Speaking Notes for Mr. Benoît Dorais,

President of the Executive Committee of the Ville de Montréal

Responsible for Finance, Human Resources, Legal Affairs, Property Assessment and Property Management and Planning.

Forum of Mayors of the XIIIth Conference of the Network of Creative Cities of UNESCO, Fabriano, Italy

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

Signore e signori,

As municipal lawmakers, we all have a **political responsibility** to leave an “ideal city” for those who come after us.

Our young team, under the inspiring leadership of Mayor Valérie Plante, whom I am honoured to represent, was elected to office in November 2017 on the basis of an ambitious vision for such an ideal city, founded on mobility, inclusion and ecological transition—and, consequently, on a quality living environment.

We know that the design of public places, streets, housing, retail businesses, signage and street furniture has a direct impact—be it positive or negative—on our day-to-day individual and collective perception and experience of the city we live in, work in or visit.

To ensure healthy, sustainable growth, cities must stand out, primarily by offering a living environment that fulfils shared aspirations to individual and collective well-being. As a result, beyond the duty to lead by example, cities’ attractiveness and competitiveness rely, more than ever, on quality, creativity and innovation in design.

That acknowledgment of the importance of design, combined with a dynamic creative industry with a sizable pool of some 27,000 designers, prompted the City of Montréal to invest in the promotion of this sector in 1991.

In June 2006, Montréal was awarded UNESCO City of Design status, thereby joining the Creative Cities Network established two years earlier.

We received the UNESCO designation as **neither a label nor a form of recognition**, but as an invitation to develop Montréal around its creative forces in design.

To us, “Montréal, UNESCO City of Design“ is thus **a city project**, a **collective** endeavour, whose **implementation over time** hinges on all stakeholders—elected officials, municipal employees, citizens, experts, entrepreneurs and designers—buying into and embracing it.

We have been working steadfastly on this ever since, and 13 years later, we can say without reservation that Montréal’s membership in the Creative Cities Network has significantly contributed to building new momentum and greater confidence, aiding the evolution from a city recognized as a *city of* ***designers*** toward one with the coveted status “*City of* ***Design***.”

As the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and New Urban Agenda remind us, however, the profoundly changing global context is prompting ALL OF US to do MUCH MORE, for the needs are PRESSING.

That is why our administration has pledged to adopt and implement, in 2019, the first ***Montréal Agenda for Quality and Exemplarity in Design and Architecture***, a strategy that extends beyond a sector-based action plan, aiming to ensure the systematic, cross-cutting incorporation of design into all City practices and policies.

Quality living environments, wellness, living together in safety and security for all, and responsible, sustainable urban development for current and future generations are the key concerns—reflected in UN Sustainable Development Goal 11—driving that approach, and they make citizens the focus of our thinking.

*“Our future by design: For a Montréal that is ecologically sustainable, economically viable, socially equitable, and culturally diversified.”*

This is the vision we have embraced, built on the Declaration signed in 2015 in Gwangju, South Korea, by the seven major international organizationsrepresenting the design, architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning professions.

Following the 2017 World Design Summit in Montréal, the international community firmly reiterated its commitments to international framework agreements, as seen in the *Montréal Design Declaration* and the *World Design Agenda*, both of which were adopted in 2017.

The ***Agenda for Quality and Exemplarity in Design and Architecture*** is OUR RESPONSE AS MONTREALERS to this planetary call for ideal cities.

Thank you / Grazie per la vostra attenzione