

“Build it and they will come!”
Brossard’s attempt to urbanize a suburb

by

Nicolas Thomas

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Department of Geography
McGill University
Montreal (Quebec) Canada

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ABSTRACT/RÉSUMÉ

In June 2024, Brossard, a suburb of Montreal, Quebec, officially adopted bylaws for the development of a New Downtown. A transit-oriented development, it seeks to redesign what is currently central and underused land into a walkable, mixed-use neighbourhood with a variety of service offerings. This project aims to understand the history of the New Downtown's conception and its goals, the effects it has on Brossard's growth, and the perceptions that residents of Brossard have of the project as well as its consequences. I first outline how Brossard is currently waiting on the private sector to propose projects to the city. Then, based on interviews with residents, I demonstrate that residents are generally cautiously optimistic about the project and the growth it can bring to the city, with some showing a certain level of skepticism and apprehension about the changes it will incur.

En juin 2024, Brossard, une banlieue de Montréal, Québec, a officiellement adopté des nouveaux règlements de zonage pour le futur développement de son Nouveau centre-ville. Il s'agit d'une vision fortement liée au concept du TOD (*Transit-oriented development*), qui vise à reconcevoir ce qui sont actuellement des terrains centraux et sous-utilisés en un quartier à usage mixte avec une diversité d'offres de services ainsi qu'un accent fort sur l'accessibilité piétonnière. Ce projet de recherche vise à comprendre la conception du Nouveau centre-ville et de ses objectifs du début jusqu'à maintenant, les effets qu'il aura sur la croissance de la ville et les perceptions qu'ont les résidents de Brossard en lien avec ce projet ainsi que de ses conséquences. D'abord, je démontre que la Ville de Brossard attend actuellement que le secteur privé leur propose des projets de développement. Par la suite, selon mes analyses des entrevues avec les brossardois, j'illustre comment les résidents sont globalement prudemment optimistes à l'égard du projet et de la croissance qu'il pourrait offrir à la ville, certains démontrant un niveau de scepticisme et d'appréhension à l'égard des changements qu'il entraînera.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context: situating Brossard

The South Shore of Montreal was described by Jacques Cartier in the 16th century to be abundant with wild fruit trees, various fauna, and fish (Pratt, 2009). While there is limited scholarship or other writings that recount Brossard's history, the first recorded description of what is now Brossard comes from French navigator Samuel De Champlain, who on June 7, 1611, described the prairielands around the Saint-Jacques River, which now makes up the southern border of Brossard (Pratt, 2009). Curiously, there were no recorded signs of permanent Indigenous settlement in the vicinity at that time by the French, although the Haudenosaunee had nonetheless been noted to be sporadically present in the area (Pratt, 2009). Permanent European settlement in the area began in 1668 when 40 concessions were made by the Jesuits to the seigneurie of La Prairie de la Magdeleine (Pratt, 2009). What was the most inhabited portion at the time, Côte Saint-Lambert, was located across the banks of the Saint-Lawrence River and maps onto modern-day Brossard (Pratt, 2009). It remained a quiet prairie village until the 19th century, when rail operations became commonplace and, on December 15, 1880, the Grand Trunk Railway Company bought a nearby railroad that passed through an area called Brosseau Station, which is now in the south of modern-day Brossard (Pratt, 2009).

In 1950, part of the Brossard area became an incorporated parish municipality by the name of La-Nativité-de-La-Prairie, and on February 14, 1958, it was officially incorporated as the City of Brossard after land concessions were made to three other nearby municipalities one year earlier (Pratt, 2009). In 1962, the first large development in Brossard was built: the Champlain Bridge, built at a cost of \$35,000,000, opened in 1962 and linked the city with nearby Nuns' Island and the rest of Montreal (Pratt, 2009). After the bridge was completed, Brossard's population swelled from 3,778 people in 1961 to 11,884 just five years later in 1966 (Pratt, 2009), demonstrating a continued growth and expansion of its regional influence. On March 25, 1978, the municipality of Notre-Dame-du-Sacré-Coeur merged with Brossard, which integrated the area into its "A" Sector, renaming all streets with words beginning with the letter "A" (Pratt, 2009). This trend of naming streets in neighbourhoods after certain letters continued and became a defining factor in Brossard's urban geography throughout the subsequent decades as Brossard continued to sprawl across its territory (see **Map 1.1**) and established itself as a commuter suburb in the Greater Montreal Area (GMA).



Map 1.1: Brossard, its lettered neighbourhoods, and the area of the New Downtown surrounded by dotted lines (Source: City of Brossard, 2024).¹

In 2001, Brossard’s population grew to 65,026 (Pratt, 2009). While still a sprawling suburb dominated by single-family neighbourhoods, major projects continue to break ground in the city, further cementing its prominence within the GMA as a suburb with distinct attractions. For example, the *Quartier DIX30* (Dix30), Canada’s largest outdoor lifestyle centre, essentially a shopping complex of roughly 3,000,000 square feet at the intersection of Quebec Highways 10 and 30, opened in 2006 (Garver, 2024). Further, the opening and inaugural ceremony of the GMA’s first light rail line, the *Réseau express métropolitain* (REM), occurred in 2023, the line itself beginning at the Brossard Station east of Highway 30 with a total of three of the REM stations being located within the city (CDPQ Infra, 2023). Finally, the ongoing development and construction of the *Solar Uniquartier* (Solar) neighbourhood in the “E” Sector has not only brought renewed attention upon the city but signals a break in its developmental history of sprawling single-family homes and a shift towards incorporating denser, mixed-used planning

¹ See **Appendix A** for a general idea of Brossard’s location in relation to the rest of the Greater Montreal Area.

into the city's urban fabric (City of Brossard, 2024). While not explicitly stated, it also seems to be an attempt at emulating certain elements of a transit-oriented development (TOD), being located next to the REM's Du Quartier station and prioritizing sustainable mobility alternatives (Barrieau, 2019).



Figure 1.1: Promotional rendering of Brossard's New Downtown (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online).

A quarter way through the 21st century, Brossard's estimated population has ballooned to 95,066 people and is forecast to keep growing, with its population growth rate between the 2016 and 2021 Canadian Census standing at 6.8% compared to 4.6% for the GMA (City of Brossard, 2024; Statistics Canada, 2022). Now, an even newer urban vision— this time, explicitly branding itself as a TOD— has been proposed by the incumbent city council and Brossard's Department of Urban Planning. The *Nouveau Centre-Ville* (New Downtown) project is a blueprint of a new urban vision approved by city council in June 2024 (City of Brossard, 2024). This project broadly seeks to revitalize a large swath of the suburb's land that surrounds the city's main traffic artery, Taschereau Boulevard. An area currently dominated by underused parking lots, aging infrastructure, and planning unfriendly at the human scale, the New Downtown presents a vision that aims to reshape the future of the general area and define an urban vision that deviates from the city's historically car-dominant and low-density norm. Among many other goals, it aims at fostering mixed-use planning, encouraging active and sustainable mobility, becoming a

destination for residents and tourists, and ensuring that residents within the New Downtown will be no further than 300 meters from greenspace (City of Brossard, 2024).

Such a sweeping urban revitalization project— one whose bylaw reforms affect more than one-tenth of the city’s territory, per the City of Brossard (2024)— has never been proposed at such a scale in other suburban contexts before, let alone in the GMA or the province of Quebec. At first glance, the New Downtown is reminiscent of the initial renderings of the Royalmount project in the Town of Mount Royal, which incorporated mixed-use buildings into much of its initial plans (Tomesco, 2023). However, the project evolved to become an expansive, 3,600,000-square-foot luxury indoor shopping mall with zero housing units incorporated, a stark contrast to the initial vision spearheaded by private developer Carbonleo (Barrieau, 2019). Instead, what is perhaps the most comparable project to the New Downtown could be seen as the urban development project around the Montmorency metro station in Laval, Quebec, but even this differs considerably in nature. First, although bylaws may have been modified to accommodate the project, it is spearheaded not by Laval’s municipal administration but rather Groupe Montoni, a private developer responsible for overseeing the entirety of the project (Groupe Montoni, n.d.). Second, Laval is one Canada’s biggest cities, home to 438,366 people, making it a suburb far greater in stature in comparison to Brossard at least by population (Statistics Canada, 2022). Third, it is a private investment by a company that seeks to emulate a downtown in a city that, according to Groupe Montoni, “has always lacked a real [one]”, reaping its potential to emulate a TOD with roughly 700 housing units in towers integrated with commercial offerings, yet lacks integrated institutional services, such as education and health (Groupe Montoni, n.d.: online).

1.2. Research aim and research questions

Due to Brossard’s steady and consistent growth, the project has the potential to sustain its population and to perhaps fit a role beyond its existing stature as an off-island suburb of Montreal. To this extent, the **aim** of this research project is **to understand the development and effects of a large-scale urban revitalization project within the current suburban context of Brossard, Quebec**. I will approach this aim with the guidance of **three research questions**:

- a) **From a policy perspective, how does the City of Brossard plan on globally implementing such a project?** To approach this question, I conduct a content analysis between public information and that obtained from municipal officials responsible for

outlining the vision and bylaws that define the New Downtown project and synthesize it with participant observations.

- b) **What are the impressions, thoughts, and reactions of Brossard's current residents to the development of a downtown core in their suburban community?** To address this question, I inquire upon these perspectives by uncovering shared and unique experiences of the city's residents while getting a view of their current understanding and critical reflections of the project.

- c) **What are the implications of developing a downtown core upon Brossard's growth?** This final research question attempts to synthesize the first two by analyzing the consequences of the project and understanding the effects that it has upon Brossard's development, administration, and population. It consists of a critical reflection that will be conducted throughout this thesis, though primarily addressed in my concluding discussion by discerning patterns in interviewee attitudes and examining how existing theoretical framework applies to Brossard's future development.

1.3. Thesis layout

In Chapter 2, I conduct a literature review of scholarship on urban revitalization projects in urban and suburban contexts alongside the administrative tools used to execute such projects, while forming parallels alongside literature describing the nature and creation of satellite cities and bedroom communities, all with a North American focus. In Chapter 3, I describe the methodological design and approaches that I applied to my research, the analysis phases that followed, and all ethical and positional implications. In Chapter 4, I answer my first research question by conducting an analysis of available documentation and data obtained from municipal officials. In Chapter 5, I present findings from interviews I conducted with residents of Brossard and address my second research question. Finally, in Chapter 6, I offer concluding critical remarks and reflections, answer my third research question, discuss research limitations, outline the contributions this research makes, and provide directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I offer a review of literature relevant to the themes with which I engage throughout this thesis when discussing the development of Brossard's New Downtown. First, I characterize North American urban form using literature that discusses its characteristics and evolution over time (2.1), especially focusing on themes of commuter suburbs, bedroom communities, and satellite cities (2.1.1). I then summarize scholarship that has studied urban revitalization projects, drawing upon similarities between different contexts (2.2). Finally, I engage with the different approaches and tools that are used in urban revitalization projects (2.3).

2.1. The nature of North American (sub)urban areas

First, it is important to note the origins of urbanization as a concept. As Lee & Jacoby (2011) discuss, accredited urban engineer Ildefonso Cerdá coined both urbanism and urbanization as terms referring to “the science that manages and regulates the growth of the city through housing and economic activities” (qtd. on p. 19). Scholarship has demonstrated how North American urban form is unique insofar as it encourages automotive transportation, is often quite low-density, and places peripheral environments at risk of degradation (Birch, 2007). Literature suggests how, alongside this, a definitive element of urban development across North America is urban sprawl, whereby urban cores get depleted resulting in increasing vehicle miles travelled per person (Dieleman & Wegener, 2004). Scholars further demonstrate that urban sprawl has environmental impacts, such as the decrease in air quality and the encroachment upon open and scenic spaces in metropolitan areas (Dieleman & Wegener, 2004). Other scholars have attempted to depict suburbs as not as a distinct concept but rather as a part of broader urban form, arguing that the definition is either too broad or inaccurate (Harris & Lewis, 2001; Forsyth, 2012). While some argue that it is best to either ditch the term of suburb altogether (Forsyth, 2012), others say they should instead be treated as a part of a larger metropolitan area (Harris & Lewis, 2001). Nonetheless, in the North American context, literature has defined cities as being typically places of high density and activity, while suburbs are their ever-growing extension.

2.1.1. Bedroom communities and satellite cities

Earlier scholars again have been able to best define the differences between urban and suburban communities (Mayer, 1969), although some have begun to claim that distinguishing between the two has become often quite difficult, some discerning no difference whatsoever

between both urban forms (Schweitzer, 2011; Harris & Lewis, 2001). These ambiguities have sparked debates in literature on taken-for-granted ideas, such as what can be defined as urban sprawl, how to properly assess whether people truly want to live in a suburb, or whether they are forced to due to market trends (Schweitzer, 2011). This speaks to a broader trend of suburban classification: for example, the bedroom community often reduces suburbs to being servient to a bigger city or, at best, economically self-serving— for instance, offering small-scale commerce and non-exportable economic goods and services (Kaufmann & Wittwer, 2018). Other literature further describes them as being monofunctional and poorly integrated into broader urban functions, such as the provision of regional services (Dinić, & Mitković, 2010). These are relatively synonymous with commuter suburbs as described by Schnore (1963), whose early descriptions emulate Forsyth (2012) in her depictions of suburban areas broadly being either for employment or residential purposes.

There also exist satellite cities, which are typically conceived as being their own political entity within a regional hub that is capable of radiating influence and economic power (Van Leynseele & Bontje, 2019; Percival & Waley, 2012). Attempts to designate what satellite cities are is not new in academic circles: this largely suburban trend has been investigated for over a century (Taylor, 1915). The definition has historically been rather unclear, with scholars denoting how there is universal acclaim between three contrasting visions: dormitory cities, established cities, or a mix of both (Bridel & Winkler, 1958). Regardless, in the present day, these are often said to be jumpstarted by master plans and/or heavy economic investment often due to inorganic growth, whether private- or public-driven in nature (Van Leynseele & Bontje, 2019; Percival & Waley, 2012; Dupont, 2001). Empirical analyses focused on Mediterranean Europe demonstrate that the size and scale of industry and economic performance is highly dependent on whether a satellite city will appear outside of a central city, potentially even forming part of a megalopolis (Ikeda et al., 2022).

2.2. Urban revitalization in North America

When discussing urban revitalization, at least in the North American context, a first and especially important point to note is the difference between gentrification and urban revitalization. While gentrification displaces disadvantaged communities by redeveloping and catering neighbourhoods to higher-income residents (Campos de Oliveira, 2025), urban revitalization fundamentally seeks a bottom-up approach to redeveloping the urban fabric that

empowers locals and their communities to redevelop their cities (National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, 1996). This latter approach emulates community-based planning, which brings together inclusive approaches to engage residents by bringing them into the decision-making process alongside professionals (Dewar, 2021). One example of this that is tied into urban revitalization is Detroit's Lower Eastside Action Plan, which brought residents together with the local trade association and urban planners to help bolster the local economy and build housing on vacant lots that comprised of 50% of the neighbourhood's total area (Dewar, 2021).

Nonetheless, the benefits of urban revitalization may be spread unevenly among stakeholders depending on the context. Scholars have examined the effects of state-sponsored urban revitalization in a wide variety of contexts. A study of the New Jersey Transit Village Initiative, focused on creating TODs, found that the improvement of infrastructure and access to central commercial areas by promoting sustainable mobility, such as cycling or walking, did affect property values, though a causal relationship could not be found (Noland et al., 2012). What constitutes a TOD is quite often conflated with political buzzwords, and this has led to the rise of the transit-adjacent development (TAD). These mimic the core aspects of TODs but fail in practice due to the built environment being incapable of inducing sustainable mobility measures, such as pedestrian infrastructure, yet still being built close to public transit infrastructure (Duncan, 2011). Similarly, the concept of 15-minute cities has become popularized although it has also become a term to describe successful urban revitalization efforts. Essentially, it suggests that all trips for all essential needs should be within 15 minutes away by walking, cycling, or public transit from wherever one lives based on the principles of density, proximity planning, land use diversity, ubiquitous spread across an urban area (Teixeira et al., 2024).

There is some literature describing the nature of TODs in the GMA: Barrieau (2019) recounts an attempt to create a TOD in Mont-Saint-Hilaire near its commuter rail station, though was partially unsuccessful due to its lack of density and the difficulty to attract demand for mixed-use development. He also mentions the gradual development of a TOD in Longueuil around its metro station and bus terminus at the end of the yellow line, where since the 1970s municipal government has been gradually densifying the area and offering a wide range of services and denser housing, with the long-term vision of making the area more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists by 2035 (Barrieau, 2019). However, TODs and densification are not the only way suburban revitalization manifests itself: North American literature has outlined efforts

to densify existing development or repurpose brownfields. For example, Toronto has seen the creation of small city centres beyond its downtown due to the proximity of a subway line, shown to reduce private vehicle use in the area during peak hours (Crowley et al., 2009). Brownfield redevelopment is also relevant here, as it refers to the repurposing of underused land: research has shown that brownfield redevelopments in Montreal and Toronto alone have generated \$36,300,000 in tax revenue and created over 30,000 housing units across 11 major Canadian cities (De Sousa, 2006).

While urban revitalization does often take shape within the boundaries of bigger cities, it can also be understood in the context of nearby suburbs or even mid-tier cities. Whether these efforts have been successful is up for debate. Research in the American context demonstrates how creating a central element to cities is an economically successful approach, often done by repurposing large, vacant or underused buildings (Faulk, 2006). To this extent, the strategy of Jeffersonville and New Albany, Indiana is worth highlighting: their focus was on creating attractive main streets and repurposing their so-called white elephants— underused, often larger buildings with heritage value— all while preserving and enhancing the built environment and restructuring the economy through marketing initiatives and urban revitalization (Faulk, 2006). Large cities also undergo constant urban revitalization, often shifting older industrial neighbourhoods into newer, mixed-use commercial ones; there are many examples of this sprinkled across Canada, from Vancouver’s Yaletown to Montreal’s Cité Multimédia (Mason, 2003). Literature examining urban revitalization efforts across Canada shows how mid-tier cities that experience the most growth from urban revitalization were only able to distinguish themselves by focusing on their “comparative advantages” through their embrace of natural amenities and capitalizing upon the service sector (Filion, 2023, p. 16). Here, Victoria, British Columbia is a good example to look at: it took advantage of its natural amenities and brought together many commercial and institutional services which had demand (Filion, 2023). Similarly, Mason (2003) discusses the attempts of the city councils of Toronto and Montreal in promoting initiatives to make cultural neighbourhoods more appealing, such as Toronto’s Corsa Italia and Montreal’s Quartier chinois, by consolidating “the commercial and cultural identity” of such neighbourhoods, demonstrating how economic revitalization and urban identity go hand in hand (p. 355). However, Filion (2023) brings up that gentrification may be an unintended consequence of urban revitalization due to the rent-gap theory, explaining how the most “undervalued

properties” are always targeted by developers for their projects, typically affecting low-income residents the most (p. 18).

2.3. Key components and approaches used in urban revitalization

Urban revitalization projects are made up of various components, despite often being spearheaded by government master plans or agreements with private developers (Birch, 2007). Literature has demonstrated how there are largely four approaches used in urban revitalization which can sometimes overlap with one another:

1. Catalytic revitalization — large, coordinated efforts to consolidate development, often with institutional instruments or construction projects;
2. Downtown revitalization — focusing on creating or rejuvenating the city’s central business district, retrofitting existing infrastructure into mixed-use developments;
3. Neighbourhood revitalization — revamping disinvested neighbourhoods by building new infrastructure, such as schools, community centres, or housing; and
4. Project-focused revitalization — large-scale investment projects, such as sports facilities or convention centres, aimed at bolstering the local economy (Birch, 2007).

Evidently, this points to the importance of private sector involvement in urban regeneration, notably property and real estate developers. In fact, private sector participation evidently remains crucial to development in urban renewal projects: it has been shown that even in times of economic downturn, some corporations are quite keen on property development as an investment vehicle and will keep investing into urban regeneration projects (McGreal et al., 2000). Significant factors behind their motivation beyond economic benefit included the “perceived security of investment” and “new business opportunities” (McGreal et al., 2000, p. 120). For example, research shows that private-sector involvement in public infrastructure projects has been an attractive streamlining mechanism (Hodge & Greve, 2017).

Literature on the role that public-private partnerships (PPPs) play in urban revitalization has been prominent since the beginning of the 21st century, especially in North America but also in Europe and Asia (Vale de Paula et al., 2023). Scholars have explored how these can take multiple different forms but typically have to do with the promotion of commercial activity juxtaposed to the investment into public goods by the local government (Espinosa & Hernandez, 2016; Vale de Paula et al., 2023). In fact, Canada has been an early visionary in this regard, with its first notable PPP occurring in the redevelopment of Toronto’s Bloor West Village in 1970

(Espinosa & Hernandez, 2016). Other countries have taken up such a model with success, notably Spain in its attempt to revitalize its “many historic centres” by engaging “private associations and agents ... to contribute economically, [with] major infrastructure improvements and public works [being] financed by public agents” (Espinosa & Hernandez, 2016, p. 114). PPPs, however, do not come without disadvantages, as scholarship points out: while the neoliberal political landscape makes PPPs the ideal collaborative method to undergo massive infrastructure projects, they can cause various governance, financial, and management issues that leads to uncertainty regarding deliverable timelines (Vale de Paula et al., 2023). Scholarship has also observed that certain services and goals that were once the responsibility of the public sector are now being increasingly taken up by the private sector: at times, they can be to blame for issues of the “unequal distribution of benefits, unsustainable development, and marginalization and segregation of vulnerable communities” (Rhodes, 2009, p. 178). In other words, part of the long-term responsibility gets shifted onto the shoulders of corporations that involve themselves in mass-scale urban revitalization projects.

To some scholars, trends in urban revitalization since the turn of the century also serve as a way of introducing inclusive urban redevelopment. Recall the discussion about community-based planning (see **Section 2.2**): scholars similarly point to the importance of community participation in urban regeneration projects, wherein “local people must be an integral part of the urban policy process” and “communities are not homogenous entities waiting to participate” (Atkinson & Cope, 1997, p. 215). Atkinson and Cope (1997) outline the importance of involving the public in each aspect of the policy side to urban regeneration projects, bringing up several points fundamental to the understanding of urban policy as it relates to which members of a given community benefit, how the problem is addressed, in which ways policies are being managed, and most crucially “who benefits” (p. 216).

2.4. Concluding remarks: the gaps in the literature

Together, these three strands of scholarship help conceptualize similar urban environments to Brossard, the methods used to revitalize (sub)urban areas, and the methods by which cities undergo large-scale urban redesign projects. The selected scholarship weaves a delicate explanation for an intricate topic, though depth to the Quebec context and the long-term consequences of suburban revitalization master plans is somewhat lacking. Indeed, while no construction project has broken ground as of the writing of this thesis, it is nonetheless important

to understand the economic, socio-spatial, and demographic impacts a large project, such as Brossard's New Downtown, can have on what is currently a large suburb with commuter characteristics. This exemplifies a gap in literature, and my thesis aims at bridging it by examining this urban shift and attempting to contextualize it in a suburban context. By better understanding Brossard's urban vision alongside its residents' perceptions of Brossard's past and how its suburban landscape stands to evolve, I will offer an observation of a shift Brossard may undergo in its urban landscape, linking the themes uncovered in content analysis, participant observation, and through resident interviews to themes unveiled in the literature review.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The methods I decided to use to collect my data were selected to best address my research aims and questions. This chapter first describes the methods and techniques used, then outlines the strategies used within each of these methods (3.1). Finally, I discuss issues relating to research ethics and my positionality, and how it shaped my research methods and analysis (3.2).

3.1. Research methods and field techniques

My research was conducted by using several field techniques and research methods, which enabled me to triangulate my methods, thus improving rigour, and take different approaches that adequately encompass my research questions (Stratford and Bradshaw, 2021). To keep track of my research as it evolved, I kept an audit trail of my activities and observations throughout the course of my research (Stratford and Bradshaw, 2021). To address my first research question, being how the City of Brossard plans on implementing its New Downtown from a policy perspective, I conducted a content analysis focusing on the historical development of the project's concepts through the analysis of various relevant documents I obtained, notably municipal publications, newspaper or research articles, and other documentation obtained through the public and private domain. Then, I combined this with information obtained from semi-structured interviews I conducted in the Fall of 2024 with the incumbent Mayor of Brossard, Doreen Assaad, as well as municipal officials, to conduct a comparative analysis between their accounts and the information I obtained from my research for a type of content analysis called relational analysis, which uncovered "relationships between concepts and themes that surface from the analyzed text" (Wilson, 2011).

My second research question, being what the impressions, thoughts, and reactions of Brossard's current residents are to the development of a downtown core in their suburban community, was approached using semi-structured interviews with current residents of Brossard. I held 22 interviews with residents of Brossard and two interviews with municipal officials (including the mayor) between October 2024 and January 2025. These were held either virtually through a video call or in the participant's location of preference, all of which lasted between 15 to 60 minutes. Once all interviews with residents concluded, I conducted an inductive thematic analysis while I transcribed the interviews, looking for common themes between them that can

describe the broader ideas brought up by residents regarding the concept of the New Downtown. Re-listening and rewriting the interviews immersed me into each one and provided me a holistic idea of the topics that residents mentioned, which often had themes that were multifaceted and could not be reduced to singular concepts. For instance, many residents were neither optimistic nor pessimistic about the New Downtown project but had mixed feelings due to variable elements of the city that interplayed. This could not be simply broken down into the resident being ambivalent or undecided, so an academically backed approach of treating all data as “equal and worthy of analysis” was used, through a post-coding approach that encourages the analysis of interview data to be conducted “without origin or destination,” so that relevant themes can be discerned simultaneously while my two other methods were being used (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014, pp. 715, 717).

I took two approaches in my sampling. First, I used purposeful, non-probability sampling to identify potential participants who could offer a perspective on the New Downtown project. It was purposeful in nature as I relied on characteristics that identified people as key stakeholders within the scope of my thesis (Marshall, 1996), notably being residents or public sector actors involved in the conception of the ideas of the New Downtown project. Further, I relied upon non-probability sampling to target a limited population, being residents of Brossard and other relevant stakeholders operating within Brossard; in the context of semi-structured interviews discussing a specific issue, this seemed to be the most relevant approach (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007). My recruitment strategy was based on my sampling strategy and relied mostly upon email threads to establish contact with potential participants I identified. This proved to be challenging at times, especially with older participants: many preferred to arrange meeting times and locations over the phone or in-person at an event, where we would discuss the interview in further detail. Occasionally, recruitment was done in-person with people who showed interest in tangential topics, such as municipal governance or local politics.

All interviews, whether with the Mayor of Brossard, municipal officials, or residents of Brossard, were semi-structured with “ordered but flexible questioning” (Dunn, 2021, p. 158) to allow for deviations from the interview guide and approach certain ideas participants brought up carefully. My interview guide follows a funnel structure, discussing broader topics, such as perceptions about Brossard in general, and eventually narrowing down to more precise thoughts, feelings, and perceptions about the New Downtown project (Dunn, 2021). In the case of

municipal officials and the mayor, questions became more precise in terms of the thematic topics that would have been brought up. The identities of municipal officials remain confidential at their request. These interviews enabled me to directly consult with those who live in Brossard and investigate whether they share the same vision of the future for their city as those in City Hall.

I also utilized overt and active participant observation as a method of integrating myself within what was a common setting for the development of the project, crucial to understanding the power dynamics and interactions within the community (Kearns, 2016). It allowed me to simultaneously assess the state of the New Downtown project in panels hosted by both the public and private sector while attempting to get a proper assessment of the perceptions of stakeholders without directly soliciting them. This helped me address both my first and second research question by situating, in time, the progress on the New Downtown project and perhaps some private developments within, all while obtaining a holistic understanding of the mood of all stakeholders.

Gathering information on the field, especially as it pertained to the private sector's involvement within the project, required me to pivot to overt participant observation in some cases. There were two instances where I employed this field technique: first, during a brainstorming session I attended alongside roughly two dozen community organization stakeholders, hosted by private developer Prével, then at a presentation of the vision of the New Downtown by the City of Brossard, which contained an exhibit in the day and a question-and-answer panel about contents of the New Downtown in the evening. Participant observation was an unforeseen aspect of my study: since the New Downtown is still an evolving project, opportunities such as these popped up spontaneously and were an opportunity to provide me with useful information and connections for later use. My role often consisted of a primary participant-as-observer role, where I actively engaged with the process while simultaneously interpreting the event and discussions in my surroundings (Kearns, 2016).

3.2. Positionality and ethical considerations

Some scholars note that it is important to keep in mind the fluidity of our identities that constantly shift depending on our interactions with others and in different contexts (Rose, 1997). As such, I must acknowledge my positionality, especially as it pertains to my choice of subject. First, being bilingual in English and French, I can easily communicate with both French- and

English-speaking participants, which broadens the scope of the interviews I could hold with residents and put me at an advantage regarding my access to information, understanding such information, and carrying out interviews with professionals and elected officials. Moreover, being the child of a first-generation Greek Canadian father and a second-generation Greek Canadian mother means I can understand certain realities that are formative of everyday life in Brossard: according to Statistics Canada (2021), the city is ethnically diverse, with 30 different ethnic groups each making up at least 1% of Brossard's population. I am also currently a resident of Brossard and have been for most of my life, which allows me to orient myself around the city and have a strong grasp of Brossard's history and evolution. However, the most crucial aspect of my positionality is how politically involved I am within my community. I am currently a sitting member of the Brossard's *Commission des milieux de vie* (Commission on the Living Environment), which analyzes multiple aspects of the city's social environment and consults residents on how to make Brossard more inclusive for all. I am also a member of the executive council of political parties representing Brossard on the municipal, provincial, and federal levels. Further, I currently work part-time as a political attaché at the provincial riding office of La Pinière. Naturally, my political involvement and exposure has broadened my network within my local community, allowed me to develop important connections, and provided access to information that I otherwise would not have if I did not participate in Brossard's civic life.

To this extent, my positionality as an insider brings about ethical considerations across several aspects of my research. First, the dual role I play in many instances leverages a certain privilege as it concerns access to information. My connections enabled me to gain access to certain activities, contacts, and events that would otherwise be more difficult for the public to either know or get a hold of. It also means gaining access to key actors within the city, notably the Mayor of Brossard and her team, came with relative ease for me. This is, of course, a privileged aspect of my positionality that affects how my research was designed: if another researcher were to conduct the same study, yet did not have the same insider positionality as me, perhaps a survey or spontaneous interviews would be instead conducted to gather data. While the benefits of insider status are real, my status as an insider may also influence my perspective on certain information I come across (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009), meaning I must keep a sense of neutrality throughout the process of my research. Second, there are implications concerning the sample I worked with. Given how many of my connections to residents of Brossard are

through civic engagement, my sampling strategy risked being ideologically saturated. Nonetheless, there is value to the sample I worked with: each person came with their own story and, since most were bound to already being informed on local politics, many came to the interview with strong opinions. All things considered, my connections and my network create for a study that, if conducted by another person, could indeed yield considerably different results. Finally, it is important to note that working directly with people to obtain their opinions and knowledge through interviews required Research Ethics Board (REB) approval from McGill University's REB I Committee. This ensured that my research design met the necessary qualifications for rigour and research standards.

CHAPTER 4: WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD A “NEW DOWNTOWN”

In this chapter, I outline, analyze, and scrutinize elements of Brossard’s New Downtown and address my first research question: **from a policy perspective, how does the City of Brossard plan on globally implementing such a project?** By integrating all three of my methods, I first discuss the history of the idea of building a downtown within Brossard (4.1) with a focus on how the steps the city took to get to where it currently is (4.1.1), followed by a discussion of the proposed developments within the New Downtown (4.2), discourses observed within public settings and conclude by answering my first research question (4.4).

4.1. Brossard’s proposal to the public

The history of the idea of a downtown in Brossard dates back as early as 1967, when a report appeared in the local French-language newspaper, *Le Sudiste*, about a \$16-million project proposed by Aster Corporation (Bélair, 1967). Interestingly, archival records indicate that this was the same company responsible for developing the city’s “M” Sector, then dubbed Asterville, highlighting an established relationship between the developer and the municipality at the time (Pratt, 2009). The project was ambitious for its time, but both City Hall and the private developer recognized it would be a longshot:

City councilors have already approved of the project generally speaking, but according to a spokesperson from City Hall the plans will not be complete before the year 2000 because of zoning bylaw amendments and construction projects which will occur over the span of [many] years in accordance with the city’s population growth. ... [The plans] show us what should be the [at] the focal point of Brossard in a few years, located near Asterville where Taschereau Boulevard, the Champlain Bridge, and [Highway 10] meet. The main buildings that we should highlight to our readers include City Hall, department stores, office buildings, a hotel, a hospital, high schools, [and] the arena that is already under construction... (Translated from Bélair, 1967)

These plans did not proceed, but the area remained a focal point of the city as it was the site of the Panama Bus Terminus and, more recently, REM Station. While the 1960s-era idea of a new downtown was abandoned, ideas of revitalizing the area were sparked yet again in 2013 by former Mayor Paul Leduc, when he dubbed Taschereau Boulevard as having the potential of becoming the next Champs-Élysées (Gerbet, 2013). Leduc spoke of a redevelopment project where buildings would contain street-level shops and mixed-used buildings for commercial and residential activity, with parking being relocated behind these new buildings (Gerbet, 2013). It

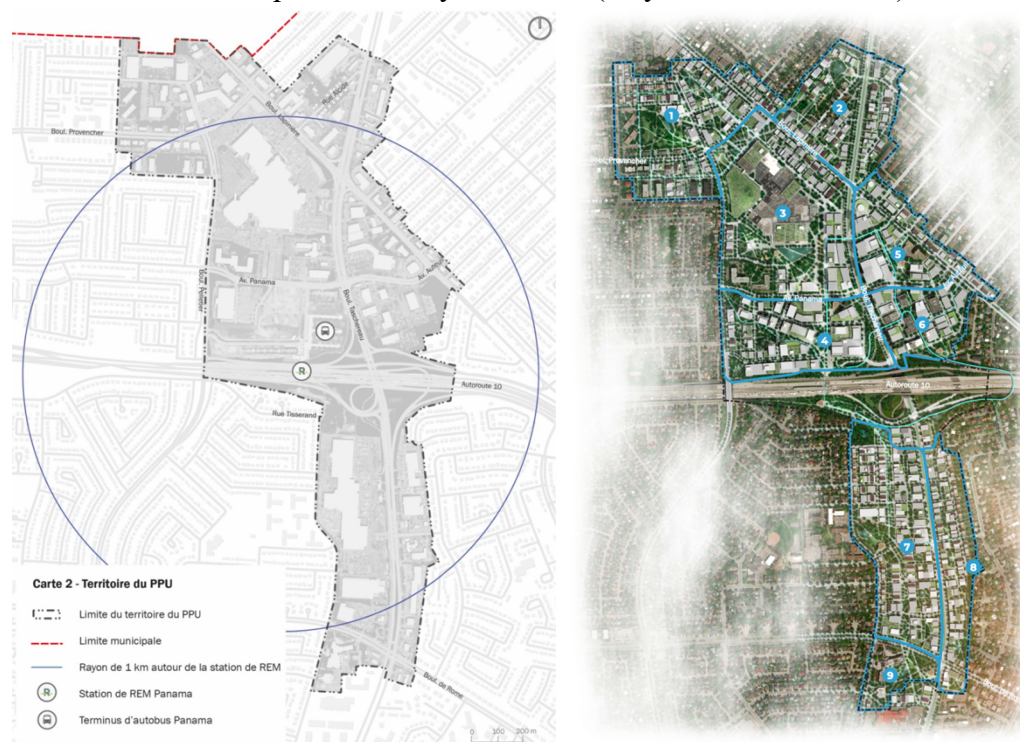
would take the form of an urban boulevard with public spaces, large sidewalks, space for more pedestrians and cyclists, and an integrated form of public transit — precisely, either bus rapid transit or a tramway running the length of the boulevard (Gerbet, 2013). These plans did not end up far but marked the beginning of the newest discussions about urban revitalization. When running against Paul Leduc in 2017, the electoral platform of Doreen Assaad included various electoral promises along the lines of revitalizing Taschereau Boulevard, namely “creating a new urban environment [and] encouraging the use of public and active transportation” (Translated from Brossard Ensemble, 2017). In 2019, these promises materialized through the creation of a framework to revitalize Taschereau Boulevard by 2035 through the implementation of densification; incorporating an integrated urban environment between denser and less dense neighbourhoods; and most notably the creation of a TOD at the Panama REM Station (Picotte, 2019). A common theme arose in the short-term among local politicians: a need for Brossard to revitalize Taschereau Boulevard— one of its largest traffic arteries— and a need to reimagine how Brossard approaches its urban and economic development.

4.1.1. Policy design and implementation

Right before her election to a second mandate as Mayor in 2021, Doreen Assaad, city council, and municipal administration began the process of consulting the general population on how they envision the future of their urban landscape across Brossard (City of Brossard, 2024). Following a survey and brainstorm sessions with residents, some of the key priorities and takeaways from the consultation process included:

- A central focus on cultural diversity in the design of public spaces;
- A wide offering of outdoor recreational opportunities;
- A living environment with all the features and components of a community, not just residences or commercial offerings;
- Neighbourhood planning at a human scale with a wide variety of housing options; and
- Minimal incorporation of motor vehicle traffic and a heavy focus on active transportation (City of Brossard, 2024).

A public assembly was held in June 2022 on the draft *Projet particulier d'urbanisme* (PPU), a special urban planning document of the New Downtown project made in consultation with residents and property owners, representing the reform of bylaws within the targeted territory around Taschereau Boulevard, between roughly the northern boundary of Brossard and Rome Boulevard (see **Map 1.1**). The official presentation of the plans of the PPU were presented in December 2023, placing an estimated timeline on the project to be complete by 2040 (Daignault, 2023). Throughout the redaction of these plans, Brossard was polishing its municipal bylaw reforms to conform to the feedback it had received, adapt to social acceptability, and aim at anticipating the necessary changes that were required in upgrading existing infrastructure; incorporating new public works projects; ensuring stable access to public transit; and planning human-scale living environments, integrated with the necessary services (City of Brossard, 2024). A final assembly was held in June 2024 to unveil the final details of the PPU, with one final consultation assembly to incorporate feedback from residents and community stakeholders; modifications were made and passed shortly thereafter (City of Brossard, 2024).



Map 4.1 (left): Territory of the PPU with an underlay of current satellite imagery (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online); Figure 4.1 (right): Conceptual satellite rendering of the eventual New Downtown (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online).

Research has consistently shown that locals know their community and its needs best (Birch, 2007). Therefore, public consultation is necessary if any urban revitalization project wishes to fit truly within the existing urban fabric. To make adequate decisions for the public, consultation and civic engagement became central to the process of rethinking such a broad swath of area that currently contains services and shops that residents often rely upon (Interview with Doreen Assaad, 31/10/2024). Nonetheless, this does not mean that governments and municipal officials will listen to the inputs of its residents: no matter how intricate public consultation processes are and how involved citizens may be, elected officials and bureaucrats end up calling the last shots and may go against their word (Renn et al., 1996). The various consultations Brossard underwent in 2021-2024 recall the fourth rung of the ladder of citizen participation (see **Figure 4.2**): it restricts the opinions of those to be later affected down to the ideas they merely input (Arnstein, 1967). Resident consultation could have fed into ideas that policymakers drafted but perhaps practically served as a means of simply ticking a box.

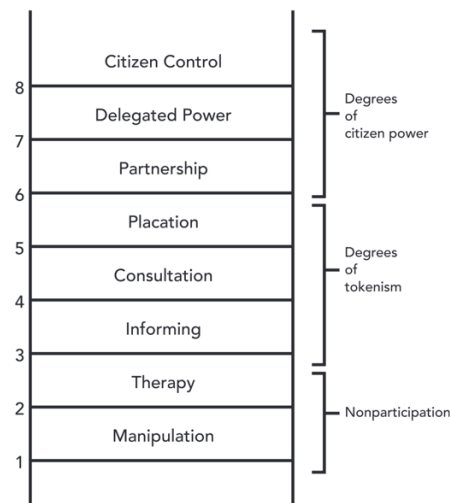


Figure 4.2: The eight rungs of the ladder of citizen participation (Source: Arnstein, 1967, p. 26).

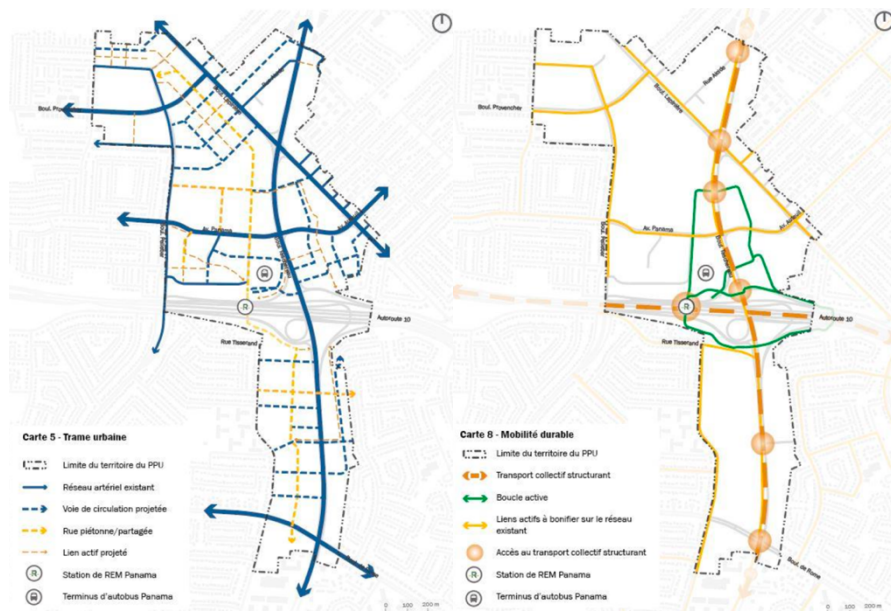
Research in the Canadian context of urban regeneration has suggested that, for Brossard to be successful in the development of its New Downtown, it must focus on a distinguishing factor that sets it apart from the rest of the region it sits within (Filion, 2023). As a suburb, Brossard must either capitalize upon a unique, existing element of its city or create a new one that will attract people from across the GMA to its New Downtown. Public consultation can be once again useful to seek out ideas for this, like what the City of Brossard has conducted throughout the policy redaction phase. However, it must continuously engage citizens to plan around the realities they live and the portrait of their city they envision as construction projects

begin, to provide residents with more say and emulate rungs 6 and 7 of the ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein, 1967). Ideally, this arrangement can serve to plan more than the placemaking aspects of the New Downtown project and serve as a long-term tool for measuring success, either according to comparisons with previous projects or with residents' expectations.

4.2. Municipal discourses about the New Downtown

In my interviews with municipal officials and Doreen Assaad, I better understood the discourses from municipal government and practical realities that led to the development of the PPU and where Brossard currently sits in the implementation phase of the project. The mayor explained to me that the city is currently “ready to start negotiating projects with landowners” (Interview with Doreen Assaad, 31/10/2024). Further to this, the city is currently preparing for major developments by upgrading existing public infrastructure to handle such projects, which is set for completion by roughly 2029 (Interview with municipal officials, 11/12/2024). The implementation of the city's vision was the first step to bringing change to the area, with four key aspects being central to its creation: moving around the area, creating a holistically integrated living environment, increasing housing availability, and urban greening measures.

4.2.1. Revitalizing Taschereau Boulevard



Map 4.2 (left): General transportation network plan across the territory of the PPU (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online); Map 4.3 (right): Sustainable mobility plan across the territory of the PPU (City of Brossard, 2024: online).

Taschereau Boulevard is at the forefront of this reimagined project, with the entire zoned revitalization area. Sustainable mobility and public transportation are central components that set this project apart from the existing urban fabric in Brossard. According to Doreen Assaad, this was an effort to rectify what she deems as problematic transportation planning:

Taschereau [Boulevard] and Highway 10, for me, is a scar to the possibility of connecting the city in a more humane way. So we discussed the challenges and we [came up with] what we call the Active Loop, [which] is going to be a kind of overpass that we're going to want to build that [goes] over the highway that will connect the "M" Sector to a part of the "P" Sector and the "A" Sector. There's already a tunnel leading to [the "T" Sector] that exists that connects this whole area to the REM and will connect to the future downtown as well (Interview with Doreen Assaad, 31/10/2024).

This represents a shift away from the car in what is traditionally a suburban setting characterized by its heavy reliance. Municipal officials acknowledged how these plans were not unanimously agreed upon between stakeholders, especially pertaining to maintaining existing neighbourhood characteristics (Interview with municipal officials, 11/12/2024). Nonetheless, Brossard does not aim to remove cars entirely but rather make it easier for people to get around by public transit, at least along its main traffic artery. The Active Loop (see **Map 4.3**) aims to put pedestrians above highway traffic in a symbolic effort to reclaim space. As highways are provincial jurisdiction in Quebec, this will require coordination between both levels of government. One can make an interesting comparison here with New York City's High Line, an elevated railway turned park that allows citizens to take advantage not only of the city's landscape, but of a greenspace that doubles as a venue for people to better understand the city's history while allowing for citizens to better benefit from public space and indulge in cultural heritage (Millington, 2015). While Brossard is a far younger suburb in comparison, the Active Loop contains many parallels to the High Line: by running through the geographic centre of the developed parts of Brossard, it weaves together not only the New Downtown area between itself, but also existing suburban neighbourhoods without the need to get around by car. It empowers citizens to take advantage of walkable civic infrastructure, which further improves quality of life and public health (Baobeid et al., 2021). Another central aspect of the New Downtown's transportation plans is the integration of many modes of transportation within the area and especially along Taschereau Boulevard, notably cycling, public transit, and implementing a plan to encourage carpooling (City of Brossard, 2024). By encouraging different modes of

transportation and linking the area with an expansive network of mobility arteries permitting a diversity of transit options (see **Map 4.2**), Brossard leans into themes of TODs and integrates principles of the 15-minute city by placing an emphasis on proximity (Teixeira et al., 2024; Duncan, 2011). This fits exactly in line with the mayor’s vision of the future downtown: “[just] like the 15-minute city, ... I want everybody around the future downtown to feel that they key services that they need to live well are accessible” (Interview with Doreen Assaad, 31/10/2024). However, aspects central to the redesigning of Taschereau Boulevard would also require provincial collaboration, since it is classified as a route and is therefore provincial jurisdiction.

4.2.2. Creating a living environment through zoning reforms



Figure 4.3: Conceptual design of the Public Esplanade (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online).

Understanding the built environment that will define the urban landscape helps paint a portrait of the area’s future urban fabric. The New Downtown aims to develop landmark buildings, plazas, and parks that can also foster the development of a sense of place within the city and turn the area into a destination. The Public Esplanade is a prime example of this (see **Figure 4.3**), where Brossard promises the development of a plethora of cultural elements within a public space containing “open plazas, fountains, sculptures and kiosks” while simultaneously connecting features of interest that promote interactions between people and the built environment (City of Brossard, 2024: online). Further enhancing the built environment is the incorporation of mixed-use planning that aims to create a lively space and key destinations that would emulate a downtown core (City of Brossard, 2024). It has been shown that reducing the proximity between residents and each other or different zoned areas, such as commercial zones,

Housing is a central component that the project seeks to address, especially given Quebec’s ongoing housing crisis that has seen rent prices increase by 27% between 2020 and 2024 amidst worsening housing insecurity (Morris, 2024). The New Downtown project, overall, aims at integrating 12,000 new housing units across the entire territory of the PPU, with heights reaching up to 35 floors and residential densities reaching up to 575 units per acre (see **Map 4.4**). Buildings will contain an urban gradient, wherein the highest buildings will be most concentrated around the Panama REM Station and bus terminals, with decreasing building heights as one goes further from this area (see **Figure 4.4**). Taller buildings will contain podium design, incorporating a staggered design where the highest portions of a building will be located closest to the downtown core (City of Brossard, 2024). Doreen Assaad describes this as “a way to give off the perception that, even though you're in an urban and dense environment, you’ll only see two floors or three floors” from afar (Interview, 31/10/2024). This is a central component of the PPU: Brossard does not want to “denature older sectors” with the high-density developments that will sit adjacent to low-density, single-family home neighbourhoods (Interview with municipal officials, 11/12/2024).

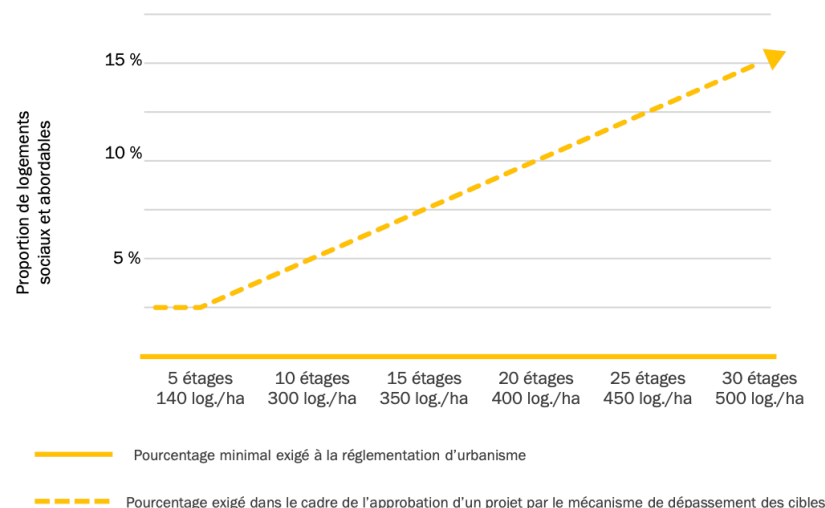


Figure 4.5: Social and affordable housing quota (solid yellow line) and target (dotted yellow line) for all New Downtown projects (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online).

What is perhaps the most shocking criteria is an explicitly mentioned minimum of 0% of housing units to be designated as affordable and/or social housing (see **Figure 4.4**). These numbers are highlighted within the PPU as the benchmarks for qualification to meet if any developer wishes to submit a project for consideration (City of Brossard, 2024). Equally

important to mention is how there are supplementary targets depending upon building height and housing density: meeting these criteria is seen as more desirable to the city, creating more favourable outcomes for public-private partnerships and project negotiations (City of Brossard, 2024; Interview with municipal officials, 11/12/2024). To this extent, the success of an individual project within Brossard's New Downtown is dependent upon the evaluation of this criterion, among others, based on what private developers submit and what the City of Brossard deems appropriate.

Real-life social systems work in complex ways that sometimes cannot be adequately predicted by policy or economic models (Munda, 2003): as multiple project proposals are presented and analyzed, their appraisals become increasingly blurred along certain norms that guide decisions. As such, the consequences of Brossard's decisions are not independent from any developments that end up breaking ground. For instance, if more greenspace is prioritized over more social and affordable housing, affordability may become an issue, just as how the general bonification of TOD communities in New Jersey led to an increase in property value (Noland et al., 2012). To this extent, it is only normal to wonder which populations will be homeowners or residents of the New Downtown and its surroundings once projects reach completion, as the gradual economic displacement of existing, often lower-income residents has occurred in the past (Filion, 2023; Atkinson, 2004). It is important that these goals do not act as targets, but concrete engagements by the city to ensure that social and affordable housing projects are followed through, addressing the most pressing issues of housing affordability and accessibility.

4.2.4. Greenspaces, both public and private



Figure 4.6: Rendering of Brossard's Central Park (Source: City of Brossard, 2024: online).

A final and crucial component of the project is the measures that have been set for the private sector regarding public and private greenspaces, as well as social and affordable housing. The PPU once again presents a set of goals along these lines with certain targets to be met for a project to be considered. No matter the project nor the size of the lot, a minimum of 10% of space within any development must be a public space or park (City of Brossard, 2024). Further, 40% of the area within any given proposed project must be dedicated to private greenspaces as well; this metric jumps to 45% if a development is set to be above ten stories (City of Brossard, 2024). Finally, no development within the New Downtown project is to be less than 300 metres from a park or greenspace (City of Brossard, 2024). A major project that helps fulfill this final point is the city's Central Park, inspired by Martin Luther King Park in Paris, France, described as being the "project's heart and green lungs ... accessible and suitable for all ages and all seasons" (City of Brossard, 2024: online). It is important to note that the privatization of greenspace can hinder the benefits nature has to offer to residents, from aesthetics to reducing pollution and heat island effects, as well as creating a more inviting urban environment for people to spend leisurely time in (Virtudes, 2016). Equal access here is important, although the intentions of Brossard in its urban greening strategies are said to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality; integrate natural elements in all aspects of the built environment; create climate-resilient bio-infrastructure; among other strategies laid out to keep the natural environment at the forefront of new development (City of Brossard, 2024).

4.3. Stakeholder discourses about the New Downtown

The city's vision for its New Downtown does not exist in a silo. This is why participant observation was a crucial aspect of my research, as it allowed me to get a better sense of what was occurring within the public scene in different contexts. In both contexts, I observed power dynamics at play that affected how ideas were received. The first one I participated in was a brainstorming session hosted by Prével and TGTA alongside community stakeholders, such as leaders of non-profit organizations, on placemaking strategies that could fit between their development and the PPU. With over 17% of space dedicated to parks and greenspaces, close to 1/3 of the 5,000-square-metre plot dedicated to public spaces, and a projected 1,776 new housing units, Prével and TGTA's project valued at nearly \$1.5B was the first private development to have been approved by the City of Brossard in June 2024 (Dostie, 2024).

4.3.1. Community aspirations for upcoming private developments

The meeting took place in May 2024 at a vacant office in a building on the current territory of the New Downtown, not far from the site of their future development at the corner of Panama Avenue and Philippines Street. As I entered the building, I felt a sense of placelessness: the main lobby was relatively quiet but simultaneously crammed and slightly disorienting. Nonetheless, there were signs guiding me towards the room where the meeting was being held. Once I arrived, I was met with a discrete setup of round tables and chairs, and people were networking with coffee and pastries in hand. Most people were dressed in relaxed office attire, and conversation flowed naturally amongst participants and me. The welcoming environment, despite the eerie feel of the building, allowed me to feel more at ease integrating in the crowd. However, I had arrived slightly late, and those attending seemed to know each other already, which led to some difficulty when it came to integrating myself into conversations. My age—often decades younger than everyone else—perhaps further affected this. People were intrigued by the research project that I took upon, but I would only be taken seriously and fully integrated into conversations once they knew I was working at the local MNA’s nearby constituency office. Here, my youth may have played into a power dynamic: while those representing the community and business sector may have already interacted with each other through their mutual recognition of their place within Brossard’s sociocultural development, my perceived age may have led to a hunch by some that I did not belong in this setting.

It was the third and final phase of the placemaking ‘cocreation’ workshop. Essentially, the goal was to unearth key elements that community stakeholders wished to see in a private development to reflect the idea of a living space. Participants were given colour-coded sticky notes representative of different umbrella themes, such as social; economic; or cultural offerings. Overall, this meeting demonstrated to me a conscious effort by the private sector to align its mission with that of the PPU, at least so far. Participants engaged and consistently fed off each other’s ideas and no hierarchy seemed present, as the organizers of the activity did integrate themselves into rotating discussions to provide their input. Interestingly though, when several community stakeholders mentioned how important it was to highlight Brossard’s cultural diversity, some private sector representatives showed skepticism and needed convincing. Ultimately, this was adapted to the vision that will guide their construction project, made up of

six bullet points often concerning the integration of certain physical features and structures, to meet their guiding principles:

- Creating interactive public spaces to let the public take full advantage of them;
- Encouraging local commercial offerings and services to foster community living;
- Creating safe public spaces that encourage active transportation;
- Fostering social inclusion through community interaction;
- Integrating a green living environment with public water infrastructure within; and
- Building a destination that serves as a local meeting point (TGTA & Prével, 2024).

4.3.2. Public reactions to the New Downtown concept in a political setting

I also participated in the final public consultation held by the City of Brossard that unveiled the final components of its PPU. Held at the Alphonse-Lepage Sociocultural Centre, it was far broader in scope and focused on their overall vision. The first half consisted of a final poster presentation with municipal officials, which fell exactly in line with the contents of the PPU. Many of the guests were older folks who were skeptical of the project, asking questions and persisting at the idea that the project was not properly thought through, lacking integration within their suburban community. Interestingly, representatives from the private sector also visited the installation to get an idea of what the final details were about for the New Downtown. Some members of the public interacted with them to try obtaining their opinions but were met with resistance and claims to be incapable of speaking to future project plans.

The second half of the consultation period was a town hall meeting between the mayor, city representatives, and the public. After a brief overview of the bylaw changes that took effect, a question-and-answer period took place. Some residents had very valid concerns: “how do you ensure that older areas with single-family homes do not get overwhelmed by traffic from denser development?”, “with such a large development project, how do we ensure we have enough schools for our children?”, and “how do we account for the medium-term noise and dust pollution that may affect the quality of life in nearby neighbourhoods?” (20/06/2024). Municipal officials reminded those present that the PPU were not private development plans but rather a broad vision that allows for flexibility for all these components to be accounted for but demonstrated flexibility to adapt its current plans to resident feedback, specifically to the pollution point. Some residents were quite simply angry, with one resident asking how “vision,

transparency, and communication can be ensured” in what she deemed a process that “neglected” communicating the truth, with applause from some in the audience following her comment (20/06/2024). None of the panelists had any feedback to provide here, mentioning how this did not refer to the actual contents of the PPU.

4.4. Concluding remarks

This chapter has attempted to answer my first research question by analyzing Brossard’s New Downtown project and how it has been presented to the public. I outlined the progression of the New Downtown until now through a content analysis of the historical leadup to the project, the goals and objectives of the project, and the contents within zoning bylaw reforms. I also incorporated information collected from interviews with municipal officials and participant observation. Brossard plans on implementing its vision for a New Downtown using the measures included within its PPU, focusing upon three central elements: reworking the way people get around, providing a complete living environment complete with urban greenery, and integrating elements of placemaking and belonging amongst its diverse population. The city underwent a rigorous process to consult the public on a vision for its future urban landscape yet may fall short of meeting some criteria if it does not act upon its ambitions and approves projects on the basis that they meet minimum requirements, notably with housing and greenspaces. As of now, at least part of the private sector seems open to the same vision that Brossard has laid out, but some residents remain skeptical that it will either be an incomplete project or one that denatures existing neighbourhoods.

CHAPTER 5: HOW RESIDENTS FEEL ABOUT THEIR “NEW DOWNTOWN”

This chapter examines interviews with residents and municipal officials to answer my second research question: **what are the impressions, thoughts, and reactions of Brossard’s current residents to the development of a downtown core in their suburban community?** I first discuss residents’ lived experiences in Brossard, positioning the city’s development up until now with their lived experiences (5.1). I follow with a summary of Brossard residents’ knowledge of and feelings about the New Downtown project (5.2), followed by their conceptualizations of where Brossard is headed from their understanding of the project (5.3). A demographic overview of resident interview participants can be found in **Appendix B**.

5.1. Living in Brossard

The first two questions of my interviews consisted of questions about peoples’ lived experiences as residents of Brossard. Through these questions, I sought to understand the depth to which residents understood their surroundings: for instance, what differences exist between those who have lived in Brossard for less time than others? Do various local geographies and identities express differences in how people experience Brossard? The questions were as follows:

1. How long you have been a resident of Brossard? What neighbourhood in Brossard do you currently live in? Where else you have lived? Do you work in Brossard or commute elsewhere?
2. How would you describe Brossard based on your lived experiences in the city? What do you like and dislike about it?

5.1.1. What brought people to Brossard

Peoples’ journeys leading to Brossard varied widely: several chose Brossard willingly, some grew up in the city and enjoyed it, and others ended up here by chance. Participant 16 moved to Brossard because his wife already lived there and enjoyed the living environment (4/12/2024). Participant 11 returned to Brossard after enjoying his childhood in the city, moving back from nearby Saint-Hubert because he felt home was “always here” (4/2/2025). Half a century ago, Participant 22’s father, who lived halfway between Montreal and Quebec City, recommended he move to Brossard for its good reputation in newspapers at that time (2/12/2024). These three anecdotes are examples of the many stories people gave that influenced their decision to move to Brossard, woven with heartfelt descriptions of a tight-knit community.

5.1.2. What keeps people in Brossard

Brossard was unanimously acclaimed as a positive living environment by all participants who were interviewed. Participant 3 expressed the city's long-standing record of good public administration, citing excellent financial management, the culture of immaculate neighbourhood upkeep, and an inviting suburban living environment (28/11/2024). He also mentioned how the city has recently seen many opportunities for growth and development, which have allowed for the city to be culturally and financially "rich" (28/11/2024). Participant 15 noted a public perception of affluence mixed with affordability associated with Brossard that dated to his high school years, which attracted him to purchase a home in the area, alongside the geographical proximity to Montreal; low taxes; and new architecture, which were other net positives he had teased out (26/10/2024). I often had to re-ask residents whether there were any negative elements to their lived experiences in the city. They usually pointed to smaller problems that could be fixed, such as potholes and other minor aesthetic issues. However, Participant 9 did not hesitate to say that, while she enjoyed growing up in her neighbourhood, she appreciates "the aspects of the city more than what... Brossard has to offer currently," such as walkability and proximity to services (17/2/2025). Perhaps elements of the New Downtown's offerings could be enticing to her, but she attests that her career's eventual location will be a large determinant of where she ends up living (17/2/2025).

5.2. Perceptions about the New Downtown project

The next two questions aimed at understanding the scope to which information about the New Downtown project was disseminated to the public. For example, did differences in age affect peoples' understandings of the project or their level of care for it? Were residents seeing eye-to-eye with their perception of municipal administration? These questions asked:

3. What do you know about the Nouveau Centre-Ville project? How do you feel about it?
4. What do you like or dislike about the project?

5.2.1. What residents of Brossard know

According to my interview data, there were mixed levels of knowledge about the project that were independent of the age of participants. On the one hand, some people were well-informed due to their proactiveness to read information that was published online, such as Participant 6, who recalls of Paul Leduc's aspirations to revitalize Taschereau Boulevard before

Doreen Assaad’s vision to create a TOD around the Panama REM Station (11/12/2024). Those who knew of the project often did research right before the interview or heard of very general points about the project. Some without prior knowledge of the New Downtown, such as Participant 19, thought the Dix30 or Solar had something to do with it due to its dense and developed nature (7/12/2024). Even those with knowledge of the project, such as Participant 18, made the same comparison, particularly regarding density; the New Downtown’s TOD characteristics (12/12/2024). However, in line with an intervention made at Brossard’s final public assembly for the New Downtown, one resident was upset at the lack of communication with locals about the project:

I hope that [they] will somehow... maybe not change decisions that were made, but at least ... get some hints, [the] people that are responsible, to think about some concerns that regular citizens have to improve the communication. As I said, maybe there is something in the plans, but it wasn't well communicated. It's a concern, so they better tackle that, because the perception that we have is not maybe the one that they expect us to have. (Participant 21 interview, 28/11/2024)

Perhaps this particular case, coupled with the same sentiment expressed at the City of Brossard’s final public consultation and the recurring lack of knowledge, is a sign that not enough residents were engaged in the decision-making process. It may also be a sign that some residents lack trust in their city and its elected officials about how well the project will be communicated going forward. Many other residents were indifferent to not knowing, although the fact that a repeated lack of knowledge came about within my interviews could be a sign that civic outreach efforts need improvement, despite the information being readily accessible online. In fact, Participant 6 deplored the idea of information not being communicated properly to the public, saying she thinks “the city made all the right efforts to try informing citizens – you cannot possibly do more, you can’t bring a camel to the oasis” (Translated, 11/12/2024).

5.2.2. How residents of Brossard feel

Overall perceptions of the project were mixed, yet very cautiously optimistic. Participant 8 summarized well what many others feel about the project, being a positive idea that the New Downtown “will bring new things to do around [Brossard] ... sometimes you need to go outside of Brossard to Montreal to do other stuff. Why can’t we have [Montreal’s services] too?” (23/11/2024). Residents were excited about the opportunities that the project can bring to an area that can be serviced by many more things. Some residents were more enthusiastic than most

others: for example, Participant 4 was excited about the opportunities it can bring to uplift the image of an area that needs attention: “this project sounds amazing ... the big space [around] Panama [REM Station] is very large and isn’t being used for anything. I do think it’s going to create more jobs for our community” (2/12/2024). She also mentioned how she can see families and retired people who want to live in a closer-knit community establish themselves there but does think that housing may be out of reach for younger people (2/12/2024). In fact, Participant 20, who lives in one of the sectors adjacent to the projected new developments, also mentioned a big concern of hers surrounding the project as being housing accessibility.

On one hand, I'm very happy that they're going to be building new [housing]. I haven't seen anything about what type of lodging it's going to be, because we definitely don't need other high-end apartments or high-end condos that nobody can afford. I'd like my kids to be able to move out eventually. So what type of buildings are they going to be? ... Not everybody needs marble countertops and high-end showers. Can we just do regular, livable [houses] so younger people like in their 20s can afford to have their own place without paying \$3000 a month on rent? That is ridiculous. But revitalizing the whole area [and] cleaning up Taschereau [is] good. (23/11/2024)

Her fear is relatively valid, as literature has previously demonstrated how unchecked urban revitalization can drive up costs and leave out lower-income residents, creating a socio-economic cleavage (Filion, 2023). To a similar extent, some residents were scared that the New Downtown would denature the Brossard that they know and cherish today. Participant 13 had the idea that existing institutions were going to be completely torn down, notably local malls such as Place Portobello and Champlain Mall (2/12/2024). However, the city has repeatedly mentioned that it does not foresee demolishing any existing buildings (City of Brossard, 2024); it has instead merely reformed zoning bylaws to create a long-term vision for the area, which could perhaps incorporate existing buildings that have for long been integrated as recreational and commercial hubs for residents of Brossard. She also offered a gendered perspective, saying how as a mother she moved to Brossard to raise a family in a suburban setting: “I cannot imagine a mother coming back from work, getting her children from daycare... what will she do to buy groceries [when her only options are] small shops? ... I don’t know how exactly the area will be planned, but I don’t see it with a keen eye” (Translated, 2/12/2024). Further, coming from a senior’s perspective, she feels that future senior residents who once knew the urban fabric quite

well would get easily lost in the area due to their reduced mobility and a tendency to be more socially isolated (2/12/2024).

5.3. The imagined future of Brossard

The final two questions related to the conception of the New Downtown within the minds of residents. Questions were designed to be vague and tease out thoughts from participants, seeking to fetch their worldviews and values juxtaposed to the project's contents per residents' understanding. For instance, do they see themselves reflected within the project? Does their overall perception about Brossard change because of this project? The final questions were:

5. Do you feel the Downtown Brossard project will change the character of the city? If so, then how?
6. Do you believe Brossard stands to gain or lose from this project? In which way(s)?

5.3.1. The city's evolving character

There was near-unanimous agreement amongst residents who were interviewed that the character of Brossard will change, but most had differing opinions as to why and what extent. Among the most common reasons were what Participant 2 described as the REM's influence in Brossard causing a current evolution within Brossard's character and how that trend will only continue: "once the REM got installed, I feel like Brossard got 100 times busier, because it became more popular and easier to get here. So if they do [build a downtown] at Panama [REM station], ... it's going to do the same thing" (25/1/2025). Participant 5, referring to other dense developments in Brossard, was unsure whether a change of character would tangibly occur: "In every lettered sector, we have our own gang. [Maybe downtown, residents will] only enter and leave home without talking to each other. However, that argument can be deconstructed when we look at Saint-Laurent Boulevard" (Translated, 30/11/2024). What Participant 5 refers to here are large condominium developments along Saint-Laurent Boulevard, seen to be a community of their own within the "S" Sector, which he believes has become a close-knit community despite being a very high-density area (30/11/2024). Participant 14's opinion believes the effects of Brossard's changing character would not be as felt much by its population, because the older population that was used to Brossard as a suburban community will likely not live to see much of the changes (15/12/2024). She notes how "it will take some time, ... new people will start to move in, and it will become more popular with them. It's older folks like me who don't want to

change their living habits” (Translated, 15/12/2024). An interesting implication that she and Participant 13 made throughout their interviews was how they both had lots of trouble seeing how it would fit within the current urban fabric of Brossard, but how this was perhaps an issue to them because of their age, habits, and lived experiences within Brossard (15/12/2024; 2/12/2024).

5.3.2. *Perceived benefits and drawbacks*

Residents’ perceptions of which ways Brossard stand to gain or lose were largely consistent with one another. Some residents, such as Participant 7 believed that down the line, the New Downtown only meant good news for the development of Brossard, but that the city could also see short-term issues regarding to the delivery time and financing of the project (15/12/2025). Other residents, like Participant 1, believe that there were two sides to the coin:

I mean more business, more citizens, more public transit, more schools, like those are all good things. There are things that drive people to, you know, want to establish themselves here. [However], I do think that it's going to take a lot of funds to [make these changes]. I think that [in the] long-term, you know, municipal taxes [and] real estate [are] probably going to go up, because when you become a bigger city, you become more in demand, and especially with the proximity to Montreal, ... I mean it already is going up, but I think it'll probably keep going up. (30/1/2025)

Another theme that was brought up consistently was the effect the project would have on Brossard’s urban fabric. Like several other residents, Participant 12 mentioned that “if they keep it tight knit, ... still small, not anything lavish,” she believes the project could benefit Brossard residents (11/12/2024). However, this goes in direct conflict with the vision of the PPU which seeks to build up to 35 stories in some parts of the development, despite the podium building design of the New Downtown (recall **Figure 4.4**). One final theme was how Brossard was seen to be a city synonymous with the Dix30 and/or Solar. Participant 17 described how, in his view, the public perceives Brossard nowadays to be equated with the Dix30 (4/12/2024). He believes that, for the project to be successful, Brossard needs to once and for all set itself apart from that image and provide a new cultural offering that brings people to the area instead of the Dix30 (4/12/2024). In fact, across all questions, the theme of Dix30 and Solar earned significant attention, either being seen as central components of the New Downtown project or as a development that Brossard needed to distance itself from due to its potential to rival a new, large-scale project. Indeed, it is a component central to Brossard in many ways, developmentally and

culturally (Garver, 2024; Barrieau, 2019), however municipal officials do not expect the two areas to be in competition to each other, but rather complementary to the success of the New Downtown due to both areas having a designated REM station (Interview with municipal officials, 11/12/2024).

5.4. Concluding Remarks

This chapter provided insights on residents' perceptions about the New Downtown project according to the interview data I obtained. My research found that residents of Brossard were attracted to their city thanks to its good reputation and tight-knit living environment and there was unanimity on the positive perception of the city by its residents. Then, I discovered the mixed emotions that residents had felt about the New Downtown project, with cautious optimism for most yet disappointment for some. Finally, residents shared their perspective on the city's evolving character through their perceptions of the impact the New Downtown will have on the city, as well as the (dis)advantages that the city could face due to the project.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a discussion upon the key themes of the New Downtown project and attempts to answer my third research question: **what are the implications of developing a downtown core upon Brossard's growth?** Given the discussion about the project and perceptions of residents and community stakeholders obtained through participant observation and interviews, I first offer a critical reflection on the most central aspects and issues of the project, using a comparative analysis to position Brossard's potential for growth into a satellite city from a bedroom community (6.1). From there, I discuss the limitations of my research (6.2) and finally summarize my findings by providing concluding remarks, providing directions for future research (6.3).

6.1. Critical reflection: will Brossard remain suburban?

There were many important points that were brought up throughout each of my 22 interviews that I unfortunately cannot individually represent. However, there are some key global takeaways to bring up. First, there is no clear generational divide between those who were more optimistic or pessimistic about the project. While younger participants were concerned about the New Downtown's impacts on housing accessibility, older participants expressed this same concern and framed it around the feasibility of establishing a life in Brossard. Will future families be able to afford a home? Will they be able to get around just as easily? Interest in taking active modes of transportation was present, but at times difficult for residents to conceptualize as a part of daily life in a suburban setting. In fact, the ease of travelling by car was another concern from young adults and seniors alike. Admittedly, this deconstructed my predisposed notion that only older residents would be more reluctant to take other modes of transportation. To this extent, many wondered how Brossard could become a destination. Residents currently perceive their city to be a quaint commuter suburb, yet many want the New Downtown to be a place where people would return to instead of visiting once as a touristic attraction, or worse, become densified sleeping quarters for young professionals. Here, resident aspirations are in line with what the PPU seeks to do: create a nucleus for the city that becomes a hub for cultural, recreational, commercial, and residential activity. However, the one barrier to success may ultimately be how long it takes before the area transforms into such a destination, as Participant 15 implied: "... if for nothing else, we could be the city that's the gateway to the rest

of the Island of Montreal in a way, right? ... Build it and they will come!” (26/10/2024). One final thing that is important to note is that nobody saw the New Downtown vision as a brownfield development. In fact, it is not a brownfield development, but instead a set of guidelines for future construction projects in the area to follow. While this part of Brossard is seeing signs of aging and neglect, it is still currently being used and is not polluted by heavy industrial activity, as brownfields typically are.

Clearly, Brossard remains a suburb within the GMA that is strategically positioned and capable of monumental growth, which is all being capitalized upon by the current municipal administration. As such, my analysis has brought me to conceptualize the satellite city in a different light. Of course, the concept itself is taken to be relatively straightforward (recall **Section 2.1.1**). Some Brossard residents believe we have already reached that point:

You know, when I first moved here in the early 90s, [Brossard] wasn't a satellite city. It was quite clearly a suburban outcropping. But for a short time, it's been a satellite city. I think it's on its way to becoming a much more substantial satellite city and [is lately] looking more like a city. I mean, if you're on the bridge, you see Solar and even [when] you look at the shoreline along [the Saint-Lawrence River] with the apartment buildings, ... and then you're going to have this New Downtown. Hopefully, there will be some sort of contiguity between all of those [developments]. It certainly looks like a satellite city now, more than it ever has. (Interview with Participant 10, 30/01/25)

However, it is again important to note that a satellite city is supposed to contain all the regular services within itself to avoid travelling to the city it orbits (Bridel & Winkler, 1958). Brossard is not at this stage yet, and the mayor recognizes that Brossard lacks certain services, saying she wants “everybody around the future downtown to feel that the key services that they need to live well is accessible,” notably highlighting health and education services as being currently lacking (Interview with Doreen Assaad, 31/10/2024). An interesting pattern I have uncovered here based on my thesis’ findings and existing theoretical framework is that satellite cities evolve from bedroom communities and is a sign of healthy urban growth. A great case study here would be Mississauga: while vastly different in size, it shares common characteristics with Brossard, namely in terms of general proximity to the bigger city within the metropolis. Mississauga too sought to distinguish itself and, throughout the 1970s, envisioned the development of a large shopping complex with mid-size office towers from select private developers, designating an official city centre (Charney, 2005). While recruiting a firm to build

megaprojects is not the approach Brossard is taking, creating a central business district for Brossard is the same concept that brought Mississauga towards satellite city status. Therefore, the implications of Brossard's New Downtown upon its future growth consist of the creation of an urban landscape fundamentally different from what residents are used to – not by scrapping existing neighbourhoods, but by providing upgraded, centrally located amenities. It may be elevated from a bedroom community into a satellite city, positioning itself as a key regional player within the GMA.

6.2. Research limitations

My research is limited to the demographics I have represented in my study. While I did my best to achieve gender parity and linguistic representation in my interviews, I could not get feasible representation from millennials. A bias may also exist from the snowball sampling I conducted: as described in my methodology chapter, due to my political involvements, the network of people I interviewed may have had more knowledge of the political happenings of the city or may have disproportionately skewed towards certain viewpoints. Furthermore, interviewing 22 residents was not a large enough sample size to quantitatively discern certain patterns between households. For instance, if I wanted to determine whether trends existed between immigrant and non-immigrant residents, people of different socio-economic classes, or workers and retirees, I would need a larger sample size to reliably conduct descriptive statistics (Rogerson, 2020). Here, an important aspect of rigour to consider is the implications of transferability as well: it does not mean that any findings or conclusions brought about in this thesis can be applicable to projects beyond my own (Stratford and Bradshaw, 2021). My project was also unable to provide the private sector's perspective of the New Downtown beyond my attendance of a consultation with community stakeholders for one construction project.

6.3. Summative remarks

In sum, this thesis investigated Brossard's New Downtown project, its potential effects upon the existing urban fabric of Brossard, as well as residents' perceptions of the project as a whole. I used a triangulated, mixed-methods approach that incorporated a content analysis surrounding the city's plans to revitalize the territory in question; participant observation of public settings that laid out the power dynamics and feelings held by the general public, the private sector, and municipal officials upon the development of the project; and interviews with

residents and municipal officials that better understood the details and thoughts that went behind Brossard's vision of the project, as well as the conceptions and opinions about the New Downtown project among residents. Chapter 1 outlined the context of Brossard as a municipality, notably its developmental history, and introduced the New Downtown project as a novel concept that sets itself apart from the other major developments that nearby regions have seen. Chapter 2 offered a review of literature denoting the nature of (sub)urban revitalization by examining research on suburban development, studies of various urban revitalization projects, and key concepts within urban revitalization. Chapter 3 detailed the methodology applied to this thesis, provided a positionality statement to position myself within my research, and delved into any ethical considerations applicable to my thesis. Chapter 4 denoted the history of a downtown in Brossard as a concept, outlined key features within the visionary working document crafted by the city, reported on discourses from municipal officials demonstrating current demand for the private sector to begin submitting project proposals, and provided an account of how participation in public forums occurred regarding ideas for future development within the targeted area in both the public and private sectors. Finally, Chapter 5 demonstrated that residents of Brossard see their city in a very fond light, are largely cautiously optimistic for the future of their New Downtown, and take the character of their city to definitely evolve in a from this long-term project.

6.3.1. Contributions and directions for future research

My thesis has contributed to the community by analyzing the New Downtown project in a manner that not only clarifies the project's vision and offerings, but also critically addresses residents' immediate and long-term concerns. My research contributes to academic scholarship and departs from other studies by examining a large-scale urban revitalization project in Quebec in real time and vis-à-vis residents' perceptions. Further, my research has been able to offer public and professional perspectives into urban revitalization literature by conducting interviews with residents on their perceptions of the New Downtown, as well as with municipal officials on their work pertaining to this large-scale project, filling a gap in urban revitalization literature. Finally, by critically analyzing residents' perceived implications of the New Downtown with existing theoretical framework, I attempt to conceptualize the rise of Brossard into a satellite city. Future research could consist of interviews with residents once construction projects within the New Downtown break ground, interviews with the private sector to better understand their role

in the PPPs that define future developments in the area, or whether my interpretation of the satellite city being the evolution of a commuter suburb holds true elsewhere.

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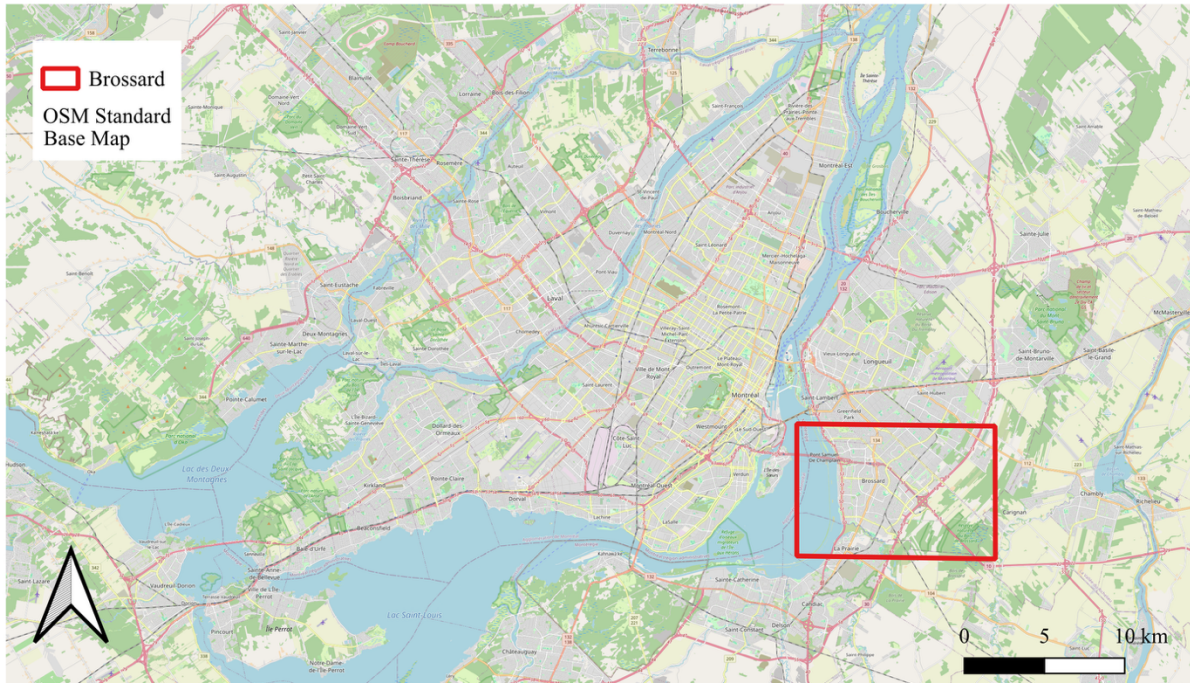
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APPENDIX A: BROSSARD IN THE GREATER MONTREAL AREA

General Location of Brossard in the Greater Montreal Area



Author: Nicolas Thomas (2025)
Projection: EPSG:4326 - WGS 84

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF RESIDENTS INTERVIEWED

Participant	Language	Sex	Generation²	Years and sectors lived in Brossard	Occupation (<i>retired</i>)
1	English	F	Generation Z	8; C, L, R	Quebec government
2	English	F	Generation Z	8; C	Full-time student
3	French	M	Silent Generation	48; S, T	<i>Fellow CPA</i>
4	English	F	Generation Z	7; B	Full-time student
5	French	M	Silent Generation	21; B, C	<i>Railway mechanic</i>
6	French	F	Baby Boomer	35; O, P	<i>Undisclosed</i>
7	French	F	Baby Boomer	40; B	Canadian government
8	English	M	Generation Z	1; O, S	Warehousing industry
9	English	F	Generation Z	23; O	Full-time student
10	English	M	Baby Boomer	34; C, N	<i>Professor</i>
11	English	M	Generation X	40; S	Physiotherapist
12	English	F	Baby Boomer	41; B, N	Banking
13	French	F	Baby Boomer	50; A, P, S	<i>Telecommunications</i>
14	French	F	Baby Boomer	45; A, R	<i>Childcare worker</i>
15	English	M	Generation X	27; O	Finance industry
16	French	M	Baby Boomer	39; A, R, S	<i>Manufacturing industry</i>
17	French	M	Baby Boomer	40; S	<i>Undisclosed</i>
18	French	M	Silent Generation	45; S	<i>Finance industry</i>
19	English	F	Generation Z	16; R, S	Lawyer
20	English	F	Generation X	30; P	Stay-at-home mother
21	English	M	Generation X	20; T	Biochemist
22	French	M	Silent Generation	49; B, M	<i>Mechanic</i>

² Generation classifications are estimates. The Silent Generation refers to the generation before Baby Boomers.