



# SP0133 Final Report

Please answer the following questions and return the completed form to the [SPF Staff](#) via e-mail.

**Project Title:** McGill Spaces Project

**Final Report prepared by:** Alan Chen, Da-Jeong Kim & Laurence Nault

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**Actual Project Start Date:** October 2013

**Actual Project End Date:** September 2016

**1. Please summarize the project and its key accomplishments in 1-2 sentences.**

(400 characters maximum)

The MSP has become a nexus point, enabling students, staff, faculty, and admin to channel their interest in improving space use and connect across campus in order to contribute to McGill's initiatives towards growing a sustainable environment through large and small scale projects.

**2. Did your team achieve your project's goal? In your answer, please describe the impact your project had on McGill's structures, processes, and/or systems. Also, please specify how this positively transformed people's behaviors/perspectives/habits on McGill campus(es).**

(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum ½ page or approximately 250 words)

Our general goal is to revitalize the spaces around us such that they better meet community needs and foster environmental and social sustainability. More specifically, we employ a multi-pronged approach that involves executing pop-up placemaking events to spark a reimagination of existing and potential campus spaces, embark on learning and research initiatives to build a better understanding of our campus spaces, and initiating permanent space transformation projects to create places out of underused spaces that can better support the McGill community. We have delivered on most of the project deliverables stated in our initial project proposal and have continued to develop the MSP beyond those terms. A complementary budget amendment was proposed and approved to adjust for unexpected changes along the way. To these ends, we have made significant achievements, checking off most of what we initially set out to accomplish with the seed funding granted through the SPF.

Before the formation of the MSP, no group was recognised to have tackled how to affect infrastructure-related change on campus with meaningful widespread engagement from community stakeholders in an effective manner. By building a diverse network of relationships with decision-making stakeholders in McGill staff and administrative offices as well as engaging in an experiential learning process of carrying out consultations and implementing projects, the MSP has come to represent an accessible and community-based force of change-making on our downtown campus.

In terms of changing behavioral processes at McGill regarding campus infrastructure, we believe we have made a significant difference in creating more opportunities for students to voice their needs and concerns regarding space design and usage at McGill. In terms of tangible change, students now hold seats on the Gardens and Grounds Senate Subcommittee as well as the Design Services Committee (both of which new infrastructural projects have to receive approval from in order to be implemented) as a result of MSP's engagement with decision-making bodies. The MSP also occupied seats on the new ad-hoc SSMU Space Committee during the 2015-2016 academic year overseeing conversations regarding the future of the SSMU building. This committee has since been dissolved, however. Campus and Space Planning have also recognized the need for more meaningful student-staff relationships in the pursuit of campus spaces that better meet the needs of the community and have hired two MSP interns on paid annual contracts to work towards that end. Through this position, MSP has been the starting point

for many long term space renovation projects for different student groups and faculty. This separate funding would not have been possible without the SPF that gave MSP the means to build its foundation.

Through the MSP, there has been a shift in the habits of decision-making for campus spaces. There is less of a "Let's go with it and see how the students react" mentality and more inclusion of students and stakeholders in the consulting and planning process before final decisions are made.

### 3. Please describe the key successes and challenges of your project. (Minimum of two examples for each)

(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum ½ page or approximately 250 words)

One key success is the All Up In Yo' Space (AUIYS) Situational Analysis. Over the 2014-2015 academic year, MSP carried out this study to gain a better understanding of spaces and their usages on the McGill downtown campus. This was a two-pronged analysis, consisting of an online survey and a series of indoor campus walkabouts we called James' Walks. The surveys resulted in 222 completed individual responses and the James' Walks allowed for detailed analysis of 17 different spaces on campus. Although not a fully representative sample, the responses for both methods of analysis resulted in a sturdy general understanding of what students find to be good spaces, making it an excellent resource for the Campus and Space Planning Office or other groups and organizations seeking for McGill students' opinions on spaces across campus.

Another key success is the widespread network created through the MSP. Fueled by the first few kickstarters, MSP has become a resource bank of not only innovative ideas but of people as well. Through our pop-up placemaking events, such as Park(ing) Day or Outdoor Living Room, as well as informal conversations that solely was driven around the existence of MSP, we were able to form relationships with many members of the McGill community who were willing to be channels, resources, advisors, active volunteers or supporters for the MSP. "Transforming spaces, connecting people" as the motto goes, is what MSP does best. We have succeeded in showing the McGill community that if they need spaces transformed or be connected to key stakeholders, MSP is the right place to look.

The MSP was also key players to the inception of permanent renovation projects of McGill service and faculty buildings such as Brown Student Services Building, Burnside Hall Basement, Leacock Lobby, and public spaces in all three Music Buildings. Different members of the McGill community have brought their concerns forward and through MSP were able to scope out, redesign and some eventually implement their project. MSP has established its reputation to be the "go-to" group to get space transformation done.

There are many more success to highlight which are all written in the progress report submitted January 2016. However, a last one to mention apart from the long list of pop-up placemaking would be the projects in our Learning and Research component. One successful independent ASR project was completed. The research was conducted with the intent of illustrating the impact of placemaking on campus spaces and in conjunction with the ECOLE Project. The results were quantitatively positive and the paper was published in two undergraduate research journals. The results were also reproduced in the form of an infographic which were displayed at two McGill research symposiums. The final publication and infographic are attached as appendix items. Additionally, the MSP created and facilitated an integrative collaboration involving a for-credit interdisciplinary course with a jointly appointed faculty member from architecture & urban planning and staff from Student Services.

But of course, our journey was not free of obstacles. Many of our challenges came about from a misalignment of timing and schedules between student-led MSP work and administration. This led to a forfeit of the Roddick Hut project and the budget was reallocated to new pop-up placemaking projects. A difference in goals and interests between students and admin, as well as slow bureaucratic processes made it difficult and sometimes infeasible to carry out our projects according to the initial SPF project's timeline.

Another big challenge for MSP was management and operation of the active group. Group structure, student transience and financial upkeep were our main struggles in expanding and moving MSP forward. The MSP operates on a non-hierarchical consensus-based decision making model. This type of decision-making democratizes power and is a general attempt at empowering individuals to work towards their own visions of change in the context of the MSP. While this model has been successful in some respects, it has been challenged by a number of members on

separate occasions in terms of contributing to a stagnation in progress for some projects and sometimes the organization overall.

Student transience is a frustratingly persistent problem that plagues most student groups. The MSP owes its momentum in major part to the fact that one individual who was present at its formation has stayed on board out of personal dedication. We have been exploring both formal and informal mechanisms to combat transience and maintenance of institutional memory. However, as the MSP core group is mainly students, many projects lost steam once school work load got heavy. This led to a long list of incomplete projects and called for a reevaluation of our priorities.

In addition, as a project with a growing team and dynamic web of projects and initiatives, financial accounting has proven to be an acute challenge for the MSP. Due to an insufficient amount of time dedicated to ensuring proper documentation of the MSP's financial activity over the years since its conception, this has resulted in an insufficient amount of attention put towards the proper management of our financial records. This issue has manifest in difficulties preparing a budget amendment that we were thankfully able to get approved through the tremendous amount of help and support the SPF staff.

Adding onto this group of hurdles was the lack of storage space. The nature of placemaking sometimes involves a slow but steady accumulation of materials and tools with which we use to engage the public. Finding storage space on campus for these materials has presented a persistent challenge. In the past, we have negotiated temporary storage deals with Campus and Space Planning (regarding their designated space in the basement of SSMU) as well as ECOLE. We have also donated a number of furniture pieces to community organizations for continued use, (painted log stools to the FACE Elementary and High School). We have been faced with the unfortunate mishap of having the MSP redboard and astroturf thrown out while it was unattended in the SSMU storage over the summer 2016, as well as the Glass Box that was stored at McLennan Library. This has been a large dent in our ability to engage with the community. Currently, the few items we still have are housed in a shared storage space with the McGill Farmer's Market who has graciously offered to support our activities by providing the storage indefinitely.

A last challenge is worth being noted. Although this does not apply to the MSP as a project, the OPERATION Brown Building had specific challenges that may be worth the mention. The scope presented a challenge that was continually faced as the project continued. Addressing a comprehensive list of problems for the entire 5-story building in the course of a one-semester long class was difficult, and in the end we were unable to deliver on a number of focal concerns that were presented to the class at the beginning of the collaboration (specifically the building's signage issues as well as the design and capacity of the health clinic and mental health clinic, arguably the most salient focal points of the initial project's vision). Further attempts to re-address these problems are being considered.

#### 4. What key points of advice or *lessons learned* would you give to other SPF teams either regarding your experience managing your project or the project itself?

(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum ½ page or approximately 250 words)

The MSP is multidimensional and reaches across and beyond the physical boundaries of McGill's Campus. Due to our goals of maximizing inclusion, we sometimes engaged with people across the university that held different opinions, understandings and interests in spaces.

If the SPF project relies heavily on community, it is important to either make very clear the direction of the project or anticipate for the project to expand according to the diverse group of people that will end up working on the project. This insight emerges from MSP's experience of its own inconsistent focus throughout the past two years. Every semester, the MSP community consists of different people and due to their interests, certain projects moves along faster than others. These projects became MSP's achievements and shaped what the public expected of us

(ex. If we did more space analysis on semester, we get more and more requests for space analysis. If we do pop-up events, we are asked to display our pop-up boards at more events).

Elaborating a little further on the project's direction and identity, another important thing to consider is the political structure of the group. MSP was a non-hierarchical consensus based group. This had its benefits of inclusivity, transparency and community building. However, it was inefficient in terms of getting projects done. We realized that the MSP had people from all different levels of understanding and professionalism. For our group in particular, it seemed that a hierarchical group structure gave positions and titles for people to work for would have been better suited, while not having a title meant nothing on the line, diminishing the sense of responsibility. All this is to say that knowing your members and what their needs are is very important when choosing a structure. In the case that the structure is set, having team members that are able to work efficiently in it is also key.

Media content that is required for the SPF is also very important to plan and start ahead from the beginning to the end. We struggled to provide footage and video of what the MSP is and our achievements due to lack of manpower, uncertainty of our direction, as well as underestimating the investment and importance of filming/logging our activities. Nowadays, social media is a very effective medium to gain visibility and to archive. A good method is to keep up with media by making short 30 seconds to 1 minute videos to recap events (before while setting up, during, or after while taking down). That way, when it comes to making the final SPF video, there will be plenty of content available to choose from.

**5. What recommendations do you have for the future of this project to be continued and are there any opportunities for complementary projects? Who will take responsibility for the project's future and how can interested persons be in touch?**

(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum 1 paragraph)

The future of MSP has been discussed among members, advisors and directors. The MSP was unable to use all the funding granted by the SPF and had difficulties seeing reason to apply for further funding. Many of our funds were allocated to placemaking. However, we wanted to step back and explore the intersection of placemaking with material sustainability. Through our projects we quickly realized that temporary pop-up placemaking required, as the name suggests, temporary materials. We want to be able to raise interest in improving spaces without creating waste. Whether this means creating a catalogue of pop-up materials that are available (ex. Glass box project board, outdoor living room) or an interactive space that upcycles waste, there are many ways out there that we can promote sustainability while making the most out of unused spaces. The next steps for the remainder of MSP would be to use the McGill campus to its full extent as a living laboratory to explore this.

The MSP would like to focus on guiding student groups to incorporate thoughts on spaces and sustainability when planning their goals and striving for improvements in student life. Collaboration with other groups who seek advice or consulting is also an option.

For the remainder of this semester, MSP will be holding spaces-related outings and events on and off campus every 2 weeks until the official MSP closing in december. The goal of these outings is to feed off the current group members' interest in space use and through this informal learning and discussion, to instigate further enthusiasm for exploring the topic. MSP hopes to leave its traces on McGill by providing a guide on how to achieve space transformations on campus, accessible to the public but specifically for student and faculty groups. Along with this, we plan to provide a small archive of different resources and network of professionals that can be consulted for reference or inspiration. The mcgillspacesproject@gmail.com email will be still be open with an auto-reply setup to redirect people interested to the aforementioned resources.

6. In your application, you listed the following sources of funding: None listed

Please confirm if you received this funding in the space below. In your response, please list the actual amount (in dollars) that you received. Note: If you received funding from a McGill Department or Unit, please attach a letter from its Financial/Budget Officer confirming the actual amount of support.

(1,800 characters maximum)

N/A

7. Did you purchase equipment or make an installation on campus?  Yes  No

If yes, please briefly describe how these items will be maintained and used in the future.

(1,800 characters maximum)

As previously mentioned in question 3 about our challenges, we had purchased materials and built the Redboard (a stackable chalkboard tower) and the Glass Box (transportable plexiglass board). These items were used for the community to voice their opinion and channel their creativity by drawing/writing on these boards set up at events or public spaces. They were unfortunately thrown away sometime the summer of 2016 by McGill without notice.

The MSP also has planned to have 2 sets of modular tree logs constructed to be used as a book sharing library outdoors. These will be installed around lower campus. This project is partially funded by the McGill Bookstore and supplied by the McGill Book Fair and hopefully through an additional SPF project or another source of funding. The Book Forest will be maintained by the Campus and Space Planning Office.

8. At the beginning of your project, you submitted a work plan or impact metric that included target measurables or indicators of your project’s success (e.g. # of tons of GHG emissions reduced). Please pick 3 indicators that best showcase the success of your project and complete the table below. To share updates on other indicators that you set, please attach an appendix to this report.

Selected Key Success Indicators	Target #	Actual #
# of articles written about	5	10
# of space transformations	6	12
# of space audits/studies conducted	1	~29

If there is a significant difference in the target numbers and the actual numbers achieved, please explain. If you have any additional information to share about these success indicators, please also include it below.

(1,800 characters maximum)

As the MSP expanded beyond the initial scope of the application, there has been an unexpected surge of requests from the community for space audits and studies to be done in order to move forward with placemaking project or building renovations. This explains the difference of number of space audit/studies conducted from a targeted 1 to an actual of ~29 studies. Three concrete formal studies have been conducted (i.e. the independent ASR, our situational analysis, and the ARCH 514 course). However, our All Up In Yo' Space Situational Analysis includes observations and notes taken on 17 different spaces on campus during individual or group audits. Stakeholder consultations and walkthroughs of evaluated spaces were also included to this success indicator. Space transformations range from temporary installations to permanent transformations. While many transformation projects have been worked on, they cannot be included as successes, since permanent transformations take many years to facilitate and implemented. Therefore, only the space study component of these renovation projects are included as achievements for the purpose of this report.

**9. Please complete the table below for the Standard SPF Key Success Indicators, if the data is available.**

Standard SPF Key Success Indicators	Actual #
# of volunteers directly or indirectly engaged in the project	>100
# of people (student, staff, or other) trained in the context of the project	55
\$ raised for project activities subsequent to SPF funding	\$1,550
# of partnerships or collaborations developed between the project team and other McGill administrative units, student groups, community groups, other universities, and/or other groups/organizations.	21

**Regarding the last Key Success Indicator, please list the groups and/or organizations that you counted.**

(Unlimited characters; point form acceptable.)

Campus and Space Planning (Paul Guenther, Brian Karasick, Chuck Adler); the McGill Office of Sustainability (Julia Solomon); Design Services (Lorraine Mercier, Virginie St-Pierre, Evelyne Poulin); Project Management (Dan Doran); Grounds (Hugo Laperle, Marc Dozois, Franco Nardi, Eric Champagne); Fire Prevention and Safety (Luiz Fernandez); Teaching & Learning Services (Marcy Slapcoff, Eva Dobler, Jennie Ferris, Adam Finkelstein); Office of the Deputy Provost of Student Life and Learning (Ollivier Dyens); Student Services (Jana Luker & Mitchell Miller); Faculty of Architecture (Nik Luka, David Covo); Department of Urban Planning (Raphael Fischler); AUS (Jacob Greenspon, Ava Liu); SUS (Jeremy Goh, Sahil Kumar); CTF (Zili Zhang, Marcus Preston, Francisco Lee); ECOLE; Simon Fraser University (Tesicca Truong); PopArt McGill (Gillian Shelley); SSMU Clubs & Services (Kimber Bialik); Associate Dean of Music (Jacqueline Leclair); McGill Environment Student Society; McGill Tunnel Art Project;

**If you have any additional information to share about the Standard SPF Key Success Indicators, please include it below.** (1,800 characters maximum)

With regard to the # of volunteers directly or indirectly engaged in the project, the latter makes it impossible to count given the amount of informal help we've been given from the community. In terms of # of people trained in the context of the project, the number recorded denotes the total number of core team members that have come and gone in the our 20 months of operation. The \$1550 indicated was raised from SSMU funding sources & group samosa sales to support the transportation costs of four MSP members to attend a conference on the role of universities and colleges in city-building (Campus to City, hosted by SFUs Public Square) at which the MSP was invited to give a lecture on campuses and public space in the city.

**10. Please rate your project team's overall satisfaction with the support provided by the SPF Staff. Choose only one response.**

- Very Dissatisfied  
  Dissatisfied  
  Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied  
  Satisfied  
  Very Satisfied

**11. Please provide any feedback or recommendations regarding your team's experience with the SPF.**

(Unlimited characters, suggested minimum 1 paragraph)

The SPF staff have been very helpful and available according to our needs. They were very encouraging, attending our events and participating directly with the project.

**12. If there is additional information you would like to share about your project, please use the field below.**

(Unlimited characters)

**13. Has involvement in this SPF project positively impacted your team in the area of professional growth?**

**Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.** (800 characters maximum)

- Yes  No  Prefer Not to Share

This project allowed for many interactions with people of different professional levels. Members got experience with different senate committees of McGill, gave presentations to the general public as well as specific stakeholders. The MSP team gained vital skill sets such as public speaking, networking, organization, driving team consensus, and research.

**14. Has involvement in this SPF project positively impacted your team in the area of personal growth?**

**Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.** (800 characters maximum)

- Yes  No  Prefer Not to Share

**15. Which of the following skills or attributes has your team improved through involvement in your SPF project? Choose all that apply.**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Networking                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systems Thinking               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Planning                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teamwork                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict Resolution       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leadership     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project Management         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time Management                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listening      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writing                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mentoring      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Engagement     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify in the field below) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Negotiating    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Identification |  |

Other:

**16. Since starting your SPF project, has your team improved its knowledge of sustainability?**

**Please choose one. If you would like to elaborate, please use the field below.** (800 characters maximum)

- Yes  No  Prefer Not to Share

As previously answered to section 5, the MSP has struggled at times to incorporate sustainability into pop-up place making. Each individual has contributed their different understandings of sustainability and the team has grown in their knowledge of sustainability through feeding off each other and off each project. Every step we took challenged the idea of sustainable projects and allowed us to apply sustainability as a pertinent criteria in everything we do.

**17. (Optional) If applicable, please list the total number of team members voluntarily self-identifying as members of marginalized communities:**

**Please identify the represented communities below. (e.g. women, Indigenous people, people of colour, LGBTTQI, student parents, members of ethnic minorities, immigrants, people with disabilities)**

(1,800 characters maximum)

**Thank you for completing your Final Report!**

Please e-mail your report to the [SPF Staff](#) attaching any additional information that you would like to share about your project (e.g. other reports, research, documents, photos, etc.). Please note that this Final Report will be shared publicly on your SPF project's webpage.

# 3 BEFORE

- BACKGROUND CHECK -

# 4 AFTER

- RESULTS & DISCUSSION -

**FIG 1**  
Underused Space in Burnside's Elevator Lobby



The Social Context of Burnside's Elevator Lobby

### Transitory Space

Given the existing major elements in the lobby (e.g. doors, elevators, staircases, etc.), Burnside's elevator lobby largely serves as a transit area that shuttles a natural flow of people in and out of the building.

### "Prickly" Space

The dingy, concrete walls of Burnside have left an unpleasant impression on the community. The lobby in particular is "prickly" - though accessible, it is not a very comfortable space to spend time in.

### Underused potential

Although the lobby is well used, there is a large area between the two central concrete pillars (see Fig 1.). Quality public space gives people reasons to linger and interact with others; the lobby can thus be understood as a latent public space

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### What is placemaking?

Placemaking is an inclusive, multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, and facilitation of public spaces with the goal of transforming them into active places by bringing people together.

### Why is this important?

- 1) How communities use their public spaces plays a critical role in building **social sustainability**
- 2) McGill ought to learn how to optimize underused campus spaces given the real estate premium in Montreal.

### Spaces & Places?

What's the difference?

Spaces = physical environments

PLACES = spaces associated w/ human value & meaning

### House vs. HOME



# From Spaces to Places

## A Human-Scale Case Study of Placemaking at McGill

Alan Chen

B.A.Sc Sustainability, Science, & Society (Geog)  
Supervisor - Prof. Brian Robinson

### Experimental Public-Life Study

The study was conducted using naturalistic observation techniques to measure activity levels by:

- 1) counting the amount of times an activity occurred and
- 2) how long an individual spent engaged in that activity (minutes)

### Experiment conditions

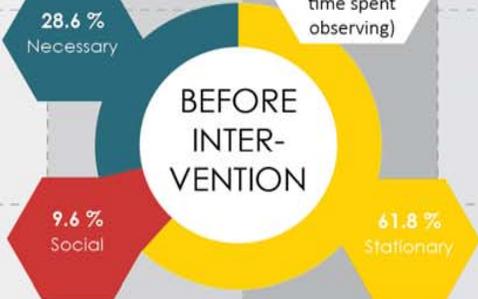
- 1) **CONTROL:** Observations were conducted under conditions where the existing space was left as is
- 2) **INTERVENTION:** Observations were conducted to evaluate the influence of passive placemaking elements placed in underused spaces.

### 3 Activity Categories

1. **Social:** Talking, Mobile use
2. **Stationary:** Sitting, Standing, Laptop Use, Studying
3. **Necessary:** Walking, Waiting, Shoe-stomping, Preparing to go outside

## 2 METHOD

**FIG 2**  
Activity Levels in Lobby (% relative to total time spent observing)



\*The interventions were placed in btw the two central pillars

**FIG 3**  
A modular mobile chalkboard with a public container for accessible chalk

**FIG 4**  
A colorfully painted pallet chair



**FIG 4**

**FIG 5**  
Activity Levels in Lobby (% relative to total time spent observing)

48.2% Necessary

## DURING INTERVENTION

These results show that placemaking can indeed make a positive impact on the quality of our campus spaces, and serve as a precedent to open up new conversations and possibilities for more campus placemaking studies and initiatives in the future.

## DISCUSSION

With the passive placemaking interventions in place, social and necessary activity levels increased and stationary activities decreased (compare Fig 2 w/ Fig 5). These results are significant considering the common thread that runs through all great public spaces: their ability to bring people together. Before the placemaking, Burnside functioned primarily as a transit space. Its "prickliness" facilitated this, with only a few benches and no other utilities to give people reason to use the empty central space. During the intervention, the novel new elements gave by-passers reason to linger. They took pictures, shared comments with friends, and slowed down in their strides, all of which contributed to an increase in social and necessary activity levels.

### References & Acknowledgements

A BIG (small) THANK YOU to Professor Brian Robinson, whose advice and understanding helped to provide enormous guidance for the rigorous academic undertaking on this project.

-Also, SHOUT-OUT to the McGill Space Project for driving amazing placemaking initiatives all across campus for the benefit of our community and well-being.

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2014 - 2015

# All Up in Yo' Space Situational Analysis

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Tim Rodgers



Transforming Spaces. Connecting People.



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## Executive summary

The McGill Spaces Project is a student-led initiative that seeks to reimagine McGill's spaces and places through cross-campus collaboration and creative placemaking. Over the school year of 2014-2015, MSP carried out its first situational analysis, All Up In Yo' Space (AUIYS), to build a deeper understanding of McGill's downtown campus spaces through collecting data from students and other campus users.

There are two major components to the AUIYS: an online survey and a series of indoor campus walkabouts (James' Walk). While the online survey data provides a broad understanding of users' preferences on features and qualities of campus spaces, the walkabouts offer more in-depth and building-specific insights for indoor spaces.

### *Online Survey*

First, we looked at general trends in space usage and respondent information based on the online survey results. Then, the MSP team organized two sets of data for indoor and outdoor campus spaces, as user needs and preferences were different for each and required separate analyses. For each set of data, the responses and suggestions collected from respondents were classified in the following categories:

- Informal space
- Study spaces
- Food spots
- Plants
- Technology infrastructure
- Aesthetics
- Connectivity

### *James' Walk*

Using the responses from the campus walkabouts, the MSP team created a priority list in terms of redesign urgency for individual buildings and their indoor spaces. Highlights from the participants' comments for each building are also included in this report.

### *Additional Suggestions ("If we had all the money")*

Participants were also given the opportunity in the survey to suggest improvements without monetary consideration (i.e. "if we had all the money"). Although some comments may be out of scope for the particular mandate of the AUIYS, the MSP team felt the responsibility to include some interesting suggestions and noteworthy concerns for the University to consider.

### *Analysis & Implications*

From our analysis it became clear that while preferences for outdoor spaces on campus are spatially concentrated in areas such as the Lower Field, indoor campus space usage is completely decentralized based on the students' faculty. This has proven to be a challenge in conducting a complete and unbiased analysis, considering the limitations of our survey results based on our total sample size. While our initial goal was to formulate a baseline understanding of campus spaces through the creation of an indoor spaces priority list, the insights generated from our analyses seems to have rendered the idea of a priority list defunct. Instead, we suggest a context-based, building-specific approach to improving indoor campus spaces. Despite its limitations, this exercise has provided valuable information on user preferences on the function and design of campus spaces. The MSP believes that the AUIYS is an important starting point in the continued effort to inform future decisions regarding McGill's campus environment and public space development.



# Introduction

The McGill Spaces Project (MSP) is a student-led initiative that seeks to critically reimagine McGill's spaces and places. Through cross-campus collaboration and creative placemaking, we aim to highlight the potential of underused areas around downtown campus.

With support from staff at McGill's Campus and Space Planning Office, All Up In Yo' Space was the first situational analysis carried out by MSP student volunteers interested in space usage on McGill's downtown campus. By using the data we collected, we believe AUIYS will both amplify student voices and build a deeper understanding of McGill's downtown campus spaces to help inform future decision-making. The information gathered will hopefully prove to be useful to both students and staff in the midst of a fast evolving campus environment.

AUIYS has two prongs: an online survey and a series of campus walkabouts. Section 2. "Methodology" provides a look at the procedure and limitations of each investigative process. (For an in-depth elaboration on the process design for the survey and our team's reflections behind each component, see Appendix 5b: "Survey Development Process".)

## Methodology

# Online Survey

The purpose of the online survey is to help us get a grasp on McGill campus users' opinions of downtown's campus spaces. The survey helped identify specific buildings and places preferred by users and the qualities that make these spaces attractive.

After several modifications based on internal feedback from MSP members (see Appendix 3b. "Survey Development Process"), we hosted our survey online at McGill Surveys in March 2015 and ran it through both social media and in-person canvassing campaigns. In particular, we set up a booth at various locations on campus, where we facilitated the completion of surveys on our own laptops or tablets as a way to increase the number of completed responses. By the end of the campaign, we received 222 completed responses.

Although we attempted to diversify the source of the responses by surveying at different locations and to targeted groups, there are still limitations to the sample. Some larger faculties such as Arts and Engineering may have been over-represented while other smaller faculties such as Dentistry had little to no representation (see Fig 2). 92% of the respondents are students, thus other user groups such as faculty and staff may not be sufficiently represented (see Fig 1). We also realize that some participants may have reported their minors or double majors while others have not. Therefore, while this sample is not fully representative of the campus user population, the responses provide valuable insight into the preferences of campus spaces and qualities nonetheless.

### Survey Participants

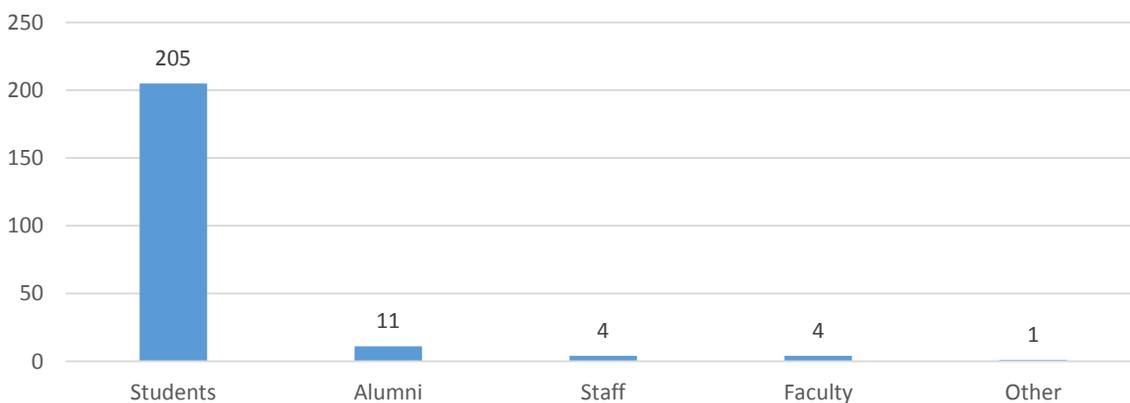


Fig 1. Survey participant distribution

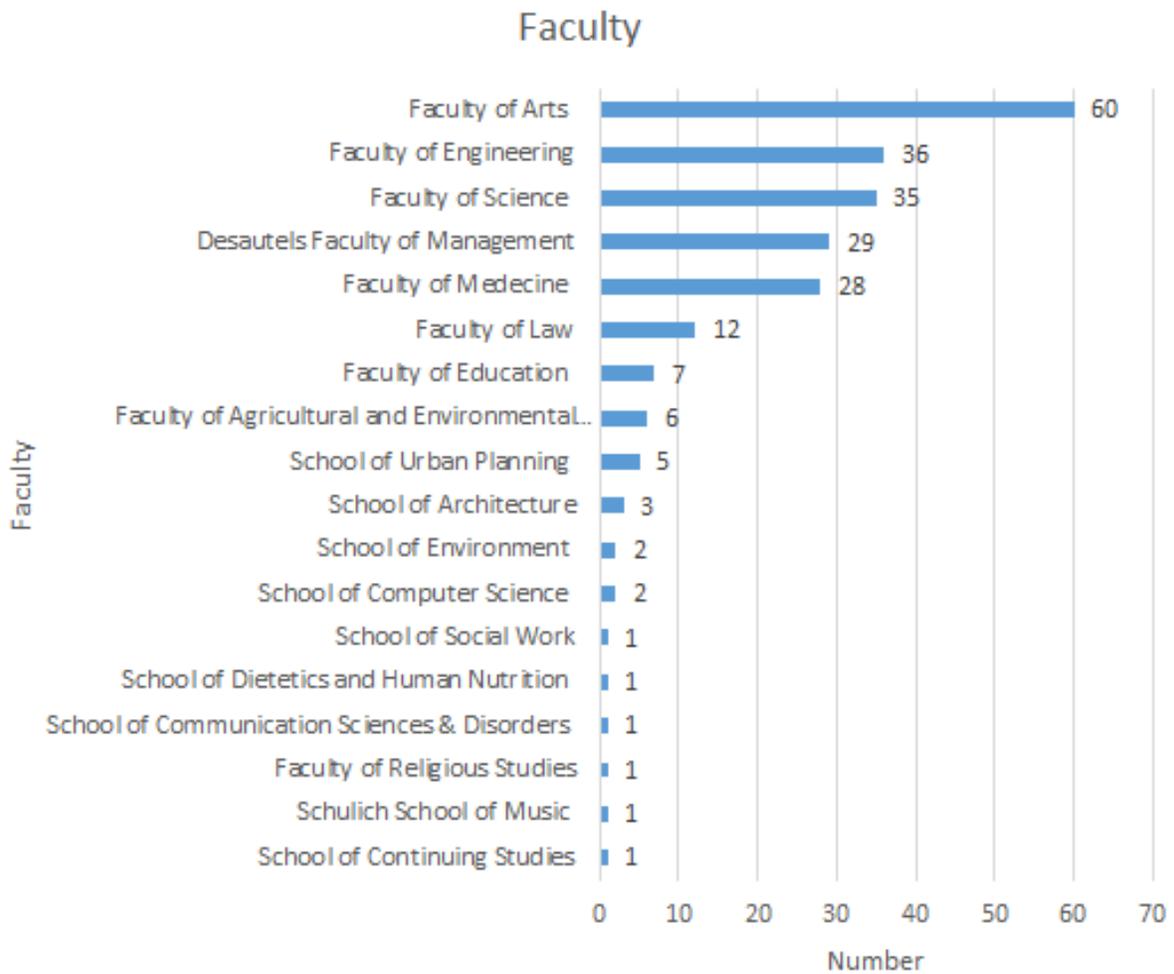


Fig 2. Faculty distribution of all respondents

## Methodology

# Indoor Campus Walkabouts - James' Walks

Our “James’ Walks”, a pun spun out of the popular Jane’s walks held around the world, were conducted twice over the course of Fall 2014 and Winter 2015 semesters. While the online survey aimed to shed light on a broader scale across campus, these walks were intended to help elicit insights by bringing people around to experience different areas on campus on a human scale. Locations were chosen based on a subjective sense of how many (more) students they catered to, as well as geographic vicinity in terms of walking from one building to the next. Groups of around 8-15 people (including students, MSP volunteers, as well as staff from Campus & Space Planning and Fire Safety and Prevention) gathered to walk and provide observations on the spaces we passed through. In total, we conducted walks for around 20-25 participants in total over both walks.

The spaces we toured include:

1. Arts Building’s main hallway
2. Burnside Hall (Elevator Lobby; Basement; Underground tunnel from Burnside to Schulich)
3. Frank Dawson Adams (FDA) Lobby
4. McConnell Engineering Building’s main hallways
5. Leacock Building’s public spaces (incl. basement, first floor, and second floor)
6. Leacock Building’s study rooms (first floor, adj. to SNAX)
7. Bridge between McLennan Library to Redpath Library
8. Redpath Library’s group study spaces
9. Redpath’s cafeteria spaces
10. Ferrier Arts Lounge
11. Ferrier/Arts courtyard (below & adjacent to Doctor Penfield Ave)
12. Genome Building atrium (McGill University and G enome Qu ebec Innovation Center)
13. Rutherford Physics Building lobby
14. Tunnel from Strathcona Anat. and Dent. Building to Genome Building
15. Strathcona Anat. and Dent. Building entrance hallway
16. Trottier Building (floors 1 & 2)
17. Wong Building lobby and student lounge

Participants jotted notes onto sheets provided by MSP (see Appendix 5c for originals). These notes were codified into data sets and prioritized based on an index rating system from 1-5. The priority list generated as well as the participants’ general comments are summarized in Section 3d and 3e, “Priority List of Specific Indoor Spaces” and “Suggestion Highlights for Specific Indoor Spaces”, respectively.

## General Trends and Observations

### Mapping Favorite Outdoor and Indoor Spaces



Fig 3. Mapping results of favorite outdoor spaces

Figure 3 shows that most respondents who chose a favorite outdoor space picked Lower Field. This focal point may be a result of the area's general accessibility and recognizable name and landscape. Several other notable points included the green space adjacent to the Stewart Biology Complex, the terraced amphitheater in front of the James Administration building, and a smattering of spots across east field around Burnside.



Fig 4. Mapping results of favorite indoor spaces

The map in Figure 4 shows a more spread out picture of favorite outdoor spaces. Instead of several nodes there are many. There are a sizeable concentrations within the SSMU Building, the faculty lounge, Bronfman Building, Redpath and McLennan Library, as well as Burnside Building and the McConnell Engineering Building.

Purpose of Campus Space Usage:

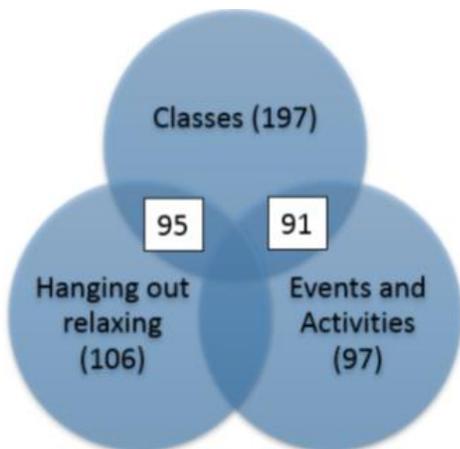


Fig. 5: Usage overlaps

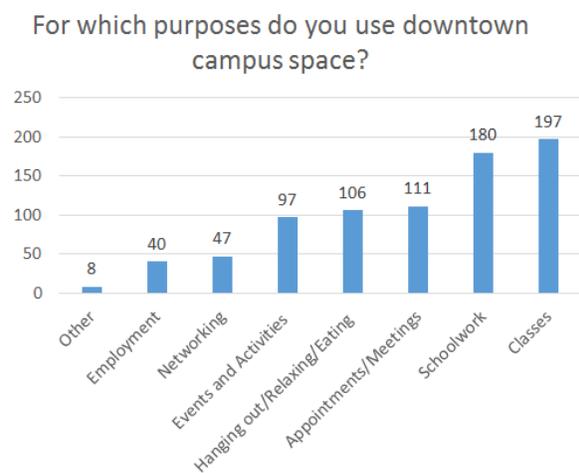


Fig. 6: Primary purposes for campus usage

Since most of the respondents were students, the general purpose of using campus space is undoubtedly for classes and schoolwork (See Figure 6). However, there is a notable portion of responses that indicate campus space as place for meetings, socializing and events. As a subset of the respondents who come to campus for classes, nearly 50% of them also use campus spaces for either relaxing or social events (see Figure 5).

Level of Satisfaction with Campus Space:

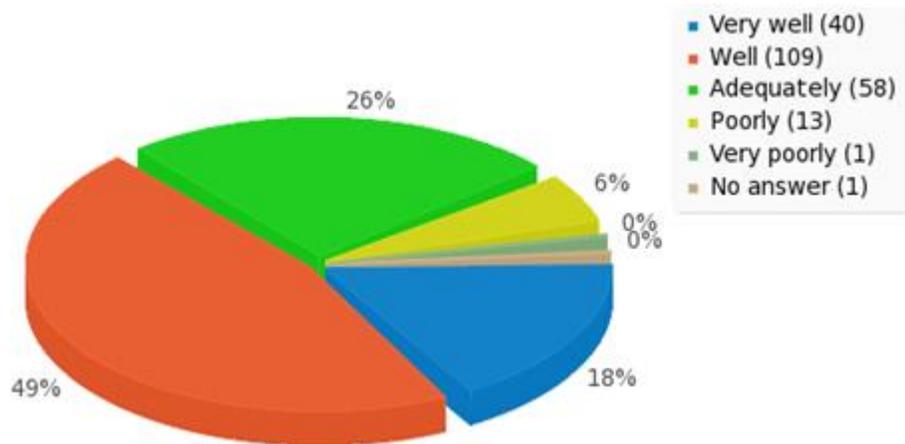


Fig. 7: Levels of satisfaction with downtown campus spaces

When asked whether campus spaces support their needs, two-thirds of the respondents (67%) responded either “very well” or “well”. Over a quarter (26%) of the respondents said “adequately” and only 6% found that campus spaces support their needs “poorly”. Therefore, while a majority of the responses are positive, there is certainly still room for improvement.

## Results

## Preferred Qualities for Indoor Spaces

### Indoor space- qualities

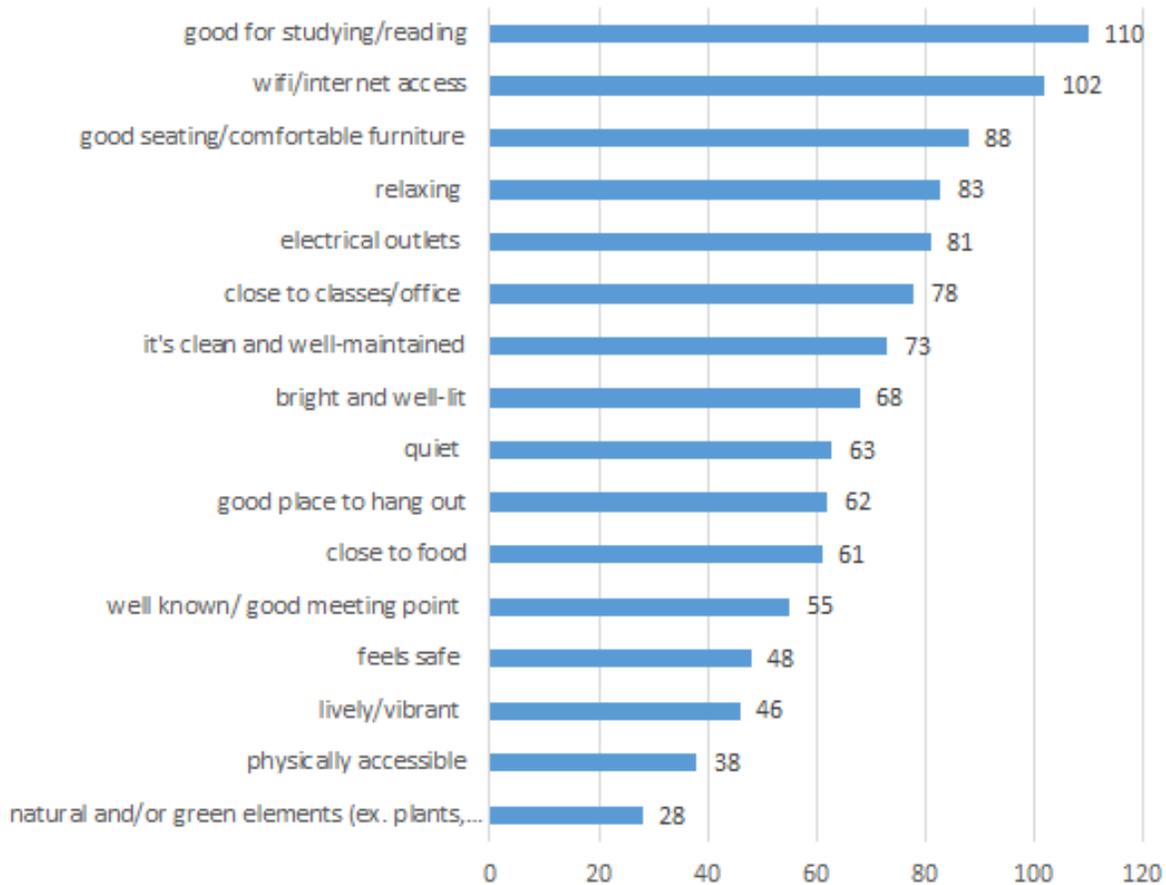


Fig 8. Responses to “Why do you like the [favorite indoor space you’ve chosen]?”

Even though our respondents have many different favourite indoor campus spaces, when asked about the qualities they like about these spaces, there are some common trends in their responses. Nearly half our respondents prefer their favourite indoor campus space because it is “good for studying or reading”. Other popular qualities include Wi-Fi access, comfortable seating and furniture, relaxing, access to electrical outlets and proximity to classes and/or offices. This shows that people generally prefer indoor spaces as study and work spaces.

A considerably smaller group of respondents prefer their favourite indoor space as places to hang out or to meet people. Related types of qualities, including “good place to hang out”, “well known/good meeting point” and “lively/vibrant” all have a much lower score than other qualities. While many may

prefer to socialize outside of campus buildings, this may be an indication that our campus buildings lack quality social spaces.

“Natural and/or green elements” is the quality that the least number of respondents selected as a reason they like their favourite indoor space. This could be attributed to the overall lack of these green elements in McGill’s indoor campus spaces.

To further inquire the respondents’ opinion on features and qualities of indoor campus spaces, we asked the respondents what they think is missing from these spaces. The information we gathered from this question offers great insight of the needs of campus space users.

#### **Informal space** (*Hang out space, lounge space, seating, interaction space, nooks, places to rest, nap*)

The data shows that the respondents want more interaction spaces, informal spaces to hang out with friends, have lunch, etc. They want places to rest or take a power nap, describing these spaces with terms such as “nooks” and “pods”. Lack of benches and seating also come up frequently in the responses. The following are some inconveniences mentioned in the survey data:

1. Seating seems to be moved around often
2. There are not enough places to hang out

#### **Study spaces** (*Study space, reading space, graduate office, meeting area*)

While a majority of the respondents point out that there are not enough spaces to study, there are also specific requirements to study spaces according to their responses. While some prefer niches and nooks to study privately, many respondents mention the need for large spaces to spread out and work. The following are some other suggestions from the respondents:

1. Absolutely quiet areas to study and work without distraction
2. Lounge space for students (This is more specific pertaining to the need of lounge space in the respective departments)
3. More student meeting areas
4. Comfortable furniture

#### **Food spots** (*Indoor and outdoor cafes, microwaves, depanneurs, cheap priced food stalls, healthy food options*)

Survey data also shows that respondents want an attractive and colorful environment that has nearby access to beverages and snacks. The respondents believe that there are not many options for eating within the campus. The following is a list of features that the respondents would like to see on campus:

1. Cheap places to eat
2. More microwaves and kettles
3. Health snack bars
4. Student run cafes/coffee shops
5. Depanneurs or Tim Horton’s

Apart from the availability of options to purchase lunch or snacks, they also wish to have more:

1. Benches and seats to sit and eat their lunches (which are often moved around)
2. Places where they can eat, study and work on their assignments
3. Recycling bins

**Plants** (*potted plants, vegetation*)

Respondents had a fair amount to say regarding greenery on campus. A majority of them wanted greenery indoors:

1. More potted plants
2. Green wall/ living wall

**Technology infrastructure** (*Lighting, electrical sockets, Wi-Fi and more computers*)

Survey data also shows that respondents would like to see improvements in technology infrastructure to better support their computing needs. The responses emphasize the importance of:

1. Charging stations for cell phones and tablets
2. Electrical outlets for charging laptops
3. Wi-Fi access
4. More computers

**Aesthetics**

In terms of aesthetics, data shows that the respondents need both functional and vibrant places to work in and the following are some of the suggestions:

1. Wall decorations such as murals and art work
2. Better task lighting and natural lighting in indoor spaces
3. Clocks (and clock maintenance, regarding a number of clocks that had incorrect displays or drained batteries)

**Connectivity**

There are also opinions on connectivity and wheelchair access throughout the campus. The following are considerations suggested by the respondents:

1. Access to the library from Sherbrooke Street
2. Tunnels connecting different buildings to facilitate access during bad weather
3. More information on existing tunnels present, including the location of entry and exit points

## Preferred Qualities for Outdoor Spaces

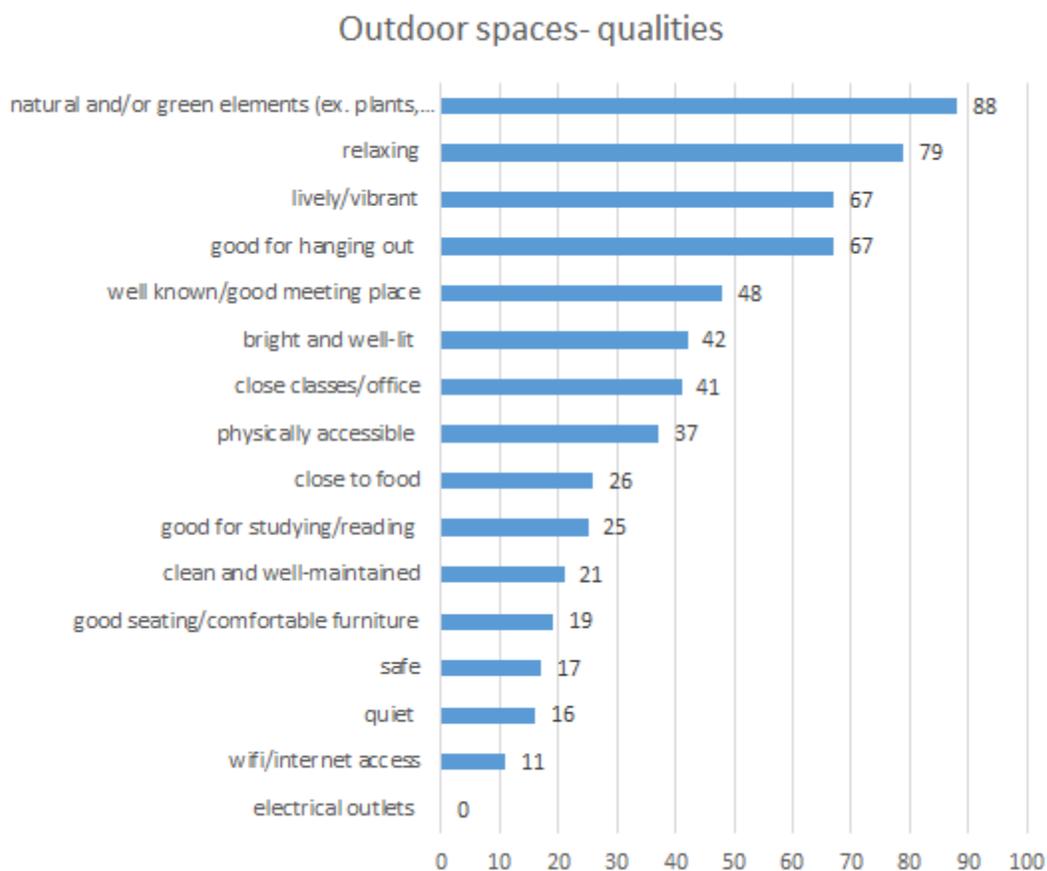


Fig. 9: Responses to “Why do you like the [favorite outdoor space you’ve chosen]?”

The preferred qualities for outdoor campus spaces are different but complementary when compared to the responses for indoor spaces. Our respondents cited qualities such as natural or green elements, relaxing, lively and vibrant atmosphere to be present in their favourite outdoor spaces. Many also found these outdoor spaces to be good for hanging out and well known meeting points.

“Good for studying/reading”, cleanliness, “good seating”, safety, quietness and Wi-Fi access were qualities that were least chosen when participants were asked to think of why they liked McGill’s outdoor spaces. Overall, these numbers are good indicators of the strengths and weaknesses of our outdoor campus spaces. For example, the low numbers attributed to outdoor Wi-Fi or comfortable seating could be an indication that we do not provide sufficient Wi-Fi coverage or seating options outdoors.

When compared to how respondents answered questions about preferred indoor space qualities, these numbers help paint a larger, complementary picture. For example, a large number of respondents preferred the indoor location they chose for their “good for studying/reading” and “Wi-Fi access” qualities while these were among the least chosen preferred qualities for their outdoor spaces. In fact, the top five preferred qualities for indoor spaces (“good for studying/reading”; Wi-Fi access; “good seating/comfortable furniture”; “relaxing”; and “electrical outlets”) are almost inversely proportional to a few of the least preferred qualities for outdoor spaces (ex. “electrical outlets”; “good seating/comfortable furniture”; “good for studying/reading”). This shows that respondents use outdoor and indoor spaces for different purposes under our current infrastructural circumstances.

Again, we asked respondents what was missing from our outdoor campus spaces to further our understanding of their needs and desires. A summary of the insights they provided follows here:

#### **Informal space** (*Hang out space, seating, interaction space*)

Similar to indoor spaces, the data shows that respondents wanted more interaction spaces, informal spaces to hang out with friends, have lunch,.

#### **Food spots** (*Indoor and outdoor cafes, cheap priced food stalls, healthy food options*)

Survey data also shows that respondents have an interest in more outdoor sources of cheaper and healthier food. Again, the data suggests a perception that there are not many options for eating within the campus and wanted the following

1. Cheap places to eat - Outdoor cafes with seating
2. Health snack bars
3. Student run cafes
4. Depanneurs or Tim Horton’s
5. Outdoor coffee shop

Apart from the availability of options to purchase lunch or snacks, they also wanted

1. Benches and seats to sit and eat their lunches (which often gets moved)
2. Picnic tables for lunch
3. Places where they can eat, study and work on their assignments
4. Recycle bins

#### **Plants** (*trees, vegetation - indoors and outdoors*)

While a majority respondents wanted greenery indoors, comments relevant to outdoor vegetation were also given:

1. More green areas
2. More trees and more shaded areas

#### **Technology infrastructure**

With regard to technology infrastructure outdoors, survey data showed that respondents were interested in seeing larger Wi-Fi coverage across campus.

#### **Aesthetics:**

Survey data suggested that wall decorations around campus such as murals and art work would be a welcome change of scenery.

### Connectivity

There are also opinions on connectivity and wheelchair access throughout the campus. The following are considerations suggested by the respondents:

1. Access to the library from Sherbrooke Street
2. Tunnels connecting different buildings to facilitate access during bad weather
3. More bike lanes
4. Pathways leading to buildings
5. More information on existing tunnels present, including the location of entry and exit points

## Results

## Priority List of Specific Indoor Spaces

During our James' Walks, participants were asked to comment on the indoor spaces we passed through as well as rate each space on a scale of 1 to 5 in terms of relative redesign priority (with 1 being "very urgent" and 5 being "not at all urgent"). The following list is a summary of each spaces' average priority value:

Table 1: Ranked average priority values of indoor spaces

Building	Area Evaluated	Urgency of Redesign
Arts	hallway	1.00
Leacock	lobby	1.50
Burnside	basement	1.83
Trottier	floor 2	2.33
Leacock	study rooms	2.50
Rutherford	lobby	2.50
Burnside	lobby	3.00
Ferrier	courtyard	3.00
Trottier	floor 1	3.33
FDA	lobby	3.43
Wong	lobby	3.57
Strathcona to Genome	tunnel	3.67
Ferrier	Arts Lounge	4.00
Schulich	brick tunnel	4.00
Strathcona	entrance hallway	4.00
McConnell	hallway	4.33
Redpath	cafeteria	4.50
Genome	atrium	4.67
Redpath	group study	5.00
McLennan	bridge	5.00

However, there are a fair number of limitations associated with this priority list. In terms of sample size, these averages are the result of <15 responses for each location, sometimes much less. These rankings are also subjectively relative to each other, as the evaluations made were conducted by different people on two separate tours. Furthermore, we began to realize as we conducted these walks that the state and situation of each building and its indoor spaces was segregated and mutually exclusive from the state of other campus buildings. Participants often commented on the notion of a “home” or “base” and mentioned that their experiences at McGill often played out in a specific set of buildings (instead of many or all). To create a “priority list of campus buildings” in this sense makes little sense, as each building caters to its own specific communities and less so to the McGill community as a whole.

## Comments & Suggestions for Specific Indoor Spaces

The comments provided were often very specific to the location and difficult to summarize across the two walks that we completed. Each building and location could have constituted an entire case study. While it was not within our capacity to carry out such research, we collected individual comments and suggestions made by participants during our James’ Walks regarding each location and highlighted examples in the table below. (See Appendix 5d. for the raw set of all comments made during the James’ Walks.)

Table 2: Suggestion highlights for specific indoor spaces

Building	Area Evaluated	Example Comments & Suggestions
Arts	hallway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bad light and painting in study space</li> </ul>
Burnside	basement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>comfier chairs, brighter furniture, sunnier light, outlets at desk, better signage for bathrooms and foods</li> <li>gross couches, needs connection to outdoors! get a giant clock!</li> <li>seating with vinyl or leather, not cloth. glass boards. make use of columns. remove payphones.</li> </ul>
Burnside	lobby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>let’s make a green wall! spend lots of time here and feel trapped. high traffic space with little community area.</li> <li>Circle the two pillars with benches</li> </ul>
FDA	lobby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>match low tables/desk with benches. add some art?</li> <li>add recycling bin. extend benches. better wayfinding through tunnel system. ICE on walkway! very urgent. bad drainage.</li> <li>cold. huge traffic. noise carries. weird athletics signage. nice schulich sign. cool rock bro. walkway too slippery.</li> </ul>
Ferrier	Arts Lounge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hard to get people here as it is out of the wat. perhaps it could be combined with courtyard to support events</li> <li>did not know this existed!</li> </ul>
Ferrier	courtyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beautiful space! unmarked! unused!</li> <li>could be used for events</li> </ul>

Genome	atrium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• boring, could use some comfier seating for the restaurant! functional, works well enough!</li> <li>• cafe = great use of space</li> </ul>
Leacock	lobby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too many recycling bins under stairs.</li> <li>• polygon table. lightings taken out of the ceiling. Basement: dark space feels dangerous.</li> <li>• staircase near room 26/snax: extremely dark. feels very dangerous in evening/night.</li> </ul>
Leacock	study rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no power outlets. cells don't have lighting</li> <li>• poor design, bad furniture, too closed.</li> </ul>
McConnell	hallway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mirrors for turning corners. expand corner in tv area? use of space in eng lobby: great exhibition space.</li> <li>• loose chairs at desk! good quick study space</li> <li>• convex mirror to view corner. semitransparent film on windows to not stare at loading dock. add seating to mcconnell lobby (niche leading to frostbite). Plants need good upkeep.</li> </ul>
McLennan	bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cover wood railings to be seats.</li> <li>• seating along walls. no exterior recycling bins. more plants. redpath doors locked: why? mclennan lobby seating next to elevators.</li> </ul>
Redpath	cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dangerous high-tables and wobbly chairs. not easy to access.</li> <li>• sound-absorbing panels on walls</li> </ul>
Redpath	group study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good use of colours. want to see expansion</li> <li>• popular, well used</li> <li>• gross bathrooms. more ventilation. wall murals should be removable. ex: vinyl stickers w/nature themes</li> </ul>
Rutherford	lobby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *hanging plants**** lack of comfortable seating, does not facilitate group study; no "way-finding". Square Angular design</li> <li>• no character, uninviting, no reason to want to stay here. Seating?</li> <li>• more wood</li> </ul>
Schulich	brick tunnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• table against wall, bar-stools, desk lamps; low comfy furniture, chill, nap!</li> <li>• warm but plain. nice lighting. long standing bar study area or couches. pretty arches. low ceiling.</li> <li>• lovely walls. light isn't bad. like the idea of McConnell hallway desk w seats for skype &amp; calls</li> </ul>
Strathcona to Genome	tunnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• too narrow for any real use. rear part very grim.</li> <li>• i like it! serves its purpose.</li> </ul>
Strathcona	entrance hallway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wrong uses in the rotunda, not a building one wants to visit (anatomy!) but beautiful spaces inside.</li> <li>• love the entrance &amp; hallway' serves its purpose. not cluttered, good lighting!</li> </ul>

Trottier	floor 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>couches! :) group seating options. Transparent barriers between cafe and hallway! (Y); lots of natural light--&gt; Plant potential! (why no plants yet??)</li> <li>i really enjoy the new design since 2011. put up more dividers; more high chairs, seems functional enough</li> </ul>
Trottier	floor 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>art on the grey pillars</li> <li>needs modular layout plan with adaptable furniture. existing furniture finished!</li> </ul>
Wong	lobby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attempt to make use of unused space. Partitioned area may be more conducive to group study as area can be noisy</li> <li>sliding doors?, lower dividing structures under staircase</li> <li>put couches at entrance to facilitate people meeting and making friends. better study space. Always think about adding study space. we're at university, so we study a lot.</li> </ul>

## Additional Comments

### “If we had the money...”

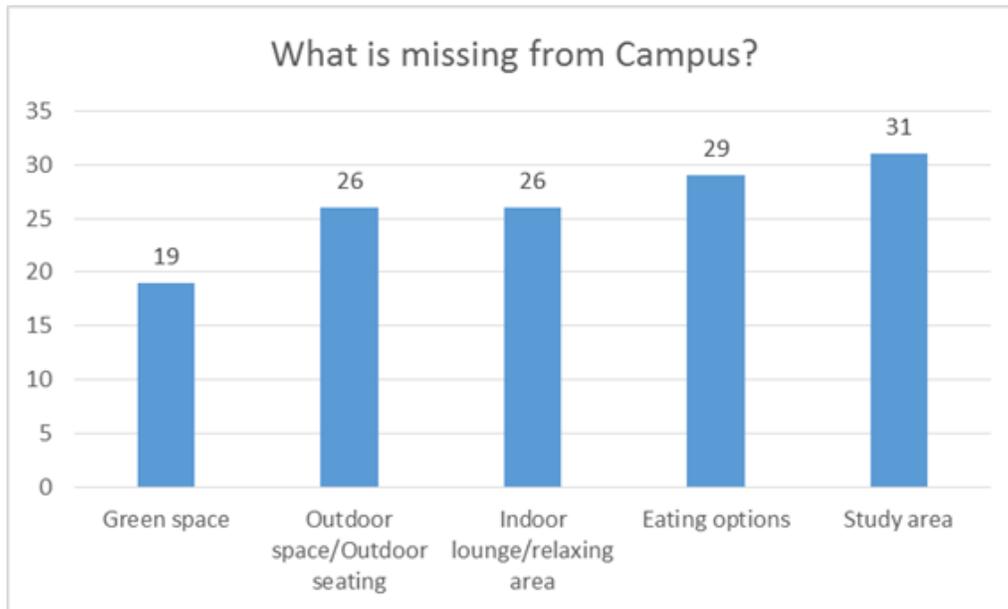


Fig 10: Frequently mentioned elements perceived as missing from campus

When asked what is missing from our campus, the five features mentioned most were study areas, eating options, indoor lounge or relaxing areas, outdoor space or seating, and green space. There is a high demand for quiet study spaces and a greater variety of healthy and affordable food options. Both indoor and outdoor spaces for seating and relaxing are also much needed according to our respondents. Although people are generally satisfied with the existing outdoor spaces such as the Lower Field, there is still a demand for more green spaces.

We attempted to get respondents to explore further possibilities by asking them the question: “If you were given a large sum (\$\$\$) for campus improvement, how would you spend it?” From this we drew a variety of suggestions that may be beyond the scope of AUIYS, but are interesting to note for future reference.

#### Food facilities

The data reveals a major demand for cheap, healthy options for food and availability of cafes and coffee shops. Students were interested in investing in the following:

1. Subsidies for student run cafes
2. Introducing cheap and healthy menus
3. More microwaves
4. More coffee

We've highlighted a few statements to illustrate the perceived necessity of better access to cheaper food and coffee:

- *"Change the food options of cafeteria in Redpath library basement. Put more coffee shops or coffee vending machines (like Seattle's best as we used to have at redpath) on campus. ONE NEEDS MORE COFFEE ON CAMPUS."*
- *"Open more coffee stands. Or hire someone to do a charity type coffee. Have someone for running the Wednesday fair trade coffee shop."*
- *"Subsidies for student run cafeterias. Food is too expensive."*

### **Landscape upgrade**

Landscape upgrades refer to adding green spaces outside such as creating areas with lots of plant species, natural spaces, and shaded open areas with trees for resting. The data reveals that money should be spent on landscape improvements so as to aid creation of more informal spaces, which help students to socialize, study or relax, to have lunches and to connect with nature. Data also reveals that students would like to have fountains, sculpture, art and partly shaded spaces incorporated into the green space.

### **Maintenance**

Data also reveals that students wanted to spend money towards maintenance, cleaning and employment of maintenance staff. This would include keeping hallways and labs clean and increasing the number of recycling and garbage containers on campus. Certain statements like the following demonstrated a general sentiment:

- *"spend more on maintenance personnel"*
- *"I would spend it on keeping spaces clean"*

## Analysis, Implications, & Recommendations

When we began our All Up In Yo' Space survey, our intent was to generate a priority list of indoor spaces and gain a better understanding of our campus spaces downtown: what they looked and felt like; what our community thought of them; and how we could move forward from there.

The process to generate a comprehensive and objective set of data has proven to be challenging on many fronts. Our most affecting and persistent issue is that of sample size. With our survey, we had difficulty balancing the complexity of our questions with general accessibility. Our campus-wide broadcasts and organized in-person surveying campaigns bore limited fruit; while we did not obtain a robust number of responses, the ones that were sent in were surprisingly insightful.

We encountered a similar situation while organizing our James' Walks. The participants who came offered a range of staff and student perspectives, with quality inadvertently taking precedence over quantity. The data collected and insights provided are thus not representative, but provide a workable starting point in terms of grasping a better understanding of McGill's downtown campus spaces.

Through our analysis, we came to observe certain consistent trends.

Survey data showed that Lower Field was highlighted as most respondents' favorite outdoor space on campus. The majority of on-campus activity happens before and after the summer season when Lower Field is most accessible, however. With reference to Montreal's winters, cold temperatures and wind send campus-goers indoors for a good deal of the school year.

Unlike outdoor spaces, preferences and usage of indoor spaces were decentralized across different buildings based on the faculty of the respondent. Desautel's students studying business in the Bronfman building spent most of their time on campus in Bronfman (including time spent lounging, eating, etc.), for instance. Urban planning and architecture students too spend most of their time in MacDonald-Harrington, their home base. These are a few examples that illustrate the lack of a focal point on campus with regard to public spaces (see section 3a. General Trends and Observations).

In this regard, the idea of a priority list of indoor campus spaces may be inherently divided from the illustrated pattern of how our community uses its campus buildings. With a relatively segregated community, prioritizing the improvement of one building or space versus another caters not to the entire community but just the portion that uses that specific space regularly. Certainly there are spaces that serve more students than others, but their individual renovation opportunities are context dependent with many varying factors. These include financial capacity, the degree and strength of established relationships between community actors including students, staff, and faculty, and student/staff capacity to propose projects, push them forward, and maintain their momentum to ensure follow-through and completion.

Therefore, approaching relationships and collaborations through a building-specific strategy might provide an appropriate starting point to tackling the improvement of indoor spaces at McGill. To illustrate

briefly, various opportunities in buildings such as Burnside and the Leacock proved ripe in the 2014-2015 year. Conversations and years of work around newly implemented space-improvement fee levies provided the financial backing and faculty support needed to kick-start major renovations processes that have been floating around as ideas for some time.

The building-specific comments provided in section 3d and in the raw data set (see appendix 5d) may prove to be more useful than the priority list generated in section 3d if this suggestion is well-received. They can be referenced and built upon in further consultations should opportunities to conduct more investigations emerge in the following years.

In terms of specific suggestions, our survey's sample size prevents us from making representative and quantitatively-backed suggestions for both indoor and outdoor campus spaces. With this limitation in mind, please refer to the suggestion summaries given in section 3b and 3c. These were topics or ideas mentioned often in survey responses and offer helpful insights with regards to how campus spaces may be improved overall.

While carrying out AUIYS over the year, we sparked many conversations about the state of our campus spaces. It was interesting to observe that while many individuals spoke of our campus and community as one entity, our indoor spaces survey suggested otherwise. The decentralized nature of our building usage therefore implies a potential for better quality public spaces to provide more opportunities to bring our community together. We hope that the information gathered through the AUIYS will help align the continual evolution of McGill's campus spaces with the needs of its community.



Transforming Spaces. Connecting People.

## Appendix 5a

## Survey Questions:

### All Up In Your Space!

Use your voice to help us build a priority list of indoor and outdoor spaces to guide the McGill Spaces Projects' future projects and collaborations.

This is a study being conducted by the McGill Spaces Project, a student-led initiative at McGill University. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may choose to withdraw at any time without consequence. We will keep your personal information confidential. The survey will take 5 minutes.

Upon completion of the survey you may enter your email for a chance to win a \$25 gift certificate for the Humble Lion Café.

By completing this survey, you consent that your answers will be used in this project.

### General Information

#### 1 I currently identify as... \*

Please choose **all** that apply:

- Student
- Alumni
- Faculty
- Staff
- Other:

#### 2 For which purposes do you generally use downtown campus space? \*

Please choose **all** that apply:

- Classes
- Schoolwork

- Employment
- Appointments/Meetings
- Networking
- Hanging out/Relaxing/Eating
- Events and Activities
- Other:

Please answer this and the following questions based on your **current status** and current use of campus spaces.

### Show us your spaces!

#### 3 Do you have a favourite indoor space on campus? \*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
- No

#### 4 Please show us where your favourite indoor space is by placing the pin on the map, and providing a brief description below.

Please write your answer here; Choose the location by right clicking on the map or dragging the pin.

#### 5 Where exactly is this space? Imagine you're giving directions to a stranger - help us find it!

Please write your answer here:

#### 6 Why do you like the space? \*

Please choose **all** that apply:

- close to classes/office
- close to food
- good seating/comfortable furniture
- good for studying/reading
- wifi/internet access
- electrical outlets

- relaxing
- it's clean and well-maintained
- physically accessible
- quiet
- lively/vibrant
- bright and well-lit
- well known/ good meeting point
- good place to hang out
- natural and/or green elements (ex. plants, window views)
- feels safe
- Other:

7 Do you have a favourite outdoor space on campus? \*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
- No

8 Please show us where your favourite outdoor space is by placing the pin on the map, and providing a brief description below.

Please write your answer here; Choose the location by right clicking on the map or dragging the pin.

9 Where exactly is this space? Imagine you're giving directions to a stranger - help us find it!

Please write your answer here:

10 Why do you like the space? \*

Please choose **all** that apply:

- close classes/office
- close to food

- good seating/comfortable furniture
- good for studying/reading
- wifi/internet access
- electrical outlets
- relaxing
- clean and well-maintained
- physically accessible
- quiet
- lively/vibrant
- bright and well-lit
- well known/good meeting place
- good for hanging out
- natural and/or green elements (ex. plants, window views)
- safe
- Other:

**11 Where do you spend the most time indoor on campus OUTSIDE OF CLASSES AND OFFICE HOURS?**

Please write your answer here; Please place the pin by right-clicking or by dragging it to this location.

**12 Where exactly is this space? Imagine you're giving directions to a stranger - help us find it! \***

Please write your answer here:

**13 Why do you like the space? \***

Please choose **all** that apply:

- I don't like this place
- close classes/office
- close to food
- good seating/comfortable furniture
- good for studying/reading

- wifi/internet access
- electrical outlets
- relaxing
- clean and well-maintained
- physically accessible
- quiet
- lively
- bright and well-lit
- well known/good meeting place
- good place to hang out
- natural and/or green elements (ex. plants, window views)
- feels safe
- Other:

### Improving campus spaces

We want to know how you think campus spaces can be improved, and the projects & ideas that you think would make them better!

**14 What is one specific thing that you think is missing from campus spaces (indoor and/or outdoor)?**

Please write your answer here:

**15 What specific indoor campus space would you like to see improved, and what should be done?**

**Imagine you're giving directions to a stranger - help us find it!**

Please write your answer here:

**16 In general, how well do campus spaces support your needs?**

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Very well
- Well
- Adequately
- Poorly

- Very poorly

Make a comment on your choice here:

### Who are you?

This questions will help us identify where your voices are coming from.

### 17 Which faculty, department, or campus service are you a part of?

Please choose **all** that apply:

- Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
- Faculty of Arts
- School of Continuing Studies
- Faculty of Dentistry
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Engineering
- Faculty of Law
- Desautels Faculty of Management
- Faculty of Medicine
- Schulich School of Music
- Faculty of Religious Studies
- Faculty of Science
- School of Architecture
- School of Communication Sciences & Disorders
- School of Computer Science
- School of Dietetics and Human Nutrition
- School of Environment
- School of Information Studies
- Ingram School of Nursing

- School of Physical & Occupational Therapy
- School of Social Work
- School of Urban Planning
- None, I am a visitor to the McGill community
- Other:

**18 Before you go! If you were given a large sum (\$\$\$) for campus improvement, how would you spend it?**

Please write your answer here:

**19 Thank you for your participation! Your voice will help shape the future of our campus spaces.**

Please check the boxes below to be entered into the draw for a \$25 gift certificate for the Humble Lion Café, and to receive occasional updates about MSP projects and opportunities for involvement:

Please choose **all** that apply:

- Enter me into the draw!
- Keep me posted about MSP projects and events!

**20 Please leave us your email address if you checked either of the boxes above.**

Your email address will not be disseminated to any third parties, and will only be used for contacting draw winners or to inform interested persons about future MSP initiatives (according to your preferences above).

Please write your answer here:

**21 Any final thoughts about campus spaces? Please leave your comments here.**

Please write your answer here:

**Thank you for your participation! The MSP sincerely appreciates your contribution. Your voice will help shape our campus spaces as they change and evolve.**

**What is the McGill Spaces Project?**

A lackluster hallway, an empty corner, an awkward nook – every university campus has them. But what if these were reimagined as a colorful study space with undulating seats, a pop-up coffee stand, and a busking area for student musicians? The McGill Spaces Project (MSP) is a student-led initiative that seeks

to critically reimagine McGill's spaces and places. Through cross-campus collaboration and creative placemaking, we aim to highlight the rousing potential of underused areas around downtown campus.

Contact us at [mcgillspacesproject@gmail.com](mailto:mcgillspacesproject@gmail.com) if you have any concerns or general inquiries. Also, check out our facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mcgillspacesproject>, and our pretty website at [mcgillspacesproject.com](http://mcgillspacesproject.com).

Submit your survey.

Thank you for completing this survey.

## Appendix 5b

## Survey Development Process

The questions we formulated were based on an idea of our “dream data” - we wanted to understand what people liked about campus; what they didn’t like; their favorite spaces and why; so on and so forth.

The initial version of the survey was first circulated internally within MSP to gather feedback. Members of the MSP gave comments in terms of wording, format and order of the questions. In particular, the survey was significantly shortened to reduce the time needed for completion. As a result, several iterations were made before the final version was confirmed.

The final version was hosted on McGill Surveys as an online questionnaire. A welcome message gives a brief introduction and outlines the research purpose and the incentive for completing the survey. The final version of the survey is divided into five sections (see appendix for questions and descriptions):

1. General Information
2. Show us your spaces!
3. Improving campus spaces
4. Who are you?
5. Conclusion

The “General Information” section identifies the status of the participant, i.e. student, staff or alumni, and the general purpose of using campus spaces.

“Show us your spaces!” first inquires whether the participant has a favourite indoor campus space. This question serves to direct the participant to a different set of follow-up questions depending on their response. If the participant selects “Yes”, then the follow-up questions will revolve around the preferred indoor space. If the participant selects “No”, then the next question will ask whether the participant has a favourite outdoor campus space. Similarly, if the participant selects “Yes”, then the follow-up questions will be about the preferred outdoor space. If not, the participant is directed to answer questions regarding a campus space that he/she uses most frequently outside of classes or office hours.

The follow-up questions in this section require the participant to locate his/her preferred or most used campus space through both placing a marker on a map and giving directions in text. The participant is then asked to select reason(s) why they prefer the space.

In the “Improving campus spaces” section, the participant is asked to identify any qualities that he/she believes is missing from campus spaces. The participant is also asked to identify any campus space that he/she wishes to see changes made. Finally, the participant rates his/her level of satisfaction on how well campus spaces support his/her needs.

The “Who Are You” section identifies the participant by the faculty or department he/she is in. The “Conclusion” section asks the participant to identify one or more key issues to improve on if he/she is given a large sum of money. At the end of the survey, the participant has the choice to enter the gift card

draw, as well as the MSP's mailing list. The participant also has the opportunity to leave any final comments.

Once the survey is finalized and hosted online, we recognized that online circulation alone would not be sufficient in gathering our target number of responses. Hence, we organized a surveying campaign after Spring Break, where we set up a booth at different locations on campus to canvass students, faculty and staff to complete the survey. The following is a list of dates and locations where the MSP team has set up surveying booths.

1. March 16, 2015, Monday, from 12:30 pm - 2:00 pm: Front entrance of the Trottier Building
2. March 17, 2015, Tuesday, from 10:00 am - 12:00 pm: Lobby of the Stewart Biology Building
3. March 20, 2015, Friday, from 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm: Outside McLennan Library
4. March 25, 2015, Wednesday, from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm: Inside the Bronfman Building



Appendix 5c

## James' Walks note-taking form example

### Redpath Cafeteria

#### Existing concerns/suggestions

- Copy/Printing Services has closed since 2013; eating area is newly renovated

#### Qualities of space?

- a. Mood
- b. Sight
- c. Touch
- d. Movement
- e. Sound

#### Comments (concerns/suggestions)

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Rate the priority of redesign      Very urgent   1   2   3   4   5   Not at all urgent

## Appendix 5d

**James' Walks raw comment data**

Building	Area Evaluated	Comments
Arts	hallway	
arts	hallway	bad light and painting in study space.
burnside	basement	no clock! payphones? customized columns. otto mass glass dividers that can be written on
burnside	lobby	lets make a greenw all! spend lots of time here and feel trapped. high traffic space with little community area.
burnside	basement	gross couches, needs connection to outdoors! get a giant clock!
burnside	basement	comfier chairs, brighter furniture, sunier light, outlets at desk, better signage for bathrooms and foods
burnside	basement	seating with vinyl or leather, not cloth. glass boards. make use of columns. remove payphones.
burnside	lobby	more colour. green wall.
Burnside	lobby	good lighting except stairs.
Burnside	lobby	no coordination of colours and finishes. looks like it was done piece meal. new ceiling and lights are improvement.
burnside	lobby	posters are nice. harsh lighting, needs green and life
Burnside	lobby	limited space to use considering evacuation path
burnside	basement	addition of furniture must take into consideration flame resistance & wiring for computers

Burnside	lobby	more plants, exhibits (less dungeon), ugly floor, lighting(soften, less harsh, strategic lighting of exhibits)
burnside	basement	plugs for laptops. more seating/study areas. fake plants!. more lighting, interactive elementsL multifuntional glass dividers.
burnside	basement	smells horrible. ubdate grubby couches.
Burnside	basement	good tables near RBC atm but not enough chairs. couches get dirty
Burnside	lobby	
FDA	lobby	add seating along edge. improve safety & security of access path from campus (bridge)
fda	lobby	doors difficult to open
FDA	lobby	heavy doors. keep space for wheelchairs when extending chairs. access to university doors.
fda	lobby	extend benches. remove sports ad. not all 3 doors neer motors. walkway into fda - poor drainage. improve signage. URGENT BRIDGE!
fda	lobby	match low tabels/desk with benches. add some art?
fda	lobby	extension of benches are okay. no extra furniture
fda	lobby	heavy doors, poor drainage on bridge.
FDA	lobby	add recycling bin. extend benches. better wayfinding through tunnel system. ICE on walkway! very urgent. bad drainage.
fda	lobby	cold. huge traffic. noise carries. weird athletics signage. nice schulich sign. cool rock bro. walkway too slippery.
Ferrier	Arts Lounge	hard to get people here as it is out of the wat. perhaps it could be combined with courtyard to support events
Ferrier	courtyard	could be used for events

Ferrier	Arts Lounge	looks like a good working area. very nice!
Ferrier	Arts Lounge	did not know this existed!
Ferrier	courtyard	beautiful space! unmarked! unused!
Ferrier	courtyard	
Genome	atrium	boring, could use some comfier seating for the restaurant! functional, works well enough!
Genome	atrium	good use of spaces even though narrow
Genome	atrium	cafe = great use of space
Leacock	lobby	too many recycling bins under stairs.
Leacock	study room	paint touch up. no lighting in individual cubicles!
leacock	lobby	polygon table. lightings taken out of the ceiling. basement_dark space feels dangerous.
leacock	lobby	permanent table with fixed spot near 232. better lighting on path to Snax. remove snax.
leacock	study room	too many large booths in room
leacock	study room	no power outlets. cells dont have lighting
leacock	lobby	staircase near room 26/snax: extremely dark. feels very dangerous in evening/night.
leacock	study room	poor design, bad furniture, too closed.
leacock	lobby	south corridor is a path for evacuation. permanent table in front of elevator

leacock	lobby	branded student tables. bore bulletin boards in hallway leading from redpath. where are the bathrooms?
McConnell	hallway	dangerously wet under water fountain. dirty/rusty windows
mcconnell	hallway	mirrors for turning corners. expand corner in tv area? use of space in eng lobby: great exhibition space.
mcconnell	hallway	loose chairs at desk! good quick study space
McConnell	hallway	
McConnell	hallway	possible furniture already installed.
McConnell	hallway	convex mirror to view corner. semitransparent film on windows to not stare at loading dock. add seating to mconnell lobby (niche leading to frostbite). Plants need good upkeep.
mcconnell	hallway	smells. need convex mirror. eng caf not affordable because no stir fy. canoe is in the way.
mcconnell	hallway	ventilation! chai latte orient lots of smells. car exhibit needs better location or display
mcconnell	hallway	i like it
mcconnell	hallway	good spatial design. aesthetics could be improved --> colour!
Mclennan	bridge	benches possible on both sides
McLennan	bridge	cover wood railings to be seats.
McLennan	bridge	seating like McConnell: confirm what is in the wall and if regular access is required.
mclennan	bridge	seating along walls. no exterior recycling bins. more plants. redpath doors locked: why? mclennan lobby seating next to elevators.
redpath	cafeteria	dangerous hightables and wobbly chairs. not easy to access.

Redpath	group study	good use of colours. want to see expansion
Redpath	cafeteria	seats should be stable. improve eating area
redpath	group study	popular, well used
redpath	group study	gross bathrooms. more ventilation. wall murals should be removable. ex: vinyl stickres w/nature themes
redpath	cafeteria	soundabsorbing panels on walls
Rutherford	lobby	*hanging plants**** lack of comfortable seating, does not facilitate group study; no "way finding". Square Angular design
Rutherford	lobby	no character, uninviting, no reason to want to stay here. Seating?
Rutherford	lobby	yellow light could be a better change of light. more greenery; make it livelier
Rutherford	lobby	lounge: dfurniture changes! Rearangement (move billiard table down); WWII bunker! more colour needed. Nicer bulletin boards?
Rutherford	lobby	more wood
Rutherford	lobby	could be more colourful. put up student art on the walls. More seating/ desks for studying!!! STUDY SPACE
Rutherford	lobby	
schulich	tunnel	corners can have table setup or sofas
schulich	tunnel	table against wall, barstools, destlamps; low comfy furniture, chill, nap!
schulich	tunnel	warm but plain. nice lighting. long standing bar study area or couches. pretty arches. low ceiling.
Schulich	tunnel	lovely walls. light isnt bad. like the idea of McConnell hallway desk w seats for skype & calls

schulich	tunnel	
Schulich	tunnel	no furniture should be added due to path of evacuation
schulich	tunnel	wrought-iron parole bench (less maintenance required vs a couch.) wall mounted workstations. paint the ceiling like a sky!
schulich	tunnel	paths must be kept clear. 4 corner seats tables. standing desks. benches that the arch supports. paintin sky onto white windows, anchored seats in sloped areas!
Strat to Genome	tunnel	smells! nice window!
Strat to Genome	tunnel	too narrow for any real use. rear part very grim.
Strat to Genome	tunnel	i like it! serves its purpose.
Strathcona	entrance hallway	wrong uses in the rotunda, not a building one wants to visit (anatomy!) but beautiful spaces inside.
Strathcona	entrance hallway	love the entrance & hallway' serves its purpose. not cluttered, good lighting!
Trottier	floor 1	to much clutter in hallways. maybe close off cafeteria with low glass from noisy area
Trottier	floor 2	needs modular layout plan with adaptable furniture. existing furniture finished!
Trottier	floor 2	could use tables/chairs (mobile), trees --> ottomans in centre; lots of sun! worn out seating. great spot for a few trees!(in the centre of space)
Trottier	floor 2	can use the space more efficiently, other than for the hand full of time consuming areas. use it for more events
Trottier	floor 1	couches! :) group seating options. Transparent barriers between cafe and hallway! (Y); lots of natural light--> Plant potential! (why no plants yet??)
Trottier	floor 1	i really enjoy the new design since 2011. put up more dividers; more high chairs, seems functional enough
Trottier	floor 1	more study space

Trottier	floor 1	
Trottier	floor 2	art on the grey pillars
Wong	lobby	i like the high ceilings
Wong	lobby	sliding doors?, lower dividing structures
Wong	lobby	attempt to make use of unused space. Partitioned area may be more conducive to group study as area can be noisy
Wong	lobby	group study on main floor. feels/looks like basement (lack of natural light) PLANTS ARE URGENT
Wong	lobby	desk lamps for the study space under the staircase, enclosed with glass wall
Wong	lobby	nice to work in; quiet, usually a seat, lighting okay! (biased to darker, indirect lighting)
Wong	lobby	put couches at entrance to facilitate people meeting and making friends. better study space. Always think about adding study space. we're at university, so we study a lot.

# From Spaces to Places

## A Human-Scale Case Study of Placemaking at McGill

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### Abstract

McGill's downtown campus offer a unique and timely opportunity to explore the impact of placemaking on underused campus spaces. The role that physical spaces play as buildings blocks for socially sustainable communities is becoming a significant conversation point, as there is talk amongst members of the community about the collective need for more informal spaces to relax, connect, and explore ideas together. Although it might be easy to turn to growth as the default option in seeking to create new community spaces, McGill's small downtown campus is confined to the core of Montreal. With little direction for expansion, it is therefore important for us to learn to optimize the space we already have. The process of placemaking offers a quick and inexpensive alternative to infrastructural renovations in an attempt to foster a better sense of place on campus. This research seeks to document the human-scale impact of a passive placemaking process and demonstrate its value in the social context of an underused campus space - notably that of the elevator lobby in McGill's Burnside Building – using an experimental public life study. Results showed that by reorganizing the space through a passive introduction of novel design elements, activity types and levels of passers-by rose and fell in circumstances that indicated a quantitative and qualitatively-assessed improvement in the quality of Burnside lobby's vibrancy and quality of public space.

### Introduction – What is placemaking?

*“Serendipity is not an accident”* (McInroy, 2013). At first glance, this poignant quotation seems incomplete and incongruent. Pleasant surprises and moments of happenstance are serendipitous in nature, but the reason they are surprising is because they happen accidentally. Under what circumstances is serendipity not an accident, then? It seems the (surprisingly) intuitive answer lies in the role that spaces and places play in our daily lives.

Placemaking, first and foremost, is concerned with matters of people and public space. It can be thought of as a movement that recognizes individuals as the lifeblood of the communities and physical spaces they navigate. On the other side of the same coin, vibrant and accessible spaces are key building blocks of a socially sustainable community (Woodcraft, Hackett & Caistor-Arendar, 2011). The availability and quality of physical spaces for public events and gatherings of people are vital threads in the tapestries of tight-knit neighbourhoods and their community fabric. If we lack the spaces we need to come physically together, we lose critical opportunities for shared intimacy and collaboration with the people that surround us. It is the gathering of people and the resulting spontaneity of interactions and experiences that creates a sense of place and *joie de vivre*

characteristic of great public spaces. Indeed, serendipity is not an accident because it is the conscious practice of placemaking that helps to set the stage.

Drawing from place-oriented organizations such as the Project for Public Spaces and the McGill Spaces Project, “placemaking” can be clearly defined as

*“a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, facilitation, and management of public spaces as nodes of activity and social potential.”*

It is at once, both a process and a philosophy. Rooted in values of community-based participation, placemaking focuses on creating vibrant places and “[reimagining] public spaces at the heart of every community” (pps.org, n.d.). One can trace the roots of the term back to concepts championed by urban thinkers Jane Jacobs and William H. Whyte in the 1960s to 1970s. They offered revolutionary ideas of cities designed not for greater efficiency and beauty, but for people, choosing to focus on the importance of lively neighbourhoods and great public spaces instead of cars, highways, and skyscrapers.

Following from these philosophies, placemaking concerns itself with issues of public space and how they are designed and used in urban environments. The Project for Public Space (PPS) explains placemaking as a process that “inspires people to create and improve their public spaces” by “[capitalizing] on a community’s assets and potential to create vibrant destinations” (pps.org, n.d.). This process takes an existing space and positively transforms its experience and sense of place for individuals that may pass through it. That being said, it can take many forms. Passive placemaking involves no human actors and might look like a new bench placed in a park to encourage more users to stay and linger, while active placemaking is a more ephemeral activity, with animators or facilitators setting up and animating pop-up interventions amongst the public. By interacting with the built environment, individuals and communities develop a strong connection to the place over time. Whether it is active or passive, however, Harrison & Doulish (1996) captures the naked essence of placemaking in an elegant quotation:

*“[Placemaking] reflects the conscious arrangement of elements to create space that accommodates activity, and (here is the hard part) the interplay of reflective design and happenstance to give expression to the values of the occupants and their wide community. In other words... a space can only be made a place by its occupants.”*

Although the term “placemaking” has been put to use in urban planning, urban design, and architectural literature since the 1970s, it seems there is little recent literature on placemaking as a grassroots tactic for improving public spaces. Building on Jane Jacob’s ideals of humanistic planning, a famous urban thinker and observationist named Jan Gehl pioneered the practice of human-scale public life studies in the 1970s. With mere pen and paper, he took to the streets to investigate the nature of public life in cities, individual by individual. From counting the time people engaged in a range of activities to mapping their walking paths, Gehl painted vivid pictures of everyday life in public spaces in a time where life between buildings was considered trivial and unimportant. By

studying urban spaces, implementing minor changes, and then studying them again, he facilitated and documented examples of positive change in urban spaces (Gehl & Svarre, 2013).

Recently, public life studies such as those conducted by Gehl Architects do an excellent job of examining the quality of public life. They do so at a city-wide scale by conducting studies every decade to measure change in levels of public life in public spaces (Gehl Architects, 2011). Given their range and scope, however, their conclusions tend to be focused on general trends. There is a loss of the human-scale insights that inspired a generation of interest in public life. At the crux of this gap in the literature, I am interested in exploring the impact of passive placemaking on the public life that plays out in campus spaces. This paper will detail a case study of one such space (McGill's Burnside Building's ground floor lobby) through an experimental public life study.

## Objective & Research Question

My primary research objective is to illustrate the impact of passive placemaking on campus spaces. Using public life study methods, this paper will explore the social context of an existing space on McGill's downtown campus (specifically Burnside Building's ground floor lobby) and investigate how the passive introduction of new elements impacts the activity levels and behavior in these spaces.

The research question I have posed to realize this objective is as follows:

- i. *How does passive placemaking impact human activity in public spaces on campus?*

## Context - Bigger picture(s)

### Spaces, Places, and Social Sustainability

An exposition on the importance of placemaking in creating sustainable communities first necessitates a discussion around the terms "space" and "place" and their distinctions. The two can easily be misconstrued as synonymous with the other (and often are because of the way we use them day-to-day). When one goes to book a location for an event, whether the reservation is for a "space" or a "place" is of no real consequence. Indeed, the difference between the two terms does not necessarily fall in the realm of practicality, but rather in one of concept and purpose. Harrison and Dourish (1996) define "space" as:

*"the structure of the world; ... the three-dimensional environment in which objects and events occur, and in which they have relative position and direction."*

"Place", on the other hand, is defined as:

*“a space which is invested with understandings of behavioural appropriateness, cultural expectations, and so forth” (Harrison & Dourish, 1996)*

In other words, while “space” merely denotes the physical element, “places” are rooted with value and meaning. Thus, places are spaces with underlying intangibles; they have social meaning and hold different value to different people. A sense of place blooms when a space becomes valued by the people that use them. The distinction is akin to the semantic split between what makes a “house” and a “home”; “a house might keep out the wind and the rain, but a home is where we live” (Dourish & Harrison, 1996). Placemaking is a process that centers itself on this critical distinction.

Acknowledging the spatial nature of our environment is of the utmost importance because we live in a three-dimensional world. Everything and everyone is located in space, and thus space acts to shape our everyday experiences by guiding our actions and interactions. If we are to come to an understanding of how sustainable communities should be built and maintained, understanding their spatial natures is a crucial prerequisite.

Of the three pillars of sustainability (that is, environmental, economic, and social equity), it seems that a great deal of attention is, and has been, put towards environmental and economic facets (Woodcraft, Hackett & Caistor-Arendar, 2011). Widespread and meaningful exploration of the social dimension has been left wanting, although research and efforts seem to be growing in recent years in response. In 2011, the UK-based Future Communities programme (Woodcraft, Hackett & Caistor-Arendar, 2011) published a report called *Design for Social Sustainability – a framework for creating thriving new communities* where a definition of social sustainability was clearly outlined:

*“A process for creating sustainable, successful places that promote wellbeing, by understanding what people need from the places they live and work. Social sustainability combines design of the physical realm with design of the social world – infrastructure to support social and cultural life, social amenities, systems for citizen engagement and space for people and places to evolve.”*

In a similar vein, the Egan Review (a report commissioned by the UK government published in 2004 to clarify understanding around the concept around sustainable communities) identified 7 key factors involved in supporting these communities. These included “housing and the built environment” and “social and cultural”, amongst five others (Egan, 2004). Although the intangible nature of social sustainability may make it relatively difficult to measure and analyse, the Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development has developed metrics distinct from “traditional social indicators... of statistical social data”. These social sustainability metrics included a sense of connectivity and place amongst residents within the community, as well as cultural activities and community involvement (Colantonio & Dixon, 2009).

Furthermore, urban planning and design literature highlights the need for flexibility as a common thread in successful places in order for neighbourhoods to flourish. A community needs

accommodating spaces to evolve while reflecting local needs, and to provide a platform for the expression of the diverse values of its individuals (Dourish & Harrison, 1996). Moreover, planners and community developers say “that the health and well-being of a city is ultimately measured by the quality of life enjoyed by its residents” (URBAN IDEA, n.d.). By working to express community values and promote the well-being and happiness of people, placemaking firmly plants itself in the realm of socially sustainable initiatives. As Susan Silberberg from the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning puts it, it is “the iterative actions and collaborations inherent in the making of places [that] nourish communities and empower people” (What’s your Place in the World?: Building Community in Every City, 2013).

### **Public Space and Public Life – From cities to campuses**

The urban context is becoming an increasingly important part of the sustainability discourse as more and more of the world's population move into cities than ever before. In society’s daily struggle for greater efficiency and faster roads, we have forgotten the lifeblood of our cities and communities: individuals and the public spaces that bring them together.

The urban city phenomenon was sparked in the middle of the 19th century as industrialization began to incentivize folk to move from rural to urban areas (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). In the face of increasingly unhealthy and overpopulated cities in the 1900s, conventionally low and dense cities were challenged to become “larger, higher, and faster” along with developing industrialized building processes. Traditional city elements such as streets and squares were recast into a modernist light which argued in favor of efficient city plans that would help to create better conditions for increasing urban populations. Led by Le Corbusier, the modernist era strongly advocated for “rational modern buildings and functional cities with straight lines, tall [therefore dense] buildings, highways, and large green areas”(Gehl & Svarre, 2013) and dominated the 1960s as the foremost planning ideology.

This well-intentioned focus on human well-being took an ironic turn in its gradual implementation. “No one was charged with responsibility for life between buildings” and large-scale housing projects lost sight of the individual’s day-to-day interactions with physical infrastructure (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). Littered amongst master planned dreams of high-rise buildings and faster roads were empty vacuums once occupied by plenty of public space.

City life and vibrancy were qualities that had followed the settlement of early cities and thus were taken for granted and underappreciated. Tradition and experience drove the intuitive design of public spaces in old, medieval cities, but these elements went missing when societies dived into an industrial framework of process and production. As urban areas grew and fed newly specialized careers such as urban planning and traffic engineering, increasing social squalor made apparent the fact that “public space and public life did not happen automatically” (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). The modernist Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis, famous for its legacy as an utter planning failure, is brought up often as the archetypal case against modernist tenets. By wholly structuring the lives of families around inflexible dwellings and communities, the Pruitt-Igoe community and many others like it degraded into a state of social disrepair where distrust and crumbling infrastructure ran

unbridled. It failed to capture an essential human essence by prioritizing the construction of *houses*, *not homes*.

At the turn of the 1960s, several urban thinkers sang new life into this graying narrative by giving voice to painfully truthful criticisms of urban reality. Seminal books such as Jane Jacob's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), Jan Gehl's *Life Between Buildings* (1971) and William H. Whyte's *The Social Life of Small Urban Cities* (1980) amongst many others served as alarms to the monotonous design of large-scale planning (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). They called for critical attention to more human-scale interactions of public space and buildings with public life. From the 1960s onwards, the practice of investigating public spaces through observation invited debate and research that helped establish a public and academic field of study. Today, public life studies have grown in popularity and application across the globe, building understanding around how individual cities experience complexity and life in urban environments.

Given that the recent decades of rapid urban growth have suffered an absence of information and inquiry on public life, these studies have understandably zeroed in on municipal scales as their scope of analysis. Large-scale, iterative investigations have been conducted by private firms such as Gehl Architects on global cities including Copenhagen, Sydney, and New York amongst others (Gehl Architects, 2011). The reports produced give a comprehensive review of the city's current public life situation and follow through with extensive recommendations. Many regions have just begun this process, conducting studies over decadal cycles to allow themselves to trace their progress over time.

Amidst the excitement that has followed this upsurge of inquiry on public life and public space, smaller scale environments such as higher education campus spaces have received little attention despite many being bottled in urban cores. Municipal level reports give big-picture overviews that simplify universities into one urban component. Although this may be appropriate for municipal studies, universities comprise of systems within themselves and thus deserve a fair amount of consideration as well. Though academic communities may already be considered crucial components of the urban fabric, understanding their inner workings may provide complementary insights on how campus environments may be better integrated into their respective cities. Educational institutions foster their own communities and public spaces that support different kinds of urban interactions. For the sake of the students, staff, faculty, and administration that frequent campus environments on a daily basis, examining the public life and public space of campuses is just as important an endeavor as public life studies are at the municipal scale.

In the context of McGill University, the fruit seems ripe for the picking. McGill University is trying its best to expand its campus spaces, but it is currently limited by its situation in Montreal's downtown core. For this reason, it is important that we learn to optimize the space we already have. Over the next three years (2014-2016), McGill's new Sustainability Strategy Vision 2020 will work towards implementing 14 broad actions, of which "Campus Hubs" is number six under the sustainability category of "Connectivity" (Vision 2020: A Sustainability Strategy for McGill University, 2014). To summarize, McGill aims to "...transform [indoor and outdoor spaces on campus] into community gathering spaces" that contribute to a culture of sustainability by "... [fostering]

interaction, creativity, and connection through well-designed physical spaces” (Vision 2020: A Sustainability Strategy for McGill University - Priority Actions Brief, 2014). There are not a great deal of studies conducted about the urban context of spaces at McGill (Saunders, 2010). Additionally, none have been conducted in the format of a public life and public space study. I would like to begin to fill this strategic gap as McGill plans to move forward with administrative plans of bettering spaces on campus.

### **The Social Context of McGill’s Burnside Building’s Lobby**

In moving towards more inclusive and welcoming community gathering spaces at McGill, it is important to note that there exists a variety of public spaces on campus that are developed but underused. While there are many examples both outdoors and indoors, for the purposes of this study I have focused on the lobby on the first floor of McGill’s Burnside Building (henceforth to be referred to as the “Burnside lobby” or “Burnside’s lobby”). For certain hours of the day, many of McGill’s buildings are held open for public access and can therefore be considered public spaces. The public life study detailed in this paper will be examining Burnside lobby in this urban context. Before moving onto an elaboration of its social context, it will be helpful to engage in a brief discussion around the purposes that different types of space serve to situate the milieu of the lobby space itself.

Different urban spaces serve different functions, and can do so in relatively positive or negative ways. As mentioned before, one space can constitute many different places at once depending on its occupants, how many, the time of day, and so forth. These functions vary both across cultures and contexts, so it can be difficult to put a finger on a comprehensive list of such functions. It can generally be agreed upon, however, that certain elements serve specific purposes. A door, for example, always acts as an entryway, an exit point, or a corkstopper, whether or not it is a door into an apartment or a train station. A hallway too, serves the specific purpose of facilitating traffic flow from one area to another (and back, perhaps).

Though this may seem trivial, purpose and function are of the utmost importance when discussing the utility of public space. Burnside lobby resides on the ground floor of the building (there is a basement which can also be accessed from the lobby, as well as from separate points on campus outside of the lobby) and comprises of a number of unique elements. These include the following (see figure 1):

- doors - north and south-facing sets of doors leading outside;
- elevators - three elevators on the same wall;
- staircases - two doors lead into staircases, each adjacent to the sets of doors leading outside;
- benches - three long wooden benches placed along the wall, facing the elevators;
- support pillars - two wide, centrally-placed cement pillars, each equipped with a cylindrical display of glass-encased posters
- water fountain - one water-fountain adjacent to the north-facing set of doors



The lobby and its components are enclosed in a single, pseudo-rectangular room without disconnections (save for the doors leading into the staircases). Of these 6 basic spatial elements, three exist to facilitate the flow of people (the doors, elevators, and staircases). Most users enter the lobby through the doors and directly proceed either to a staircase or an elevator. The same statement follows vice versa. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that Burnside lobby serves largely as a transit space, concerned with efficiently moving people to and from their destinations. The other amenities are tangential to the conduit-oriented character of the lobby and are used less frequently and by less people. These patterns of use will be examined more closely in the results and discussion section of this paper.

Furthermore, Burnside building (including its lobby) is largely known for its dingy and concrete-themed walls. The poor lighting and depressing monotonic ambiance are often spoken of in contempt and distaste. Though the building is home to a variety of science-related departments and used by many of its students, the overall impression of its spaces is thought of as cold and unpleasant.

This is unfortunate given the size of Burnside's lobby. Although it is an effective conduit for all intents and purposes, there is a large empty space right in its center between the two cement pillars. These pillars work to channel people from doors to elevators and vice versa, but in the process, effectively render this area unnoticed and therefore unused (see picture 1).

In trying to better understand poorly planned spaces, Steven Flusty (a geographer at York University) conducted research that led him to provide a typology that will be helpful in examining Burnside's lobby. He divided the idea of poorly functioning spaces (or negative spaces) into 5 categories (Saunders, 2010):

1. *Stealthy space* denotes space that is underused because it is difficult to find and thus generally unknown.
2. *Slippery space* denotes space that underused because it is poorly connected to other spaces through a lack of pathways.
3. *Crusty space* is space that is underused because it cannot be easily accessed due to barriers.
4. *Jittery space* is space that is over-monitored or regulated (think numerous cameras or security guards).
5. *Prickly space* is space that is accessible but not comfortable to use. This may be the fault of poor design, uncomfortable furniture.

With respect to these categories, Burnside's lobby seems to fit squarely into the "*prickly*" type as a space that is accessible but uncomfortable. Although it functions well as a transit space, for any other purposes that might appeal to the general university population (such as a waiting area or study space, etc.), it is prickly and unwelcoming.

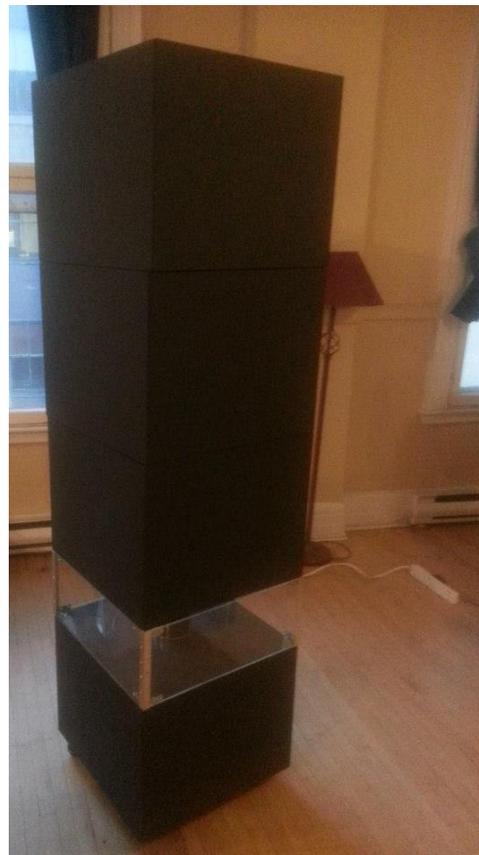
Given the natural flow of people in and out of the lobby space, this example of unused space can be framed as full of potential and therefore underused. Burnside lobby holds an ephemeral character in that it fails to hold the attention of people and gives them little reason to linger. This is a characteristic of "successful public spaces", another topic that will be further elaborated upon in the discussion. Given its size and potential, I argue that the lobby is a latent space that could be activated in a manner that may create a more positive sense of place in what current exists as a fog of transience. For this reason, Burnside's lobby was chosen as the focus of this public life study and passive placemaking experiment.

## Methodology

This research was conducted in the form of an experimental public life study. Public life studies are investigative case studies that employ the use of naturalistic observation methods and provide human-scale insights about space usage and activity levels. These observations can then be drawn upon in describing the state of a place, the different ways in which it may be lacking and thus, how it can be improved. Although studies of this type are typically conducted at city-wide levels, the investigation conducted for this research was scaled down for reasons regarding human resource

capacity. Limiting the environment of the study into a single location allowed for the opportunity to conduct an experiment with control and experimental conditions.

The control condition involved observing the activity levels of passers-by in the lobby, while the experimental condition involved observing how these activity levels shifted when passers-by interacted with a passive placemaking intervention (in the form of a public-use chalkboard tower and colorful pallet chair placed in the middle of the lobby (see figure 2)). Both placemaking elements were designed to encourage interaction and activity (with the use of energetic, contrasting colors and novel designs) and in addition had brief written prompts scrawled onto them. While unlike standard public life studies, this format allowed me to control for and eliminate extraneous variables such as climate and weather that may have influenced how people interacted within the space and with the space itself.



**Figure 2: Passive placemaking elements: Mobile, modular chalkboard & colorful pallet chair**

The range of activities that people engaged in were recorded and retroactively broken into three categories (see Figure 3). Though the categorization of these activities might be debateable, the mutual exclusivity of these three categories is supported by other public life studies professionally conducted by architecture and public life firms such as Gehl Architects, for example (Gehl & Svarre, 2013). Two types of data were extrapolated from the observations of these activities:

1. How long an individual was engaged in a certain activity (minutes)

2. How often a certain activity occurred (incidence counts)

Together, these two measures can be taken as activity level indicators for the space and give an idea of how the space is being used and by extension, its sense of place. Measures of time spent engaged in a certain activity was measured with a manual multi-stopwatch, and incidence counts were made using a counter system. To make an important distinction between these measures and the total amount of people measured in each sample: these two measures do not take into account the total number of people who entered the space, nor the total amount of people recorded in the data. They refer specifically to the amount of time spent engaged in certain activities, and how often each of those activities occurred, independent of the individuals engaging in each activity. This means that incidence counts could potentially be higher than the total amount of people observed, because an individual could engage in an activity more than once before exiting the space. Also, certain activities could be occurring simultaneously (e.g. walking and talking, standing while texting, etc.) in which case the time spent engaged in these activities counted for both the categories that each activity belonged to.

Stationary	Social	Necessary
Sitting	Talking	Walking
Standing	Mobile use	Waiting
Laptop use		Shoe-stomping
Studying		Preparing to go outside

Figure 3: Categorization of activities specific to Burnside Building lobby

In order to draw a point of comparison between the control and intervention conditions, activity levels of the space were measured from a randomized population sample of 150-200 people over two separate controlled times of the day. Individuals who entered the space from any entry point were chosen at random to be subjects and were observed until the individual exited the lobby area. Data collection was scheduled for the periods 9:30 - 11:30am and 4:00 - 6:00pm for both the control and experimental conditions. In other words, the observations for the control condition and the intervention condition were taken between the same hours on two different days. In total, 4 samples were used in the analysis and results.

## Results

In both the AM (9:30 - 11:30am) and PM (4:00 - 6:00pm) samples, the data from the control situation (with no passive placemaking elements) was compared to the data collected during the intervention situation (with passive placemaking elements). The data was aggregated in terms of the total number of minutes that I observed for each category of activity during the control and the intervention, as well as the aggregate incidence count for each activity.

In Figure 4.a, one can see the total time spent engaging in each of the three categories of activities in terms of minutes during the AM sample. During the control situation, stationary activities dominate the graph as the category that the most time was spent engaging in (for example, sitting or

using laptops for long periods of time. Social activities were engaged in for the least amount of time, while necessary activities landed somewhere in between. During the intervention, however, the total time spent engaging in necessary activities shoots to the top, surpassing that of stationary activities. Time spent engaging in social activities also displays a significant jump, but its total is still relatively less than the time spent in stationary activities.

In Figure 4.b, the same data is displayed, but for the PM data collection period. Here, while stationary activities are again the category that most time is spent engaged in, the patterns for social and necessary activities look slightly dissimilar. Instead of going up, they drop ever so slightly.

In Figure 5.a, the graph compares the control and intervention situation in terms of how often each type of activity occurred (incidence counts) in the morning (AM). Here, it is easy to notice an overwhelming dominance of necessary activities happening in the lobby. Social activities and stationary activities take up less than a fraction of the total count, but social activities happen slightly more often than stationary ones. The trend remains similar from the control to the intervention, although the incidence counts are higher overall for the intervention situation.

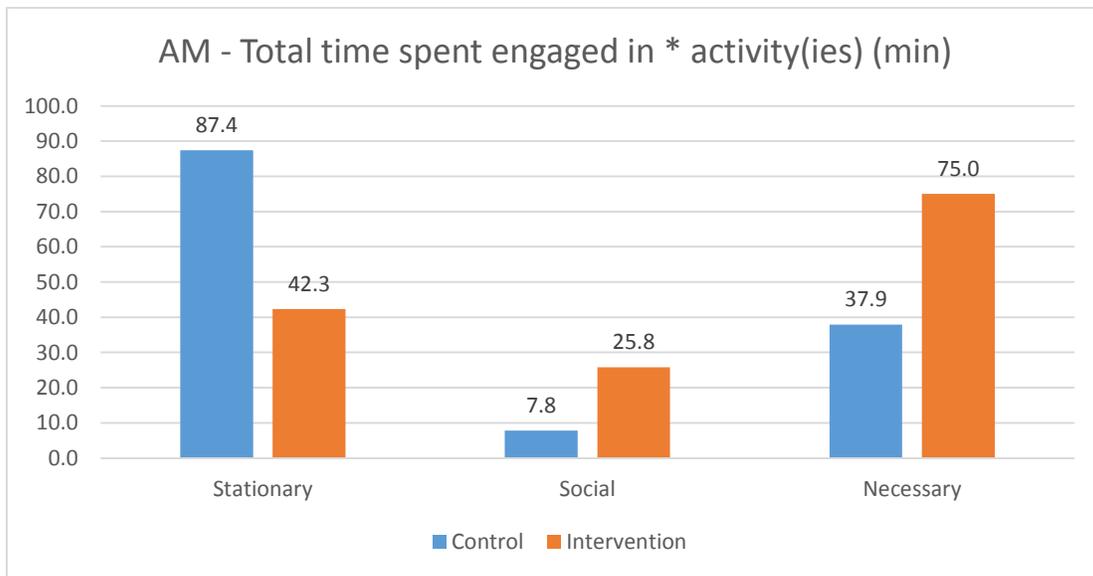


Figure 4.a: AM - Total time spent engaged in activity(ies) (min)

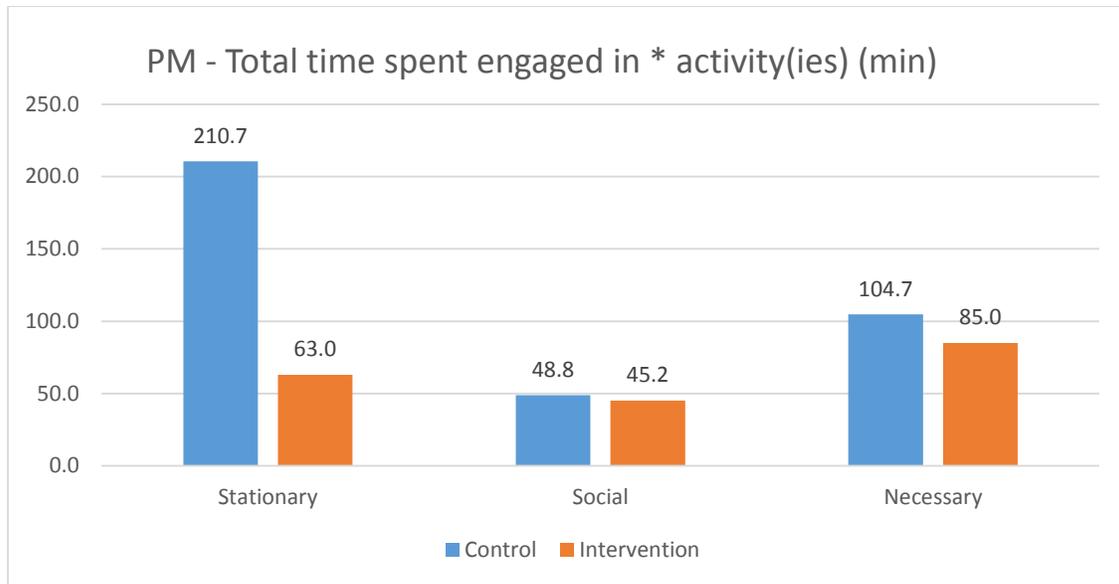


Figure 4.b: PM - Total time spent engaged in activity(ies) (min)

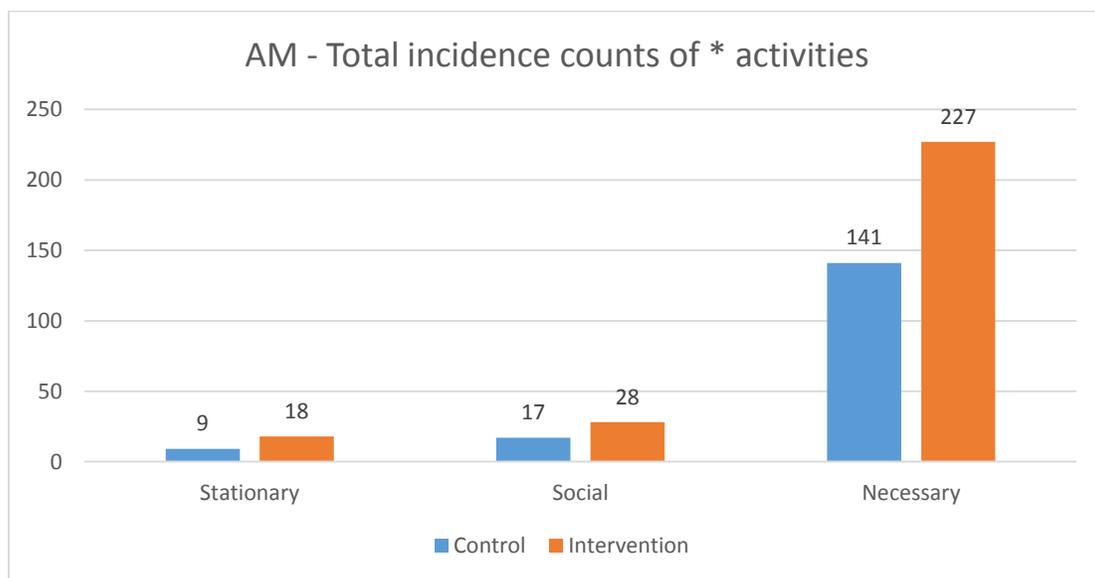


Figure 5.a: AM - Total incidence counts of \* activities

In Figure 5.b, the graph compares the same incidence count data over the control and intervention situation but during the PM sample. Again, necessary activities happen far more often than either social or stationary activities and social activities appear to be more frequent than stationary ones. There is another trend of dissimilarity between the AM and PM data collection period in that incidence counts are greater overall during the control period versus the intervention period.

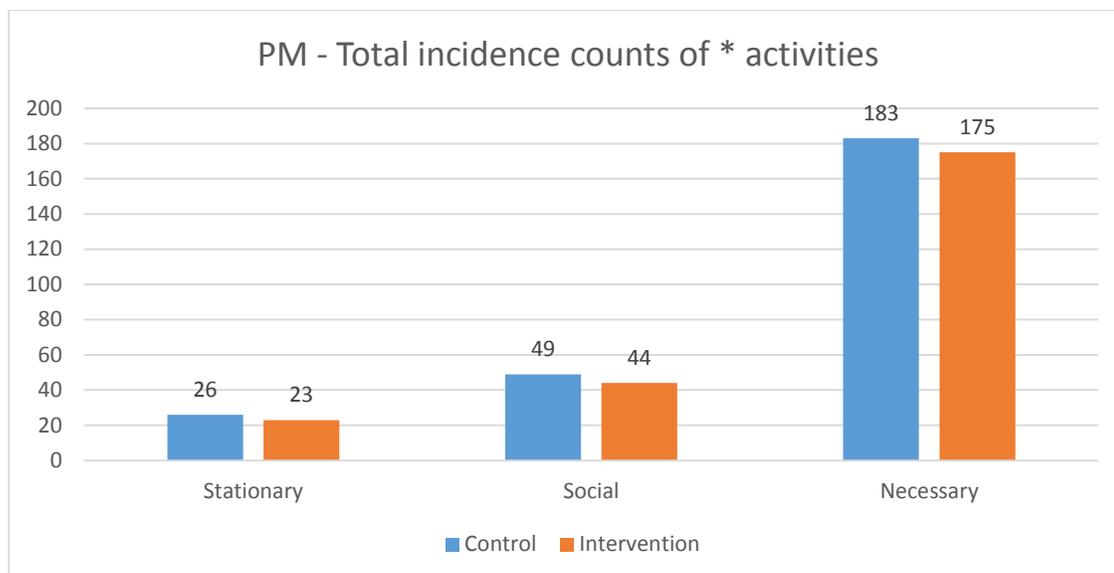


Figure 5.b: PM - Total incidence counts of \* activities

## Analysis & Discussion

The social context of Burnside’s lobby is central to how the data collected might be interpreted. The intent of the passive placemaking experiment was to shift the context of the lobby in such a way that demonstrates an impact through a placemaking process. Although the scope of the data collection was limited and thus the conclusions drawn will also be restricted, enough data was collected to suggest that the placemaking intervention had a measureable impact on the behavior of individuals of the space. Also, although an attempt was made to control for time in the experiment, different numbers of people were recorded on the different days. This occurred for reasons including (but not limited to) manual recording limitations and potential observer error. This means that analyzing relative data percentages will be more helpful than looking at the unaccompanied objective data presented under the “results” section.

To preface a discussion of the results, it will also be helpful to examine a tool developed by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) called “the Place Diagram” that can be used in our discussion (see Diagram 1). PPS suggests 4 concrete criteria that can be used to evaluate how “successful” a place is in terms of public life and vibrancy. These 4 criteria, or “key attributes” include “sociability”, “uses & activities”, “access and linkages”, as well as “comfort & image”. The diagram they developed for the purpose of visualizing these criteria and how to measure them can be used to help one describe and investigate whether or not the space in question supports interactions between people in a way that builds community, and if not, how the space can be made better. One implication of the “uses & activities” as well as the “comfort & image” criteria is that successful spaces encourage people to engage with the space for longer periods of time and linger. Unpleasant and uncomfortable spaces tend to chase people out as opposed to attracting them to stay. In the context of Burnside lobby, this implication can be used to evaluate the quality of its space.



**Diagram 1 – Project for Public Spaces’ Place Diagram**

At first, looking at the total and relative percentages of incidence counts for both the morning and afternoon sample may not yield much insight or direction (see figure 5.a, 5.b, 6.a, and 6.b). It is easy to see that necessary activities dominate, but for no more reason than specifically because they are necessary. Necessary activities do not necessarily take a long time to start and finish, such as walking from a door to an elevator or waiting for an elevator, relative to an individual who is engaged with a stationary activity (such as choosing to sit and open their laptop, for example). This is reason why the time spent engaging with stationary activities is incongruent with the incidence count of said activities. For example, two people could choose to sit on a bench for half an hour while working while crowds of people flood through the lobby whenever classes end or are about to begin and spend an average of 7-8 seconds each to walk from door to elevator or vice versa. Additionally, due to limitations in manual recording capacity and potential observer error as mentioned above, samples taken on different days recorded varying numbers of people. Examining the incidence count data therefore does not provide a very clear picture of the impact the passive placemaking intervention possible had on the lobby space.

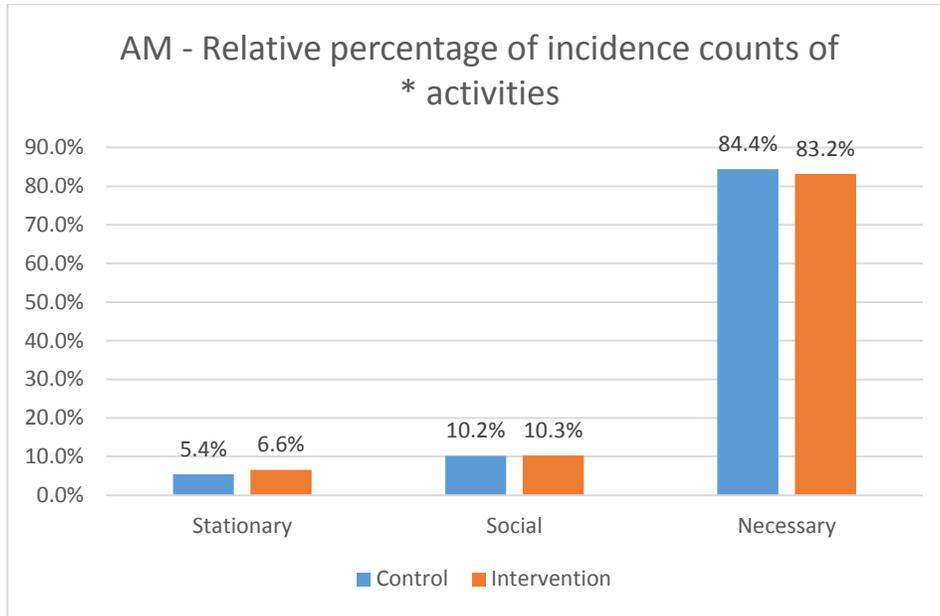


Figure 6.a: AM - Relative percentage of incidence counts of \* activity(ies)

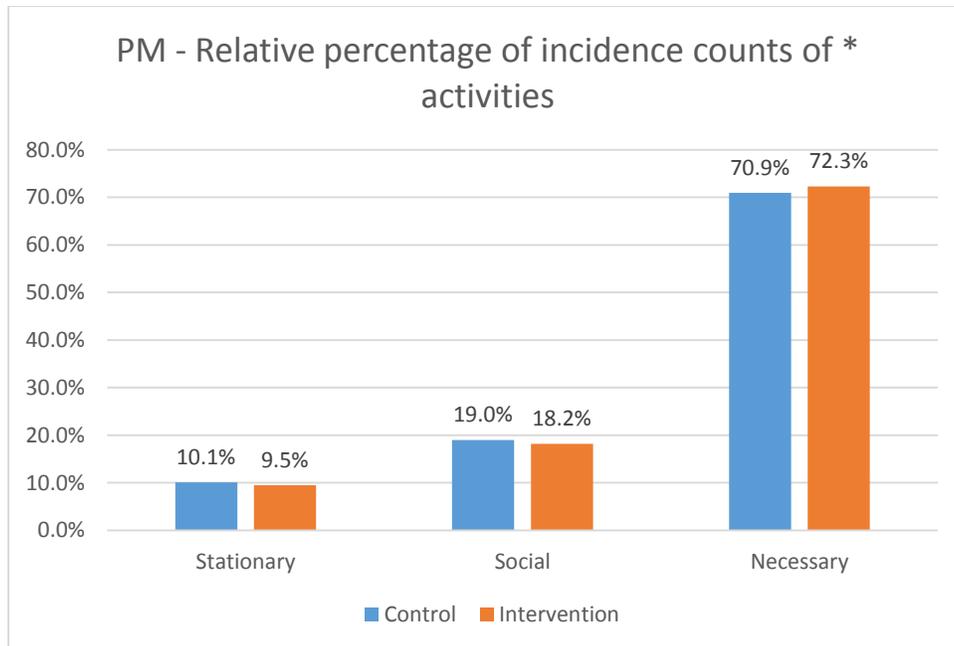


Figure 6.b: PM - Relative percentage of incidence counts of \* activity(ies)

If one were to look at the relative percentages of total time spent engaging with each activity category in both the morning and afternoon samples, however, one key trend is that the time spent doing social and necessary activities increases while time spent doing stationary activities decreases (see figure 7.a and 7.b).

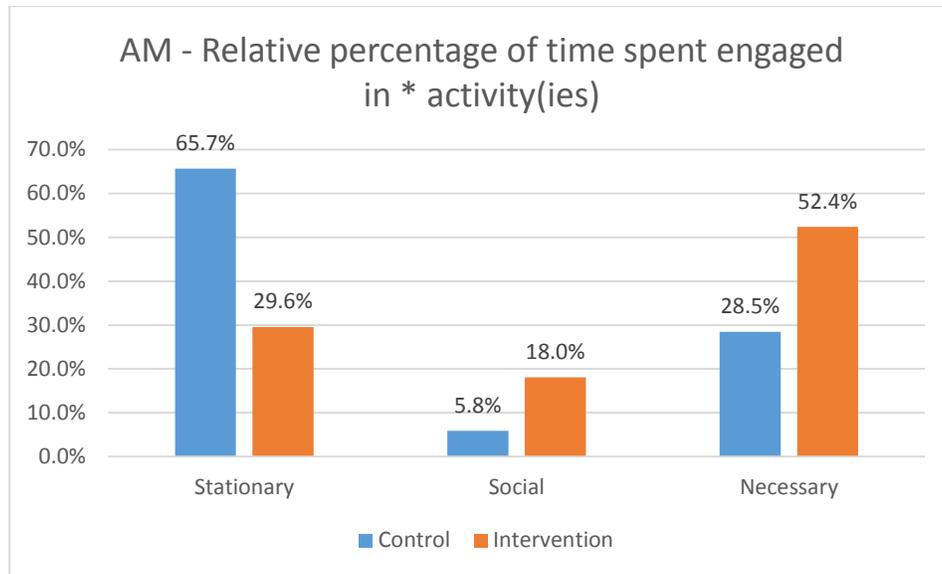


Figure 7.a: AM - Relative percentage of time spent engaged in \* activity(ies)

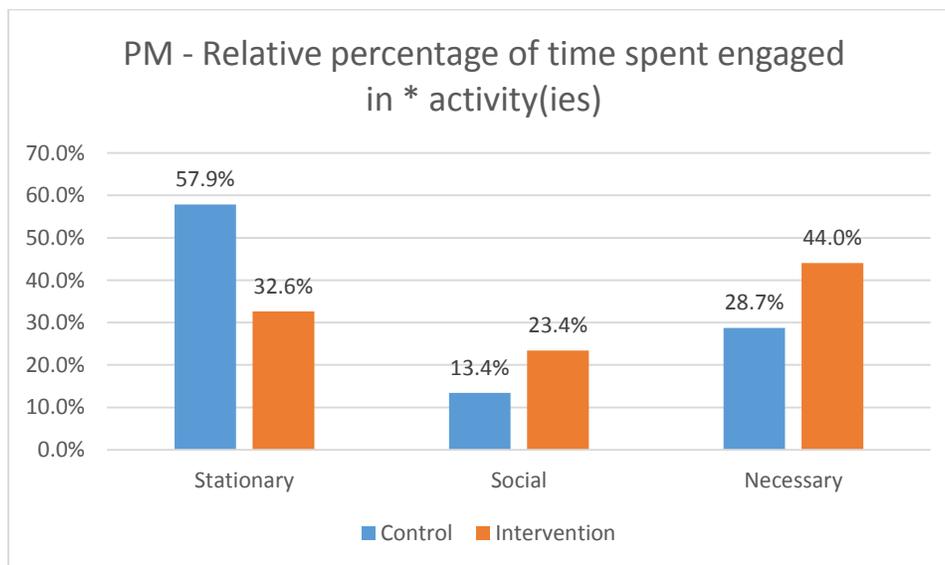


Figure 7.b: PM - Relative percentage of time spent engaged in \* activity(ies)

Qualitatively speaking, this suggests that due to the passive placemaking elements, individuals were given reasons to slow their gaits; they paused to notice the chalkboard tower and pallet chair, sometimes even stopping to interact with it. Social activities such as talking about the board or taking out phones to take pictures were observed and contributed to the increase in time spent. The increase in relative percentage of time spent engaging in necessary activities also suggests that people were willing to spend more time in the space compared to before, after a minor change in the design of the space.

This suggestion is significant given the existing social context of Burnside's lobby discussed earlier. It is one thing to say that the space is ugly and therefore not very many people want to spend

time there, but it is another thing to review this data and see that during the control sample, individuals are in more of a rush to leave the lobby than they were during the placemaking intervention. Individuals would enter through an entry point, stride quickly across the lobby and exit through an elevator or door almost as quickly as they came in. These observations could arguably be cast in a different light, (for example, students may have had full bladders or were late to class), but I contend that it is surprisingly easy to notice the quality and characteristics of haste. The lobby saw many hurried pedestrians in proportion to the number of individuals who used benches or stood to read the posters and signs that were put up on the central pillars. Both the total and relative incidence count data for the AM and PM samples support this qualitative observation (see figure 5.a, 5.b, 6.a, and 6.b). This data also supports the earlier assertion that Burnside lobby is a *prickly space*; it is an accessible and well-connected space given that many people pass through it, but it offers little reason for its users to stay and create a sense of place. Its benches are not the most comfortable, and there is no accompanying table or counter space should students want to study or individuals need to put down their belongings.

## Conclusions

The results of the intervention show that placemaking can indeed make a positive impact on underused spaces on campus. This case study of Burnside lobby has shown evidence in support of the potential of placemaking as a tactic to improve underused spaces on campus, in spite of its limited sample size and scope. The study provides a solid springboard for more human-scaled investigation to be conducted in campus spaces at a greater scope, perhaps in a search for trends and patterns that may be helpful in providing McGill with direction on planning campus spaces for future generations. In the context of McGill's persistent budget cuts and need for expansion, placemaking could play a significant role in creating better community hubs from our underused campus spaces. It is my hope to build on this study in the near future to create a stronger case for better quality public spaces at McGill.

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