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Saint Raymond 2011 Baseline Study

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Abstract

Saint-Raymond, a sub-neighbourhood of Notre-Dame-de-Grace and located just a few minutes West of downtown Montreal, lies immediately adjacent two megaprojects, the Turcot Interchange and the new McGill University Health Centre (MUHC). With a small and relatively stable residential population, Saint Raymond has a high proportion of non-Canadian-born residents. The neighbourhood is defined by significant physical barriers, isolating it from other parts of the City, but these same factors may also have played a role in softening gentrification pressures that have been strongly felt in surrounding areas. The arrival of the MUHC Glen Campus and the reconstruction of both the Décarie Expressway and the Turcot Interchange present a historic opportunity for the area to benefit from changes going on around it and to improve connections with surrounding areas. This report paints a portrait of the neighbourhood and highlights the directions in which the neighbourhood may be headed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Saint-Raymond is a sub-neighbourhood of Notre Dame de Grace, located just a few minutes West of downtown Montreal. Nicknamed the *Little Little Italy* (as distinct from the larger Little Italy near the Jean Talon Market), Saint-Raymond is found at the southern edge of the Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grace borough, in Montreal. This sliver of land, squeezed between railway tracks and a steep escarpment, has been and continues to be shaped by larger urban, geographic, economic and political forces at its borders. This report draws from many sources to paint a picture of the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood as it is today; it also hints at directions in which the neighbourhood may be headed.

An update to an unpublished student study of Saint-Raymond completed in 2005, this report builds on their work to provide an up-to-date perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing Saint-Raymond. Largely completed in 2011, the report relies on the most current socio-demographic, economic, and circulation related information available at that time.

Saint-Raymond has a small and relatively stable residential population, with a high proportion of non-Canadian-born residents. The neighbourhood is surrounded by physical barriers including highly trafficked streets which, combined with a small residential population (estimated at 3610 residents), make it difficult for Saint-Raymond to sustain both commercial and institutional services. However these same factors – small population, high volume streets and poor connections to other neighbourhoods – may also have played a role in softening the gentrification pressures which have been strongly felt in surrounding areas.

Saint-Raymond is struggling as a community; most services and amenities used by residents are located outside of the neighbourhood. Moreover, the residential quality of the neighbourhood is negatively affected by the prevalence of vehicle-related businesses and light industry located in Saint-Raymond. One solution evoked by policy makers to address the community's lack of services is to dramatically increase the neighbourhood population: a larger population would boost the small businesses on Upper-Lachine, enable the critical mass required to provide a range of social services and perhaps even justify the return of a local elementary school in the neighbourhood. Others say efforts should be made to change the character of Saint-Jacques, and replace the used car lots and roofing companies with other businesses that are less of a nuisance for residents, making the neighbourhood more inviting. However, these existing businesses, which draw clients from across the City, are economically stable and provide employment in the area. Moreover, the high volume and speed of vehicular traffic on Saint-Jacques lends itself well to current uses. Planners have suggested using incentives to move these noxious businesses slightly further West on Saint-Jacques, so that these uses and the jobs they create are kept in the neighbourhood, but further away from residents, but these suggestions may be expensive and challenging to implement.

Important changes are happening in the areas immediately adjacent to Saint-Raymond. The opening of the new Turcot Interchange in 2017 will likely reduce traffic volumes on Saint-Jacques especially during rush hour, but a broad literature on congestion suggests this improvement may only be temporary. With the opening of the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) Glen Campus in 2015, new traffic patterns and increased pressures on real estate will start to be felt. While these mega-projects appear to have stalled several key planning initiatives in the area, the long-term future development of Saint-Raymond is sure to be heavily influenced by these two projects.

The arrival of the MUHC Glen Campus and the reconstruction of both the Décarie Expressway and

the Turcot Interchange present a historic opportunity for the area to benefit from changes going on around it and to improve connections with surrounding areas. As noted succinctly in an important MUHC social and economic impact assessment report, prepared by Arbour et associés in 2005:

L'implantation d'un équipement de l'envergure du futur Centre universitaire de santé McGill (CUSM) à la cour Glen aura un impact sur le milieu d'insertion d'un point de vue économique. L'ampleur de l'impact dépendra des différentes caractéristiques du milieu récepteur, des intentions et du comportement des différents intervenants concernés (p.156).

Importantly, the effects of these projects on Saint-Raymond will depend on what decisions the different social, economic and political stakeholders in and around the neighbourhood make, and what actions they take. These decisions and actions will affect many different aspects of neighbourhood life, including housing affordability and gentrification, economic development opportunities, urban integration, speed and volumes of road traffic, walkability of streets and local employment rates.

Our report provides a comprehensive overview of information about the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood to help orient a variety of stakeholders as they grapple with neighbourhood change.

1.1. Presentation of study area

The neighbourhood known as Saint-Raymond, named for the Catholic Parish of Saint-Raymond, is located in the southeastern portion of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG), which is part of the larger City of Montreal borough of Côte-des-Neiges/Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (CDN/NDG). Saint-Raymond, sometimes also known as “the neighbourhood below the tracks”, was historically an anglophone, working-class residential neighbourhood. The affordable land available on the southern side of the tracks, especially during the 1910s, attracted many industrial workers working locally. Throughout its history, strong regional forces have shaped the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood, especially the construction of the CPR railway in 1890 and the construction of the Décarie Expressway in 1964. Before the construction of Highway 720, Saint-Jacques was the main road leading to downtown Montreal, and many of the small and struggling hotels along this artery date from this period. The automotive sector, which remains a visible feature of the neighbourhood, was established on Saint-Jacques in the 1920s. Saint-Raymond is also often referred to as an Italian neighbourhood, due to large numbers of Italian-born immigrants who settled here in the 1950s.

Over the past few decades, Saint-Raymond has increasingly been home to lower income and, more recently, newly arrived immigrant populations. Today, the area is home to an ethnically-diverse population which includes recent immigrants from all over the world (China, the Caribbean and Africa), in addition to the ageing Italian community. This section will present some of the defining characteristics of the neighbourhood.

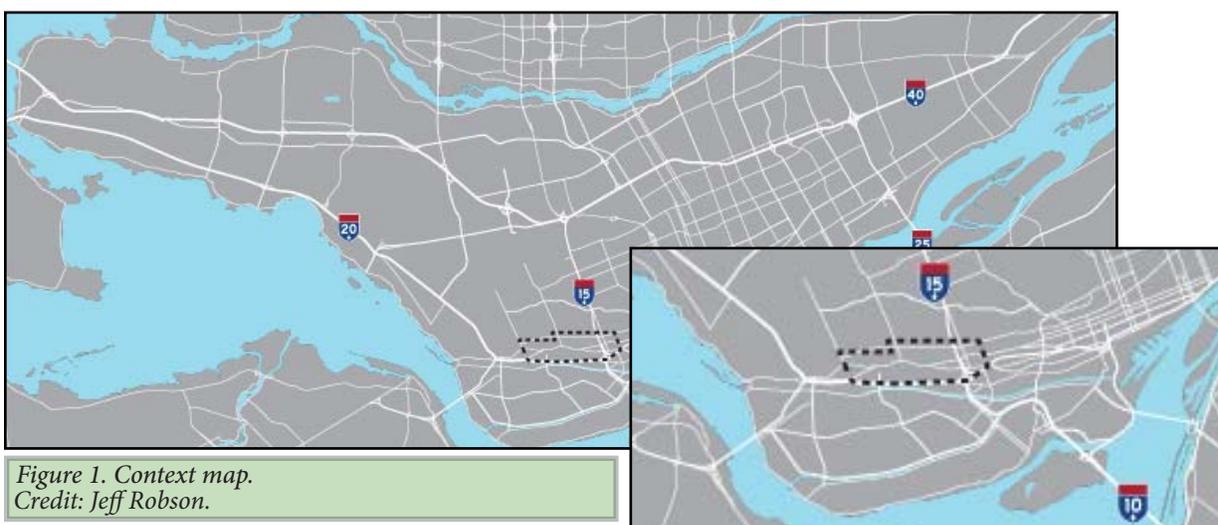
1.1.1. Boundaries

Saint-Raymond is an enclave, blocked in by physical barriers on its northern, southern and eastern borders, which contribute to many of the neighbourhood's challenges. These physical features include: the Canadian Pacific (CP) railway tracks that run along de Maisonneuve to the north, the Saint-Jacques Escarpment to the south, and the Décarie Expressway to the east. The western border of the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood is often defined as boulevard Cavendish, a high volume arterial road. (However, for Census data analysis, the western border of Saint-Raymond is extended, as will be described further on in the report.)

For the purposes of this study, the boundaries of the study area are sometimes extended to include other sub-neighbourhoods in the south-eastern corner of CDN/NDG Borough (sometimes referred to by non-residents as Lower-NDG or South-Eastern NDG). These sub neighbourhoods are defined by Canada Census tracts, some of which have local names while others have names we have invented for the purposes of this report. The four sub neighbourhoods are:

- Saint-Raymond, our focus area (a low-income, immigrant-rich area South of the railroad tracks);
- Westmount Adjacent (a highly educated, older, low density NDG sub neighbourhood north of the tracks east of Decarie);
- Westhaven (a low-income, largely immigrant, medium-density sub neighbourhood south of the tracks west of Cavendish);
- Below Sherbrooke (which the census data suggests we can further breakdown into East and West sections, at Melrose).

Represented in Figure 1 below, these neighbourhoods will be further characterized in section 1.3.



1.2. Brief history of Saint-Raymond

Saint-Raymond began as an agricultural outpost of Montreal, followed by the subdivision of farming “cotes” into residential properties. The complete elimination of farmland and agricultural production in the area occurred in the early 1900s. The construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway track in 1890 was one of the first dividing lines between Saint-Raymond and the rest of NDG, and these rail tracks remain an important division today. The early-to-mid 20th century was marked by explosive population growth and building construction, leading to the creation of the Saint-Raymond community. The bulk of the neighbourhood’s physical form was established between 1920 and 1960. From the 1950s onward, major developments in transportation infrastructure surrounded Saint-Raymond, leading to its isolated and enclaved nature (Akins et. al., 2005). Housing stock in the area reflects this history and consists primarily of duplexes and triplexes built in the 1910s and the 1920s, larger apartment buildings built in the 1950s and 1960s, and a number of condominiums built after 2000.

The most recent regional service to have a profound effect on the local community is the new McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) Glen Campus situated to the east of Saint-Raymond, on the site of the former CP Glen yards. Remediation on the site of this mega-hospital was completed

in 2010 and construction is slated for completion by the end of 2014. The MUHC Glen Campus will likely have lasting effect on its surroundings (Arbour 2005; Rolph 2011). The current and potential effects that this new development will have on the neighbourhood have been the subject of much speculation, and is a discussion thread throughout this report.

1.3. Brief Description of Surrounding Neighbourhoods

Although Saint-Raymond is defined by physical barriers, the neighbourhood remains accessible due to its proximity to Vendôme metro station, Sherbrooke Street and the highway network. In addition to the Falaise Saint-Jacques¹ and the railway tracks, other important features in the area surrounding Saint-Raymond include a commercial strip on Sherbooke, Vendôme metro station, high-density residential towers near the intersection of Cavendish and Sherbrooke, as well as a big-box commercial development to the west along Saint-Jacques.

Two of the other sub-neighbourhoods adjacent to Saint-Raymond, Westhaven and Westmount Adjacent, have relatively well defined characteristics and their residents would recognize the name we are using, while “Below Sherbrooke” is a sub-neighbourhood we are naming ourselves, for purposes of this report (see figure 2). As mentioned elsewhere, we will further break this area down into two parts, at Melrose.

A brief portrait of each of these neighbourhoods will now be presented.

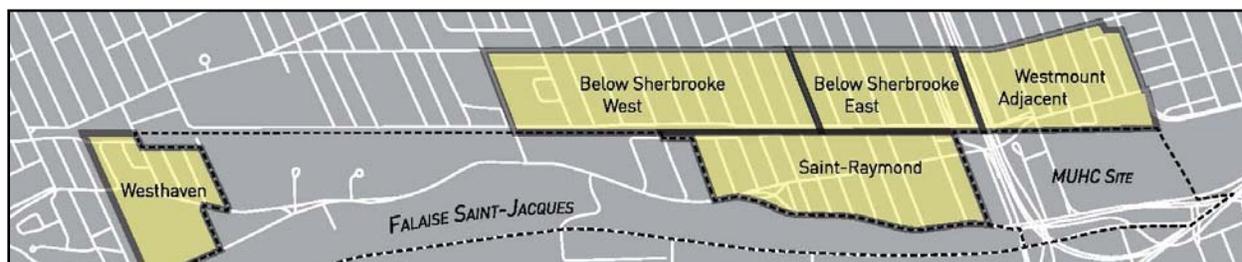


Figure 2 : Saint-Raymond and Surrounding neighbourhoods.
Credit: Jeff Robson.

Westhaven: Westhaven, a small neighbourhood, is a historically low-income residential area located to the extreme west of our study area, below the tracks, on the border with Montreal West. This neighbourhood has been home to elderly residents and students (given its proximity to Concordia’s Loyola Campus) and more recently, large numbers of visible minorities, particularly from the Caribbean. This neighbourhood is separated from Saint-Raymond by a large commercial zone between Décarie and Cavendish. This neighbourhood is part of the same Census Tract as Saint-Raymond, and analysis will sometimes group these two neighbourhoods together; both are home to large immigrant populations.

Westmount Adjacent: This neighbourhood’s name reflects its proximity to the largely affluent independent municipality of Westmount. Located above the tracks on the other side of the Décarie expressway near Metro Vendôme, the character of the built environment and the population here more closely resembles that of Westmount than NDG: high levels of university educated residents, majority native English speakers, and low rates of buildings in disrepair. However, this area has been undergoing significant changes in socio-demographic characteristics, as will be presented later in the report.

¹ Falaise Saint-Jacques is the term most often used, even by Anglophones, to refer to the Saint-Jacques escarpment.

Below Sherbrooke: This area is located north of the tracks, between De Maisonneuve and Sherbrooke streets, and between the Décarie Expressway and Cavendish. This area is relatively well-connected to the rest of NDG, and is sometimes referred to as ‘Lower NDG’. It is separated from Saint-Raymond by the rail tracks, a distinguishing feature in connectivity and settlement history. This area has experienced strong gentrification pressures which will be discussed later in the analysis of census data.

Moreover, since the western and eastern sections of this area have significantly different socio-demographic composition and dynamics, below Sherbrooke will be analysed statistically as two areas: below Sherbrooke East and below Sherbrooke West, corresponding to the two separate census tracts which encompass this area.

A socio-demographic analysis of the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood will now be presented.

2. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The residential population of the neighbourhood has remained relatively stable over the last 15 years. Saint-Raymond is a diverse neighbourhood, with an ageing Italian population, slowly declining in population, and growing proportions of recent immigrants. Saint-Raymond is also home to high proportions of lone-parent families, with more renters than homeowners, and household incomes below the Montreal-average. Saint Raymond is highly disadvantaged, both materially and socially, according to a 2008 Public Health study (see sidebar 3).

NDG has an unusual demographic pattern, very much like a patchwork quilt. While NDG is highly diverse, with a large immigrant population and high numbers of visible minority residents, immigrants are concentrated in a few sub-neighbourhoods, one which is Saint-Raymond. Many of Saint-Raymond’s residents are recent immigrants; many face challenges in adjusting to life in a new city and securing employment. Most residents are able to speak at least one official language, however few are native French speakers.

Saint-Raymond has relatively high numbers of children. The elementary school in Saint-Raymond closed many years ago and children in the area must navigate physical barriers to reach schools in other areas. There are also lots of seniors in Saint Raymond, particularly in the traditionally Italian area at the core of Saint-Raymond; many of whom live in Les Habitations Saint Raymond.

2.1. Population

Figure 3. Neighbourhood Population.
Sources: Statistics Canada 2001, 2006; Ville de Montréal, 2011b.

	<i>Population 2001</i>	<i>Population 2006</i>	<i>% Increase</i>
Saint-Raymond	3 409	3 610	5.6 %
Westhaven	1 740	1 842	5.8 %
Westmount Adjacent	1 877	2 177	16 %
Below Sherbrooke East	2 233	2 145	-3.9 %
Below Sherbrooke West	6 040	6 285	4.1 %
NDG	100 014	99 174	-0.9 %
City of Montreal	1 620 693	1 649 519	1.78 %

Saint-Raymond's population has been relatively stable for the past 10 years, rising 5.6% between 2001 and 2006 (see figure 3). The 2006 Census pegs the population of the dissemination areas that compose the neighbourhood of Saint-Raymond at 3610 people².

2.1.1. Children and Seniors

According to 2006 data, the proportion of children and seniors living in Saint-Raymond has not changed significantly since the 2001 census, with people over the age of sixty-five still making up approximately 15 percent of the population and children under the age of ten making up 10 percent of the population. Saint-Raymond has a higher rate of seniors relative to its immediate neighbours, but still slightly less than the NDG and Montreal average for seniors over 65. Westhaven also has a high percentage of children under 10 years of age.

Figure 4. Children and seniors (2006 Census data)
 Source: Statistics Canada 2006; CDEC CDN/NDG 2009.

	# of children under 10	% of children under 10	# of Seniors over 65	% of Seniors over 65
Saint-Raymond	370	10.3%	510	14.1%
Westhaven	225	12.2%	140	7.6%
Westmount Adjacent	150	6.9%	655	10.8%
Below Sherbrooke East	200	9.3%	180	8.4%
Below Sherbrooke West	635	10.1%	235	10.4%
NDG		10.3%		14.3%
City of Montreal		8.7%		15.4%

Many families in Saint-Raymond and its surrounding areas are single-parent families³. In both Saint-Raymond and Westhaven, single-parent families make up roughly one-third of families, at 30% and 28.7% respectively. This is higher than the percentage of families who have single parents in NDG (23.2%) and the City of Montreal (21.6%).

Childcare is in high demand in Saint-Raymond and NDG. Two childcare providers are located directly within the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood, one located on Saint-Jacques at Madison Avenue and one located on Upper-Lachine at Regent Avenue. Additional childcare spaces are located to the north of the neighbourhood, almost all of which offer spaces at the provincially-subsidized rate of \$7 per day.

There are currently no elementary schools in Saint-Raymond; most Saint-Raymond children attend French schools, at École Notre-Dame-de-Grace, located at Notre-Dame-de-Grace and Girouard or the École Notre-Dame-de-Grace Annex, located at Côte Saint-Antoine and Oxford.

The opening of the Annex was in part due to the influx of children from areas of NDG like Saint-Raymond where there are no schools nearby. There has been talk of opening a temporary elementary school in Saint-Raymond in 2012 while the new gymnasium at the École Notre-Dame-de-Grace is underway (McQueen, P. 2011). However no official decisions had been made, as of July 2011.

² The statistics for the neighbourhood of Saint-Raymond are pulled from six Dissemination Areas within Census Tract 94.01, which make up the neighbourhood of Saint-Raymond. Use of Dissemination Areas makes it possible to distinguish Westhaven and Saint-Raymond from the greater Census Tract. Likewise, statistics on Westhaven are made up of three Dissemination Areas. The total population of the CT 94.01 was 5962 in 2006, thus the recomposed Westhaven and Saint-Raymond do not take into account the remained residents of 94.01, roughly 500 people who live east of Girouard.

³ The census measures this using the total number of census families in private households.

Some Saint-Raymond children also attend an English elementary school, Willingdon, located at Terrebonne and Draper. There are no secondary schools in Saint-Raymond, and the closest secondary schools are James Lyng High School in Saint-Henri, Royalvale High School in NDG, and Westmount High School in Westmount.

2.2. Immigration

In 2006, 43 percent of the Saint-Raymond population had been born outside of Canada. While a much higher proportion than for Westmount Adjacent (30 percent), and Below Sherbrooke East (22 percent), both Westhaven and Below Sherbrooke West had even greater proportions of non-Canadian born residents than Saint-Raymond (50 and 49.3 percent, respectively, fig 5). Local community group outreach suggests that these trends have continued over the past years, with the arrival of substantial numbers of recent immigrants to these neighbourhoods since the last census.

Figure 5. Proportion of residents born outside of Canada
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 census.

	Saint-Raymond	Westhaven	Westmount Adjacent	Below Sherbrooke East	Below Sherbrooke West	NDG	Montreal
% Born outside of Canada	43%	50%	29.8%	22%	49.3%	40%	31%

Earlier immigrant waves originated in European countries, true not just for our study area but also for Montreal and Canada. Saint-Raymond attracted immigrants from Italy, hence Saint-Raymond's nickname, the *Little Little Italy*. The Italian heritage of the neighbourhood lives on in part through small local businesses, restaurants and bakeries, as well as local participation in annual Montreal Italian Week activities.

More recent immigrants come from many other places on the planet, with many of Asian, Caribbean and African origins arriving over the past decade. In 2006, only 10% of the Saint-Raymond population was born in Italy and Italian-born residents represented 25% of the foreign-born population of Saint-Raymond. Thus, while the Italian-born population is still present in the neighbourhood in 2006, immigrants of Italian ethnic origin are no longer the majority. New residents of Chinese, Caribbean and African origins are also much more present in the neighbourhood in 2006 than in 2001. The Asian, African and Middle-Eastern origins of recent immigrants have greatly added to the diversity of ethnic origins in Saint-Raymond as well as to the large increase in visible minority groups in the neighbourhood, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.3. Visible Minorities and Ethnic Origins

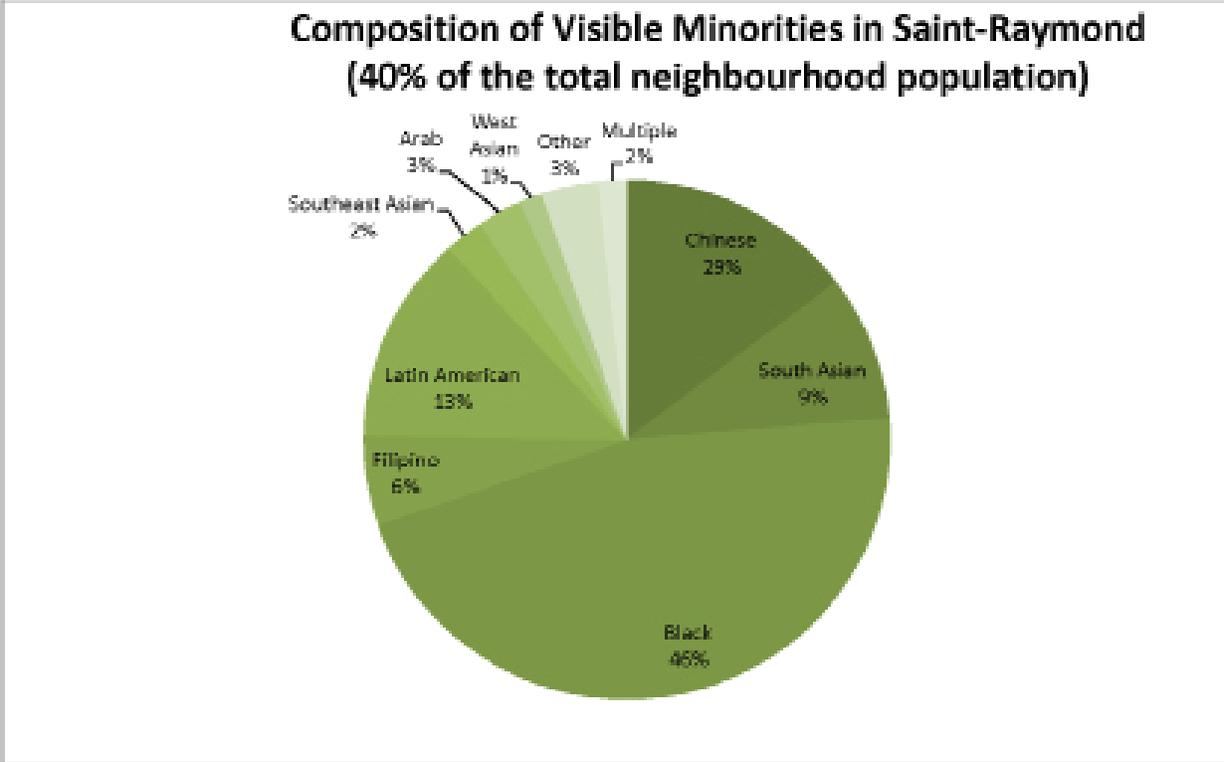
NDG is home to a large proportion of visible minority residents from a diverse range of ethnic origins, with visible minorities constituting roughly one-third of its population. Similar percentages of visible minorities are also present in Saint-Raymond and the surrounding neighbourhoods. In Saint-Raymond, 40 percent of residents are identified as being part of a visible minority group. The breakdown of visible minority residents by sub-neighbourhood is found in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Visible Minorities
 Source: Statistics Canada 2006

	Proportion of visible minority residents
Saint-Raymond	40%
Westhaven	55%
Westmount Adjacent	28%
Below Sherbrooke East	18%
Below Sherbrooke West	40%
NDG	30%
City of Montreal	25%

Surrounding sub-neighbourhoods vary widely in the proportion of visible minority residents. Only 18 percent of Below Sherbrooke East residents self-identify as visible minorities, much lower than the 40 percent of residents who self-identify as visible minorities in Below Sherbrooke West, reflecting a striking difference in population composition between these two adjacent areas. Saint-Raymond (40 percent) has a higher percent of visible minorities than Westmount Adjacent (28 percent) but much lower than Westhaven (55 percent), which has the highest percentage of self-identified visible minorities of all the sub-neighbourhoods studied. See a breakdown of Saint Raymond’s visible minorities in figure 7.

Figure 7: Composition of Visible Minorities in Saint-Raymond, 2006
 Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.



Residents of Saint-Raymond and surrounding neighbourhoods identify as having a diverse array of ethnic origins and nationalities, including Canadian, the British Isles (English, Irish, Scottish), French, Caribbean (Jamaican, Trinidadian, Guyanese), African, Chinese, German, Polish, Filipino, Romanian, South Asian and Iranian.

One of the biggest increases has been in the Chinese population, which has seen a significant increase in the area in recent years, consistent with an overall rapid increase in Chinese immigrants making NDG their home (CDEC CDN/NDG, 2009).

Manifestations of this diversity can be found through various displays of national identity, such as the numerous Italian flags displayed in retail stores in the north-eastern part of Saint-Raymond. Many shops also display signs with writing in languages of origin, such as Italian or Mandarin. Some of the gathering places for local residents of diverse ethnic origins are described in Sidebar 1.

Sidebar 1:
CRUCIAL LOCAL GATHERING PLACES

After 81 years of being an Anglican Church, St. Savior's, built in 1925, was sold due to low membership and a need for repairs to the church. The church was bought by a Romanian orthodox parish which had formerly been sharing space in Snowdon district. This new tenant in the area, the Romanian Orthodox Church, had its first mass in 2009, and members are currently fundraising to expand the church. Although Romanians are not yet a strong presence in Saint-Raymond, the choice of locations for the church may reflect an increase in Romanian immigrants in the general area.

Although declining in numbers, the Italian Community in Saint-Raymond still hosts a bocci tournament during the annual Italian Festival which takes place throughout Montreal in at the beginning of August every year. These bocce courts, located at Oxford Park are an important place for older Italians to socialize, and thus serve an important social function in the ageing Italian community (see Burns et al., 2012).

2.4. Language

Only a small minority of Saint-Raymond residents are native French speakers; English or a non-official language are far more common mother tongues in this neighbourhood. A striking 46 percent of residents are neither French nor English native language speakers in both Saint Raymond and Below Sherbrooke West; 14% are native French language speakers. Other language related highlights include: a very high number of native English speakers (50%) in Westmount Adjacent and in Below Sherbrooke East; a relatively high percentage of French native language speakers in Below Sherbrooke East (34.5%) (see figure 8 for details).

Figure 8. Mother Tongue by percentage of neighbourhood populations, 2006
 Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.

	English	French	Non-official	Multiple responses
Westmount Adjacent	50%	22%	27%	1%
Below Sherbrooke East	42%	34.5%	23%	0.5%
Below Sherbrooke West	33.5%	17%	46%	3.5%
Saint-Raymond	36%	14%	46%	4%
Westhaven	37%	17%	43.5%	2%

However, a majority of Saint-Raymond residents speak both English and French, while about one-third can only speak English.

Weak official language skills, especially low French fluency, is a major problem for new immigrants when trying to accessing government services and information. Moreover, Figure 8 shows 2006 figures and local community groups who provide services on the ground are reporting that more recent immigrants coming to the area have tended to be even less fluent in English and French, so the situation may be getting even more challenging (Olson, 2011b). The NDG Community Council (NDGCC) has made efforts to provide housing information and other supports to these new populations, as detailed in Sidebar 2.

In 2006, educational levels in the study area were similar to the Montreal average, although substantial differences are found when analyzed by sub-neighbourhood, as seen in section 2.5.

2.5. Educational Levels

Of the sub-neighbourhoods, Saint-Raymond had the lowest proportion of university graduates and the highest proportion of people without a high school education. In contrast, educational levels in Westmount Adjacent were the highest, with more than 60 percent of residents over 25 having at least a bachelor's degree⁴.

Still, when compared with 2001 data, levels of educational attainment in Saint-Raymond have generally improved. More Saint-Raymond residents have at least a high school education and many have bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, the percentage of residents over 25 who have completed high school in Saint-Raymond is similar to the City of Montreal average. Also, both neighbourhoods below Sherbrooke have quite high levels of high school certificate attainment when compared to the City of Montreal, although in line with NDG averages.

Overall, all the neighbourhoods are at or above the City of Montreal average in terms of percentage of residents having completed at least high school (CDEC CDN/NDG, 2009). The statistics of the highest degree completed are also telling of differences between the area neighbourhoods. Figure 9 shows that Westmount Adjacent has the highest percentage of university-educated residents (62

Sidebar 2:

MORE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT NON-FRENCH SPEAKERS

Among other services, the NDG Community Council (NDGCC) attempts to answer housing enquiries and complaints from local tenants. As many residents of the area are new to Canada and have not yet mastered functional French, the NDGCC has implemented outreach programs to inform newly arrived immigrants' of their legal rights as tenants.

The NDGCC housing outreach program surveyed residents in 2008 and 2009. Community workers went door-to-door to talk with tenants to discuss individual problems and offer basic information. They found many health and safety issues in residences throughout the neighbourhood including unaddressed maintenance issues, mould, bedbugs and cockroaches. Community organizers provided advice to new immigrants on how to deal with irresponsible landlords and how to navigate other renter issues.

In 2009 the Council worked specifically with the growing Chinese population through a variety of events and workshops. Through a government-funded program, the NDGCC hired a native Mandarin-speaking student to work with local residents and to gather and share information pertaining to a variety of issues such as lease termination, cockroaches, rent increases, and repair demands.

⁴It is important to note that due to changes to the Canadian Census between 2001 and 2006, the more recent numbers include residents aged 25 or more, while the 2001 data is for residents 20 years of age or more.

%) of the surrounding neighbourhoods, while Saint-Raymond has the lowest (28%). Moreover, there appear to be a higher percent of trade school graduates in Saint-Raymond than in other neighbourhoods. Finally, while 85% of Saint-Raymond residents have completed at least high school, for 29% of the residents, a high school certificate is the highest level of educational attainment, whereas in other neighbourhoods there are higher levels of CEGEP and University diplomas.

Overall, Saint-Raymond has lower levels of educational attainment compared to area neighbourhoods (fig 10). We will now turn our attention to income and employment data.

Figure 10: Educational Attainment by highest degree completed by percentage of total population in Saint-Raymond and Surrounding Neighbourhoods, 2006
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.

	High School Certificate	CEGEP	Trade school	University
Westmount Adjacent	13%	3%	19%	62%
Below Sherbrooke East	19%	4%	22%	50%
Below Sherbrooke West	17%	8%	17%	40%
Saint-Raymond	29%	12%	16%	28%
Westhaven	18%	7,3%	16%	44%

Figure 9. Educational Attainment by high school diploma in Saint-Raymond and Surrounding Neighbourhoods, 2006

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.

	% of residents over 25 who finished high school
Westmount Adjacent	86%
Below Sherbrooke East	95%
Below Sherbrooke West	92%
Saint-Raymond	85%
Westhaven	86%
NDG	92%
City of Montreal	85%

2.6. Income and employment

In 2005, the median household income in Saint-Raymond, representative of a typical Saint-Raymond household, was \$32,764. For comparison, the 2005 median household income was \$44,576 in Notre-Dame-de-Grace, \$38,201 in the City of Montreal, \$47,979 in Greater Montreal (CDEC CDN/NDG, 2009). The average household income of Saint-Raymond, which can be skewed by very small or very large incomes, was \$38,138, roughly \$8,000 more than the typical (median) household in the area. As to be expected, the average incomes for all the neighbourhoods are higher than the median incomes, suggesting a certain amount of polarity in income levels throughout the area.

At the dissemination area level, median household incomes for Saint-Raymond and Westhaven ranged from \$16,180 to \$36,856, indicating that some dissemination area residents have significantly lower household incomes. In Westhaven, the small differential between median and average income indicate less discrepancy between residents' incomes, in contrast with South of Sherbrooke East where the average household income is \$20 000 higher than the median, indicating that there are a relatively smaller number of residents who have household income that are substantially greater than the median. Overall, all of the neighbourhoods in our study area have lower median incomes than the greater NDG area (Sidebar 3 summarizes a study of NDGs "disadvantaged neighbourhoods" including Saint Raymond.)

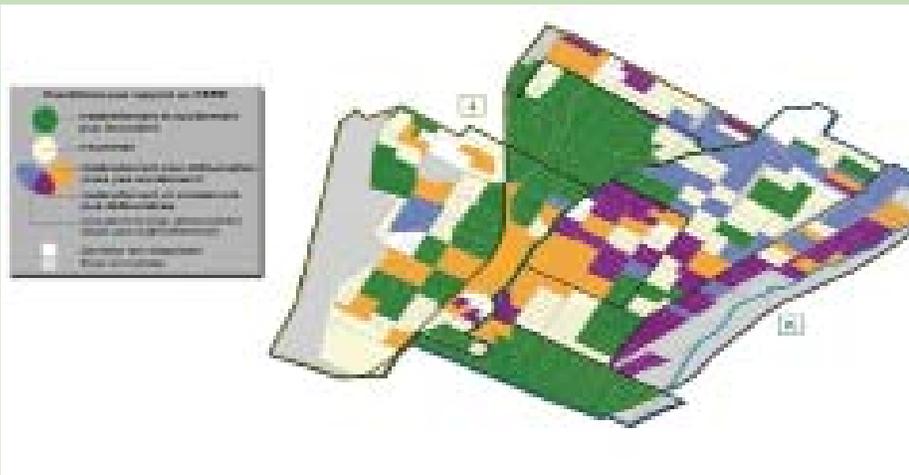
Sidebar 3:

MOST SAINT RAYMOND RESIDENTS “DISADVANTAGED”, ACCORDING TO 2008 PUBLIC HEALTH STUDY

In 2008, the Direction de santé publique published a report on NDG that provided a new view on the fabric of this community (Khun et al., 2008). Using a complex methodology developed by Robert Pampalon, which some researchers consider controversial, the report analyzed NDGs census data in a way that illustrates two kinds of “disadvantage” one material and the other social. The results map very specific areas of NDG, identifying in purple those spots that are particularly disadvantaged. As shown in Figures 11 and 12 below, much of Saint-Raymond appears purple, areas marked as both materially and socially disadvantaged. Two areas in orange are materially but not socially disadvantaged, roughly corresponding to the Italian node at the East of the neighbourhood (Khun et al., 2008).

Figure 11: Report on disadvantaged areas of Montreal - Analysis by Dissemination areas.

Source: Direction de la santé publique.



When this data is expressed in numbers, we see that a stunning 55 percent of the population of Saint-Raymond and Westhaven qualify as being both “materially and socially disadvantaged”, with 30 percent being socially but not materially disadvantaged, and 8 percent as being materially but not socially disadvantaged (see Figure 12 below). This analysis gives us a special view on our study areas, providing an important illustration of this sub-neighbourhood as it compares to other areas: Saint-Raymond is one of the most disadvantaged areas in NDG when the confluence of material and social factors are taken into account (Khun et al., 2008).

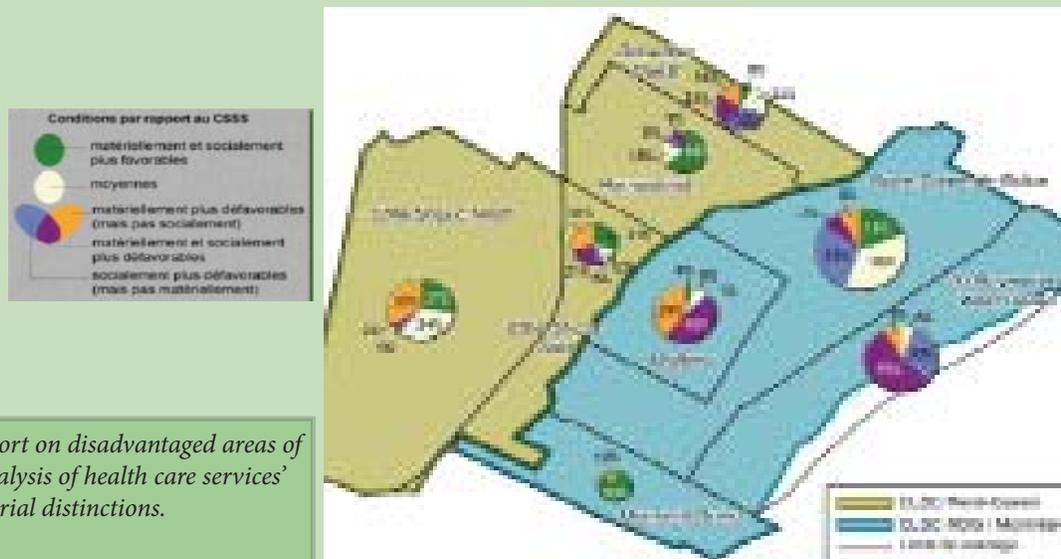


Figure 12: Report on disadvantaged areas of Montreal - Analysis of health care services’ (CLSC) territorial distinctions.

Source: Direction de la santé publique.

Figure 13. Average and Median Household Incomes (2005)
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.

	Median Income	Average Income
Saint-Raymond	\$30 971	\$38 138
Westhaven	\$23 562	\$26 273
Westmount Adjacent	\$26 753	\$39 568
Below Sherbrooke East	\$40 717	\$60 446
Below Sherbrooke West	\$29 573	\$36 958
NDG	\$44 576	\$58 960
Montreal	\$38 201	\$51 811

Turning to unemployment, differences between the neighbourhoods are again apparent (Figure 13). Counting only the people over 15 years of age who are part of the labour force, Westhaven clearly has the highest unemployment rate (18%), three times the unemployment rate of Westmount Adjacent. Below Sherbrooke West, Saint-Raymond and Westhaven all have unemployment rates which are above the NDG average (fig 14); however, they also have a lower percentage of residents over age 15 actively part of the work force.

Saint-Raymond in particular has a high percentage of children and of elderly in its population, in addition to the lowest percentage of university educated residents, half that of Westmount Adjacent residents. Saint-Raymond is also very different from Westmount Adjacent and below Sherbrooke East in terms of the immigrant population; like Westhaven, Saint-Raymond percentages of visible minority residents and residents whose native language is other than French or English are much higher than surrounding areas.

Figure 14: Unemployment rate for persons 15 years of age and older (in the workforce), 2006
Source: Statistics Canada, 2006.

Saint-Raymond	12.3
Westhaven	18.3
Westmount Adjacent	6.2
Below Sherbrooke East	7.5
Below Sherbrooke West	12.3
NDG	9
Montreal	9.2

Note: Unemployment rate applies to persons 15 years of age and older in the workforce.

Below Sherbrooke West also resembles Westhaven and Saint-Raymond in regards to the immigrant population as well as average and median household income. There thus appears to be significant similarities between below Sherbrooke East and Westmount Adjacent, in terms of population characteristics.

Overall, defining trends in Saint-Raymond's socio-economic character include a significant recent increase in the Chinese population as well as in other visible minority groups, which has changed the Italian-dominated character of the neighbourhood. Moreover, high-school level educational attainment has increased in Saint-Raymond, although university diploma rates remain substantially lower than surrounding neighbourhoods.

Saint-Raymond, Westhaven and below Sherbrooke West are all struggling with poverty-related challenges. We will now turn our attention to the ways in which these challenges are being manifested with regards to a rapidly evolving housing market and other major changes occurring nearby.

2.7. Housing

Historically an affordable area to live for low-income people, Saint-Raymond has seen rental costs go up in recent years, with increasing average rents, and an ever larger percentage of residents spending 30% or more of their income on rent.

Moreover, the vast majority of residents in Saint-Raymond are renters, with a smaller number who own their own homes. Rising housing costs put different pressures on these different groups, but in general, rising prices benefit home-owners and make it harder for renters. Some characteristics of the housing market in Saint-Raymond will now be presented.

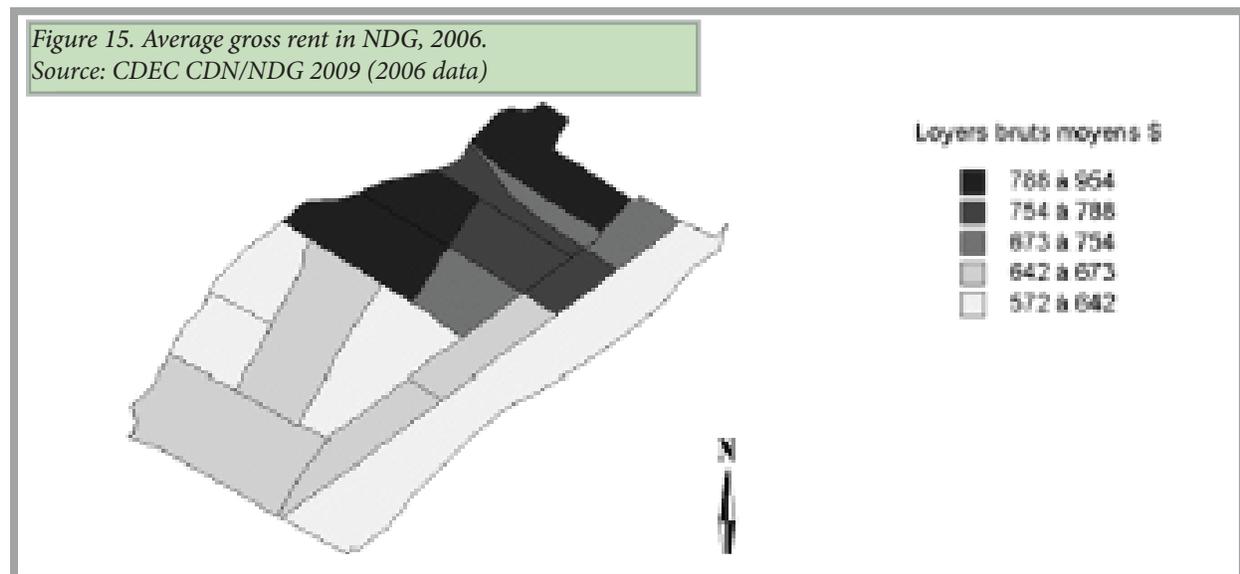
2.7.1. High percentage of renters

Saint-Raymond has a high percentage of renter-occupied households, making it more vulnerable to rises in rental prices. The proportion of renter-occupied households in Saint-Raymond and Westhaven was 81.6 percent in 2006, which is considerably higher than the city-wide average (62.1 percent) and the highly gentrified Plateau (73.8 percent) (Twigge-Molecey, 2009).

A considerably lower number of renter-occupied households was found in Westmount Adjacent, where only 66 percent of households were renter-occupied (Twigge-Molecey, 2009). This area also had a better quality building stock and higher average income levels than the other sub-neighbourhoods, with an overall profile perhaps closer to Westmount than its NDG counterparts.

In 2006, average rents in the area were lower than the island or CMA average at \$572 for Saint-Raymond and Westhaven and \$634 for Lower NDG (Saint-Raymond, Westhaven, Westmount Adjacent, South of Sherbrooke West and East), compared with \$709 in the Plateau, \$600 in Saint-Henri, and \$662 island-wide (Twigge-Molecey, 2009: 47)⁵. The average gross rents in NDG are mapped in figure 15 below.

Saint-Raymond and Westhaven exhibited a 13.9% increase in average rent between 1996 and 2006, significantly lower than Westmount Adjacent (22.6% increase), Below Sherbrooke East (20.8% increase) and Below Sherbrooke West (23.2%).

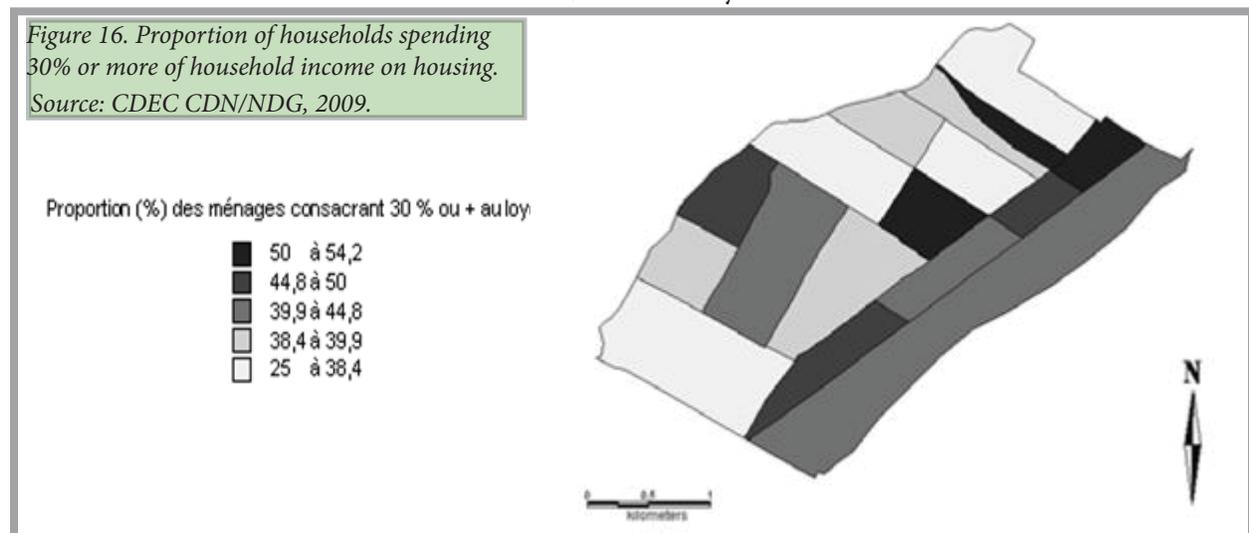


⁵ Refers to the total average monthly payments paid by tenant households).

While as of 2006, Saint-Raymond and Westhaven still had the lowest rents in NDG, at between \$572 and \$642 a month, the area we are calling Below Sherbrooke had average gross rents in the second highest bracket, at \$754-788 per month, even higher than Westmount Adjacent, at \$673-754 a month.

The increasing cost of housing presents an ongoing challenge to renters in our study area. In Saint-Raymond, since 2006, between 40 and 45 percent of renter households were spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent. In neighbouring Westmount Adjacent, the proportion of renters spending 30 percent or more of their income on monthly rent was more than 50 percent: not a typical Westmount profile. These differences are represented in figure 16 below.

It is important to consider again the percentage of renters to owners, to fully appreciate these numbers: 4 out of 5 households in Saint-Raymond rent, compared with just over 3 out of 5 for Westmount Adjacent, as noted earlier in this report. Thus, approximately 840 households pay more than 30% of their household income on rent, in Saint Raymond.



It is interesting to note that Westmount Adjacent spends a higher percentage of their income on rent, although the rents are lower than Below Sherbrooke, which suggests that Below Sherbrooke has a more affluent community (higher rents, lower percentage of income spent on rent) than Westmount Adjacent. This conclusion is also supported by average household income data, cited elsewhere in this report.

2.7.2. Rising dwelling values in Lower-NDG

In addition to increasing rents, average dwelling values have risen at a higher rate in Lower-NDG than city-wide during the ten-year period from 1996 to 2006. In 2006 homeowners in the area were struggling to afford their homes, almost 30 percent of homeowners were spending 30 percent or more of their household incomes on the cost of shelter (Twigge-Molecey, 2009).

In 1996, the average value of a dwelling in Lower-NDG was \$139,969, while in 2006, this value had increased to \$339,911, an increase of 143%. By comparison, over this same period dwelling values on the Island of Montreal increased by 92% (Twigge-Molecey, 2009). By 2006, average dwelling values in Lower NDG were higher than those in Saint-Henri or the Plateau. In Saint-Raymond and Westhaven, there was a decrease in homeownership between 1996 and 2006 of approximately 2%, with about 17 % of residents owning their home.

2.8. Community resources

Although residents face substantial economic challenges, summarized in the previous section, Saint-Raymond has a true neighbourhood feel. A good-sized community centre and major public green space, Parc Georges-Saint Pierre, known locally as Oxford Park, serve as important centres for the neighbourhood, both as social gathering spaces and activity centres. Saint-Raymond is also served by a number of community groups and resources, some of which are physically located in the neighbourhood and others not; Saint-Raymond has also recently lost some key community groups that have had to relocate elsewhere in NDG when they lost their community space at a local Catholic church. The parks, community gardens and some of the community organizations will be presented in the following section.

2.8.1. Parks and Community Gardens

Saint-Raymond's largest public space is Parc Georges-Saint-Pierre, often called Oxford Park, located between Upper-Lachine, Saint-Jacques, Oxford and Old Orchard. This multi-use park includes a number of recreational features such as a soccer field, baseball diamond, outdoor skating rink, playground and picnic area, and is also the location of the Saint-Raymond Community Centre. This park hosts the previously mentioned Italian festival and bocce tournament. In the last two years several improvements have been made, including redoing the playgrounds and the addition of a basketball court. Moreover, the Borough mayor has also proposed plans to add a children's wading pool area in 2012 (McQueen, 2011).

Oxford Park also contains a City of Montreal community garden with 21 garden plots located at Oxford and Upper-Lachine and a collective garden operated by resident-volunteers that is part of the Victory Garden Network of Action communiterre, an NDG community group. In addition, many residents, especially members of the Italian community, have private gardens for growing food. While there is a small grocery store and some *dépanneurs*, it is difficult to find good quality fresh fruits and vegetables in Saint-Raymond (CEUM, 2011).

The Terry Fox Park, located along the top of the Saint-Jacques escarpment is an elegantly designed but rarely used park (figure 17). The City of Montreal acquired much of the properties along the escarpment in the 1980s, and this park was in effect the first phase of a bigger project to enable resident access to the Falaise Saint-Jacques, a large and wild area located in the South-West Borough. The Falaise Saint-Jacques, recognized by the City of Montreal as an eco-territory and protected for its contribution to Montreal's biodiversity, is threatened by the redesign of the Turcot Interchange. Due to the heavy traffic on Saint-Jacques, Terry Fox Park is rarely used by residents. Access to the Falaise Saint-Jacques is also very difficult, and few residents in Saint-Raymond make use of this green space. The most recent Montreal Master Plan calls for permitting public views from the top of the Falaise of the Lachine Canal and the Saint Laurence River, from key spots in Saint-Raymond, but does not foresee facilitating access to this green space.

Figure 17. Terry Fox Park



2.8.2. Community organizations

NDG Community Council (NDGCC)

Saint-Raymond has historically had a number of active community groups working to improve the quality of life for residents. Over the past 5 years, the NDG Community Council has played an ever-more important role in the neighbourhood, supporting work on the ground and citizen groups. The Community Council, active in NDG for seventy years, animates a number of thematic community meetings which bring together organisations in NDG: the NDG Round Table meetings (similar to the Tables de concertation in other neighbourhoods) are convened roughly four times a year and draw approximately thirty organizations.

The NDG 2020 (or Assemblée publique 2020) is an innovative public assembly run by the NDGCC which meets roughly eight times a year and allows citizens to express their thoughts on the direction of the neighbourhood or on a particular issue affecting the neighbourhood. These assemblies allow local groups, public bodies and residents to discuss major issues and developments in their neighbourhood and work in a concerted manner by sharing information on community initiatives. NDG 2020 is a made-in-NDG mechanism for galvanizing community action.

The NDG Community Council has actively supported the Saint-Raymond Residents' Association. The Council is also an active partner in the Quartier Vert process (described later in this report) and in the Interneighbourhood Coalition (CIQ) and Community University Research Alliance (CURA), whose main preoccupation is the arrival of the new mega-hospital in a rail yard immediately to the East of Saint-Raymond. These projects and activities will have an impact on the future development of Saint-Raymond.

Saint-Raymond Community Centre

The Centre communautaire de Saint-Raymond is located on Upper-Lachine at Oxford Avenue. This centre opened in 2006 and is managed by Comité Jeunesse NDG, a non-profit organization in existence since 1981 that works in partnership with the NDG-CDN Borough. The community centre offers a variety of sport and recreational programs, as well as specific programs for school age children.

NDG Food Depot

The NDG Food Depot, a food bank located just north of Saint-Raymond at the corner of de Maisonneuve and Oxford, has been serving Saint-Raymond and the rest of NDG since the mid-1980s. Current services include the Good Food Box, Emergency Food Baskets, free cooking classes, a weekly drop-in for seniors, and jobs and skills workshops and assistance. The Good Food Box is a program that provides high quality fruits and vegetable boxes twice per month at various neighbourhood drop off points. Emergency Food Baskets, which provide 2.5 days worth of healthy and nutritional food, are available up to twice a month to individuals and families living in certain NDG neighbourhoods.

Action communiterre

A non-profit organization founded in 1997 and currently located on Sherbrooke at Kensington Avenue, Action communiterre is dedicated to raising public awareness about food securing and

urban agriculture, as well as improving the community's access to healthy produce (Action communiterre, 2011). Action communiterre manages the Victory Garden Network, which includes ten organic gardens located throughout NDG. This organization also offers a variety of activities including inter-generational cooking, gardening workshops, and nutritional information.

Saint-Raymond Residents Association (SRRA)

This association, composed of home-owners and renters, was formed in 2005, partly in response to the announcement of the McGill University Health Centre, and in anticipation of changes to the neighbourhood, particularly in regards to traffic and access to the rest of NDG. The association continues to exist but has been less active recently.

2.9. Conclusions: Socio-Demographic Section

Overall, the Saint-Raymond population has increased moderately over the past few years, most particularly due to new condominium infill projects, with an estimated 3610 people in 2006 (plus a few hundred since then). Yet, despite this modest growth, Saint-Raymond is still relatively small and isolated, making it difficult to support local amenities and services and a vibrant local economy. Residents of Saint-Raymond still have to travel north to Sherbrooke to access basic services such as banks, pharmacies and other services.

The two most important changes in Saint-Raymond over the past decade are a substantial increase in the visible minority immigrant population, and a spike in education attainment levels. Saint-Raymond has a highly diverse residential population which includes a high proportion of people born outside of Canada who speak many different mother tongues.

While people of Italian origin still make up 10 percent of the total Saint-Raymond population, this proportion of the population is both ageing and declining in numbers. New immigrants in the area are primarily of Caribbean, African and Chinese origins. Some 40% of Saint Raymond residents are also visible minorities, compared with 25% in Montreal as a whole.

Strikingly, while the majority of people living in Saint-Raymond have knowledge of at least one official language, only 14% are native French language speakers. In 2006, nearly half of residents speak non-official languages as their mother tongue, neither French nor English, similar to other Montreal neighbourhoods like Cote-des-Neiges.

The median household income in Saint-Raymond is substantially lower than the rest of NDG. A huge majority of residents are renters (82%), much more than the Montreal average (62%), and the neighbourhood is also home to a higher than average proportion of single-parent households.

However, via a variety of local initiatives, some effort is being made to tackle pressing issues like poverty, tenants' rights, community services and neighbourhood connectivity. Rising housing costs and key indicators show that gentrification is occurring in neighbourhoods surrounding Saint-Raymond, especially just to the north of the area, as described later in section 4.3.1: planning, policies and community action in Saint Raymond will continue to respond to these larger urban forces. The neighbourhood of Saint-Raymond will continue to be shaped by outside forces including the large-scale projects currently under construction at its borders. We will now turn to transportation and circulation in the area for more insights into these vectors of change.

3. TRANSPORTATION

The following section provides a detailed analysis of the regional road network, public transportation routes, as well as pedestrian and bicycle routes. Major transportation routes and corridors outside Saint-Raymond will be included in analysis, as these routes contribute to the greater context of vehicular, pedestrian and public transportation links.

Major transportation features for the area include heavy transiting traffic during peak hours, fewer vehicle trips and lower car ownership as compared with NDG as a whole. Overall, strong barriers make pedestrian and cycling difficult and/or unappealing. While some transport issues continue to affect Saint-Raymond (notably the impending construction of the Turcot Interchange and the start of construction of the MUHC Glen Campus), a major effort to improve active transport has been launched, the 2011 South-Eastern NDG Quartier vert actif et en santé (QVAS) project developed by Mobiligo in partnership with the NDG-CDN Borough with support from the Urban Ecology Centre and the Coalition québécoise de la problématique du poids as part of the Montreal Urban Ecology Centre QVAS initiative⁶.

The QVAS project gathered information on circulation patterns for the South-Eastern NDG study area, which includes the part of Saint-Raymond neighbourhood east of Melrose and the rest of the south-eastern corner of NDG between Oxford and Décarie, south of NDG avenue (see Figure 18 below). Key information gathered by this research project will be highlighted in this section, but readers are encouraged to explore the complete QVAS report carefully for a thorough treatment of transport issues.

3.1. Public Transportation

In general, the neighbourhood of Saint-Raymond is relatively well-served by the city's public transportation system considering the small residential population and enclaved nature of the neighbourhood (Racine et al., 2005). Saint-Raymond is served by a major trans-island bus route and is minutes from the Vendôme metro station. The Vendôme metro station, a bus, subway and commuter train hub, acts as a gateway to much of the rest of the city. Public transportation is heavily used by area residents and although bus service has been improved in recent years, bus frequency and overcrowding are still reported on certain lines, as will be described in more detail later on.

3.1.1. Vendôme metro and commuter rail station

The Vendôme metro has been under significant pressure due to its strategic location and inter-modal capacity and is currently at capacity. With the arrival of the MUHC Glen Campus, expected to draw an additional 10,000 people to the site daily, the STM and the AMT have agreed that the Vendôme station must be redesigned in order to handle the expected increase in users. This expansion will involve the creation of a second egress from the metro an improvement of the connection between the metro line and the commuter rail stop and a link to the Glen Campus. Currently, the MUHC is working with a private partner to design the hospital connection to the station, prior to a request for funds from the Ministry of Transport. The MUHC is studying both

⁶ QVAS The Quartier vert, actif et en santé (QVAS) project, an initiative of Centre d'écologie urbaine, is a multi-step program which solicits community participation in brainstorming solutions to circulation problems. This research and problem-solving project has been conducted in four neighbourhoods in Montreal, most recently in south-eastern NDG. As part of the QVAS, sometimes referred to in English as the Green, Active, Healthy Neighbourhoods Project, area residents are involved in diagnosing circulation problems and conducting research on the area. Solutions to problem areas are then brainstormed by a variety of stakeholders. The South-eastern NDG QVAS project began in the summer of 2010 and was completed in November 2011.

tunnel and overhead walkway options, as reported at public Comité de bon voisinage meetings in February 2011 (Ville de Montréal, 2011a). (See sidebar 4 for details on the Comité.)

Additionally, the AMT is proposing the reservation of space for two additional tracks to increase commuter rail capacity, in anticipation of improved service from the West Island. The station itself is also in need of repair as it does not have an elevator, making it inaccessible for wheelchairs. The timeline and prioritization of these projects will depend on the allocation of provincial and municipal funding. Still, the creation of a more accessible, better connected Vendôme intermodal station with a greater capacity for transit users is not only an essential asset for the viability of the MUHC Glen Campus project but will also improve service for all area public transit users.

3.1.2. Bus Routes

Several bus routes serve southeastern NDG and connect to the Vendôme metro. These routes vary in frequency and in usefulness with respect to bringing residents of Saint-Raymond to their destinations. The seven bus routes connecting at the station are: 17-Décarie, 37-Jolicoeur, 90-Saint-Jacques, 102-Somerled, 104-Cavendish, 105-Sherbrooke, and 124 -Victoria. Two buses connect Saint-Raymond to points West and the Vendôme metro station, along Upper-Lachine Road: the 90 and the 104.

In 2005, general observations indicated that residents predominantly take Bus 90, which connects Saint-Raymond to Vendôme, stopping at seven bus stops on Chemin Upper-Lachine every five to seven minutes during peak morning hours. Since 2010, the city has implemented a 10-minute maximum program which promises a less than 10-minute wait between buses on weekdays during peak hours and in peak directions. Bus routes 90 and 105 are both part of this program.

Other bus lines can be taken from the Vendôme Metro, including lines 17, 102 and 162. These lines run north-south along the eastern edge of the Borough, on the Décarie Expressway and Girouard and generally arrive every 30 minutes. Line 104-Cavendish, which connects Saint-Raymond residents to several important health and other services, arrives roughly every fifty minutes. The 420 express bus only runs during peak hours, from Vendôme metro station into the city centre. Thus, the majority of bus lines must be taken from the Vendôme metro and primarily run on the outskirts of the neighbourhood, with the exception of Bus 90; the frequency of buses remains an important issue for many residents (see fig 21 for mass transit user data).

Sidebar 4:

COMITÉ DE BON VOISINAGE

A recently developed forum for resident participation on major changes in the area is the Comité de bon voisinage (Committee for Good Neighbourly Relations), which was formed by the City with the MUHC to provide information and updates on the MUHC Glen Campus construction to local residents and merchants. In this forum, representatives from the MUHC and City officials answer questions from local residents and elected representatives regarding the construction projects linked to the new Glen Campus and attempt to resolve problems caused by the construction. These meetings, held monthly since October 2010, are often reported on in local newspapers, the Westmount Examiner and the NDG/Hampstead Free Press, thus enlarging the forum to those who are not able to attend the meetings.

Although limited to subjects related to current construction projects, the forum does serve the purpose of disseminating information to residents and providing resident feedback to the MUHC and to the City. The archived minutes of all the meetings since 2010 can be found on the MUHC website:

<http://cusm.ca/new-muhc/page/archives>.

Overall, since south-eastern NDG residents and residents of Saint-Raymond in particular depend heavily on public transportation, they have been especially vulnerable to changes in public transportation routes due to the number of construction projects in the area, which will be discussed later on in this section of this report (see figure 18a).

Figure 18a. Public transit network.

Source: QVAS 2011.



Sidebar 5:

A NEW SCHOOL IN SAINT RAYMOND: IS IT POSSIBLE?

According to preliminary research in 2008, it was found that residents of Saint-Raymond bus their children to six different primary schools, some French and others English. There is one school bus per school which brings roughly 30 children to each primary school. This unfinished research project would have asked at what point it becomes viable for the school boards to consider opening a new school in Saint-Raymond; how many children and what demographic pattern would have to be in place for this to happen; is population density a factor in school board decisions? Planners have suggested that while the density and total population of the area is currently insufficient, the need could be reconsidered if the population increased.

Several locations have been identified as potential sites for a temporary school, including the Shadd Business Academy on Old Orchard, formerly John 23rd school (English) and the old French school on Oxford which houses an annexe to the Centre Saint-Paul, offering two training programs, a nursing aide school and French courses for adults (at the time of writing, the annex was temporarily closed and courses were relocated to the Saint Henri annex) (CSDM, n.d.). Given the fact that some NDG schools are at capacity (one school has created an elementary school annex to accommodate growth), and the increase in housing units in Saint-Raymond, school boards may be invited to explore increased service in this neighbourhood.

3.2. Pedestrians and Bicycles

Pedestrian and cyclist routes in Saint-Raymond are made difficult by the high volume of cars and the lack of appropriate infrastructure supporting active transportation. Many key services for residents of Saint-Raymond are located just outside the area on Sherbrooke Street, including churches, schools, banks, and other amenities. Walking or cycling in the area is made less safe and less attractive by the detours required to get around natural and built barriers. Poor maintenance of infrastructure (sidewalks and roads) are not only impediments to walking and cycling, but also make the area less secure for children and the elderly. The unusually difficult problems cyclists and pedestrians face in this neighbourhood is one of the reasons the Montreal Urban Ecology Centre chose South-Eastern NDG for a QVAS pilot project.

3.2.1. Pedestrian network

As part of the reconstruction of the Décarie access to the MUHC Glen Campus, pedestrian routes on the borders of the study area may see some improvements. However, within Saint-Raymond, pedestrians and cyclists must use heavily-trafficked roads which constitute the key access points into and out of the area. Pedestrian access to the north of the railway tracks is limited to four options:



Figure 18b. The Girouard Viaduct
Source: CEUM 2011.

- **the Melrose Tunnel** : a quick link to Sherbrooke Street, this option can be dangerous as it is icy in winter and poorly lit; narrow stairs make it difficult for seniors and parents with strollers and impossible for wheelchairs;
- **the Girouard Viaduct** : a key route for school-aged children; thousands of cars use the viaduct daily; pedestrians must travel a distance of 500m in very unpleasant conditions (a six minute walk) (see Figure 18b);
- **the Upper-Lachine Viaduct** : the link to the Vendome metro: high traffic volumes and complicated pedestrian crossing possibilities along a very unpleasant, barren and isolated landscape; the Borough is considering closing this viaduct when a new link via Crowley is opened to the Glen Campus.

- **the pedestrian bridge at Grand** : another official short cut to Sherbrooke, this structure goes over the train tracks and is narrow and difficult to climb.

Residents have made a number of holes in the fences bordering the tracks on both sides, shortcuts for people willing to hazard a dangerous crossing, to avoid a long detour via the official passages.

2008 AMT Origin Destination (OD) data found that most of the walking trips in the South-eastern area of NDG are completed by people under the age of twenty. Children who walk to school from Saint-Raymond generally take the Girouard viaduct to reach schools in Upper-NDG. Parents have expressed concern regarding the lack of a school crossing guard at the intersection of Girouard and Upper-Lachine (CEUM, 2011). Because, many key services for residents of Saint-Raymond are located just outside the area on Sherbrooke Street, including churches, schools, banks, and other amenities, improving the security and attractiveness of pedestrian routes would encourage active transport. See Figure 19 for a mapping of key places that most people could get to by foot and bike and the “inhospitable zones” mapped in gray.

11. UN QUARTIER PROPICE À LA MARCHÉ ET AU VÉLO



Figure 19. Accessibility of neighbourhood by foot and cycling.
Source: CEUM 2011.

While many things are close, sidewalks in the neighbourhood especially those on highly trafficked streets are in disrepair, two factors that discourage walking. The Borough has implemented new traffic-calming measures on Chemin Upper-Lachine, adjacent to the community centre (fig 20).

In general, the main thoroughfares of Saint-Raymond are not conducive to pedestrian activity: a limited number and variety of local stores, a walking environment made unpleasant by frequent traffic, noise and air pollution, and neglected sidewalk maintenance. The improvement of these walking environments would encourage commercial vitality on Upper-Lachine, and make walking trips to Sherbrooke and the Vendôme metro more appealing for local residents.



Figure 20. Traffic-calming on Upper-Lachine
Credit: Jill Merriman.

3.2.2. Cycling infrastructure

The cycling infrastructure is insufficient in Saint-Raymond, although paths outside the area connect well to downtown. Montreal has two heavily used bike paths connecting Western neighbourhoods to Downtown. A heavily used commuter bike path runs along de Maisonneuve just north of Saint-Raymond, connecting NDG with the downtown core (see fig 22 for the bike map of the area).

A crucial link in this route remains to be completed at intersection of Decarie and de Maisonneuve, just East of Saint-Raymond, as will be discussed later in this report (see sidebar 6). A second path along the Lachine Canal links the Town of Lachine to Montreal's Old Port. The Lachine Canal Bike Path is used by commuters as well as thousands of recreational cyclists.

The 2005 Master Plan for the MUHC's Glen Campus included links via the hospital site to the Downtown and Lachine Canal, but these are no longer in the plan. Also, the most recent City of Montreal cycling network plan does not foresee a connection to Saint-Raymond either. But Borough planners are exploring the possibility of adding a bike path on Upper-Lachine, linking de Maisonneuve and downtown. With so many large projects underway concurrently and many different players (e.g. City and Borough departments, provincial ministries, private consortia), it becomes a challenge for mobilized residents with proposals for improving active transportation networks to get their voice heard. These improvements have modest capital requirements, compared to those of the projects under construction, but require all players to agree that they are important and to integrate them into their planning.

Actions taken over the next months and years will play a large role in determining what long-term improvements, if any, are made to the area.

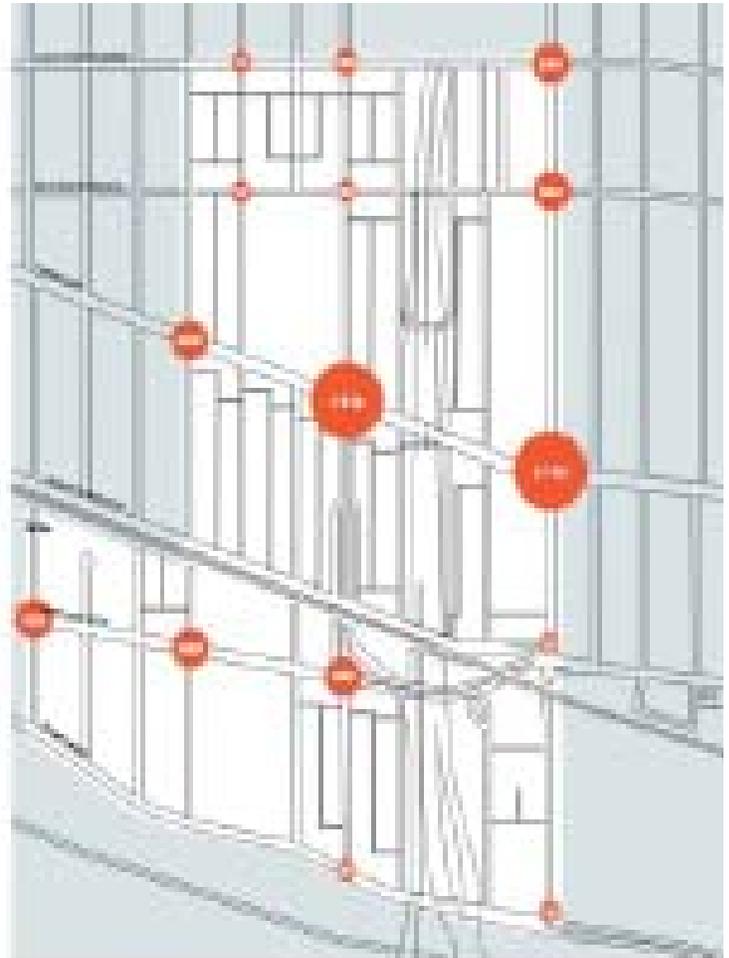


Figure 21. Public transit counts (2010).
Source: CEUM 2011.



Figure 22. Cycling network, 2011.
Source: Ville de Montreal.

3.2.3. BIXI

In 2011, the BIXI bicycle sharing program expanded its network to include six stations in NDG. At the time of this study, there were two BIXI stations located just east of the study area, at Vendôme metro station and at the intersection of Marlowe and Sherbrooke. However, these two stations may not be sufficient to meet existing and rising demand.

Additional BIXI stations in NDG are found at the Villa-Maria metro station (21 bikes), and at Marcil and Monkland (15 bikes). Two stations are located near the Snowdon metro station. The dearth of service near Saint-Raymond is not unsurprising, as the southwest of Montreal in general has a limited number of BIXI stations⁷. Also, limited bicycle network connectivity as well as poorly maintained infrastructure make cycling difficult.

3.3. Regional road network

The major roads in Saint-Raymond are important arterials and connectors primarily used by high-speed vehicle traffic. These roads tend to serve commuters who are passing through the area more than local residents. Saint-Jacques is dominated by commuter traffic from the West Island and is the first major arterial road north of the Turcot Interchange. Other major east-west routes through lower NDG are boulevard de Maisonneuve (currently one way going West, from Decarie) and Sherbrooke Street.

The 2005 study of the area found that while Sherbrooke Street managed a high volume of traffic throughout the day, Saint-Jacques managed the highest traffic volumes during both morning and afternoon peaks (Racine et al., 2005). Upper-Lachine, the final major east-west corridor, used to be a main thoroughfare in the area, which justified the presence of an interchange at Upper-Lachine/Saint-Jacques. The borough would like to restructure these roads in the coming years to favour local traffic patterns (Gourde, 2011).

An analysis of Saint Raymond movement using Origin-Destination data is presented in Sidebar 7.

Sidebar 6:

THE “MISSING LINK”: PROBLEMS WITH THE CYCLING NETWORK

The “missing link” in the de Maisonneuve bike path, at the intersection of Décarie Boulevard, has received increased attention in recent months, with respect to the danger it presents to cyclists. A summertime headcount recorded 1,700 cyclists crossing this intersection on a weekday (QVAS, 2011; Beaudin, 2011). Because the bike path ends abruptly at Décarie Boulevard, at a 5 point intersection, cyclists must either dismount or cut through heavy, dangerous and confusing traffic (CBC, 2011). The bike path picks up again at de Maisonneuve and Northcliffe, one block east of Decarie. (See Figure 19 for QVAS diagnosis of cycling issues).

There are plans to incorporate bicycle paths on-site in the new MUHC Glen Campus, running around the perimeter of the site, but, as mentioned earlier, the internal network’s connection to the broader bike path network in the City is unclear. Given the large number of new trips that will be generated by the site, this issue needs to be taken seriously by the City and the hospital. NDG city counsellor Peter McQueen, and others, are proposing that a dedicated bike and pedestrian bridge be constructed that safely connects NDG to Westmount (CBC, 2011).

⁷These counts are based on observations from 2011, the 2012 Bixi network may see increased stations in the area.

Sidebar 7 : PEOPLE AND CARS IN SAINT RAYMOND: ANALYSING THE 2008 ORIGIN-DESTINATION (OD) DATA

The regional transport authority's Origin-Destination (O-D) survey, taken every 5 years, is key to understanding how people actually move in the City of Montreal. Data from the 2008 survey was analyzed as part of NDGs Quartier Vert Actif et en Santé (QVAS) research project (see section 5.2 for details), highlights from which are provided here.

Saint Raymond residents have fewer cars, ride more buses, metros and bikes

Origin Destination data (OD) shows that residents in the QVAS study area, including Saint Raymond, take cars less often (had a lower modal share for automobile trips) than residents in the rest of the Borough, which can be explained by:

- the presence of two Metro stations within the QVAS area;*
- the efficiency of bus 90 on Upper-Lachine and the 105 on Sherbrooke,*
- the relative closeness to the city center as well as*
- lower than average household incomes in Saint-Raymond.*

The 2008 data also showed that south-eastern NDG has a slightly higher than average modal share of public transit use (34%) when compared with NDG as a whole (30%). Also, households in the QVAS area have lower vehicle ownership rates than other households in central city neighbourhoods. So, residents of south-eastern NDG, including Saint-Raymond residents, are less likely to have a car and more likely to use public or active transportation. This compares favourably to the Plateau-Est QVAS, renowned for being mass-transit friendly, where 30% of trips are by car and only 27% of trips are by public transportation; 39% of trips are by foot or bicycle.

Saint Raymond residents more likely to take short trips by car or by foot

South-eastern NDG residents also tend to take short trips. According to the 2008 data, more than a third of trips by residents were distances less than 2 km. Of these trips, 44 percent were done by car, and 43 percent by active transport (40 percent walk, 3 percent bike). In comparison, in the Plateau-est QVAS neighbourhood, a neighbourhood which is very pedestrian and bike friendly, only 19% of trips under 2km are taken by car, versus 71% of trips under 2km taken by foot or by bike. Short trips by car in Saint-Raymond can be explained in part by the physical barriers that create long detours for residents, dense automobile traffic, and a lack of safe bicycle path and pedestrian crossings which makes active transportation unattractive, even for short distances.

Lots of “just travelling through” cars cause heavy rush-hour traffic

2008 OD data also shows that there is heavy traffic in the area during peak hours. Roughly 16,500 non residents come into south-eastern NDG, as their destination, primarily to work (36%) and shop (18%). More than a third of these trips (34%) occur during morning peak hours and roughly one half (49%) occur during morning and afternoon peak hours combined. Thus, significant numbers of non-residents come into the QVAS zone, influencing local traffic patterns including the street vehicle traffic, and overcrowding on buses and at the Vendome metro. To this already important influx of non-residents will be added the roughly 10 000 MUHC Glen Campus employees and patients who will be coming into the area, many of whom may come by car.

For more information on traffic pressures arising from the new MUHC, see www.ciq-glen.ca.

Inner-city neighbourhoods in Montreal are defined by AMT in the QVAS report as including the following sectors in Montreal: Sud-Ouest, Notre-dame-de-Grace, Côte des neiges, Plateau-Mont-Royal, Villeray, Ahuntsic, Saint-Michel, Rosemont, Sud-est, Mercier et Outremont. These sectors are defined by the AMT and differ slightly from borough boundaries.

3.3.1. Construction and the road network

The heavy traffic on the two east-west roads in Saint-Raymond, Saint-Jacques and Upper-Lachine, is partly due to the predominance of dead-ends on the neighbourhood's thirteen north-south streets: only two of these cross the railway tracks: one at Cavendish and one at Girouard. This hinders north-south circulation in Saint-Raymond. A third access under the railroad tracks currently connects Upper-Lachine to de Maisonneuve, but automobile traffic is expected to be rerouted via Crowley and Decarie Boulevard when the new hospital opens.

A major north-south transit corridor, the Décarie Expressway, marks the eastern border of the neighbourhood. Until recently, Saint-Raymond residents accessed this highway southbound via a circuitous route under the tracks and along de Maisonneuve, and northbound via a ramp off of Sherbrooke Street. These access points will change with the new configuration of the road network to accommodate the McGill University mega-hospital, as described in the next section.

Due to several recent construction projects, circulation patterns have been distinctly altered in the neighbourhood, although high volumes of vehicle traffic remain persistent. Currently, construction on the Turcot Interchange, the reconstruction of the Décarie and the construction of the MUHC Glen campus have complicated traffic patterns and made traffic counts difficult to obtain and compare with previous counts. At the time of this study, Décarie Boulevard was almost completely closed to traffic south of de Maisonneuve and lane reductions were also present on Upper-Lachine west of Décarie Boulevard (fig 23). The Saint-Jacques exit off Autoroute 720 going West was also closed, with traffic diverted via Atwater.



*Figure 23. Décarie Blvd. and Upper-Lachine road closures and lane reductions, July 2011
Credits: Jill Merriman.*

3.3.2. Impact of the MUHC Glen Campus on road network

The 2005 Office de consultation publique de Montréal (OCPM) report from consultations on the MUHC Glen Campus recommended a number of changes to the road network. Prioritized in this report was the widening of Décarie between Saint-Jacques and de Maisonneuve, currently underway, the reconstruction of the railway underpasses on Décarie and Upper-Lachine, and the improvement of the Saint-Jacques streetscape between St-Rémi and the MUHC Glen Campus. Several road improvements associated with the MUHC Glen Campus, such as the widening of Décarie Boulevard, have already begun and are scheduled to continue for at least the next two years. Figures 24 and 25 below outline the location and timing of the major modifications.



1. Fall 2010:

Construction of a buried pipe under the railway tracks located near the intersection of Boulevard de Maisonneuve and Boulevard Décarie.

2. Fall 2010 - Spring 2011:

Construction of a large collector sewer 3.6 metres in diameter along the eastern side of Boulevard Décarie.

3. Fall 2010 - Spring 2011:

Redevelopment of the Saint-Jacques/Décarie intersection.

4. Spring 2011 - Fall 2012:

Reconstruction of the railway bridge.

5. Summer 2011 - Fall 2011:

Reconstruction of underground infrastructures (sewer-aqueduct) on the western side of Boulevard Décarie.

6. Spring 2012 - Fall 2012:

Sidewalk widening, road reconstruction, tree and shrub planting, installation of street furniture and lighting.

7. Winter 2012 - Spring: 2013:

Reconstruction of sewer and water mains at the intersection of Boulevard De Maisonneuve and Boulevard Décarie.

8. Spring 2013 - Fall 2013:

Redevelopment of the De Maisonneuve / Décarie intersection and Chemin Upper-Lachine.

Figure 24. Scheduled interventions on road network surrounding the MUHC.
Source: MUHC, 2011.



Figure 25. Traffic impact of the MUHC Glen Campus on the surrounding area (2007 assessment).
Source: Dessau Soprin, 2007.

These projects, in addition to changes associated with the reconstruction of the Turcot Interchange, will have an impact on traffic patterns, both during and after construction. With increased vehicular capacity and vehicle volumes in the areas surrounding the MUHC Glen Campus, the psychological and physical borders created by major roads in Saint-Raymond will continue to be reinforced. A Saint-Raymond residents group has been a vocal critic of the evolving plans. The latest proposal, they argue, reduces access from Saint-Raymond to the rest of NDG, forcing cars leaving the area to take a detour via Crowley before heading North to Sherbrooke Street. The closing of the Girouard highway ramp to the 15 South and 20 West is also criticized. The proposed traffic plan, critics argue, favours incoming hospital traffic, at the expense of the outgoing and local traffic.

3.4. Circulation Conclusions

Despite being physically isolated, Saint-Raymond is relatively well-located and accessible via metro, bus and private car to the greater Montreal region.

However, key local services and amenities are located north of the rail line, and many residents depend on weak and dangerous pedestrian links to get to them. As in other Montreal neighbourhoods, illegal rail crossings are common.

Streets, especially at key neighbourhood access points, are not designed to encourage active transportation. Saint Raymond is plagued with heavy automobile circulation and poor quality cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, especially at the main north-south axes (Cavendish and Girouard), and the main east-west axes, Upper Lachine and Saint-Jacques. Car-oriented planning at these points has reinforced the barriers of the Saint Raymond enclave, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

To make things worse, traffic patterns have been disrupted by major public works for some years now, and these are likely to continue for years to come, affecting both community and economic life in Saint Raymond.

These issues have been raised at public consultations and Borough meetings by local residents and activists for years.

After construction is completed, the changes to the local transport grid required by the MUHC's Glen Campus, as well as the reconstruction of the Turcot Interchange and consequent repercussions on East-West traffic patterns, will also mean lasting changes to traffic patterns in Saint Raymond. Not all of these will be bad for Saint Raymond.

However, because the scope of work of these mega-projects is limited, authorities are not addressing some of the major problems faced by residents of Saint-Raymond, such as reducing north-south barriers in the neighbourhood. They may in fact be making them worse.

More recently, a joint community/Borough initiative has brought a more focused approach to improving active transport in the study area: Quartier Vert, Actif et en Santé. The QVAS report presents sixty six ways to improve the pedestrian and cycling environment in the Eastern NDG, and many of these apply to Saint Raymond, with a view to increasing pedestrian and bike safety and mitigating negative effects of heavy local circulation on quality of life. Some of these recommendations have already been integrated into the Borough's traffic calming strategy (2011). More on the policy recommendations of the QVAS will be presented in section 5.2.

4. Economic Development

This section will address economic development in the broader study area, both commercial and residential. The most significant changes in the area regarding commercial development have taken place on Sherbrooke Street. Within Saint-Raymond, the lack of a large residential population and nuisances from existing automobile-related businesses and light industrial activity have played a role in the stalled attempts to change the commercial character of Upper-Lachine and Saint-Jacques. The arrival of the MUHC Glen Campus presents new opportunities for spin-offs that may greatly change areas closest to the site, although the final outcome of this economic development pressure will be strongly affected by the reconfiguration of the road networks. The local community economic development corporation, in concert with the Borough, has explored options for improving Saint-Raymond since the original 2005 base line study, detailed below.

As for residential development, a number of new residential projects illustrate the effects of the arrival of the hospital on Saint-Raymond, although for the time being these projects have been lower-end condominium projects. Still, there is evidence of some gentrification pressures being felt in the area, which will be discussed in further detail in the following sections.

4.1. Main Commercial Arteries

The main economic axes of Saint-Raymond and its environs are, from south to north: Saint-Jacques Street, Chemin Upper-Lachine, de Maisonneuve Street, and Sherbrooke Street. Within the neighbourhood, Chemin Upper-Lachine offers the most services to the residents of Saint-Raymond. However, as its offerings are limited, Saint-Raymond residents must regularly and frequently leave the neighbourhood to meet most of their basic needs and access services (Burns et al. 2010: 8). The commercial activity on de Maisonneuve and Sherbrooke, both located outside of the neighbourhood, provide essential services to the residents of Saint-Raymond. Sherbrooke is especially important as it is a well-known commercial zone, home to a diverse range of commercial services and business types including banks, restaurants, bakeries, dépanneurs, grocery stores and a post office. This section will discuss the trends in commercial development along the main commercial arteries within Saint-Raymond and the surrounding areas in NDG.

4.1.1. Changes north of the tracks: Sherbrooke and de Maisonneuve St.

Over the past decade, there has been substantial change in the character of the businesses on Sherbrooke, as locally-owned, neighbourhood-oriented stores have been replaced by high-end retail stores. This trend is particularly acute in Westmount, where one holding company, Cromwell Management, owns most much of the commercial space on Sherbrooke between Victoria and Claremont Street (Beitel and Lance, 2011)⁸, but is also evident in commercial spaces west of Claremont to past Girouard Park.

Efforts to organize Sherbrooke Street West businesses in NDG to form a Business Development Society (SDC) failed, after a breakaway group of merchants moved to decertify the group. The decertification effort led to the collapse of the local Merchants Association, leaving the street vulnerable to larger commercial and retail pressures.

⁸ As of 2011, Cromwell owns much of the commercial space between Prince Albert and Grosvenor on Sherbrooke, including the entire southern portion of Sherbrooke between Prince Albert and Victoria, as well as the apartment building that houses the Hogg Quincallerie and another building where the SAQ is located. They also own a property on Westmount's secondary commercial street, Victoria Avenue (Beitel and Lance, 2011)

Another trend on Sherbrooke Street West in NDG has been an increase in community-minded boutiques such as Coop La Maison Verte (since 2000) and Melons et Clementines (since 2010), a store specializing in women's products related to breast-feeding and counseling. Locally-owned commercial establishments, such as Café Shaika and Yoga on the Park!, serve a variety of clients who work and live in NDG, Westmount and other parts of the city. Gradually, the stores on Sherbrooke Street West are attracting more expensive commercial activity which may make it difficult for Saint-Raymond residents to access affordable services in close proximity to their homes.

De Maisonneuve

The part of de Maisonneuve within and around Saint-Raymond is a one-way street with buildings located on the north side of the street, and rail road tracks on the south side. Between Décarie and Grand Boulevard, de Maisonneuve is mainly commercial in nature, although home to very different types of establishments than those located on Sherbrooke. This section of de Maisonneuve includes several car-related businesses, as well as a used-bicycle store. In addition, the NDG Food Bank is located on De Maisonneuve (at Oxford, see fig 26). Overall, establishments are sparser, larger in scale, often cater to more regionally-based markets and are rarely oriented for pedestrian shoppers. East of Grand Boulevard, de Maisonneuve is mainly residential in nature.



*Figure 26. NDG Food Bank, De Maisonneuve and Oxford.
Credit: Montreal openfile <http://montreal.openfile.ca/montreal/file/2011/10/ndg-food-depots-greening-and-placemaking-efforts>.*

4.1.2. The local commercial street: chemin Upper-Lachine

Chemin Upper-Lachine traverses Saint-Raymond and is home to small, locally-supported and community-oriented businesses. Commercial establishments include a number of *depanneurs*, cafés, bakeries, and restaurants (fig 27). Many of these establishments reflect the presence of the Italian community, as noted by Italian language signs on various stores and Italian flags. Upper-Lachine also has the only banking-related service in Saint-Raymond, an automated Caisse populaire Desjardins de Notre-Dame-de-Grace wicket. This automated service, located next to the Saint-Raymond community centre, was formerly the Saint-Raymond service centre of the Caisse populaire Desjardins de Notre-Dame-de-Grace, which was moved to the Caisse populaire Desjardins de Notre-Dame-de-Grace headquarters on Décarie in 2010 (Desjardins, 2010).



Figure 27. Examples of commercial activities on Upper-Lachine
Credit: Jill Merriman.

Upper-Lachine has also been identified by the QVAS project as a street which should be targeted for street quality improvements (such as bike lanes, BIXI stations, and green walls) with a view to achieving overall a more pedestrian-friendly environment (See Figure 28 below for a rendering of what Upper Lachine could look like).



Figure 28. Upper-Lachine rendering.
Source: CEUM, 2011.

4.1.3. Saint-Jacques street: traffic and auto-related businesses

Saint-Jacques Street, a major thoroughfare and large arterial road in Saint-Raymond, is the location of several auto-oriented businesses, such as car dealerships, auto mechanics and moving-vehicle rental locations. Beginning at Cavendish, West of Saint-Raymond, is a string of big-box stores, including a Loblaws grocery store and further a Canadian Tire store. Adding to the multi-functional character of Saint-Jacques is the Montreal icon 24-hour bowling alley, the Rose Bowl at Cavendish, as well as a strip club, a motorcycle shop and some small hotels.

Recently some spin-off developments related to the MUHC Glen Campus have also opened on Saint-Jacques, near the future MUHC Glen Campus. One such spin-off location is a multi-use building constructed in 2008, next to the existing J.E. Hanger building at the corner of Saint-Jacques and Girouard, which includes an MRI Clinic, a pharmacy and a café (fig 29).



*Figure 29. New MUHC-related Development
Credit: Jill Merriman.*

4.1.4. Conclusions regarding commercial streets

The four main commercial arteries in and around Saint-Raymond – rue Saint-Jacques, Chemin Upper-Lachine, rue Sherbrooke, and boulevard de Maisonneuve – are distinct in character, scale and catchment area.

Saint-Jacques, a major arterial road with a high-volume of fast moving traffic is marked by establishments catering those arriving by vehicle rather than on foot. The local commercial street, chemin Upper-Lachine, provides some services to Saint-Raymond residents, although the small residential population and proximity to Sherbrooke limits the variety and scale of establishments that this street can support. Outside of Saint-Raymond, Sherbrooke is the most important local commercial street, serving residents, visitors and workers of NDG, Westmount and other Montreal neighbourhoods. Lastly, the portion of de Maisonneuve in the study area is a relatively isolated one-way street with sparse and intermittent commercial activity, mainly in the auto-sector establishments, and of little interest for Saint-Raymond residents, with the exception of the NDG Food Bank and a bike shop.

4.2. Commercial Development

Saint-Raymond has a relatively stable business environment. Many area businesses, especially those located on Saint-Jacques, cater to non-local markets and automobile drivers. The current small, relatively stable, modest income residential population can just barely support the existing small businesses on Upper-Lachine. The Borough has supported plans for densification and increases to the residential population so that local commercial viability can be increased (See policy section 5.2.); the Borough is also sensitive to the need to densify in a way so as to not displace current residents. Some Borough planners have proposed reorganizing the businesses along Saint-Jacques, moving them West, in order to maximize Saint-Raymond land use for housing while protecting views of the Saint-Jacques escarpment. This would require altering the current usage of the area and could impact the types of commercial activity along this street. However, for the time being change has been moderate, as the spin-off effects from the MUHC Glen Campus are just beginning and it is unclear what the commercial and employment benefits of the mega-hospital will be to residents.

4.2.1. Dominance of auto-industry businesses

In 1999, there were five-hundred and fifty businesses in Saint-Raymond, employing 4,622 people, where 90 percent of businesses employed less than ten employees (Studio I, 2005). The local community economic development corporation, the Corporation de Développement Economique Communautaire (CDEC) CDN/NDG, does not have an up to date list of businesses with which to compare these numbers. However, a Borough official estimated roughly 2500 to 3000 jobs are found in businesses on Saint-Jacques between Décarie and Saint-Anne (da Sylva, July 2011). Despite the unattractiveness of having automobile-related businesses on Saint-Jacques for local residents, these industries are the source of a significant number of jobs. Moreover, the current high volume of vehicular traffic on Saint-Jacques makes the street well-suited to these types of establishments.

4.2.2. Stimulating commercial development in Saint-Raymond

Given the relative stability of the auto-sector on Saint-Jacques, the borough's focus on locally-oriented commercial development is focussed on Upper-Lachine. One way to stimulate commercial development is to increase the population density around the commercial areas. A key Borough initiative has been to encourage housing development along Upper-Lachine, in the hopes of increasing consumer demand on Upper Lachine (see section 4.3, below). Another lightweight way to improve Upper Lachine is found in a 2012 CURA report: tinyurl.com/bny7wor.

In 2005, after the release of the MUHC's revised social and economic impact assessment report (Arbour 2005), the CDEC CDN-NDG initiated a stakeholder engagement process with business people, community groups and residents to explore efforts and initiatives to encourage commercial development this part of NDG. Over a two year period, public meetings were held to stimulate discussion and solutions for improving the quality of life in Saint-Raymond, as well as identify potential entrepreneurs. The CDEC invested in several initiatives, generated via a participatory process, including a daycare on Upper-Lachine (CPE Les Petites Chenilles, with a 75,000\$ investment), the preparation of a non-profit housing development strategy, Habiter Saint-Raymond, headed by Groupe CDH and with the active support of the NDG Community Council, and a community catering initiative (Au Pois Chic). Efforts to put Au Pois Chic on Upper-Lachine were explored, but this project located just north of Saint-Raymond, on Decarie Boulevard.

4.2.3. Recent nearby commercial development

Since the Saint-Raymond population is too small to support a major commercial corridor, many residents must frequent commercial establishments in surrounding areas to meet their needs. For example, local residents shop at big box stores concentrated on Saint-Jacques west of Cavendish, between Saint-Raymond and Westhaven. These establishments, accessible by car or bus, provide competition for smaller operations located within the neighbourhood. In this same commercial area there have been a few new developments, including a branch of Porte et Fenetre Verdun. The Borough reports there is still room for commercial buildings to be developed in this stretch.

Other new businesses which have opened in the area include a new car dealership owned by the Gabriel Group, which owns a number of dealerships on the Island of Montreal and many in proximity to Saint-Raymond⁹. A Harley Davidson/BMW dealer to the west of Cavendish at 6695 Saint Jacques adds to the high number of auto-related businesses on this street, as do the number of used car businesses located on the eastern portion of Saint-Jacques.

⁹ Gabriel Group's establishments include: Ford-Lincoln Gabriel at 7100 Saint Jacques Street Ouest, Hyundai Prestige at 6435 Saint Jacques Street Ouest and Mazda Gabriel at 5333 Saint Jacques Street Ouest.)

4.2.4. Complementary commercial development: PR@M -Industry

The areas closest to the MUHC Glen Campus are under considerable development pressure. Existing industrial buildings and other buildings on Saint-Jacques and Décarie adjacent the MUHC Glen Campus site may soon be redeveloped for non-residential uses. As the date of the opening of the MUHC Glen Campus nears, the rising demand for clinics and other related services will likely result in medical related businesses filling any vacant commercial spaces in close proximity. (Rolph, 2011.) The 2005 Arbour study says hospital related services will likely cluster near the metro, on Maisonneuve, rue Sherbrooke, and along Décarie near the principal access to the MUHC (Arbour 2005: 157). In addition, Westmount Adjacent (east of the Décarie and north of the MUHC Glen Campus site), could experience increasing pressure to transform residential units to medical commercial spaces.

At the time of writing, a number of locations along Saint-Raymond's commercial corridors are for sale, including some vacant lots, a commercial office building and a car wash. There are also a number of multi-unit residential properties for sale in Saint-Raymond and surrounding neighbourhoods. It is unclear what these properties will become; however, their future uses will have a cascading effect on other commercial and residential uses in the neighbourhood.

Moreover, the City of Montreal recently added the area between Saint-Jacques, de Maisonneuve, Prud'homme and the Glen Road, to its PR@M-Industry program (fig 30). PR@M-Industry is a property-tax rebate program for owners of non-residential buildings, aimed at stimulating commercial development. Buildings located within PR@M zones are eligible for five-year general property tax rebates. Eligible activities include: manufacturing, film and video production, computer system design, call centres, science and research, architecture, design and consulting services, and the performing arts.

Clinique Médicale Saint-Jacques serves as an example of the kind of businesses that will locate near the MUHC Glen Campus, located at the intersection of Girouard and Saint-Jacques. This business, with its magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) clinic, is next door to a recently expanded J.E. Hanger medical facility, built in 2008. These buildings include a café, a pharmacy and a Persian restaurant. The clinic also has an eight-spot parking lot along the southern border of Saint-Jacques.

Vacant properties on Sherbrooke Street, north of Saint-Raymond have also been sold in the last few years and are to be developed as commercial or residential properties, some of which may house complementary medical or hospital-related businesses (see fig 31).



Figure 30. PR@M-Industry Zone
Source: City of Montreal – Success @ Montreal: PR@M Industry



Figure 31. Potential development opportunity along Sherbrooke in NDG, just east of the Décarie Expressway
Credit: Jill Merriman.

4.2.5. Growing pains: MUHC Glen Campus construction – Bad for business?

Saint-Raymond is located close to the epicentre of a seemingly eternal construction site. The construction of the MUHC Glen Campus and neighbouring public works, the Turcot interchange and a multitude of private developments, have placed new challenges on many Saint-Raymond businesses. In particular, changing traffic routes, truck volumes and construction noise have negatively affected many local businesses, making it unpleasant to shop, difficult to park, difficult to navigate, and even difficult to find shops, given the changing configurations of the road network (figure 32 shows an ad used by a car wash to explain to customers how to find their business).

Many local business owners have expressed their concerns at Borough meetings and at the Comité de bon voisinage (See sidebar 3). The majority of these concerns from business owners are related to traffic redirection due to construction and its negative effects on their customers, but parking is also an important factor (Olson, 2011a).

As described in section 2.7, Saint-Raymond has seen rental costs go up in recent years, with increasing average rents, and an ever larger percentage of residents spending 30% or more of their income on rent. Moreover, the vast majority of residents in Saint-Raymond are renters. Saint-Raymond has also seen a small residential development boom over the past years, with over 200 new units constructed since 2006. This is a recent phenomenon: 2006 census data, compared with 1996, did not show strong evidence of classic gentrification indicators.

Figure 32. Local business affected by traffic redirection.
Source: Westmount Independent, 2011.

This section will provide an overview of the real estate market in the area, looking at gentrification pressures in relation to housing and new residential developments.

4.3. Residential development

This section will address gentrification pressures in the study area, and is based on studies of the area completed in 2009 and 2010, using a comparison of census data from 1996 and 2006.

Gentrification is simultaneously a physical, economic, social and cultural phenomenon. In the literature, it is defined as “involving the ‘invasion’ of previously working-class neighbourhoods by middle or upper-income groups and the subsequent displacement of many of the original residents” (Burns et al., 2010; Twigge-Molecey, 2009).

The Burns study, focusing on gentrification pressures and displacement of aging populations, argues for the need to reconceptualize gentrification and displacement as resulting not only from private-sector actors but municipal actors as well. The authors argue that “core city municipalities of large metropolitan areas are increasingly courting, even orchestrating gentrification”, by facilitating new housing construction or rebranding neighbourhood commercial arteries, in order to improve local economies and attract young singles and/or families to the neighbourhood. These processes can result in “indirect” displacement, where existing populations may not be physically forced out of an area, for example if they live in social housing or are otherwise protected from displacement, but their local cultures (for example, the places they shop in or services they use, their political representation and other local narratives of place) are disrupted by gentrifying populations: younger, more educated, wealthier newcomers (Burns et al., 2010).

4.3.1. Gentrification Pressures in Saint-Raymond

The MUHC Glen Campus has already led to speculative construction of condominiums, although these have been towards the low end of the market (Burns et al., 2010: 6). However, once the hospital is completed, many local stakeholders and area community organizations expect significant revitalization of Saint-Raymond. Many community groups have been highly proactive in warning about and trying to mitigate the potentially negative effects of gentrification on the area’s low-income, working-class residents:

“Moreover, there is widespread concern among community groups that the proposed McGill University Health Centre (MUHC) mega-project will lead to gentrification or accelerate gentrification already underway in the surrounding neighbourhoods, with competing land-uses leading to increasing property values and speculation in adjacent areas and the potential displacement of existing residents.” (Twigge-Molecey 2009: xi)

4.3.2. Classic gentrification indicators: an analysis of 2006 data

In Twigge-Molecey’s (2009) analysis of gentrification in Lower-NDG and Saint-Henri, she argues that, between 1996 and 2006, gentrification is clearly taking place in Below Sherbrooke East as well as in Westmount Adjacent (neighbourhoods north of the rail line), but not in Saint-Raymond or Westhaven. To form this conclusion, Twigge-Molecey uses a widely-accepted methodology, with key indicators including the increase in the proportion of owner-occupied households, increases in average dwelling values and average gross rents, increases in average household and personal income, as well as high proportions of residents working in professional and managerial positions.

For example, while Saint-Raymond and Westhaven exhibited increased average household and personal incomes, the neighbourhoods also witnessed a decrease in the proportion of residents who

own, rather than rent, their dwellings (Twigge-Molecey, 2009). Typically, gentrifying neighbourhoods see an increase in the numbers of owners. Moreover, unlike the other Lower-NDG neighbourhoods, Saint-Raymond and Westhaven did not see an increase in the proportion of residents working in professional and managerial positions, another indicator of gentrification used in the study (Twigge-Molecey, 2009).

Other classic indicators of gentrification are the proportion of university degree holders and the size of the 20-44 age group. In Saint-Raymond, Westhaven, South of Sherbrooke and Westmount Adjacent, the proportion of university degree holders has increased faster than the CMA as a whole. However, the area was not marked by a relative increase in the 20-44 age group, which demonstrates that signs of gentrification were less marked than elsewhere in Montreal (Burns et al., 2010).

Still, this does not mean that the neighbourhood is exempt from gentrification pressures now or in the future, it only states that as of 2006, neighbourhoods to the north of the rail line were experiencing gentrification while Saint-Raymond was not, according to an analysis of widely accepted indicators. Thus, although 2006 census data does not indicate strong evidence of gentrification up to that date, more recent data and other sources of information tell a different story. Some examples of new residential development occurring in the area will now be described.

4.4. Recent residential development

A number of refurbished properties converted into condominiums as well as new condominium developments have been added to the Saint-Raymond neighbourhood in the past years and have resulted in a small increase in the local population. Between 2005 and 2008, 294 units were added to Saint-Raymond (Megalas et al., 2008).

Wilson and Upper-Lachine: a failed opportunity

One of the largest of these new condominium projects is located on Wilson/Hingston and Upper-Lachine and was constructed in 2007 (fig 33). Another, at Hingston and Upper-Lachine with 74 units, started to go up for sale in September 2011. This cul-de-sac development faces inward, with none of the units fronting onto Upper-Lachine. Critics have argued that this configuration represents a potential missed opportunity to create more ground-floor local commercial space fronting on Upper-Lachine, to continue the streetscape and contribute to a livelier, pedestrian-friendly local street (Hefez, 2009). That such a development could be given a construction permit hints at the need for better urban design controls on real estate development in the area.

2009 property values of some tiny condos listed in figure 34 below are “affordable” according to the City of Montreal’s guidelines.⁸ The City of Montreal lists maximum prices of private housing for first time buyers in its Home Ownership Program, which targets households



Figure 33. Condo project – Upper-Lachine and Wilson (Photos: Jill Merriman, Spacing Montreal).

with modest incomes. Maximum prices for the City of Montreal, under this program, are : \$200,000 for a single person (typically a loft/1-bedroom); \$235,000 for a couple without children (usually 2-bedroom); \$265,000 for a family with children (typically a 2-bedroom unit); \$310, 000 for a family with children (3-bedroom unit, of at least 1033 ft²) (City of Montreal, 2011).

Figure 34. New Residential Development in Saint-Raymond
 Source: Google Streetview. Source: MLS listings, 2011.

Address	Units	Date of Construction
2123-2160 Hingston	64 units, (41/2 & 51/2)	2005/2006
Examples of unit size/price:	452 ft ² (42 m ²)	- \$ 160 000
	452 ft ² (42m ²)	- \$ 180 000
	516 ft ² (48 m ²)	- \$ 200 000



Other Condo projects

Many of the residential dwellings currently for sale in Saint-Raymond and the surrounding neighbourhoods are recently refurbished condominiums, such as the units for sale on Hampton Avenue. The average price (as of September 2011) for a one bedroom condo in this 1970 refurbished condo development is \$283,000.

A soon to be completed, smaller-scale condominium project is located on Avenue de Melrose, adjacent to the rail line (fig 35). This project includes 2-3 bedroom units, in a semi-detached condominium. Figure 36 shows the 2012 sale prices of these units, which are mostly within the affordable housing guidelines of the city, but researchers could not locate square footage.

The marketing strategy for these units, like other new condo projects in the area, includes the selling point that units are only a 5-minute walk from the MUHC Glen Campus. This fact may be taken as a sign that the arrival of the MUHC Glen Campus is having an impact on residential real estate attractiveness, speculation and advertising strategies in the area. Further study would have to be conducted to determine if these marketing strategies are actually working.



Figure 35. Condominium Project, Ave. de Melrose
 Photo: Ramier Realty Inc.

¹¹ Obtained through the City of Montreal property rolls, accessible online at: http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/portal/page?_pageid=3077,3528875&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

¹² The City of Montreal inclusionary strategy for affordable housing considers a dwelling affordable when its rent or monthly mortgage payment (including property taxes and heating costs) does not exceed 30% of a given household's gross monthly income.

Figure 36. Observed sale prices as of February 2012- Ave. de Melrose
(3 of 5 units sold as of February 2012)

Address	Description	Listing price
2093 Av. de Melrose	Semi-detached condo - 2 Beds, 1 Baths	\$189,900
2095 Av. de Melrose	Semi-detached condo - 2 Beds, 1 Baths	\$235,900
2097 Av. de Melrose	Semi-detached condo - 3 Beds, 1 Baths	\$315,000

4.4.1. Proposed new residential development in the area

The Saint-Jacques/Upper-Lachine interchange is being actively considered by non-profit housing developers as a site for future development. The publicly-owned intersection is currently above and below grade, however in the past few years plans have been proposed to redevelop this interchange at grade to allow for residential development on this site. According to city officials, an estimated 200 to 400 units of housing could be constructed on this site, depending on unit size and building heights (Megalas et al., 2008). Some elected officials have supported this plan, however the requalification of the interchange is only just moving forward now, in the fall of 2012.

The EcoLogez 2011 Charrette, an inter-disciplinary university student brainstorming session, hosted by Equiterre and l'École de technologie supérieure (ETS) was conducted in March 2011, focussing on this site. Fifty-seven students, working in small teams, participated in the charrette and came up with a variety of visions for sustainable residential development on the site. The main goal was to show how to transform the interchange into a livable urban space including a park and a minimum percentage of commercial space, and housing that would appeal to MUHC Glen Campus workers, the elderly, and families. The charrette's "client" was Groupe CDH, a non-profit community housing developer that works closely with the NDG Community Council's Housing Committee. See Sidebar 9 for details of an effort to include Saint Raymond viewpoints in the charrette.

Figure 37. Design plan from the winning teams of the Ecologez Charrette, March 11-12, 2011

Designed by Keven Durand, Marilyne Primeau, Jérémy Daugreilh, Valérie Houde, Maël Camus, Axel Cohen, Pierre-Édouard Stephan. Amandine Lainé, Daniel Forgues (coorganisateur et professeur à l'ÉTS), Marilyn Hébert, Olivier Charbonneau-Charrette, Mélina Maiorano, Lony Tehini, Maxime Duval-S., Gabriel Lacombe, Julie Bachand-Marleau.
Source: Equiterre 2011. <http://equiterre.info/site/ecologez/>.



Sidebar 9: I WISH THIS WAS...

In an effort to incorporate Saint-Raymond residents' perceptions of and hopes for the neighbourhood into the design process for rethinking the Upper Lachine/Saint Raymond site, two local researchers implemented a mini "I Wish this Was" campaign, collecting short videos and ideas from both tenants and homeowners in the neighbourhood.

"I Wish This Was" is a light-weight, easy to implement approach invented by activist and urban designer Candy Chang, involving removable fill-in-the-blank stickers that welcome local residents ideas about how to improve their neighbourhood. The bright red "I wish this was..." are filled in and placed on specific spots, labelling precisely what is wished for at that location. The charrette site, a desolate piece of highway wedged into the West side of Saint-Raymond, provoked immediate responses from passing residents: a stop light at a tricky spot (dangerous crossing!), a row of housing (more customers!), a café!, a laundrymat! One resident proposed linking Saint-Raymond to the rest of NDG via a level crossing across the train tracks. In the videos, residents painted detailed portraits of life in the neighbourhood, in which one resident pleaded that the unpleasant-smelling tar-manufacturing businesses be replaced by a local coffee shop, like the Coop Maison Verte. Check out the "Snapshots of Saint Raymond" videos here:

<http://vimeo.com/38033318>

<http://vimeo.com/36785992>



Figure 38. I wish this was...

Source : Adriana Olmos, Iterati.ca

4.4.2. Residential development in surrounding areas

Lower NDG, or the broader study area, has seen a number of developments over the past few years, particularly along de Maisonneuve but also elsewhere in the study area.

One example will serve to illustrate the way the area is changing and how the real estate market is responding. The Le Claremont condo project, built in 2007, consisted of thirty-three units in a four-storey building (3.5, 4.5, penthouse). Le Claremont is located immediately next to Westmount, at the corner of de Maisonneuve and Claremont. Units in this new condo development, constructed on the site of a former gas station, are advertised as luxury condominiums in proximity to the Vendôme metro and the new MUHC Glen Campus. The location adjacent to the City of Westmount was used as a selling point; marketing for the development re-branded the neighbourhood as an "upscale" area (Le Claremont, 2011). This kind of project, almost completely sold (30/33 units) three years after the first units were occupied, illustrates the real estate pressures in the areas immediately adjacent the MUHC Glen Campus site.

Another potential influence of the MUHC Glen Campus on surrounding neighbourhoods is new residential development for employees of the megahospital. According to the Arbour Report (2005), nearly 500 MUHC Glen Campus employees may move closer to their place of work when the new hospital opens, or 6 percent of the expected 7,000 employees. This number, based on a 2001 survey of hospital employees, does not define "close to the hospital" (Arbour et Associés, 2005).

The MUHC is collaborating with the City of Montreal to explore ways to direct the provision of housing for its employees in the area, which would have an impact on the real estate in the area. A survey of MUHC employees completed in 2011 by the City of Montreal suggests that as many as 40% of employees would consider moving within the next 3 years, but only a small fraction (less than 4%) expressed a desire to move to NDG. This recent study is not publicly available yet.

4.5. Economic Development Conclusions

Healthcare related commercial developments are likely to occur in proximity to the MUHC Glen Campus, and are even encouraged by City incentives, such as the PR@M Industry program. Roads immediately abutting the MUHC Glen Campus, such as Decarie and deMaisonneuve, will be most directly affected, but complementary commercial development may also occur on Saint Jacques, Sherbrooke and along existing arteries, due to their relative proximity to the site and existing commercial character.

Analysis of classic gentrification indicators from 1996 and 2006 data has shown that neighbourhoods surrounding Saint-Raymond are exhibiting signs of gentrification, although Saint-Raymond and Westhaven were not, as of 2006. However, the mini-boom of new residential developments in Saint Raymond, as well as the marketing language used to sell these developments, suggests that proximity to the McGill hospital may be contributing to development pressures in these neighbourhoods. Unfortunately, with the abolition of the obligatory Census Long Form, it will be difficult to measure future gentrification using a standardized, generally accepted methodology. Other tools will have to be developed to track neighbourhood change in areas undergoing development pressure.

5. POLICY AND PROGRAMS

Saint-Raymond has been the subject of several policies and preliminary plans, which will be explored further in this section. Despite a general consensus that the sector should be a municipal priority, little progress has been made. The most promising development has been the Montreal Urban Ecology Centre's Quartier vert, actif, et en santé (QVAS) project, undertaken with the collaboration of the Borough and local residents, as described in an earlier section.

5.1. Borough plans

In 2006, a reflection document was prepared for the Upper-Lachine/Saint-Jacques sector (Arrondissement Côte-des-neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, 2006). This reflection document, prepared by a private consulting firm, outlined a vision for the area and proposed specific interventions. The document was presented to the Conseil consultatif d'urbanisme (CCU) in anticipation of an allocation of municipal resources for a Plan particulier d'urbanisme (PPU, or special planning program), a fine-grained planning tool used by municipalities to guide development towards a particular desired state.

5.1.1. Detailed reflection document, « Secteur de planification détaillée Saint-Jacques-Upper-Lachine », 2006

Plans for a PPU have been delayed until recently, when the Borough again announced its intention to restart the process. The project's delay was likely due to the timing and proximity of the site to larger municipal and provincial projects including the remodeling of the Turcot Interchange and the construction of the MUHC Glen Campus, as well as for a variety of political, administrative and financial reasons¹³. Still, some of the ideas from the reflection document were integrated into the revised chapter of the Borough master plan, which lists the Upper-Lachine/Saint-Jacques sector (including Saint-Raymond) as a special planning area for the Borough (referred to as a secteur de

¹³ Specific planning projects require financing from the City central planning division. In order to be approved, the reflection documents must show a certain degree of detail in not only the thoroughness of the presentation of main goals and specific interventions but also in the design aspects (Conversation with Richard Gourde.)

planification détaillée, see section 5.1.3 for more information). The designation of this area as needing special attention is due in part to its proximity to the MUHC Glen Campus site.

Thus, the proposed changes to Saint-Jacques and the future of Saint-Raymond as a whole will most likely be repositioned within the scope of a larger city-led reflection on the area around the MUHC Glen Campus. Given its strategic proximity to two mega-projects, it is logical that the City would want an increased role in the planning of the area. However, any planning policies or tools used in the area around the Glen Campus and Saint-Raymond will likely take a minimum of 3-5 years to take effect. Still, given that the MUHC Glen Campus is projected to be open to the public in 2015, this planning and reflection process may occur more quickly than a standard PPU process.



Source: MUHC Foundation

5.1.2. Proposed changes

Densify Saint-Raymond

One of the key initiatives put forth in the Borough's plan included the densification of the neighborhood. Greater population would solve many problems: bolster neighbourhood commerce on Chemin Upper-Lachine, increase services such as schools and social programming. A rethinking of Saint-Jacques in favour of residential development would slow traffic down on this street while increasing pedestrian and cyclist safety.

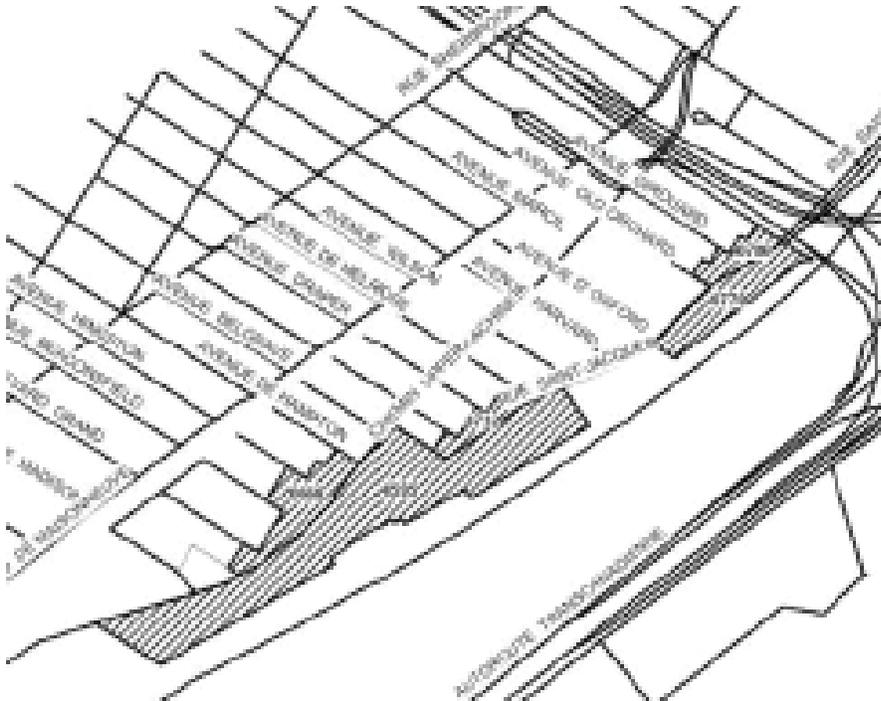
The vision upheld by the Borough plan was of Upper-Lachine Road as an important commercial artery, with an urban village feel.

To achieve this, the population of Saint-Raymond would have to almost double its size, from roughly 4000 to 8000 residents. The document recommended new 6-8 storey, multi-unit residential developments along Saint-Jacques and at the western end of Upper-Lachine. Studies would have to be made to assure that the land is stable enough for development, and, given current and historical land uses, much of this land may need remediation prior to residential infill. The change in land use of the area along the escarpment is also motivated by the Borough's interest in protecting the escarpment; some critics are not persuaded that residential development along the top of the escarpment will protect the area.

Also, the goal of increasing the population of the area without removing jobs and hurting the economic development is not an easy task to accomplish. A variety of strategies are available for encouraging relocation of commercial and light industrial uses elsewhere, such as tax incentives for relocation in specific areas outside of core urban zones however these strategies are expensive.

However, the CDN-NDG Borough has used restrictive zoning to attempt to gradually change the character of the businesses along Saint-Jacques, through a 2008 change to the planning bylaws with the explicit goal of “better managing the non-residential activities located along rue Saint-Jacques between avenue Madison and Décarie, to ensure compatibility with the residential usage wished for in the sector pending the implementation of the “étude de planification détaillée Saint-Jacques/Upper-Lachine” (Arrondissement CDN-NDG, 2008). This bylaw prohibits the following uses in specific zones along Saint-Jacques (0595, 0668 and 0778, see figure 40): car parts and accessory, car sales and rentals, and fuel. Still, this by-law modification only applies to future permit applications,

*Figure 40. Zoning change areas affected by 2008 bylaw.
Source: Arrondissement CDN-NDG, 2008.*



thus all the existing auto-related businesses have the right to continue operating.

The Borough has thus opted for a more passive approach to changing the character of the commercial zones along Saint-Jacques, although the explicit goal is for this area to become residential in usage.

The extent to which densification will take place in the area will likely be influenced by spillover from the MUHC Glen Campus (clinics, etc.) which is touched on in more detail in section 4.2.4.

Reshaping Saint-Jacques

One of the proposed changes to Saint-Raymond outlined in the 2006 reflection document was the renovation and reshaping of Saint-Jacques to make it more pedestrian-friendly. Some of the proposed measures for Saint-Jacques include: the creation of a central island at least three metres wide, the creation of a sidewalk promenade on both sides of Saint-Jacques, the reorganization of residential lots to maximize off-street parking and minimize irregular driveways on the street, and a reduction to two lanes in both directions, in addition to the removal of parking lanes on the eastern section of Saint-Jacques. Additional traffic-calming measures were also proposed for Chemin Upper-Lachine, such as enlarging the sidewalks, repainting crosswalks, and redoing the landscaping to favour pedestrian usage (ibid, page iii). Chemin Upper-Lachine was in particular seen as a potential urban village type of street, with local commercial offerings such as cafés and pedestrian activity.

5.1.3. 2009 Borough Master Plan

Despite the failure to enact a PPU for the sector, parts of the 2006 reflection document was integrated into the 2009 Borough Master plan, a chapter of the City’s Master Plan. The NDG/CDN chapter of the plan identifies the Upper-Lachine/Saint-Jacques sector as one of four sectors requiring a detailed local plan with specific goals and targets for the sector. The Upper-Lachine/Saint-Jacques sector is defined as the area between Décarie highway and the Borough of Côte-Saint-Luc–Hampstead–Montréal-Ouest, underneath the tracks, which corresponds to the neighbourhoods of Saint-Raymond and Westhaven.

The four main goals set out for the Upper-Lachine/Saint-Jacques sector are:

- Consolidating the residential and commercial functions of the sector
- Improving accessibility to the sector
- Improving the general image of the sector
- Preserving the Falaise Saint-Jacques and recognizing it as an “eco-territory”.

“Ecoterritories” are defined by the City of Montreal as “tracts of land conducive to the creation of new protected areas” in the Policy on the protection and enhancement of natural habitats (City of Montreal, 2004). This term refers to “areas of remarkable biodiversity” and can include already protected areas as well as natural spaces to be protected and enhanced.

This plan also called for the consolidation of commercial activities between Madison avenue and West Broadway, restricted expansion of industrial activities, various improvements to the connectivity between the sector and the surrounding area both for pedestrians and cyclists, an improved public domain and landscaping of Saint-Jacques in conjunction with traffic calming measures to improve the image of the sector, ensure high quality construction on Saint-Jacques, and protect the Saint-Jacques escarpment. Aspects of the original plan that were incorporated into the Master Plan were less ambitious than those outlined in the 2006 reflection document.

5.1.4. Other borough plans

There have been other Borough-level initiatives since the previous baseline study which could affect the future of Saint-Raymond. For example, the very recent Urban Forestry Plan, enacted in 2011, calls for supporting greening measures of both public and private space to reduce heat islands and favour the increase of urban forest biodiversity. This program is similar to those enacted in other Boroughs, and could improve green spaces within Saint-Raymond.

The Plan Vert of the Borough, enacted in 2008, puts forward a plan for 2008-2012 which among other initiatives, calls for the financial support of projects to improve the environment and quality of life of residents, such as improvements to the alley networks (Ruelles vertes).

Lastly, the Plan d’action famille (2008) is a Borough-level plan which calls for a variety of actions to improve quality of life for families, including increasing security and improving circulation and transportation for residents.

5.2. Quartier Vert, Actif et en Santé – Southeastern NDG

The Quartier Vert, Actif et en Santé (sometimes referred to by its English name – Green, Active and Healthy Neighbourhoods) project in Southeastern NDG is part of a series of pilot projects

supported by the Urban Ecology Centre and its partners (Mobiligo, Coalition québécoise sur la problématique du poids and the CDN-NDG Borough) which engages residents in rethinking and redesigning streets and public spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. The Southeastern -NDG project (fig 41) was launched in June 2010 and involved a number of events where residents met with the representatives from the Southeastern NDG project team to discuss various design solutions for their neighbourhood (Urban Ecology Centre, n.d.). Similar to the other Quartier vert, actif et en santé (QVAS) projects, the territory of study was defined by a steering committee comprised of local community groups, residents, and borough representatives. An interesting feature of this project is that it includes parts of several neighbourhoods which have little connection other than geographic proximity, including the eastern part of Saint-Raymond and Upper-NDG.

One of the main factors in the selection of the South-eastern NDG area for a pilot project was the importance of improving the safety of children's movement in the area. As previously mentioned in this report there has not been a primary school Below Sherbrooke in NDG for several years, and children must go north across the tracks to attend one of the six primary schools in the sector. According to 2006 figures, roughly 280 children are under 10 years of age, or 10 % of the population. This number has likely increased in the last five years, given the increased number of residential units. The form of street grid and limited access to the northern side of the tracks makes active transportation options less appealing, especially since children in Saint-Raymond must often take several detours to arrive at school.

The four main priorities outlined for the QVAS project in southeastern NDG by Mobiligo and the local neighbourhood committee are:

- North-south connections in the neighbourhood (NDG)
- Links between key destinations
- Integrating the district within Montréal's cycling network
- Access to the Villa-Maria and Vendôme métro stations

In terms of the north-south connections in the neighbourhood, the focus was on improving the existing passages underneath the railway to make them more accessible, convivial and green, with the Girouard viaduct being a major priority. The Girouard viaduct is an important pedestrian connection to key services, such as the NDG School located on Girouard and NDG, attended by many children living in Saint-Raymond. Other proposed improvements included increasing the security of pedestrians at the intersections of Décarie and de Maisonneuve boulevards, and making a safe space for active transportation between avenue Girouard and the Vendôme metro station.

A need for better north-south bicycle connections was also emphasized (CEUM, 2011).

It is worth noting that many of these changes have been suggested to the Borough in the past, however little action has been taken, to date.

Figure 41. Quartier Vert, Actif et en Santé: NDG sud-est
Source: CEUM, 2011.



After traffic-calming workshops with city planning and community professionals to seek solutions to resident-identified problems, the southeastern-NDG QVAS project is now at the stage of proposing and validating an action plan in conjunction and collaboration with the Borough. The action plan has been adopted as of November 2011. While the area within the borders of Sherbrooke, Saint-Jacques, Décarie and Melrose will be heavily affected by megaprojects such as the reconstruction of the Turcot and the completion of the MUHC Glen Campus, the Urban Ecology Centre hopes that their work will help serve as a reference for proposed changes in the area, as a representation of what residents want the area to be (CEUM, 2011).

Importantly, a local Comité de suivi QVAS has been established with the active participation of the Borough, the MUHC, community groups and local residents, to oversee the implementation of the QVAS plan, over the next few years. Led by the NDG Community Council, the committee has staff support from the Council and technical support from the Urban Ecology Centre, for the first year of operations.

5.3. Policy Conclusions

Local plans and policies for Saint-Raymond must be set in the context of the two mega-projects currently under construction nearby, both the MUHC Glen Campus and the Turcot. These large-scale projects present both opportunities and challenges for the residents of Saint-Raymond.

Because of its proximity to these mega-projects, representing a total public investment exceeding \$5B dollars, Saint Raymond is under close scrutiny by public, private and community interests. Public policy initiatives may be initiated at all levels of government to affect and shape change in the neighbourhood. Increased private sector activity is also likely to be observed in the coming years.

The QVAS planning approach, given that it is a joint Borough/community initiative, may prove to be a more immediate way for local residents to affect change and determine priorities in Saint Raymond, while city-centre plans and policies may have a more lasting and effect on the community.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Saint-Raymond, near the epi-centre of two mega-projects, is a neighbourhood in transition.

The past decade has brought change to the neighbourhood. Evolving demographic patterns, such as a relative decline of the Italian community in favour of increasing rates of visible minorities, and increasing housing costs, which benefit homeowners but increase hardship for renting families, are being felt. Important new residential projects and changes to the local transport network are underway.

Up to 2006, Saint-Raymond had not experienced the same degree of gentrification pressures as neighbouring communities, partially due to its small size, the presence of high-volume streets and its poor connectivity. Since 2006, however, there has been significant infill development; the full impact of the two nearby megaprojects on Saint-Raymond has yet to be seen.

Large-scale, regionally-focused projects such as the MUHC Glen Campus and the reconstruction of the Turcot Interchange and Decarie Expressway are affecting and will continue to affect Saint-Raymond. Temporary disruption to traffic patterns and the temporary removal of parking spaces has negatively affected local businesses and residents, while future permanent increases to vehicular circulation in the area, associated with the MUHC Glen Campus, will likely also have important impacts on the community.

Barriers to active transportation, at all access points to Saint Raymond, are important and persistent; existing pedestrian and cycling routes remain dangerous and unappealing.

Plans for the densification of the neighbourhood, which would improve the chances for “neighbourhood viability” (a stronger main street, more services, schools etc), have been put on hold, with much administrative attention devoted recently to the two mega-projects.

A growing number of plans and initiatives for neighbourhood improvements exist, and are accompanied by an increasingly active leaders at the local level who are attempting to call attention to the area’s major problems. The impact of the community-led efforts may remain limited, however. Demographic and spatial legacies – which have set the area apart from its neighbours – have in recent years deepened. Decisions made by non-locals with respect to infrastructure, circulation, housing investment, and services – whether made by private actors or government bodies at various levels – may greatly affect the future of the area, as they have in the past. The wide diversity of actors at many levels and a complex web of regional forces at play in the greater area around Saint-Raymond mean local concerns may not be prioritized.

Two scenarios seem likely. The arrival of the MUHC Glen Campus could prompt a re-orientation of Saint-Raymond. The area could host new kinds of economic activity oriented towards health and hospital activities,. Given its close proximity to the hospital, Saint-Raymond could also host the first units of work-force housing, bringing a greater population density to the neighbourhood—but strong efforts would also have to be made to protect the existing tenants and overall neighbourhood affordability from the pressures of gentrification. Alternatively, change could occur slowly, with Saint-Raymond continuing as it has for the last 40 years, a little-known corner of NDG and a pocket of affordability in the ever-changing tapestry of Montreal.

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