surrounding areas are also connected by an extensive bus network, which links zones beyond the metro's reach to nearby stations. This integrated system enhances service reliability along major corridors such as Sherbrooke Street East, Hochelaga Street, and around the Olympic Stadium.Despite this robust network, transit coverage and accessibility vary, particularly in areas north and south of the Green Line, where coverage can be patchy or overly reliant on buses.

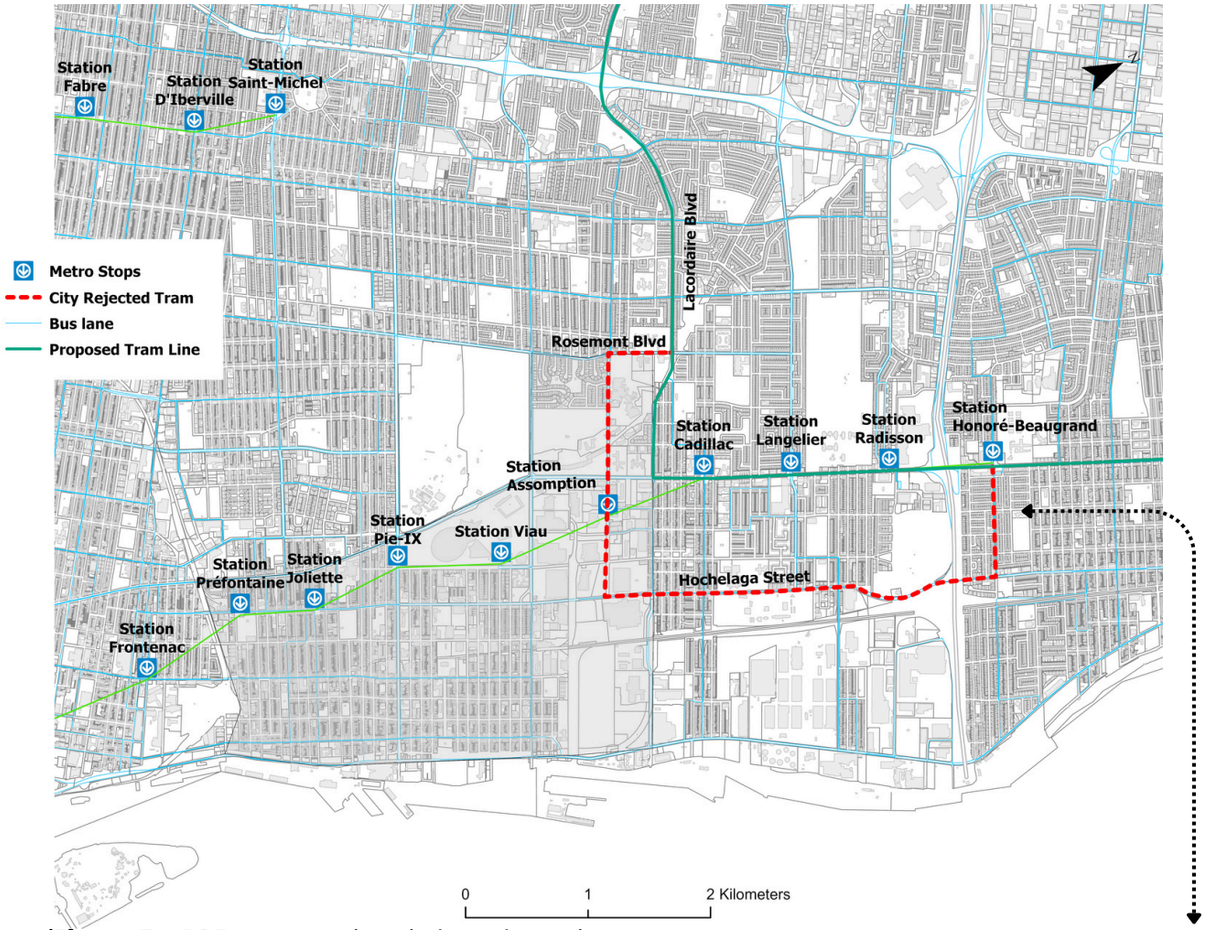
In May 2022, the Projet structurant de l'Est (PSE) released a report proposing a new tram line that largely duplicates existing transit service by overlapping with four stations on the STM Green Line: Cadillac, Langelier, Radisson, and Honoré-Beaugrand. Instead of expanding access to underserved areas, the proposed alignment follows the same corridor as the metro, offering little added connectivity. As a surface-level mirror of the Green Line, the tram represents inefficient land use and resource allocation. This redundancy ultimately undermines the goal of network expansion and limits the potential for more equitable transit development in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve and beyond.



(**Figure 6**- *PSE-proposed tram line and existing transit infrastructure in Montreal.*)

Rejected Tram Line

An alternative tram alignment was studied by the city along Honoré-Beaugrand Street, L'Assomption Boulevard, and Hochelaga Street, but it was formally rejected (see Figure 7) in the May 2024 Projet structurant de l'Est (PSE) report due to critical design and engineering constraints. According to the report, "Honoré-Beaugrand presented right-of-way constraints, as its narrow layout and high concentration of single-family driveways left little room for surface rail infrastructure without major expropriation or disruption."(see Figure 8) In addition, the report notes that "L'Assomption Boulevard posed a technical challenge, as maintaining a consistent 6% slope would require the construction of a trench ramp—an engineering solution that is both costly and spatially invasive." Although Hochelaga Street was included in the alignment, its connection through these problematic segments ultimately undermined the feasibility of the route. The combination of topographic and spatial constraints led the PSE to dismiss this option as incompatible with sustainable tramway development in a residential context.



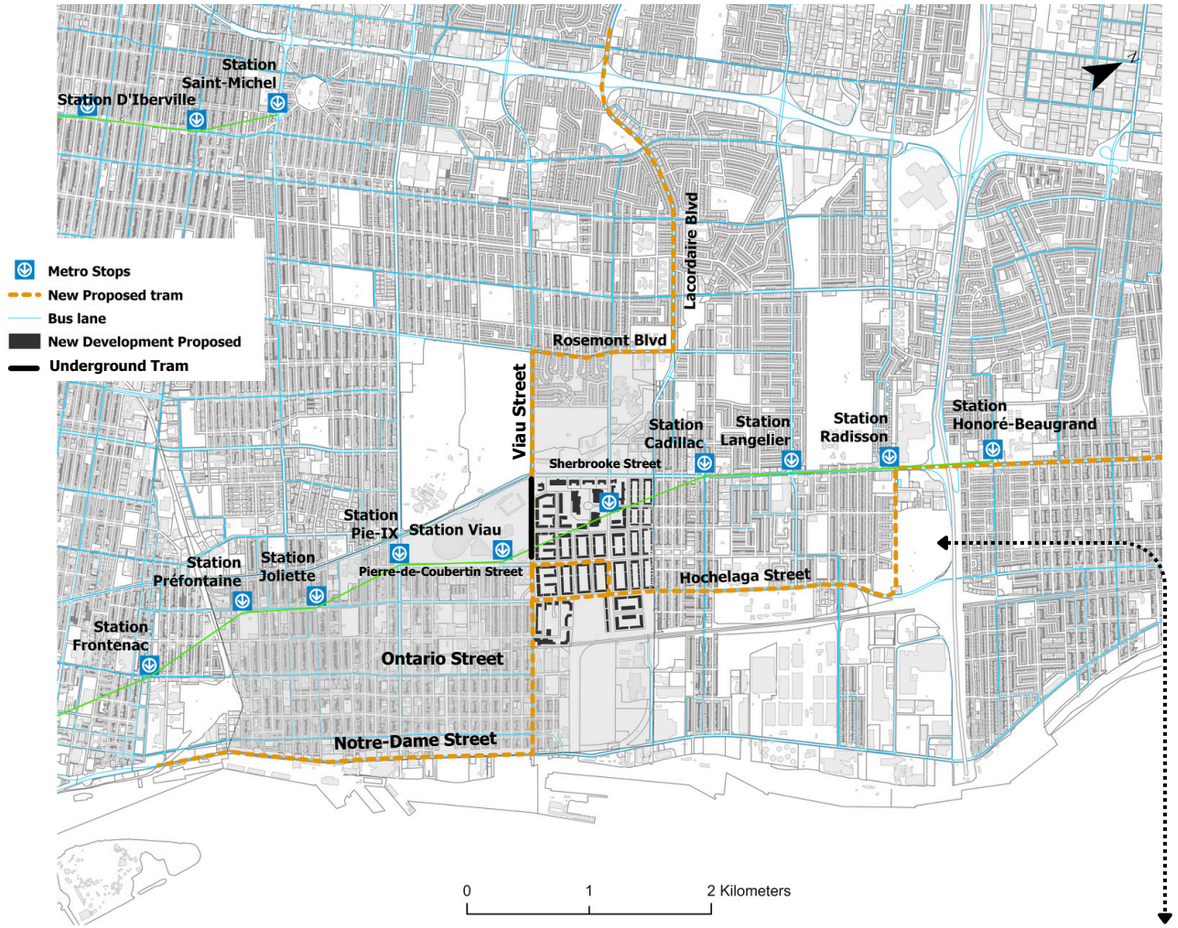
(**Figure 7** - *PSE-proposed and city-rejected tram alignments with existing transit infrastructure in Montreal.*)



(**Figure 8** - *Surrounding residential fabric near Honoré-Beaugrand station.Source: Google Earth, 2025.*)

New Proposed Tram Line

This report proposes a revised tram alignment that directly addresses the limitations identified in the May 2024 Projet structurant de l'Est (PSE) report. The proposed route runs from Radisson to Viau via Hochelaga Street(see figure 9), bypassing the slope and right-of-way challenges associated with Honoré-Beaugrand and L'Assomption. In contrast to earlier alignments that mirrored the Green Line, this alternative extends east-west connectivity and enhances transit access in underserved parts of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve and its surrounding areas. Hochelaga Street offers fewer spatial constraints and provides a more viable setting for surface tram infrastructure. To address the steep grade between Sherbrooke Street and Pierre-de-Coubertin, the alignment includes a tunnel segment along Viau Street(see figure 10) that ensures a consistent slope and minimizes disruption to the surrounding built environment. The tram line connects to major new redevelopment zones near the Olympic Stadium and links with the proposed commercial corridor along Pierre-de-Coubertin, the existing commercial strip on Ontario Street, and the southern corridor approaching Notre-Dame Street. This integrated approach aligns with long-term urban planning objectives focused on mobility equity, transit-oriented development, and sustainable neighbourhood transformation.



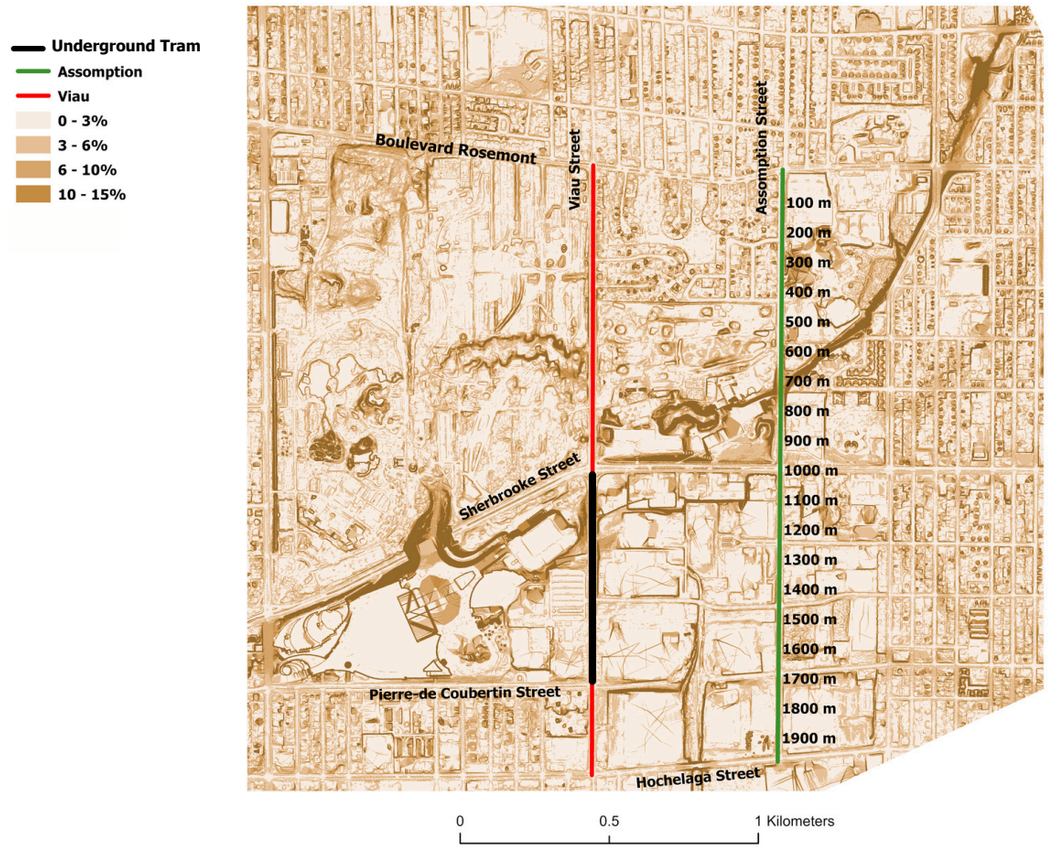
(**Figure 9** - *Proposed tram alignment and existing transit.*)



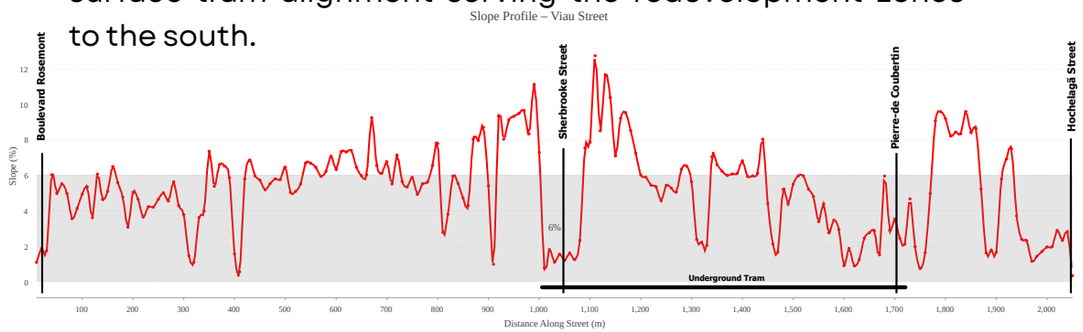
(**Figure 10** - *Surrounding residential fabric near Radisson station.Source: Google Earth, 2025.*)

Slope Profile Summary

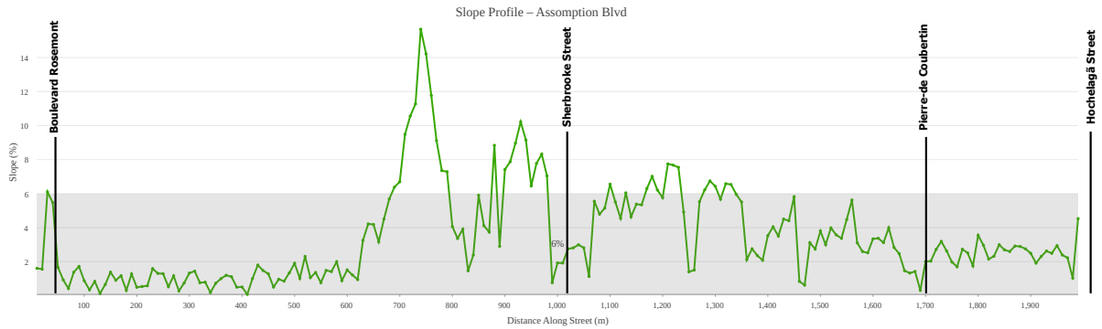
Slope analysis was conducted to assess the technical feasibility of surface tram infrastructure along two key north to south corridors: Assomption Boulevard and Viau Street. The slope profile for Assomption shows a sharp incline reaching approximately 14 percent north of Sherbrooke (see Figure 11 & 13) Street, which significantly exceeds the six percent operational threshold for trams. This extreme gradient confirms that a surface tramway on Assomption would require major trenching or other costly engineering solutions. In contrast, while Viau Street also features several steep segments, its slope is more consistent and remains closer to the acceptable range for tram operations. To address the steeper portions between Sherbrooke Street and Pierre-de-Coubertin Avenue, this report proposes an underground tunnel section along Viau Street (see Figure 11 & 12). This solution ensures a manageable six percent grade, minimizes surface disruption, and allows for smooth integration with the surface tram alignment serving the redevelopment zones to the south.



(**Figure 11** - *Slope analysis map of Viau and Assomption corridors*)

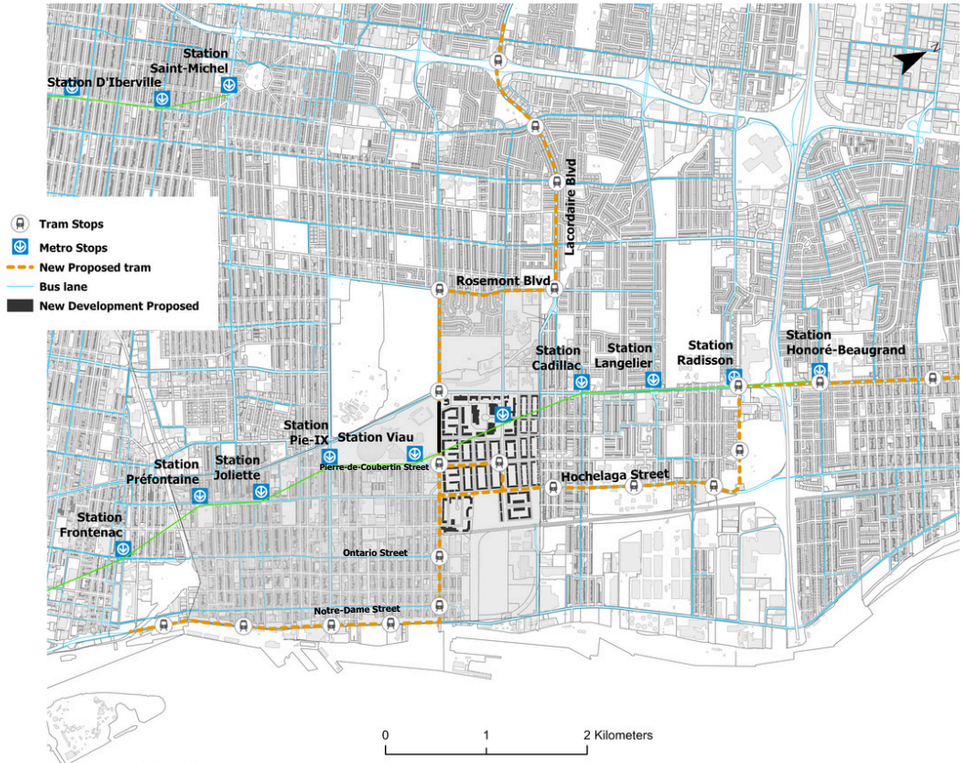


(**Figure 12** - *Slope profile – Viau Street.*)



(**Figure 13** - *Slope profile – Assomption Boulevard.*)

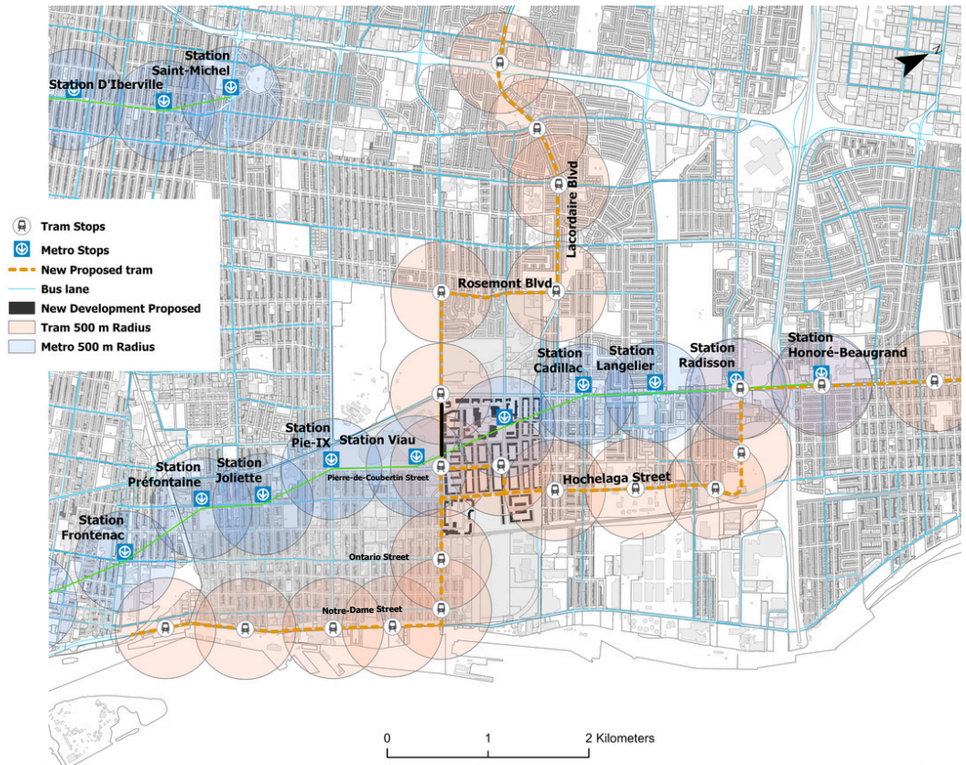
Stop Access and Coverage



(**Figure 14** - *Proposed tram stops and existing transit network.*)

The proposed tram alignment adopts a stop spacing of approximately 800 meters (see Figure 14). This distance reflects a balance between providing regular access for pedestrians and avoiding unnecessary overlap with existing metro infrastructure. The spacing is consistent with practices in similar tram systems and allows for efficient service without excessive travel delays. Stop locations have been selected to align with key intersections, commercial corridors, and access points to proposed redevelopment areas. This distribution supports functional integration into the broader transit network without duplicating existing services.

A 500-meter buffer analysis was conducted to evaluate the coverage of the proposed tram stops in relation to existing metro service(see Figure 15). The results show that the tram extends transit access into several areas currently outside the walking radius of the Green Line, particularly in the southern part of the neighbourhood. These expanded coverage zones intersect with existing bus routes, suggesting that the tram would function as an additional mode rather than a replacement. This overlap supports improved accessibility in a broader range of residential and commercial zones without significantly disrupting current transit patterns.



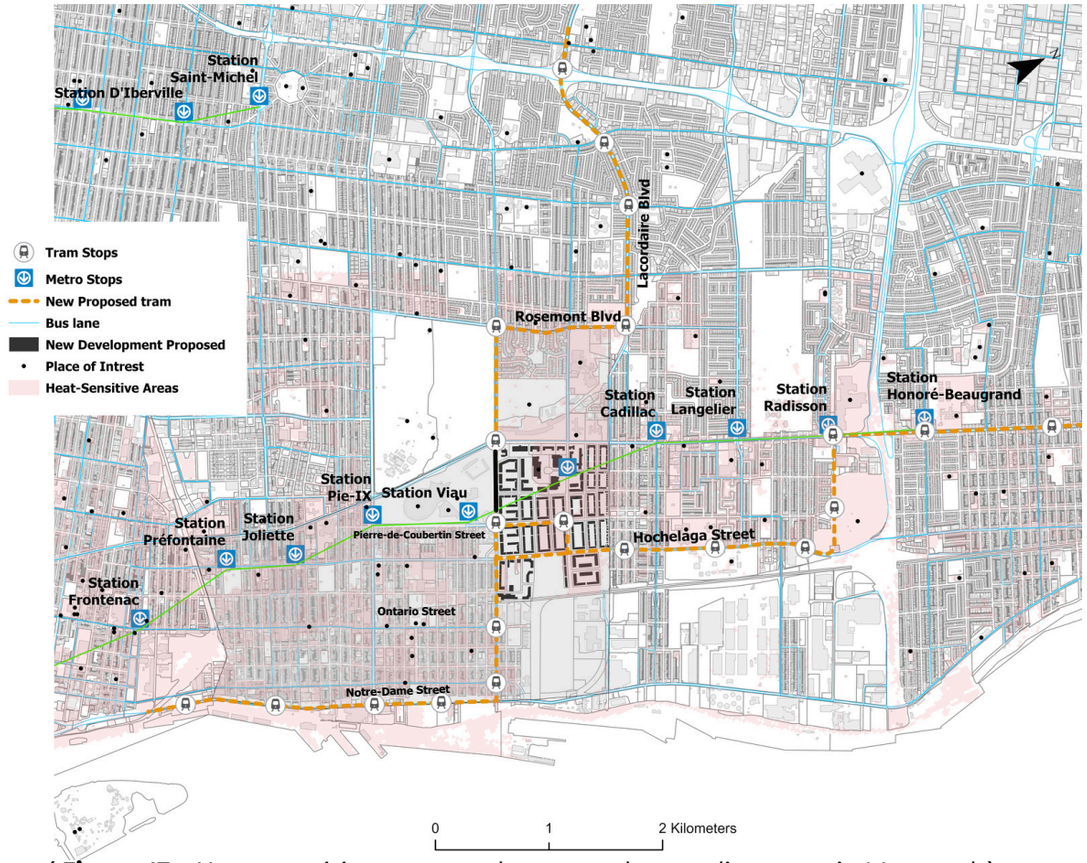
(**Figure 15** - *500 m coverage zones for proposed tram and metro stops.*)

Sustainable Mobility Strategy

The proposed tram alignment passes through areas identified as vulnerable to extreme heat, based on the Ville de Montréal's 2022 climate sensitivity dataset. This vulnerability is calculated using several types of data, including physical sensitivity such as heat island effects, social sensitivity based on demographic and economic indicators, territorial sensitivity related to infrastructure and essential services, and environmental sensitivity like tree cover and natural areas. Many of the vulnerable zones in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve are also far from metro stations, densely built, or located on underused industrial land(see Figure 17). To address these challenges, the tram proposal includes green tracks, which are vegetated tram corridors that reduce heat and manage stormwater. This approach is inspired by the T9 tramway in Paris, where green tracks help adapt infrastructure to urban climate conditions(see Figure 16). The alignment also improves access to schools, parks, and commercial areas, and responds directly to the transit and climate-related weaknesses identified in the neighbourhood.



(**Figure 16** - *T9 tramway in Paris with vegetated tracks. Source: Richez Associes.*)



(**Figure 17** - *Heat-sensitive areas and proposed tram alignment in Montreal.*)

Proposed Street Grid and Network

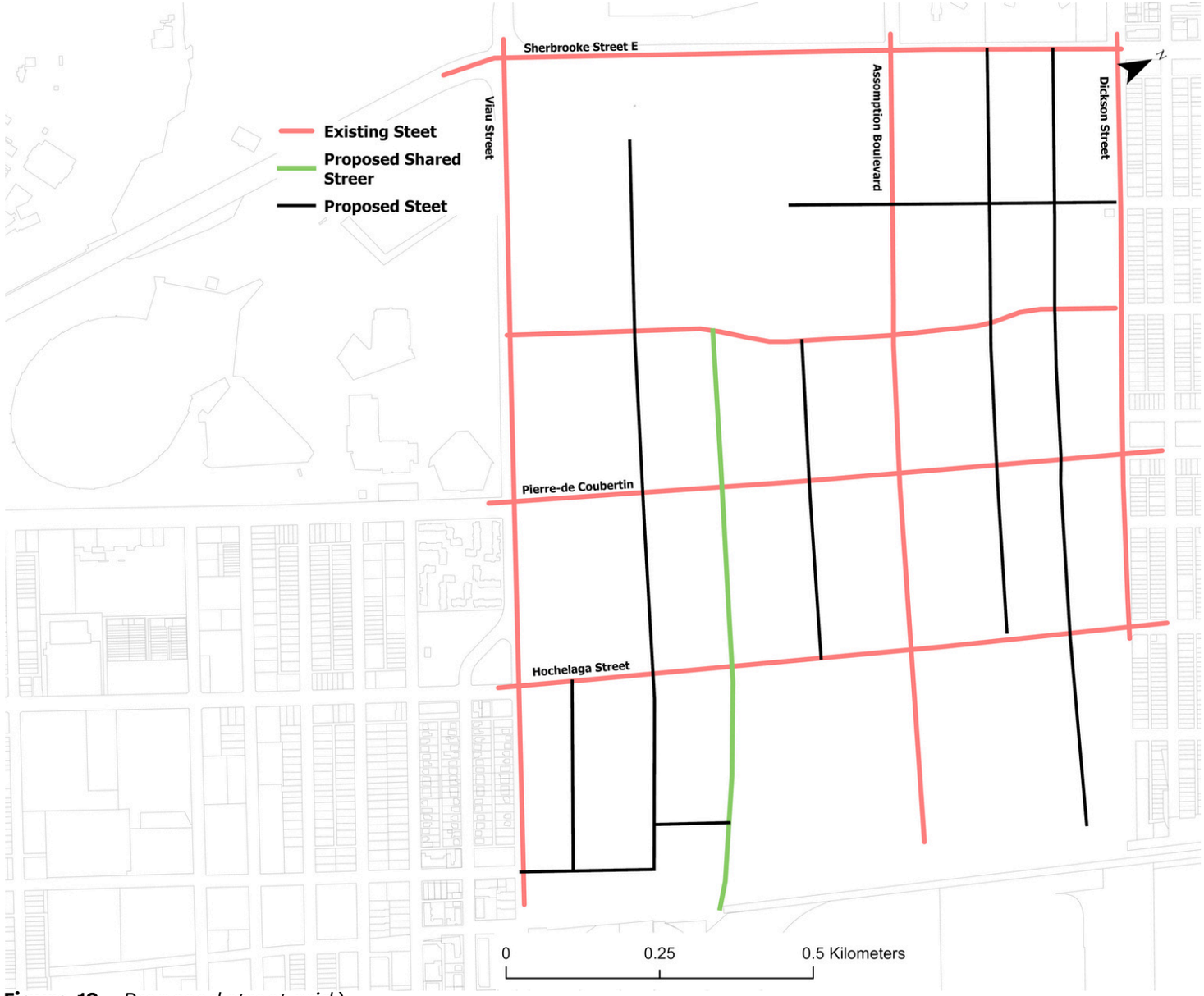
The redevelopment of the industrial area of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve began with the reorganization of the existing allotment system. Originally configured to accommodate large industrial buildings, the allotments were restructured through the introduction of new roads, aligning the layout more closely with the finer-grained pattern found in the surrounding neighbourhood. This restructuring allows for greater integration with the existing urban fabric. In parallel, green spaces were consolidated within individual blocks, and additional areas were specifically zoned for green infrastructure. This approach supports the development of a high-density, mixed-use neighbourhood while promoting sustainable living and the creation of semi-private open spaces between residential and commercial functions.



(**Figure 18** - *Proposed plots, green spaces, and built form.*)

Street Hierarchy

To support the proposed allotment restructuring, a new street hierarchy has been developed for the area (see Figure 19). The design retains key segments of the existing street network from the former industrial layout while introducing new streets to subdivide the large original parcels. This brings the area's structure closer in form to the finer-grained urban fabric found to the west of the borough. The updated hierarchy is intended to enhance overall mobility by increasing walkability and providing direct access to the reconfigured allotments. A shared street, marked in green, intersects Rue Pierre-de Coubertin and Rue Hochelaga, offering an additional layer of pedestrian connectivity while integrating and consolidating adjacent green spaces. The proposed streets have a typical width of approximately 28.4 metres.



(**Figure 19** - *Proposed street grid*)

Land Use

The proposed land uses reflect a mix of functions as indicated in the adjacent legend (see Figure 20), supporting stronger integration with the existing urban tissue and contributing to a more complete neighbourhood. While residential uses form the core of the plan, several key exceptions enhance the area's functionality. A commercial corridor is designated along Rue Pierre-de Coubertin, drawing inspiration from the role of Ontario Street in the existing fabric of Hochelaga-Maisonneuve. This corridor also intersects the proposed shared street and connects to a section of the planned transit line, reinforcing accessibility and activity. In addition, existing industrial uses and proposed institutional buildings are concentrated in the northern portion of the site to reduce noise impacts on residential areas and contribute to a balanced land use composition.



(***Figure 20*** - *Proposed land use and tram alignment in the redesigned allotment area.*)

Land Use 3D Model

Land Use	Area (sqm)
Commercial	11,794
Industrial	19,087
Institutional	25,432
Mixed-use	75,076
Residential	231,726

Total Dwellings	Estimated Population
13,574	31,220



Building Heights

The spatial configuration of the proposed development is illustrated in the allotment and building height map (see Figure 21), which outlines the distribution of building heights across the site. Most buildings range from three to four storeys and are designated for strictly residential use. Height increases in mixed-use buildings, which range from five to six storeys to accommodate commercial spaces at the ground level with residential units above. The tallest structures, ranging from 11 to 12 storeys, are located along the periphery, strategically positioned to capitalize on views of adjacent green spaces such as the golf course and the Olympic Complex.

The proposed redevelopment introduces 12,574 new dwellings, resulting in a projected population increase of 31,220 residents. Land use distribution is planned as follows: 64% residential, 21% mixed-use, 7% institutional, 5% industrial, and 3% commercial. This mix supports a vibrant, high-density urban environment while ensuring functional diversity across the neighbourhood.



(***Figure 21*** - *Proposed building heights within the redevelopment site.*)

Building Typology Examples

Low to Medium Density Residential

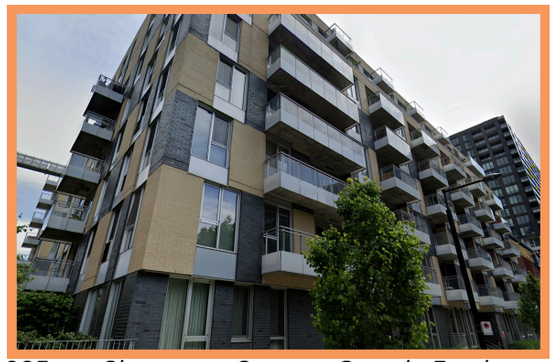


4395 Rue Andre Laurendeau - Source: Google Earth



- 24 units per building
- Interior staircase
- Parking in rear
- Street facing

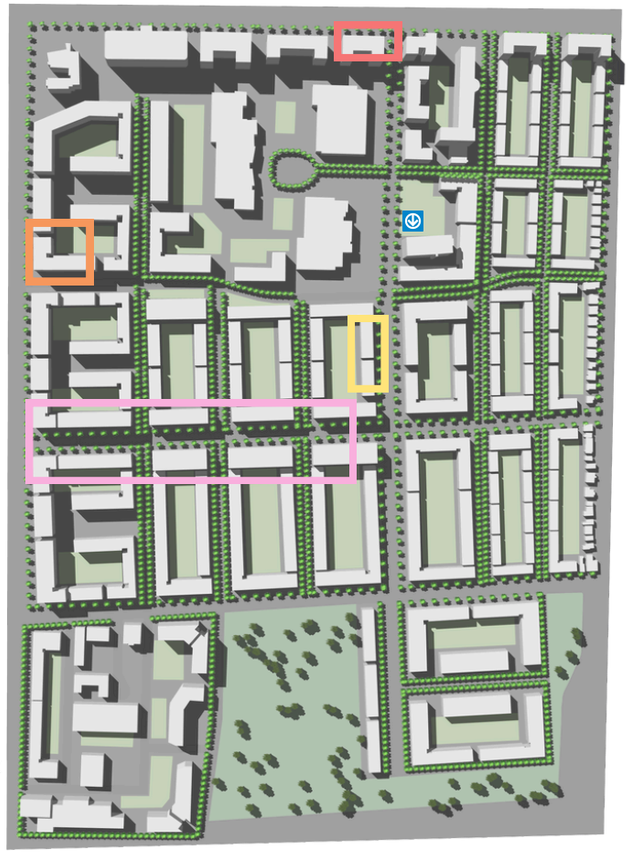
Medium Density Residential



295 rue Shannon - Source: Google Earth



- Apartment Building
- 6 - 8 stories
- Varied units



Mixed Use

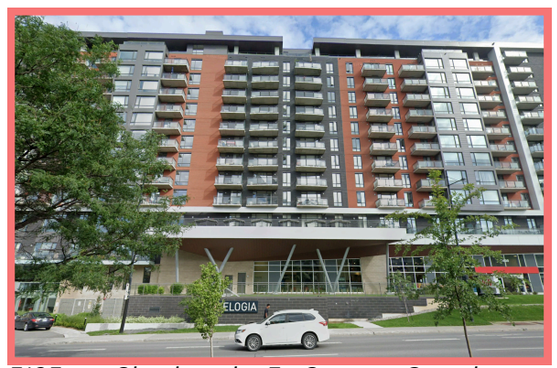


3945 rue Ontario E - Source: Google Earth



- Commercial ground floor
- 1 -2 residential units on top
- Front facing street access
- Alley behind

High Density Residential

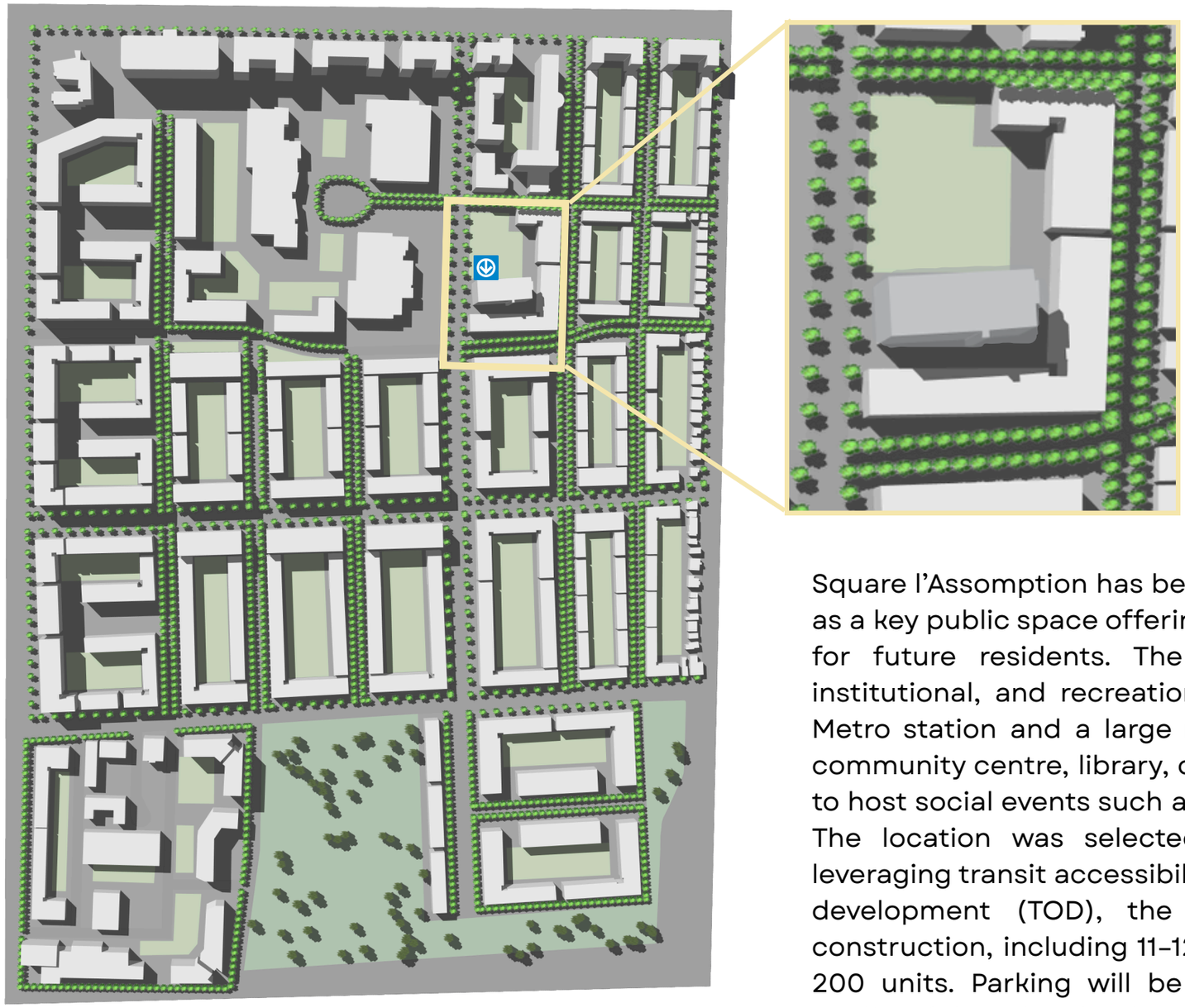


5195 rue Sherbrooke E - Source: Google Earth



- 12 stories
- varied uses, mostly residential
- green space in back

Site 1:
Square l’Assomption

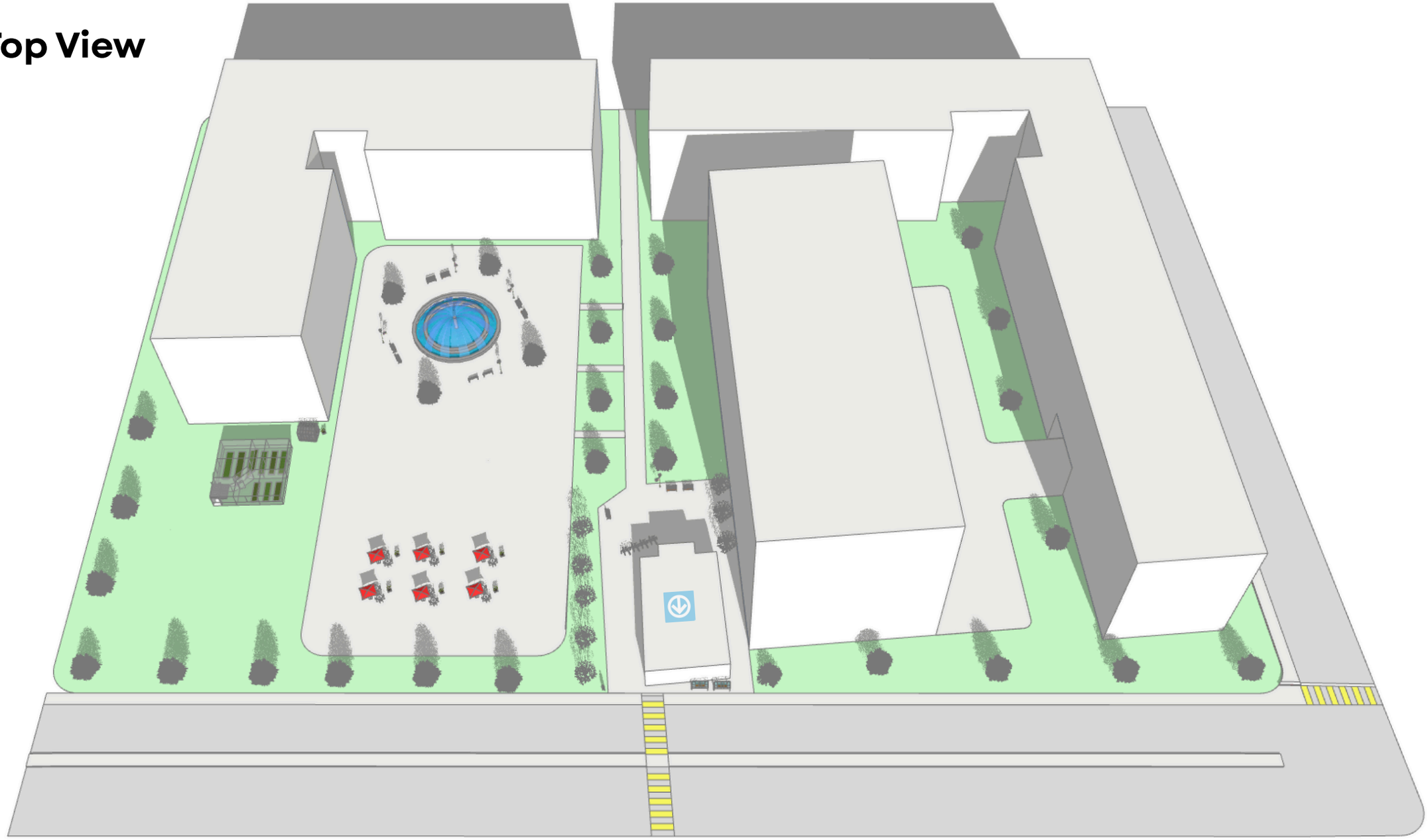


Existing Buildings

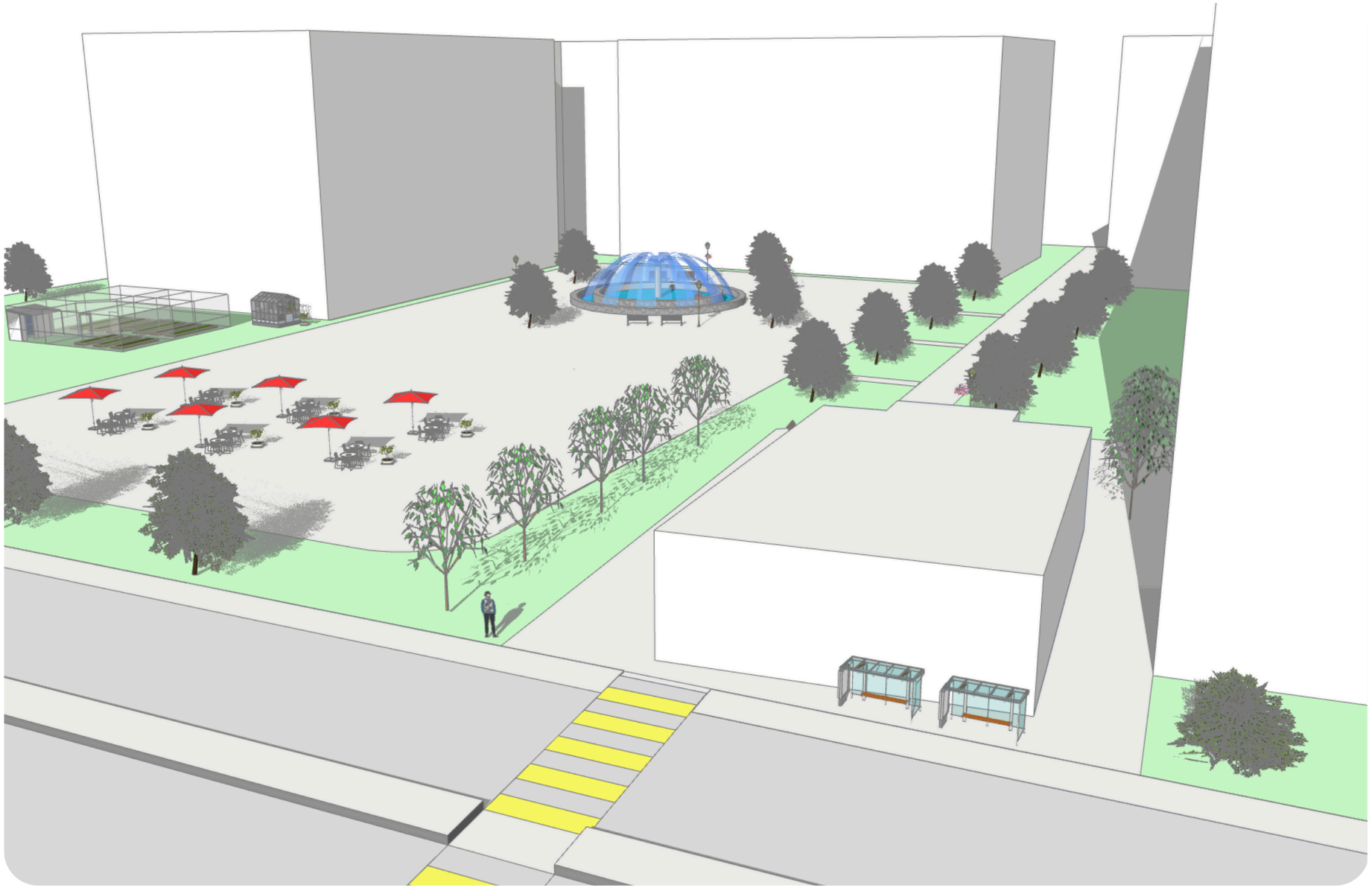
Proposed Buildings

Square l’Assomption has been identified as a priority site due to its potential as a key public space offering a wide range of community-oriented activities for future residents. The area will incorporate a mix of residential, institutional, and recreational uses, anchored by the existing Assomption Metro station and a large residential building. Planned facilities include a community centre, library, community garden, and an open space designed to host social events such as outdoor movie nights and seasonal gatherings. The location was selected to support key communal functions while leveraging transit accessibility. Aligned with the principles of transit-oriented development (TOD), the block will feature medium to high-density construction, including 11–12 storey residential buildings with approximately 200 units. Parking will be accommodated underground to preserve the quality of the urban landscape and optimize land use efficiency.

Top View



Perspective View



Examples

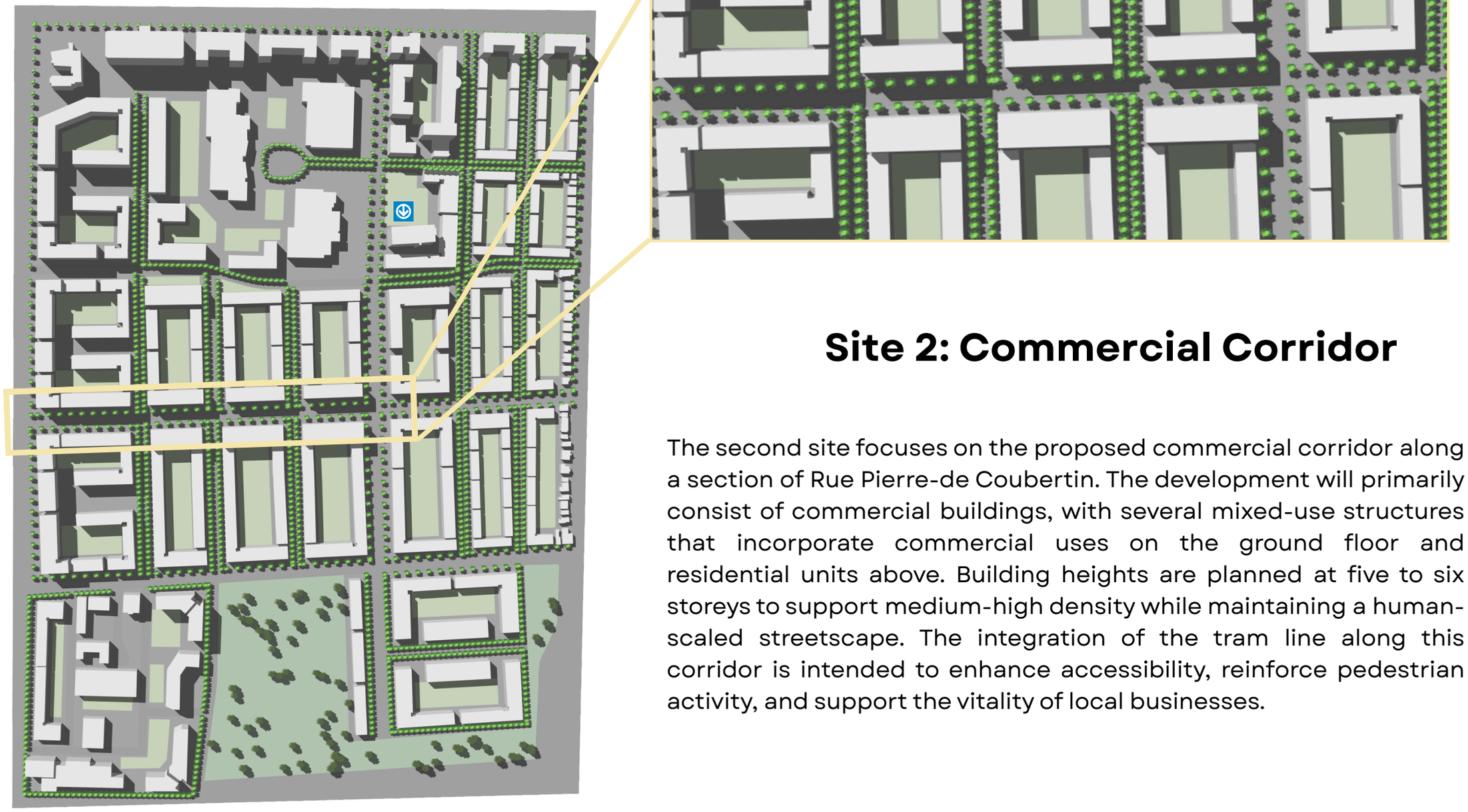


(***Figure 22*** *- L'Îlot Rosemont: a high-density mixed-use development connected to transit. Source: Google Earth, 2025.*)



(***Figure 23*** - L'Îlot Rosemont: a high-density mixed-use development connected to transit. Source: Google Earth, 2025.)

L'Ilot Rosemont and the Marc-Favreau Library with Luc-Durand Park serve as local precedents for envisioning the future development of Square Assomption (see Figure 22). Both examples feature high-rise mixed-use buildings that integrate residential units with public amenities, including a contemporary library noted for its distinctive architectural design. The surrounding areas are characterized by generous landscaping, tree-lined pathways, expansive public spaces, and recreational features such as an outdoor splash pad. L'Ilot Rosemont, which is directly connected to a metro station, demonstrates how transit-accessible nodes can effectively support diverse communal activities (see Figure 23).

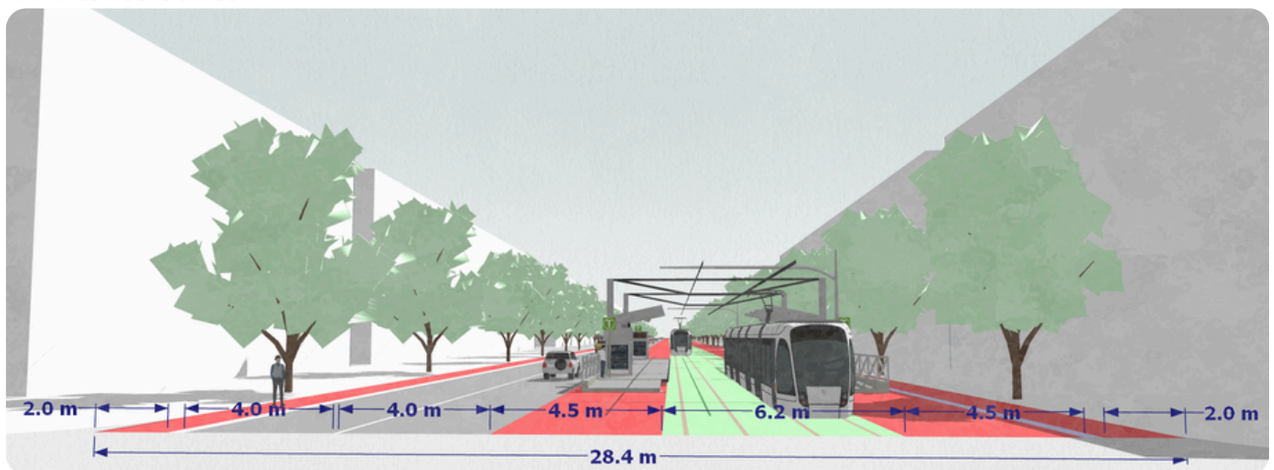


Site 2: Commercial Corridor

The second site focuses on the proposed commercial corridor along a section of Rue Pierre-de Coubertin. The development will primarily consist of commercial buildings, with several mixed-use structures that incorporate commercial uses on the ground floor and residential units above. Building heights are planned at five to six storeys to support medium-high density while maintaining a human-scaled streetscape. The integration of the tram line along this corridor is intended to enhance accessibility, reinforce pedestrian activity, and support the vitality of local businesses.

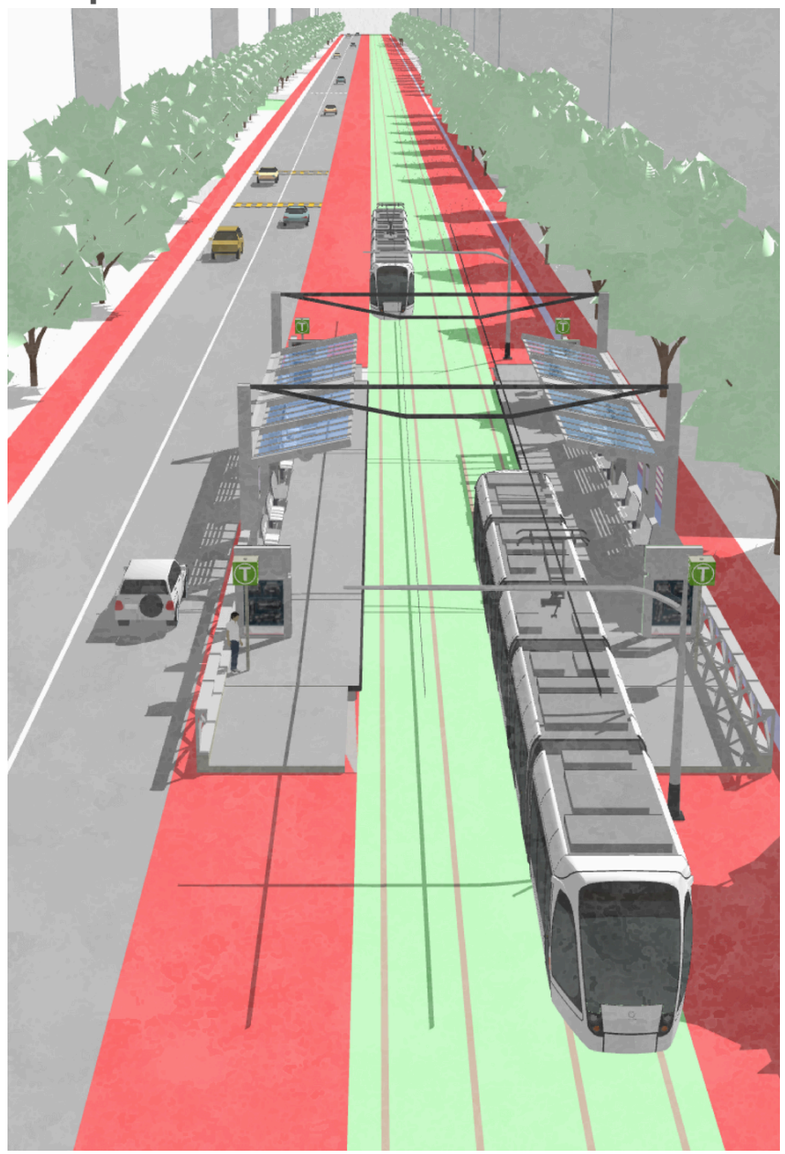
The section and perspective views provide a detailed representation of the proposed commercial corridor layout along Rue Pierre-de-Coubertin (see Figure 24). To prioritize pedestrian accessibility and safety, vehicular access is limited to one lane in each direction, with a maximum speed limit of 40 km/h and stop signs at all intersections. Sidewalks will have a minimum width of 2 meters, while vehicle lanes will be 4 meters wide. The central tram corridor will measure approximately 6 meters in width, flanked by 4.5 meters of pedestrian space on each side to accommodate bidirectional foot traffic parallel to the roadway. Tram stops are planned at intervals of 800 meters, with key stops located at both the beginning and end of the commercial corridor. The streetscape will include extensive tree planting and vegetation to provide shade and enhance the pedestrian experience. Additionally, the tram tracks will be grass-covered to support water infiltration, reduce the urban heat island effect, and contribute to the corridor's aesthetic appeal.

Section View



(**Figure 24** - *Section and perspective of proposed tram corridor.*)

Perspective View



Examples



(**Figure 25** - *Ottawa Street in Griffintown, Montreal – a medium-density, mixed-use corridor. Source: Google Maps Streetview, 2025.*)



(**Figure 26** - *Tram corridor in Barcelona, Spain – an example of transit-oriented street design. Source: Zkolra (2022).*)

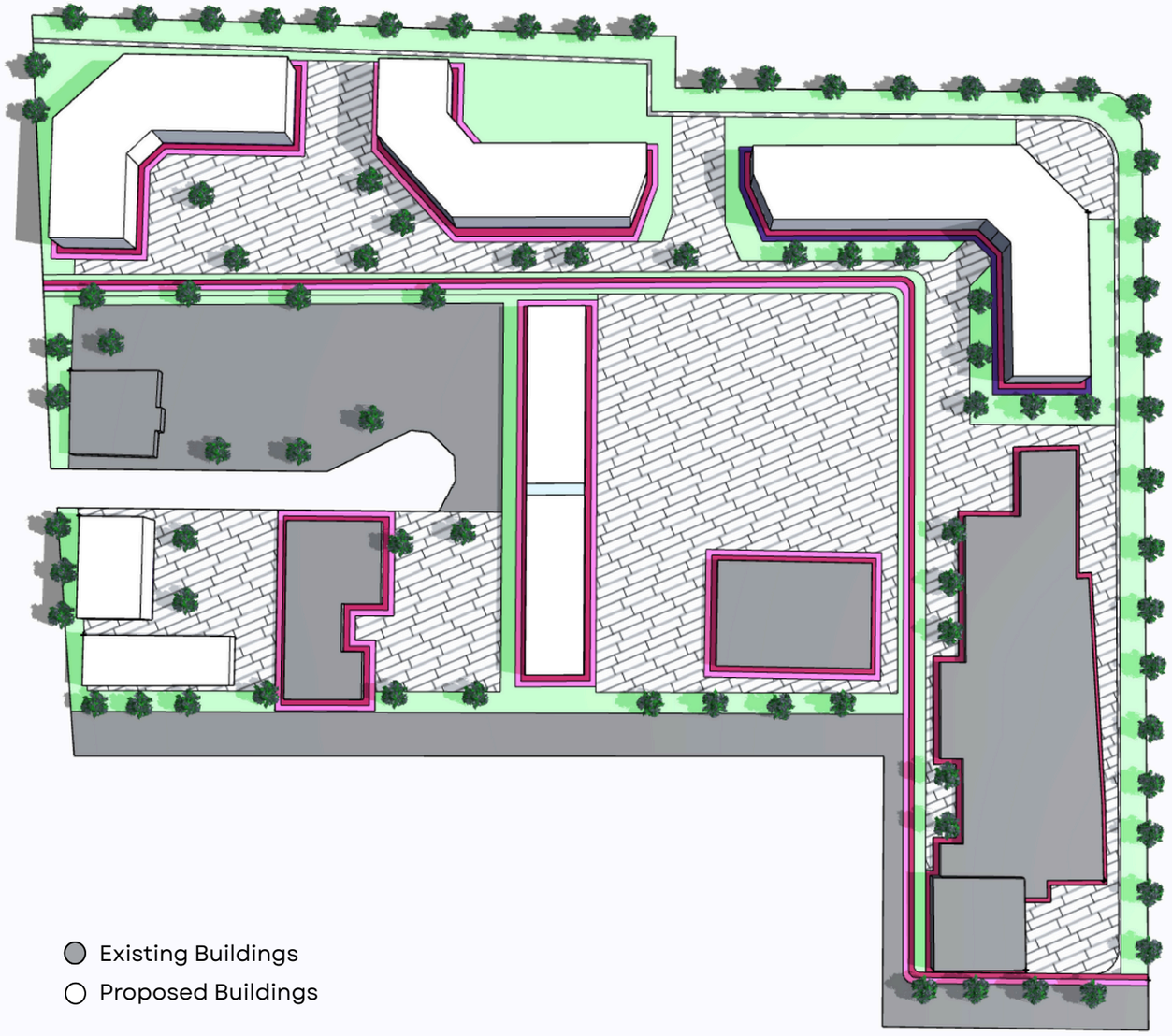
Ottawa Street in Griffintown serves as a relevant local precedent for the proposed commercial corridor along Rue Pierre-de-Coubertin (see Figure 25). This street features medium-rise buildings, generally around six storeys, combining commercial and mixed-use functions. Its scale, activity, and form align with the envisioned character of the corridor. Additionally, since Ottawa Street extends into Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, it offers a point of reference for incorporating local heritage elements into the new development through architectural detailing and material choices. An international precedent can be found in Barcelona, Catalonia, where transit-oriented streets integrate two tram lines running in opposite directions (see Figure 26). These corridors include wide sidewalks, benches, bus shelters, and tall street trees that provide shade and thermal comfort. The embedded tram infrastructure allows for a shared environment between pedestrians and cyclists, enabling them to cross and navigate the space freely. Unlike typical car-dominated roads that act as physical and psychological barriers, tram-oriented streets promote inclusivity and enhance overall accessibility.

Site 3: Arts District

The final proposed site is the arts district, envisioned through the adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings. This initiative seeks to preserve the architectural character of the area while supporting the local arts community and commemorating the neighbourhood's industrial heritage, reinforcing a strong sense of place. The district will feature a mix of uses, including art galleries and studios, non-profit community housing for artists, and locally operated businesses such as breweries, cafés, and restaurants. Generous open spaces are integrated into the layout to host outdoor events and provide a variety of seating areas. A pedestrian and cycling green path will pass through the central open spaces of the district, enhancing internal movement and connecting to the existing green path that leads to the Maisonneuve Market. Extending this pathway through the arts district will improve overall connectivity and increase foot traffic. To prevent displacement, unaffordability, and loss of character often associated with artist neighbourhoods, the plan includes partnerships with non-profit and community housing organizations and prioritizes leasing space to local businesses.



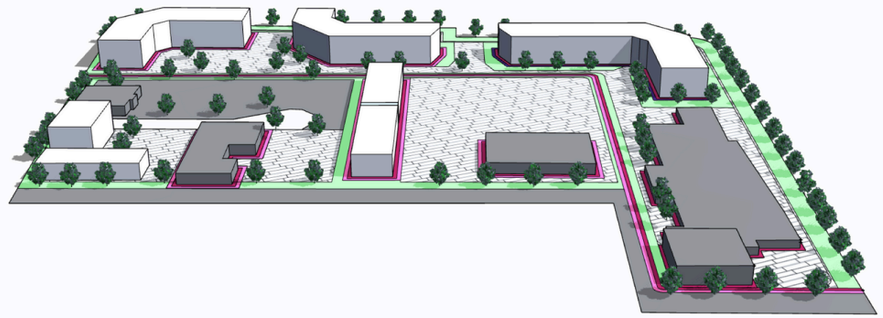
Top View



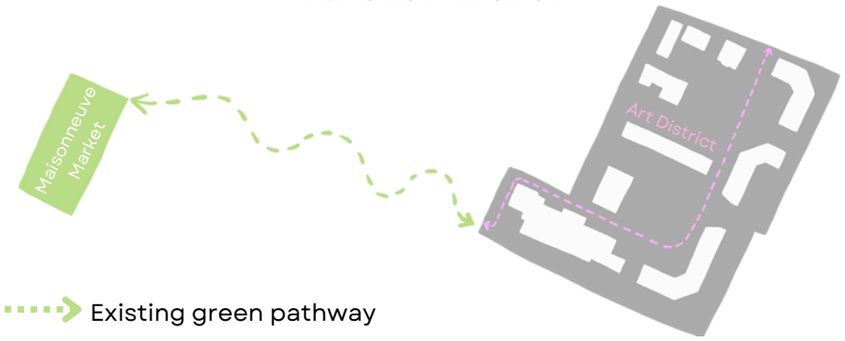
Existing Buildings

Proposed Buildings

Iso view



Green Path Extending from Maisonneuve Market to Art District



Existing green pathway

Proposed green pathway

Examples



(**Figure 27** – *Heesterveld housing and cultural district in Amsterdam. Source: bureau SLA*)

Inspiration for the proposed arts district was drawn from international precedents, including Heesterveld in Amsterdam (see Figure 27). Originally developed as housing for a predominantly Black community in the 1980s, the area was later abandoned and slated for demolition. The site was ultimately acquired by Ymere Housing Corporation, which led its redevelopment into a mixed commercial and residential program. Completed in 2013, the project aimed to activate the area's urban and creative potential, serving as a model for integrating affordable housing, artistic expression, and community revitalization.



(**Figure 28** – Holzmarkt 25 cultural complex in Berlin. Source: visitBerlin.de)

Another precedent is Holzmarkt in Berlin (see Figure 28), a public cultural district that supports a diverse range of artistic, cultural, and community-oriented activities. The 12,000-square-metre mixed-use space is characterized by vibrant street art and hosts artist-owned businesses, including clubs, restaurants, a daycare, an event agency, a recording studio, a music school, a coworking space, and a photo studio. The site remains active year-round and is particularly popular during the winter months due to its annual Christmas market. Holzmarkt exemplifies how creative placemaking can foster community engagement, economic diversity, and cultural vitality within a flexible urban framework.

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