

The gateway corridor is in need of an identity. The mishmash of grids either flimsily absorb each other in the awkward interface of roads or they are divided entirely by unrelenting highway, railway, and canal. And unlike the well-aged and respected urban-scapes of Europe, Montreal is, in most places, afflicted with homogenous sprawl lacking in character. To reduce sprawl and create identity, we propose tight clusters of dense building to center each development and provide scaffolding for further growth.

Different urban design models could be deployed and phased separately to encourage various flavors of urbanism to take hold. The new villages and communities will provide variety and create a critical mass of culture, business, and lifestyles to coalesce within and around the gateway corridor.

The structure of the new developments could be inscribed in a circle. Along its edge, it provides a means to connect to and connect between different modes of transportation, being a form suitable for high-speed highway interchanges as well as low-speed roundabouts. The single ring road simultaneously enables connectivity and forms a definitive boundary.

Outside the boundary of new developments swaths of post-industrial land are allocated for environmental remediation. The process of landscaping is continuous over time and also highly selective. Acting as a buffer between developments rather than within developments, this landscaping strategy attempts to turn the green lung metaphor on its head. Rather than a repeat of the tired modern notion of nature in a city, it is a return to the premodern notion of cities in nature.

The landscape and the new developments shift against each other over time, always balancing the need for remediation against the need for building. However, it is the primitive shapes of the developments which provide the greatest singular icon and the most effective connections between otherwise disparate neighborhoods and modes of transportation. Montreal's gateway corridor has enormous potential and it should be developed in a controlled manner towards a unified goal that amplifies the vibrancy, diversity, and strength of Montreal.





