

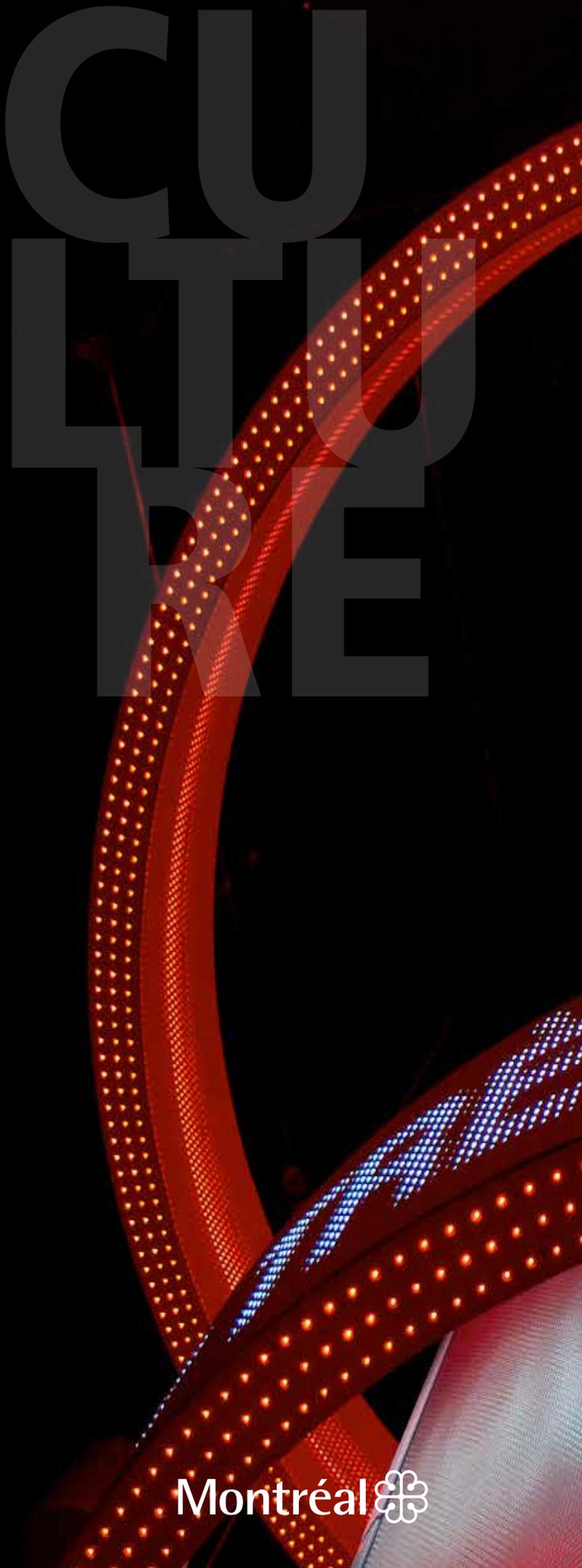
CULTURE

MONTREAL COMMITTED TO CULTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL DISTRICTS

DECLARATION

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Montréal 



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DECLARATION

Over the past ten years, the Ville de Montréal

- has adopted a *Cultural Development Policy*;
- has adopted a *Heritage Policy*;
- was designated *UNESCO City of Design*;
- has implemented the *Montréal Cultural Metropolis—2007-17 Action Plan* in collaboration with its partners.

All of these actions have a common thread: placing culture at the heart of Montreal's future, throughout its territory.

Since the middle of the last century, Montreal has been able to boast of major achievements in the arts, culture, heritage and design. These accomplishments have made it a cultural metropolis that is open to the world, whose established institutions are in a state of balance, complementing each other, whose vibrant creativity has manifested itself across its entire territory.

Through this declaration, we are proclaiming our common resolve to continue Montreal's cultural development for both present and future generations, based on a strong downtown and outer core, relying on the diversity of its population and rich cultural heritage. The appropriation of the city's territory by its citizens is among the keys for transforming it, for establishing its identity and creating a feeling of belonging.

We hereby recognize the central role of artists, cultural entrepreneurs, organizations, institutions and researchers from all disciplines in energizing and developing a creative city, as well as the contributions of citizens in building a cultural metropolis—with the cooperation of one and all!

We also recognize that one of the central missions of the city—the urban planning of its territories and public spaces through architecture, landscape architecture and design—is a cultural act and that the viewing, appreciation and appropriation of these elements are also cultural in nature. To be long-lasting, the urban development must incorporate the city's heritage and those elements reflecting its values and collective memory, while bearing in mind local needs.

For this progress to continue, more efforts must be made collectively to enshrine the cultural rights of all citizens, and to make Montreal a genuine and sustainable cultural metropolis. Together, it is our aim to continue developing the city by drawing inspiration from the *Agenda 21 for culture of the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)*:

- *for a culturally active citizenry*
- *for the incorporation of culture in the planning of our living environment*
- *for environmentally responsible cultural leaders*
- *for learning experiences generated by culture and the arts*
- *for social inclusion through cultural activities*
- *for an alliance between culture and the economy*
- *for an intelligent city based on innovations in the cultural sector*

To these ends, between now and 2017 the Ville de Montréal, its boroughs and partners shall strive to **instil a deep-rooted sense of culture** throughout its territory by means of the following actions:

- implementing the plan *Réalisons ensemble nos Quartiers culturels*, a blueprint for local cultural plans based on constant dialogue with citizens and artists to gain their support in developing the city;
- prioritizing an approach based on cultural mediation, on inclusion, cultural diversity, fairness, dissemination of the arts and sharing of knowledge;
- promoting the cultural participation of all citizens through diverse creative activities: courses, workshops, joint creative projects, spontaneous creative experiences in public spaces;

- continuing to develop local public facilities and equipment such as libraries, cultural houses, amateur artistic centres, especially in disadvantaged or derelict areas, emphasizing their accessibility to citizens and local partners;
- encouraging the planning of festivals and events that provide access to culture, and that are based on environmentally responsible principles;
- adopting measures to raise the level of urban, technical and artistic knowledge, so as to enhance the quality of the planning, design and development of public spaces;
- raising public awareness among citizens to develop their interest and knowledge of issues related to heritage, design and architecture;
- showcasing all cultural districts, not only in such emblematic areas as Old Montreal, Mount Royal, the Quartier des spectacles and Espace pour la vie, but those in the boroughs as well;
- adding a cultural dimension to the *2016-2020 Montreal Community Sustainable Development Plan*, as well as to revisions of the borough's local sustainable development plans;
- ensuring that culture is at the heart of the celebrations and enduring legacy of the 375th anniversary of Montreal in 2017.

Through the measures set forth in this declaration, we are asserting that culture provides meaning and benefits to its recipients, improving the future of the entire community, and that all local initiatives must be based on fairness, inclusion, solidarity and creativity.

It is proposed that this Declaration be signed by all those participating in the 2014@2017 Montreal Committed to Culture event on September 23, 2014 at the Société des arts technologiques [SAT].

AGENDA 21 FOR CULTURE

The *Agenda 21 for culture* established by the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) highlights the importance of cultural elements in the sustainable development of cities. Adopted on May 8, 2004 in Barcelona by cities and local governments, including Montreal, at the 4th Forum of Local Authorities for Social Inclusion of Porto Alegre, this document of international scope was approved by cities, local governments and organizations from all over the world to enshrine their commitment to cultural diversity, participatory democracy, human rights, and the necessary conditions for peace. The aim of the Agenda is to reinvent local development through culture.

Montreal, we recall, is currently the Co-Chair of the UCLG's Committee on Culture and was among the first cities in the world to adopt the *Agenda 21 for culture* in 2005. Since then, some 500 cities and associations worldwide have come on board. As Co-Chair, Montreal defended the role of culture at the United Nations in 2013.

This cultural approach is part of the ongoing commitments of the Municipal Administration with regard to various policies, tools, charters and declarations:

- *Montreal Charter of Rights and Responsibilities*
- *Montreal Community Sustainable Development Plan*
- *Imagining-Building Montreal 2025*
- *Economic Development Strategy*
- *Family Policy*
- *New Framework for Action in the Realm of Public Art*
- *Cultural Tourism Development Plan*
- *Cultural District Plan*
- *Assessment of Municipal Libraries*
- Declaration of Montreal and its 19 boroughs recognizing culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development (2011)
- Cultural support programs
- *Plan for the Protection and Enhancement of Old Montreal*
- *Assessment and 2010-2014 Action Plan of the Accès Culture Network*
- *Assessment and Implementation of Amateur Artistic Practices Plan*
- *Cultural policies and action plans of the boroughs*
- *Municipal Policy of Universal Accessibility*
- *Montreal Youth Strategy*
- *Montreal Declaration for Cultural Diversity and Inclusion*
- *Policy for the Equal Participation in City Life by Men and Women*
- *Action Plan, Friends of Seniors*
- *Land Use Planning and Development Plan*
- *Transportation Plan*

In May 2014, UCLG launched a new *Agenda 21 for culture*, affirming that citizens are the major players in configuring a city's local cultural scene, and in ensuring a strong and vibrant cultural life. This agenda is part of a worldwide movement to ensure that culture remains at the heart of sustainable development policies.

The Ville de Montréal would like to serve as an international example, a pioneer in matters of culture and sustainable development, and to this end recognizes the following fifteen principles of the new *Agenda 21 for culture*:

- Culture includes the values, beliefs, languages, knowledge, arts and lifestyles through which individuals express their humanity, as well as the meaning they ascribe to their existence and development.
- Cultural diversity is the principal heritage of humanity. It is the product of thousands of years of history, the fruit of the collective contribution of all peoples through their languages, imaginations, technologies, practices and creations.
- Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights. No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon the human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope. The cultural freedom of individuals and communities is an essential condition for democracy.
- Access to the cultural and symbolic universe at all stages of life is a fundamental element in the shaping of one's sensitivity, expressiveness, coexistence and good citizenship. The cultural identity of each individual is alive and dynamic.
- Sustainable development requires a combination of factors: cultural as well as environmental, economic and social.
- Local governments are worldwide players of prime importance as defenders and promoters of human rights, good governance, and local, national and international democratic systems.
- In the context of globalization, local policies must take into account international processes, including the design and facilitation of international cultural cooperation and the consideration of the specific cultural needs of lesser-developed regions.
- Cultural development, which is an integral part of sustainable development, involves the broadening and intensification of the exercise of cultural rights among citizens, as well as the reduction of inequalities in exercising these cultural rights.
- Cultural development relies on a host of social agents, including citizens, civil society organizations, governments and private players. Good governance requires transparency of information and public participation in policy design, decision-making and evaluation.
- Cities and territories are privileged settings for cultural invention, which is in a state of constant evolution, and provides the environment for creative diversity.
- Cultural heritage, tangible and intangible, testifies to human creativity and forms the bedrock of a community's identity. Heritage management involves identification, registration, inventory and description according to international standards.
- The cultural or creative economy, which includes an ecology of profit and non-profit, large and small actors, can play an important role in the emergence of sustainable societies, wherein economic, social and cultural values are in a state of balance.
- Access to information supports the sustainable development of cities. The appropriation of information and its transformation into knowledge by citizens is a cultural act.
- Urban planning is a cultural act.
- Public spaces are collective goods that belong to all citizens and cities are responsible for allowing these spaces to be appropriated.