

**THE OFFICE DE CONSULTATION PUBLIQUE DE
MONTRÉAL
[MONTRÉAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION OFFICE]:
THE FORMALIZATION OF A PROCESS
OF PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY**

**METROPOLIS, PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL
NOVEMBER 25, 2011**



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN MONTRÉAL

A brief history

The '70s

- Reaction of civil society to real estate developments in central areas
- Organization of public consultation mechanisms by civil society organizations



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN MONTRÉAL

A brief history

The '80s

- Under pressure from groups in all spheres, “ad hoc” consultations held for selected development projects
- Establishment by city council of a first structure for consultations



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN MONTRÉAL

A brief history

The '90s

- Abolition of those mechanisms and minimalist consultations



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN MONTRÉAL

A brief history

The 2000s

- Under pressure from citizens, establishment of the OCPM and entrenchment in the governing legislation, the Charter of Ville de Montréal



WHAT IS THE OCPM?

An organization:

- Reporting to city council
- Neutral and independent
- Whose members are appointed by a 2/3 majority vote of city council
- Whose members are subject to a public code of ethics

MISSION OF THE OCPM

- **To consult Montrealers on any project assigned by the city council or executive committee**
- **To propose rules aimed at structuring public consultation conducted by municipal bodies to ensure credibility, transparency and effectiveness**

CONSULTATION SUBJECTS

- **Draft by-laws amending urban planning legislation**
- **Private and public projects**
- **Municipal policies and master plans**

CONSULTATION SUBJECTS

May be mandated to consult on:

- **Shared or institutional equipment**
- **Major infrastructures**
- **A residential, commercial or industrial establishment**
- **Cultural property**
- **Projects located in a historical and/or natural borough**



CONSULTATION SUBJECTS

May be mandated to consult on:

- **Policies**
 - Family
 - Cultural development
 - Protected areas...
- **And plans**
 - Revitalization of marginal urban areas
 - Repurposing of destructured areas
 - Creation of new neighbourhoods



CONSULTATION PROCEDURE

Phase 1: Public information

- **The commission**
- **Advertising**
- **Information sessions**
- **The documentation**
- **Site visits**

CONSULTATION PROCEDURE

Phase 2: Hearing of opinions

In public sessions

- **Presentation of briefs and verbal opinions**
- **Importance of discussion with the commission**
- **Briefs may be filed without an oral presentation**

THE REPORT

- **Outline of participants' concerns**
- **Analysis of public opinion**
- **Consistent with major political orientations and development tools**
- **Recommendations of the commission**
- **Submitted to the Mayor**

THE REPORT

- **Made public**
- **Tabled in city council**
- **Project adopted by city council with or without modifications**
- **Explanations available to citizens regarding the council's handling of the report**

OCPM IMPACT ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

- **Increased level of citizen confidence in public consultation**
 - **Resulting from the neutral-third-party nature of the Office and predictability of the OCPM process**
- **Integration of political orientations and development tools within the public participation processes**

OCPM IMPACT ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

- **Improvement in quality of Montréal's public participation processes**
 - **Review of rules governing consultations of the city council's commissions**
 - **Training program for elected officials**
 - **Consulting role to Montréal authorities**

THE OFFICE AND MONTREALERS

- **The Office was created as a result of pressures exerted by Montrealers**
- **Over the years, Montrealers have made the Office their own**
- **Steady increase in the rate of participation and number of presentations made before the Office**

THE OFFICE AND MONTREALERS

- **Website – From 2002 to 2010**
 - **From 85,000 pages downloaded**
 - **To over 4,000,000**

THE OFFICE AND MONTREALERS

- **From 2005 until today**
 - **40 consultations**
 - **230 sessions**
 - **1100 briefs**
 - **517 presentations by 404 citizens (47%)**
 - **585 presentations by 429 organizations (53%)**

THE OFFICE AND MONTREALERS

- **From 2005 until today (Cont'd)**
 - **21,000 have participated in consultations**
 - **4,000 have participated via Website questionnaires**

A NEW INNOVATIVE MODEL

- **A neutral third party with no vested interest in the projects under review**
- **An effective procedure, transparent and credible**
- **Creates space to ensure citizens and groups they will be heard**

A NEW INNOVATIVE MODEL

- **Creates a space for meetings among players with divergent interests, fostering solutions to litigious issues**
- **Mechanism to assist elected officials in their decision-making process**

OBRIGADO

