Place d'Orléans Réinventé: A Senior-Centric Vision for A Suburban Mall

by

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Abstract

Taking the now forty year-old suburban Ottawa's *Place d'Orléans mall* as its subject, this thesis critically reconciles current mall-transformation strategies with place-specific environmental, social and cultural sensibilities. Accepting the suburban mall's privileged role in seniors' lives, the thesis pursues the mall's radical reconfiguration into both ideal setting for senior living and relevant landscape for younger generations. Through strategic removals and additions, and via the "spatialization" of the mall's roof, a reinvented Place d'Orléans master plan and mall will organize commercial spaces, social programs, and housing. An interior urban forest and an agriculture production complex open the mall's mass, while naturalized parking lots reactivate local marshlands and their relationship to nearby housing. By considering future changes in transportation habits and parking requirements, and taking the new LRT station into account, the proposal aims to reconnect Place d'Orléans mall to its broader environment, and, ultimately, to reverse the effects of urban sprawl.

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*I dedicate this thesis project to all of you who helped me throughout
the years with my goal of completing my Master degree.*

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Introduction

The suburban shopping mall is undergoing a process of redefinition due to profound changes in the retail industry. Numerous examples of malls' obsolescence are to be found across North America. In a recent trend, suburban malls are being demolished or partially demolished to be replaced by outdoor malls. These feature single storey rows of stores with direct access to the outdoors. Unlike traditional malls, these do not come together to form interior public spaces with food courts and sitting areas. In Ottawa, the Trinity Development Group has transformed several suburban malls of the postwar era in this manner. A recent project is the transformation of the Herongate Mall, demolished and rebuilt into a strip mall now known as Herongate Square. The "turning inside out" of the suburban mall and the removal of the mall's shared interior domains is part of a larger North American trend to render the mall more profitable in response to changing consumer habits.

Fig. 1 Herongate Mall in 2011, prior reconstruction

Fig. 2 Herongate Square in 2017, after reconstruction

The current malls must compete with the stand-alone big-box stores, but they are also challenged by the attractive convenience offered by online shopping. To adapt to these changes, suburban malls are currently undergoing a renovation period which consists of removing interior corridors, food courts, and other heated spaces of circulation and seating. As a result, the shops are reoriented toward the parking lots. In so doing, the renovation endows the shops with an exterior façade and a street frontage of sorts.

There is more to these mall renovations, however. The renovated North American mall is devoid of what has defined it since its invention: an ample heated interior “mall” where wanderers were able to linger or walk without spending money. On a cold Canadian winter day, such a space has no price. Appreciated especially by seniors, the mall of old offered a safe realm where daily exercise and humble acts of socialization could be had. In the suburban context, the transformations have a big impact on the surrounding neighbourhoods since they cause them to lose their defined town centres and identities. Furthermore, the dissolution of the mall and the construction of new strip malls accentuates sprawl.

This thesis contemplates the implications of the loss of the postwar suburban mall with its interior domain and asks whether there exist ways to secure this valuable space while at the same responding to the economic pressures that malls must face today. Is there a way to simultaneously reinvent the Canadian suburban mall and make the latter profitable, while saving its expansive communal interior mall? To answer these questions this thesis explores an architecture of “partnership” between the mall and other programs whereby the interior mall is not only preserved but heightened and elevated. Strategic intersections of the mall with other programs such as seniors’ residence, garden centre, daycare centre, play Centre, and office building, will yield new insights into the suburban landscape of the present and future. Finally, a specific site has been chosen for the focus of this study: Place d’Orléans mall, in the eastern, historically French, suburb of Orléans. Located in Orléans’s historical town Centre, built in 1979 and expended in 1990, the shopping mall shows signs of difficulty trying to keep business working. Through the last two decades, the mall has been unable to hold on to its large anchor stores. In the ’90s its Eaton’s store closed; the Walmart that replaced Eaton’s moved out in 2005 to a new site, setting up an added competition to the mall.

Fig. 3 Place d’Orléans mall’s Exterior

Fig. 4 Place d’Orléans mall’s Interior

While the suburbs are car-centric communities, Place d'Orléans is also the central public transportation hub of Eastern Greater Ottawa. The OC Transpo rapid transit bus station is to be transformed into a light rail train (LRT) station in the next few years. This is an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild and densify the area to counter the city's sprawl. The dull suburban mall today begs to become a place of cultural fascination, social richness, and environmental healing. With an aging population, many residents of Orléans wish to downsize from their large houses. These residents seek for proximity to essential services and social activities while remaining close to the cultural and social communities they established themselves in many years ago.

Fig. 5 Diagram of Transportation infrastructure at Place d'Orléans

Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall

This research will explore a vision where Orléans seniors are offered a residential complex, as well as, safe interior public spaces that cater to their needs and social life. These interior spaces would host multiple programs that usually take place in an exterior context. By considering future changes in transportation habits and parking requirements, the project proposal will also reconnect the Place d'Orléans mall to its site and environment. Extended community gardens, an urban forest, and an agriculture production complex, will open up the mall and take over parking lots, in an effort to reverse the effects of urban sprawl.

This thesis responds to the various social and morphological conditions outlined above, bringing them together and reconciling them through a design proposition. Chapter 1 of this thesis will delve into the town of Orléans, its history and topography, to guide and inform design decisions to come later in the thesis. Chapter 2 will examine the mall's typology and historical origins in glass-covered architecture of the 19th century. This will be followed by an analysis of the suburban mall's history and of Victor Gruen's vision, contrasted with its present-day plight. A graphic mapping of typical and speculative morphological transformations will conclude this chapter. Chapter 3 compare the reality of today's suburb context with its original promise. Chapter 4 will present the design proposition proper. Titled *Place d'Orléans Réinventé—a non-disorienting mall replacement*, the proposition sees the mall intersected with other programs both inside and out, and its parking lot transformed into an environmentally sensitive landscape that reconnects Orléans to the marshes that are slowly disappearing in this area.¹

1. Robert W. Stokes, "A Comparison of the Current Wetland Boundary Mapping for Petries Islands, and Baie Lafontaine Provincially Significant Wetlands with Mapping Produced Using the OntarioWetlands Evaluation System, Southern Manual, 3rd Edition, 1993. <http://www.petrieisland.org/documents/Stokes96-Wetland%20Mapping.html>

Chapter 1 Orléans: Between Ottawa and Montréal

Settlement and Cultural Memory

The town of Orléans embodies an important layer in greater Ottawa's cultural landscape harking back to the French settlement and Catholic community life. The land on which Orléans was built was originally occupied by indigenous people. Like much of the Eastern most part of Ontario, the land was purchased from the Algonquins during the Crawford Purchase in 1783.² The first subdivision in the vicinity of Orléans was registered in 1858 and marked the beginning of St-Joseph's parish. After eight acres of land owned by François Dupuis were donated to the Bishop of Bytown, the town's first plan was commissioned. Luc Major, who participated in the construction of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Ottawa, was commissioned to draw the first city plan for Orléans. The Bishop of Bytown (Ottawa), Joseph-Eugène-Bruno Guigues, established the parish of St-Joseph d'Orléans in 1860 along St-Joseph Boulevard, the mall's southern boundary today.³

2. Government of Ontario, "First Nations and Treaties," Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, (Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2017), https://files.ontario.ca/treaties_map_english.pdf.
Glenn Clark, "A Historical Timeline for the Township of Gloucester," Gloucester Historical Society. <http://www.gloucesterhistory.com/history.html>.

3. David M. Cheny, "Bishop Joseph-Eugène-Bruno Guigues, O.M.I.," www.Catholic-Hierarchy.org/bishop/bguigues.html.

Fig. 6 Regional Map

Fig. 7 Map of Orléans

Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall

The origin of Orléans's name remains undetermined, but it was most likely chosen by Jean-Théodore Besserer, the first postmaster in Orléans. He was born in Québec on the Ile d'Orléans, which itself was named after the city of Orléans in France.⁴ Primarily a farming settlement, Orléans was also marked by the presence of the Grey Nuns. In 1885, the religious community bought 500 acres to build the Youville farm. The nuns held this land for almost a century until it was sold in 1970 to become the Convent Glen subdivision and the Youville Industrial Park.⁵ In 1909, the Canadian Northern Railway opened a rail line that went from Ottawa through Orléans. This is the location of today's Highway 417, following the 174 Highway. The rail line had a station near Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall on the opposite side of the Highway. This line was abandoned in 1939 and demolished. In 1945, the line was converted into the Highway 17, linking Ottawa to Montréal. Ironically, the City of Ottawa is about to undertake an extension to its LRT network along the old rail axis.⁶

4. Joan Scott, "The History of Orléans Talk by Louis Patry," *Historic Gloucester*, Summer 2014, <http://www.gloucesterhistory.com/Historic%20Gloucester%20Volume%2015%20No%202.pdf>.

5. Ibid.

6. City of Ottawa, "Confederation Line East," Stage2LRT.ca, <http://www.stage2lrt.ca/where/east/>.

Fig. 8 Orléans in 1976

Fig. 9 Ottawa's Phase 2 LRT planned route

Orléans area is well-known for its francophone community. This community demonstrated its pride for the French language when it celebrated the St. Jean Baptiste feast day for the first time in 1929. To promote francophone culture, the Mouvement d'Implication Francophone d'Orléans (MIFO) was founded in 1978. The organization administers multiple programs and activities related to the arts, preschool and daycare services. This organization led to the creation of the Centre Culturel d'Orléans in 1985 which houses shows and exhibitions.⁷ Since then, the MIFO has been the main presenter of the Shenkman Arts Centre's francophone shows. The Shenkman Centre was built in 2009, designed by Lalande +Doyle Architects Inc., as part of a public-private partnership with the City of Ottawa.⁸ Another cultural event worth mentioning is the first Santa Claus Parade on St-Joseph Boulevard, in 1987. The historic St-Joseph Boulevard is currently still the town's main street.

In the 1990s, wishing their francophone presence and heritage contribution recognized, the francophone community fought to have the town's name corrected. The name was wrongly registered in the Prince's official documents in 1939 since there was no "é" on the typing machine at that time. In 1994, following the debate, the Ontario Geographic Names Board officially decided that Orléans must be spelled with an acute accent on the letter E in both French and English.

In terms of governance, the town of Orléans was split in half along Champlain Street in 1975. The western portion became part of Gloucester City, while the eastern portion became part of Cumberland. At the turn of the twenty-first century, both municipalities of Gloucester and Cumberland were amalgamated to the City of Ottawa (2001).⁹

7. Université d'Ottawa, "Mouvement d'implication francophone d'Orléans et Centre culturel d'Orléans (fonds, C127)", Centre de recherche en civilisation canadienne-française, <http://arts.uottawa.ca/crcf/fonds/C127>.

8. City of Ottawa, "Shenkman Arts Centre." <https://ottawa.ca/en/business/doing-business-city/public-private-partnerships-p3s/shenkman-arts-centre>.

9. Joan Scott, "The History of Orléans Talk by Louis Patry", Historic Gloucester. <http://www.gloucesterhistory.com/Historic%20Gloucester%20Volume%2015%20No%202.pdf>.

Topography and Landscape

Orléans is a town of 128,281 inhabitants, located east of Ottawa's urban core along the Southern Edge of the Ottawa River.¹⁰ Its boundary starts right outside the Greenbelt for an area of 2,797 km². Further east, the neighbouring town of Cumberland faces Gatineau and L'Ange-Gardien on the opposite side of the Ottawa River. It is important to note that the closest crossing points of the Ottawa River are a Ferry in Cumberland (11 km east of Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall) and the Macdonald-Cartier Bridge in downtown Ottawa (18.5 km west of Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall).

Orléans was built along St-Joseph Boulevard, which is still the town's main street nowadays. Within the town, the boulevard follows the bottom edge of a natural escarpment that is a well know feature of the Orléans topography.

10. Government of Canada, "Census Profile, 2016 Census," Statistics Canada. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=FED&Code1=35076&Geo2.=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Orleans&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=35076&TABID=1>.

Fig. 10 Orléans's closest Inter-provincial crossings

- Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall
- Inter-provincial crossing

Fig. 11 Orléans's escarpment

St-Joseph Boulevard is a significant symbolic east—west axis connecting Parliament Hill to Montreal, with a western extension to Kanata. Following its path to the West it changes names multiple times as it crosses other portions of Ottawa. Running under the 174 Highway, it first becomes Montreal Road while it crosses Beacon Hill and Vanier. Bridging over the Rideau River, the street is renamed Rideau Street as it traverses Sandy Hill, and all the way to the Rideau Canal. Crossing the locks, the road is renamed again as Wellington Street along the Parliamentary Precinct. The road changes one last time as it becomes the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway. To the East, St-Joseph Boulevard exits Orléans and has its name changed only once. Under the name of Old Montreal Road, it crosses the town of Cumberland and eventually merges with Highway 174 towards Montréal.

Fig. 12 Road to Montreal

Along the same axis as the St-Joseph Boulevard is located Highway 174. The grounds of this artery were originally occupied by the Canadian Northern Railway before it was transformed into Highway 17. This Highway was the main route to Montreal until the Ministry of Transportation built the eastern portion of the 417 Highway that essentially bypasses all the small towns along the Old 17 Highway. Highway 17 was then renamed Highway 174 and downgraded to the municipal level. This main artery is essential to the commuters that drive to Ottawa's core every day. With the sprawl of Orléans, this highway becomes very congested at peak hours.

Along the St-Joseph Boulevard escarpment, a few water streams allow ground water to flow north across Orléans and meet the Ottawa River. These streams are the result of a river system that was built underground during the construction of the suburban neighbourhoods on top of the escarpment. Bilberry Creek, Taylor Creek, and Cardinal Creek can easily be noticed while travelling along St-Joseph Boulevard as one can observe some waterfalls such as the notable Princess Louise Waterfall.¹¹

11. "Princess Louise Falls," Capital Gems, <http://www.capitalgems.ca/princess-louise-falls.html>.

Fig. 13 Orléans's watershed

Fig. 14 Princess Louise Waterfall

Other than the St-Louis Residence for long-term Healthcare and a few houses along Radisson Way, Orléans is mostly secluded from the Ottawa River's southern shore. Most of the shore consists of a forest obstructing the view toward the river. Along this forest there is a network of bike paths that lead to Petrie Island's Beach in the East and to the Ottawa River Pathway in the West. The Ottawa River Pathway is part of the National Capital Bike Path network that also connects to the Trans-Canada Trail.¹² Petrie Island is Orléans only beach. The beach was originally a sand quarry that the city decided to transform into a recreational area for picnics and beach uses in 2003.

12. "Places to Visit: Getting Around Canada's Capital," National Capital Commission. <https://ncc-ccn.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=e4ace0d0442c4d35b9a3e90f0c632450&entry=2>.

"The Great Trail", Trans Canada Trail. <https://thegreattrail.ca/explore-the-map/>.

Fig. 15 Orléans's shoreline

The suburb of Orléans expands alongside a rich northern boreal landscape. Indeed, the Mer Bleue Bog, a vast conservation area covering 3,500 hectares, is located south of Orléans. It is the site of important research on climate control and is the most studied wetland in the world. Mer Bleue provides multiple opportunities for local residents or tourists to participate in exterior sports and activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and photography.¹³ The proximity of Mer Bleue is significant, and will inspire the approach to landscape taken in the design proposition to follow.

With the amalgamation of Orléans within the Greater Ottawa City, Orléans became a sort of garden city akin to that outlined in Ebenezer Howard's *Garden Cities of To-morrow*, in the sense that Orléans, along with other suburbs, perform the roles of quiet and green residential satellites surrounding a larger town, Ottawa in this case. As Orléans grew, the new residents weren't working in the town itself, and used it as a dormitory city. These commuters cross the greenbelt daily to go to work and use the social and cultural amenities located in the core of Ottawa.

13. "Mer Bleue," National Capital Commission. <http://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/places-to-visit/greenbelt/mer-bleue>.

"Greenspace Master Plan: strategies for Ottawa's Urban Greenspaces—August 2006," City of Ottawa. <https://www.ontariotrails.on.ca/assets/files/pdf/Masterplans/Ottawa%20Greenspace%20Masterplan.pdf>.

Fig. 16 Mer Bleue Bog

Fig. 17 Ottawa's Greenbelt

● Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall

1958

1965

1976

1991

Fig. 18 Orléans's sprawl

1999

2002

2005

2007

Fig. 19 Orléans's sprawl (continued)

2008

2011

2014

2017

Fig. 20 Orléans's sprawl (continued)

The Place d'Orléans Mall

Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall is located on the lands that used to be owned by Jean-Baptiste Duford along St-Joseph Boulevard. Duford arrived in the area with his family where he ran a vegetable and milk farm. The farm operated with his descendants until 1957. The Place d'Orléans Shopping mall was completed and opened its doors in 1979. Today, the area surrounding and including the Mall is also known as the Heart of Orléans District, which runs along 4 km of the St-Joseph Boulevard, between Prestone Drive and Youville Drive.¹⁴ The current site is bordered by St-Joseph Boulevard on its south edge, encircled on the other three edges by a ring road named Place d'Orléans Drive. Highway 174 runs along its northern boundary, parallel to the northern stretch of Place d'Orléans Drive. At the midpoint of this northern edge, Champlain Street crosses the highway to Queenswood Village, Orléans South West, and Chatelaine Village, three neighbourhoods between the Highway and the Ottawa River. Historically, Champlain Street used to continue through where the mall's building is constructed, and connected with St-Joseph Boulevard. The construction of the mall disrupted earlier connections. It will be important to consider these in the new design, and re-establish them.

14. "Location Map," Heart of Orléans. <https://heartoforleans.ca/about/map/>.

Fig. 21 the Hearth of Orléans District

Multiple services and retail operations are in immediate proximity to Place d'Orléans mall. To the West there's a grocery store (Nofrill's), two fast-food chains (Wendy's & Tim Horton's), two gyms (Fit4less and Greco), two hair salons, a spa, a pharmacy and multiple clinics such as optometrists, chiropractic and massotherapy clinics, orthotics and pedorthic care, and an emergency walk-in clinic. To the South, a gas station (Shell), a drug store (Shoppers Drug Mart), a grocery store (Farm boy), a dentist, a jeweller, multiple auto shops and restaurants signal the area's vibrancy. To the East, Orléans Town Centre provides a more recent addition to the area. Originally built in the late 80s, and expanded in the late 00s, the "outdoor mall" development consists of a mixture of retail and institutions including a bank (RBC), restaurants, various medical clinics, a pharmacy, a driving school, Orléans-Cumberland Community Resource Centre, a cinema, a hotel (Holiday Inn Express), some housing, but most importantly a YMCA, the Orléans's City Hall and the Shenkman Arts Centre referred to above.¹⁵

15. "Orleans Town Centre: Retail Suites", Colonnade Bridgeport. http://colonnadebridgeport.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/orleans_town_Centre_retail_brochure.pdf.

"Volume 2b - Site Specific Policies", City of Ottawa. <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/planning-and-development/official-plan-and-master-plans/official-plan/volume-2b-site-specific-policies>.

Mary Payne, "Six neighbourhoods planned for area east of Tenth Line", *The Express*, 1986. <https://www.fallingbrook.com/history-of-fallingbrook/>.

Fig. 22 Place d'Orléans land in 1976

Fig. 23 Place d'Orléans land in 1991
Note the disappearance of Champlain street on the site.

Significantly, Place d'Orléans mall is well connected to the Ottawa region due to the presence of a large OC Transpo transit station for buses. A pedestrian bridge links this station to a Park'n'Ride on the other side of the highway. Interestingly, the Park'n'Ride was once the site of a train station offering transportation between Orléans and Ottawa by the Canadian Northern Railway. In the near future, an LRT station will be completed along this pedestrian bridge, in the median of the highway. This return in rail service will allow Place d'Orléans to expand its role as the main transportation hub of the area. As such, a transformed Place d'Orléans mall holds the potential to have a regional presence. For this reason, Place d'Orléans should be seen as an opportunity for critical rethinking of the suburban mall. The mall itself is one of the last enclosed malls constructed in North America. Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall holds 140 shops and services, over an area of roughly 761,000 square feet over two floors. The mall also offers over 3800 parking stalls for suburban drivers. Currently, the mall caters primarily to more than 116,000 residents in the main trade area (location of 50 to 70 percent of stores' business), with an additional 72,000 residents in its secondary trade area (location of 15 to 20 percent of stores' business). It is expected by the mall's management, Primaris, that its market population will increase by another 6,000 residents in the next five years.¹⁶

16. "Place d'Orléans," Primaris, https://www.primarisreit.com/portfolio_overview/place-d-orleans.

Fig. 24 OC Transpo pedestrian bridge

Fig. 25 Place D'Orléans Shopping Mall

Fig. 26 Place D'Orléans - Ground Floor Plan

Fig. 27 Place D'Orléans - Second Floor Plan

Unfortunately, in the last two decades Place d'Orléans has struggled to keep hold of its main anchor stores. With the commercial development of Innes Road, a main artery located in the southern portion of Orléans, many stand-alone box stores come directly in competition with the mall. Within these commercial strips, one can shop at stores such as Lowes, Walmart, Best Buy, Superstore, Staples and Home Depot. These retail developments resulted in a massive boom in residential development that extended the built environment onto precious wetlands and farmlands south of Orléans. Today, the centre of Orléans appears as a disconnected commercial expanse, and its natural assets and main street are hard to see. The right architectural gestures upon Place d'Orléans mall and its parking lot could change all this.

- Place d'Orléans Shopping Mall
- Big-Box Stores along Innes Rd. & Tenth Line Rd.

Fig. 28 Diagram of Place d'Orléans's main retail competition
Note the Bilberry Creek appearing as a North-South Green River
through Orléans

Place d'Orléans being located centrally within Orléans and well connected to the rest of Ottawa should have the mandate to respond to the community's needs. Orléans is the vessel of the greatest francophone population of Ottawa, which is gradually aging. To protect the cultural fabric unique to the region, services aimed for the aging francophone segment should be prioritized on the site of Place d'Orléans mall.

Seniors' Stories: Interviews

Consulting with senior members of this community is essential for the elaboration of a successful vision for the future of Place d'Orléans. For this Ethics-approved study, two groups of seniors were presented the opportunity to voice their opinion through a questionnaire (See Appendices A and B). The two groups approached were able to provide important information regarding their everyday living habits, routines and preferences. The interviewees all had different mobility, health, social, and activity conditions. Interviews were conducted by the author on January 17th and 25th, 2018 at the Saint-Gérard Community Center and at Sainte-Rose-de-Lima Church. The interview results gathered clearly indicated that maintaining safe indoor public spaces was not only critical, but that these spaces should be improved. Interviewee feedback influenced the vision and design for the mall proposed in this thesis, where accessibility, shelter, leisure, and community spaces were given priority over retail spaces.

The following quotes extracted from interview transcripts capture the community's preferences. Names have been modified.

Interviewees were senior members of a Club de l'Âge d'Or and an Active lifestyle Group, of Gatineau-Ottawa. These groups are frequent visitors of the shopping mall.¹⁷

17. See Appendix A, B, and C.

“I like to walk outside and stay active during the winter. This year I joined the Active Lifestyle Exercise Group and I made many new friends.”

Pierrette Dupuis, *Active Lifestyle*

“In the winter months, I prefer to stay inside. Every Thursday I meet a group of friends to play card games.”

Lucien Gagnon, *Club de l'âge d'or*

“To prevent arthritis in my knees I go up and down the stair multiple times throughout the day.”

Alain Bouchard, *Active Lifestyle*

“At my community centre, we organize bean bags and lawn bowling tournaments.”

Robert Gauthier, *Club de l'âge d'or*

“Keeping a good routine with the house chores helps me to keep active when winter confines me inside my house.”

Ginette Leblanc, *Active Lifestyle*

“I wish I could walk more often outside, but it is too cold and slippery. I don’t want to risk breaking a hip.”

Lise Desjardins, *Active Lifestyle*

“As a kid, I used to go skating all the time, it was my winter passion. I’m now too old to do that.”

Royal Cyr, *Active Lifestyle*

“I rarely go to the mall, maybe once a month? There are too many people, I find it stressful.”

Normand Boivin, *Club de l’âge d’or*

“I visit the shopping mall at least once a week. Sometimes it’s to shop, other times it’s just to meet my friend Huguette for a coffee.”

Estelle Ménard, *Club de l’âge d’or*

“My new apartment is so small; I just feel the need to get out. The public spaces at the shopping centre allow me to socialize and walk, I think they are important.”

Célia Dubois, *Active Lifestyle*

“I’m not sure how they should improve the mall, but they should make the public spaces better.”

Thérèse Parent, *Club de l’âge d’or*

“They should have more space for seniors at the mall.”

Paul Fournier, *Club de l’âge d’or*

“The interior spaces at the mall should be used for physical activities such as walking or exercise groups during the winter. My wife is looking for a Yoga groups for beginners.”

Jean Caron, *Active Lifestyle*

“I like when the mall’s interiors are well lit with natural light and have a good layout. You know at my age, I can’t walk long distance, I need to sit.”

Claire Martel, *Club de l’âge d’or*

“I wish the mall had more things than just stores, they should add restaurants and places where I can just meet friends to talk or play cards.”

Noëlla St-Pierre, *Club de l’âge d’or*

“I might consider helping out at an interior community garden, but that depends on whether my health allows me too. Also, I might not have enough time for it. I’m already involved with many groups.”

Roger Paquette, *Active Lifestyle*

“The mall should provide more space to walk.”

Mario Côté, *Active Lifestyle*

“I have no difficulty getting to the mall, but my friend Annette has too many bus transfers to get there. When she wants to go, she often calls me to get a ride there.”

Lucille Gagné, *Active Lifestyle*

“If there were more activities at the mall, I would definitely consider going there more often, although I don’t know how much more I would go.”

Jocelyn Roy, *Club de l’âge d’or*

Chapter 2 Appearance and Disappearance of the Interior Mall

Glass Dreams—Interior Heavens: First Iterations of the Glass Mall

Before making any interventions and attempting to “fix” the mall, it is important to look at the evolution of the commercial spaces and public enclosures to understand some of the key elements that brought success to the current shopping mall. The most basic act of commercial exchange consisted of farmers bringing their goods to the town centre. They would display their products on tables, in their wagon, and in baskets, to operate a simple farmers’ market. We can still experience this type of commerce during the warm seasons at Ottawa’s ByWard, Parkdale or Farmers’ Market at Lansdowne Park, as well at smaller stalls along rural roads all around the city.¹⁸

Unfortunately, outdoor selling has the disadvantage of being impractical during winter or very uncomfortable on rainy and windy days. Through history, builders have experimented with ways to enclose space, to recreate exterior experiences within them. Essentially, the main advantage of such covered spaces was that they provided shelter from the outdoors.

18. Byward Market, <http://byward-market.com/en/home/>.

Fig. 29 ByWard Market, Ottawa

Fig. 30 La Galerie Vivienne, Paris

In many European cities, there are examples of covered streets, such as “la Galerie Vivienne”¹⁹ in Paris or the Galleria in Milan. Walter Benjamin’s work *The Arcades Project* (1927–1940) is set in Paris’s arcaded walkways, with its main protagonist, “the flâneur,” wandering along arcades. The flâneur would observe and analyze products, objects, and other people and their behaviours while they shared the space with him. Benjamin’s work underscores the powerful social dimension of urban life, and the crucial role of Paris’s iron and glass covered streets as spaces of contemplation, cultural reflection, and understanding.

Indoor markets offered shelter for the inhabitants as well as protection of the goods being sold. Produce and items were shielded from the sun and humidity. One can experience this type of space at the St-Lawrence Market in Toronto or the Marché Jean-Talon in Montréal.²⁰ The large glass-covered interior space means that the market lives on after the warm weather. The covered glass garden, street, or plaza, are powerful urban forms that fall into the category of delight and pleasure. Vulnerable because they do not directly generate income, these spaces are, today, under siege. Yet, by strategically tying these “free spaces of delight” to revenue-generating sources, they would be able to be preserved, and even, augmented.

19. Guy Lambert, *Paris et ses passages couverts*, (Paris : Éditions du patrimoine, 2002) 39-40.

20. St. Lawrence Market. <http://www.stlawrencemarket.com/>.

“Marché Jean-Talon”, Marché publics de Montréal. <https://www.marchespublics-mtl.com/marches/jean-talon/>.

Joseph Paxton — The Crystal Palace—1851–1936

The fascination of large interior glazed spaces led to engineering achievements. One great example of these giants enclosed structures is the Glass Palace in London for the world exhibition of 1851. The Crystal Palace is probably the most iconic precursor of the enclosed shopping mall. Built in 1851 by hothouse designer Joseph Paxton, the Crystal Palace was to be a temple dedicated to the exhibition of scientific and technological progress for the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park.²¹ The exhibition organized five main areas according to five themes: Raw Materials, Machinery, Manufactures, Miscellaneous, and Fine Arts.²² The Palace and the exhibition represented the hard work done by the middle class that allowed the progress in engineering, science, arts and commerce.²³

Paxton had already acquired some experience in the construction of glass buildings such as orchid houses, pinetums, arboretums and conservatories. These glass buildings and the gardens of exhibition were considered wonders of the Victorian time.²⁴

21. Anthony Bird, *Paxton's palace* (London : Cassel, 1976) 3.

22. Ibid, 108–109.

23. Ibid, 4.

24. Ibid, 30.

Fig. 31 The Crystal Palace in 1851.

Fig. 32 The Great Conservatory in Chatsworth by Joseph Paxton, opened in 1840.

Paxton's enormous glass structure was an immense gamble because nothing like this had never been built. Many feared the building wouldn't have enough lateral support. There were concerns about visitors' safety and damage to exposed items for the exhibition due to leakage and condensation typical of conservatories.²⁵

Phaidon Press's *Architecture in Detail* devoted to the Crystal Palace provides a rich account of this unique construction (1994). Author John McKean describes the challenges of glass construction of the time. Weight constraints and the need to meet a certain level of transparency and quality affected the form of the building. The building relied on new technology. The rate at which workers could produce the glass, the price of manufacturing the glass, and its weight, determined the process of fabrication Paxton chose and the size of the glass panels.²⁶ The initial project on its own was a huge success as attested by the number of visitors, a number unfeasible before the railway age.²⁷

Fig. 33 The Great Exhibition inside the Crystal Palace.

25. Ibid, 39.

26. Ibid, 55–57.

27. Ibid, 93.

Inside the Crystal Palace, artificial lighting wasn't required at all during the day, and only minimally at night for police patrol.²⁸ A great feature of the building was a series of louvres running along the bottom of the building walls and along the top of the roof trusses to provide proper ventilation.²⁹ There was much to marvel at: the building provided a boom in tourism and became a prized possession of Londoners who wanted it to remain open longer.³⁰ Visitors continued to visit the site until the parliament ordered the deconstruction of the building. This is when Paxton created a company to purchase the building and have it moved to a different site. The result of this move was the creation of a suburb in Sydenham.³¹ To be used for recreation and education, the building was converted into a glass house for exotic plants and a festival space.³² In later years, the company running the Crystal Palace faced economic struggles and had to sell portions of its land to keep afloat. Even if the new building was safer than the previous one because its inside was more partitioned, the heavy use of timber spelled its demise. In 1936, the building's life ended abruptly by fire.³³

28. Ibid, 67

29. Ibid, 111.

30. Ibid, 116.

31. Ibid, 124–126.

32. Ibid, 130–131.

33. Ibid, 144–152.

Fig. 34 The Crystal Palace's structure. Note the tree inside.

Fig. 35 Plan of Sydenham's suburb in 1862.

We nonetheless have, with Paxton's Crystal Palace, an early example of a large glass structure as a catalyst for urban development and source of social excitement. Might this inspire a change at Place d'Orléans mall today? Furthermore, glass production techniques have been perfected: heavy machinery can lift glass easily and manufacturing is automated to ensure high and consistent quality. This allows for glass to be produced in much larger sizes than in Paxton's day, and opens up new possibilities for glass architecture in the present.

Victor Gruen — The North American Mall

The apparition of the first suburban mall was an important moment in the context of consumerism. The suburban shopping mall as we know it today came to be thanks to Victor Gruen's visionary mind. However, his path to the creation of the first enclosed suburban shopping mall wasn't easy. After the Second World War, the suburbs were booming as they offered less expensive houses for families, and everybody now owned a car. Gruen saw the need for retail development in the suburbs, and attempted multiple times to convince big companies to believe in him and let him design buildings in these neighbourhoods. In his mind, the current method of lining stores along a street with big parking was wrong and forced customers to move their car often to complete their shopping. His solution was to create a one-stop shopping experience.³⁴

34. M. Jeffrey Hardwick, *Mall maker: Victor Gruen, architect of an American dream*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 91–94.

Gruen's first built attempt of his vision was a Milliron's department store branch in Westchester, complete with community services on the roof. One could find a restaurant, a daycare and an auditorium within. Built in 1949, the store was praised for its rooftop parking and two futuristic looking access ramps.³⁵

This store, a complete experience, put Gruen on the national stage and allowed him to get contracts for bigger projects. On a larger scale, Gruen was able to realize his vision of a shopping centre that “would have the character of a large park surrounded by shopping facilities.” To him, the shopping mall should have multiple attractions that would create a pleasurable experience for visitors. These attractions would make the visitors spend more time on site and consequently incite them to spend more. At the same time, this experience would have an impact on the visitors' subconscious mind by making them believe that shopping was pleasurable. They would come to associate the great time they had in the mall's community facilities with the retail experience proper.³⁶

Fig. 36 Milliron branch in Westchester

Fig. 37 Northland Center, Detroit

35. Ibid, 94–97.

36. Ibid, 104.

Gruen affirmed that suburbs were communities built without hearts, and promised that shopping centres built according to his principles would fix this issue. Shopping centres shouldn't be just beautiful buildings but should be built with the people in mind. These centres should cater to all the community's needs, and they should make people happy.³⁷

In 1954, Northland Center was built in suburban Detroit. At the time, this was the biggest shopping centre in the world. The Northland Center has been described as a city within the city. It consisted of a few buildings circling a big department store in the middle. Between the many buildings were located terraces and courtyards reminiscent of squares in old European cities. It is important to state that Victor Gruen originated from Austria and was very fond of Vienna.³⁸ His European sensibilities and background influenced his vision quite deeply. He once rhetorically asked why Americans love to visit Europe so much and answered the question by stating that European cities are vibrant most of the day and people enjoy walking in them. For these reasons, these cities should be the models to follow to create space that people will enjoy.³⁹

Gruen's goal was to create new centres in the suburbs endowed with an urban density.⁴⁰ Despite the ever-growing success generated by his work and the bigger projects he was tackling, Gruen started to worry while looking at how people inhabited his spaces. People were too focused on consumerism and were often forgetting the pleasures of life. With his nostalgia of his previous European lifestyle, he aimed to fix the American lifestyle through better planning.⁴¹

37. Ibid, 121.

38. Ibid, 128–129.

39. Ibid, 134.

40. Ibid, 130.

41. Ibid, 141.

In 1956, Gruen built Southdale Shopping Center in Edina, Minnesota. At the time, it was the first enclosed mall and it went further than any of his previous work. The mall was designed to make people feel as if they were outdoors while at the same time having them enjoy the comfort of an indoor environment. The idea was to have the visitors entertained while they shopped and explored (so they might shop even more).⁴² This mall was Gruen's biggest success but also led to his deepest regrets. Southdale Mall inspired many other architects to create similar enclosed malls all around the world. The enclosed mall was the perfect retail machine: it had valuable leasing space and high revenue potential. Many disagreed with Gruen's design, with some saying it incited consumerism, while others didn't understand the use of a big central public court. The central court was often seen as a wasted retail opportunity, and other architects thus often removed this element from their mall designs. For Gruen, the central court was precisely what attracted visitors to the mall, and he therefore designed the latter with care.⁴³

Fig. 38 Southdale Shopping Center in Edina, Minnesota

42. Ibid, 146–149.

43. Ibid, 152.

After many years of projects and working on the revitalization of downtowns, Gruen published his own reflection on his work. While this publication, *Centers for the Urban Environment: Survival of the Cities* (1973), showed how he created successful shopping centres in the suburbs and how to revitalize declining downtowns, an important aspect of this book was how cities and suburbs are destroying nature with their sprawl and car-centric lifestyle. In his opinion we have the choice between fighting nature, polluting and making our environment toxic, or embracing nature and incorporating it in our planning.⁴⁴

Reflecting on his career and pioneer work on shopping centres, Gruen expressed not being proud of his work. He wrote that his vision had been corrupted by developers' greed. Developers forgot to care about the people they were serving. What Gruen despised most about his shopping malls as they evolved over the decades were the vast seas of parking lots and the removal of the community spaces from the designs.⁴⁵ A quote from 1948 aptly summarizes the key element in his vision and source of its success.

*"It is our belief that there is much need for actual shopping centers-market places that are also centres of community and cultural activity. We are convinced that the real shopping centre will be the most profitable type of chain store location yet developed, for the simple reason that it will include features to induce people to drive considerable distances to enjoy its advantages."*⁴⁶

44. Ibid, 214-215.

45. Ibid, 218.

46. Ibid, 1.

The success of the original malls is gradually fading under exacting retail pressures. But it is most likely in combination with the fact that the developers deviated from Gruen's idea. The centre of community and cultural activity that was woven with the centre of retail disappeared from today's landscape as they are deemed unprofitable and waste of retail space.

The Suburban Mall: A Changing Landscape

The typical shopping mall layout is usually recognized by four components. Firstly, there are the anchor stores, where a vast floor space is occupied by a department store, or a main attraction that brings visitors to the site (such as Goodlife Fitness or The Hudson Bay Company). Secondly, there are the hallways that link the anchor stores and provide a comfortable environment for shoppers regardless of the weather outside. These hallways are bordered by smaller stores that people visit while walking from one anchor store to another. This indoor non-commercial space is useful for the elderly, who walk there during winter. The hallways help them remain active and allow them to have social interactions. Thirdly, there is most likely a food court that offers food from various food chains, but also offers a space where people can gather, meet friends, and enjoy their meal. Lastly,

Fig. 39 Place d'Orléans Mall diagram

the mall often has atria, a central, versatile, gathering space used for events such as the Santa Claus's picture booth or fashion shows. When not in use, the space is used by visitors who simply linger, take a break or wait to meet others. The atrium often houses artworks, craft fairs or an exhibition, but some of its great features relate to the sense of orientation it provides. The atrium allows the user to orient him or herself within the mall, or offers a view to the outside and guides the user to exterior destinations.

Unfortunately for these retail centres, multiple obstacles threaten the existence of these unique spaces today. From the customer's perspective, the context has completely changed. Customers don't enjoy the same financial stability as the middle class postwar family. With multiple economic crashes of the last decades, citizens have been left with a smaller purchasing power. The cost of life has gone up, and additional expenses were created. Fifty years ago, no one could imagine having to pay for a cell phone or internet plan. These,

Fig. 40 Place d'Orléans's interior public domain - Ground Floor

Fig. 41 Place d'Orléans's interior public domain - Second Floor

now essential services to the current way of living, take up a large portion of the customer's budget and prevent money from being spent elsewhere. From the point of view of retailers, aggressive competition makes survival difficult. Big box stores are driving fierce competition by their sheer size. Small shops compete with these giants with difficulty, and the big stores that don't adapt, suffer. The recent closures of Sears, Target, and HMV are clear examples.⁴⁷ And of course, there is online shopping. The economic pressures retailers must face today are manifold and immense.

Indeed, while the competition between brick and mortar stores is ferocious, the stores now must compete with online shopping. Previously, customers were limited to shopping within their own region; now, online shopping allows customers to shop for products and services globally. Although convenient for consumers, the local retail industry is having difficulty matching the prices of goods that are cheaper to produce elsewhere. Some international companies are also circumventing local taxes. Online shopping also provides a unique shopping experience. People can now access services and products from the comfort of their own home just as one can watch movies without visiting the movie theatre. One can also order items or food online to have it delivered directly to one's doorstep.

47. Lisa Wright, "Final Sears stores close Sunday, marking the end of an era," Toronto Star. <https://www.thestar.com/business/2018/01/12/final-sears-stores-close-sunday-marking-the-end-of-an-era.html>.

Peter Evans, "Target closes all 133 stores in Canada, gets creditor protection," CBC News. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/target-closes-all-133-stores-in-canada-gets-creditor-protection-1.2901618>.

Hollie Shaw, "HMV Canada to close all 102 stores as ailing music chain goes into receivership after 30 years," Financial Post. <http://business.financialpost.com/news/retail-marketing/hmv-canada-to-close-all-102-stores>.

To be able to compete, mall owners must cut expenses where they can. The interior public spaces in the mall generate the least revenue while being extremely expensive to run and maintain. They require heating, lighting, cleaning, but most importantly they require considerable amount of money to be constructed in the first place. For these reasons, the strolling and shopping hallways that we became accustomed to are slowly disappearing. This fact can seem unimportant, but for the aging population who employs these spaces the most, the loss of protected walking paths and social spaces, is tragic.

While these spaces are technically privately owned, it is clear that the public interior spaces are important to the community, and operate as “public” spaces. Some questions may now be asked: to protect these interior spaces, should they become publicly owned? Who should be responsible for building and maintaining them? Should the community pay for these amenities? How can these spaces be improved to ensure their financial survival? The retail industry is already having trouble generating a profit; it is hard to imagine that the industry will take the lead unless it deems it profitable. Creative solutions to make the mall’s interior public spaces viable and even profitable are called for as their survival is important for the aging community.

Chapter 3 Wandering the Suburbs

Autonomy and freedom

The senior residents of the suburb of Orléans interviewed for this thesis initially chose to build their life in the area because of a way of life that could be had there. As for many suburban dwellers, the suburb's allure was that it offered the best of the rural lifestyle with the convenience of the urban context. In a society of consumerism, suburbs offered privacy, ownership, convenience and peace for a relatively cheap price compared to the urban core. Suburbs came with the idea of owning land. Compared to the urban core, one can afford to purchase more space: most suburban homeowners have their own garden, front lawn, and backyard. Many also have their own private pool. Owning land in combination with proximity to public parks provides the feeling of owning vast expanses of land.⁴⁸ Living on the edge of the city isn't a big deterrent as most of the basic needs such as groceries, clinics, and entertainment are provided nearby. The only catch is that one is required to own a car. But a car isn't such a bad thing for a consumer who's looking for convenience. Car owners can reach any destination they wish, on their own terms, and cross greater distances in a shorter amount of time. The car is a symbol of freedom and autonomy. However, as they age, some of these community members aren't able to rely on the daily use of cars as their means of transportation. Many aging individuals must face the loss of their driver's license, and this event radically changes their life by profoundly altering their degree of mobility, freedom of movement, and access to family and friends, events and services.

48. Benjamin Ross, *Dead end: suburban sprawl and the rebirth of American urbanism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 11.

Crossing the Suburb with its Antithesis

The reality of the lifestyle offered today by the suburb is more complex than initially envisioned. Suburbs once represented the economic success of cities, but now they are a barrier to city growth.⁴⁹ Issues related to transportation, zoning, and generational composition all have an impact on the suburb's success. The following presents key challenges of the suburbs and corresponding solutions. Taken together, these solutions point the way to a new vision for Place d'Orléans mall.

Transportation and Co-Work Spaces

Suburban residents experience the increasing level of congestion on the road on their commute from home towards the urban core every morning. Congestion is also putting great stress on the transit system and the provision of reasonable services to every citizen across the city is difficult. The solution would be fewer people commuting. Multiple opportunities are now available with the advances in technology to bring work and home closer together. People can work from home and exchange information through the internet and its cloud servers. In turn, for those who oppose the overlap of work and home, a simple solution is work in local shared workspaces. By providing office space for small groups of employees, or the basic resources for the sole worker to accomplish his or her tasks, the “co-work” space can be adapted to each business's needs. Pooled equipment and resources mean that small businesses can offer a wider range and a higher quality of services to its users as the cost of these resources is absorbed by a larger number of individuals. In suburban locations and more specifically suburban malls like Place d'Orléans, the insertion of co-work office spaces offers interesting opportunities and could play a part in getting cars off the road.⁵⁰

49. Nicholas A. Phelps, *Sequel to Suburbia*, (London: The MIT Press, 2015), 5.

50. Libby Sander, “Co-Working is evolving to combine co-living”, *The Conversation*, 2017. <http://theconversation.com/co-working-is-evolving-to-combine-co-living-75200>.

Suburban Fabric and Zoning

The suburb's zoning composition is easily revealed by a satellite image: one instantly sees lines of commercial spaces along the main arteries surrounded by vast neighbourhoods of housing. This clear zoning segregation is the main factor in car reliance. Jane Jacobs argued strongly against suburban zoning as follows: districts must have more than one primary function, blocks should be short to allow people to cross them easily, districts must be composed of buildings of different ages, and there must be the density of population great enough to support the function of the district.⁵¹ Following these guidelines, one would end up with a mixed-used neighbourhood that is pedestrian friendly, but also a neighbourhood that ages and is rejuvenated gradually. By creating a tight mesh of all living needs, suburban fabrics would also be able to dissuade citizens from commuting.

Fig. 42 Sprawled Orléans

51. Benjamin Ross, 67.

Sociologists identify the upcoming working cohort (or Millennials), the actively working group (also known as Gen Xers), and the Baby Boomers now entering retirement, as the main groups making up typical Canadian suburban communities. An intervention at Place d'Orléans offers the opportunity to increase the interaction between generational groups and bridge the gaps between them while paying special attention to seniors. It is important to favour a multi-generational approach in any sustainable, community-oriented design, but in this pursuit, seniors merit a special status as they are often factored out of decisions due to their smaller spending powers in comparison with younger income earners. When the older generation interacts with the younger one, seniors keep active and remain healthier, are able to keep up with new trends, and transmit knowledge to the young crowd. An increase in inter-generational interactions and closer social knit would benefit all. Integrated zoning, co-work office spaces, "inter-generationality": these are features of a radically improved and more vibrant suburb. These principles will point the way to a new vision for Place d'Orléans in the form of a design proposal presented further on in this thesis, and titled "Place d'Orléans Réinventé : A Senior-Centric Vision for a Suburban Mall."

Questions Pertaining to the Suburbs

North American suburbs have long shirked the responsibility to provide well-considered shared public spaces. The private home and shopping areas exist separately, and the experience of getting from one to the other is experientially poor. Beyond the private home, the suburbs' idyllic greenness disappears. A different approach toward suburban green spaces is needed. A brief look at suburbs' unbuilt lands and green spaces will therefore be useful here.

A key feature of the suburb is its proximity to nature and the natural environment. This combined with the fact that each home possesses its own garden has meant that suburbs approach gardens as vague and un-designed "green spaces." Yet parks are fundamental to building sustainable communities. Parks have a great impact on the community by improving health and providing a framework for urbanization.⁵² Key elements of the nineteenth Century City Beautiful movement, parks offered a getaway from unhealthy conditions, congested arteries, and unsanitary environment in cities that were getting populated faster than housing could be provided.⁵³ While the living conditions of this century greatly improved, parks remain essential to citizens' well-being. Parks house ecosystems, improve air and water quality, and maintain optimized temperatures within the city. Parks encourage physical activity, mental rest and social interactions.⁵⁴ The desire for residents to live near parks also has an impact on the economy. Businesses located in proximity to a park will be more successful.⁵⁵ For these reasons, it is important to incorporate gardens and public spaces in any development. The act of bringing a garden into the centre should determine reinvention of Place d'Orléans mall.

52. Alexander Garvin, *Public parks: the key to livable communities*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2011), 13.

53. Ibid, 19.

54. Ibid, 33.

55. Ibid, 49.

Sprawl and the Environment

Urban sprawl has come at the cost of natural land and farm land. By building on top of irreplaceable arable lands, we push farmers further away from the city's core and we must claim more natural land for farm culture. Sprawl is unsustainable as we will eventually run out of natural land and farm land. The addition of vertical farms and urban farming at Place d'Orléans would allow for a production of local food while reducing the need for additional arable land. Further, the creation of a wetland onsite, in the place of asphalt surface parking, would help with the management of used water while providing space for ecosystems to return within the city. Management of used water on site would also reduce the stress on the city's infrastructure. The creation of a natural habitat within Orléans would be an act of environmental healing.

Fig. 43 A green intervention

Mall as Indoor Garden

Malls like Place d'Orléans fulfill the function of gardens in many ways. The current Place d'Orléans offers some spaces for social interaction, but they are compromised in numerous ways. Place d'Orléans has sidewalks along an unwelcoming street, St-Joseph Boulevard; its hallways provide little seating; its food court is gloomy and uncomfortable, and its atria are mostly empty. To improve Place d'Orléans as a social hub, better pedestrian access to the nearby neighbourhoods is required. Comfortable spaces for visitors to meet and sit and larger spaces for spontaneous events and gatherings are needed. Once circulation and human movement in Place d'Orléans (and in the centre of Orleans more generally) ceases to be merely approached as a functional walk from point A to point B, suburban experience beyond the private home stands to be radically improved. Citizens need spaces and places that make them feel connected to others, happy, safe, and healthy, not simply “access points” to objects of consumption. The mall's role as a public garden is worth revisiting.

A garden, a gesture of environmental healing, a people place: these are the programmatic goals for Place d'Orléans réinventé, as will be seen further.

Fig. 44 Car centric land use around Place d'Orléans Mall

Chapter 4 Place d'Orléans Réinventé : A Senior-Centric Vision for a Suburban Mall

The Story—Imagining a different future

The following chapter describes a design proposition set in the future. The design builds on a number of imagined contextual changes to the suburban fabric, including a North-South cable car from the neighbourhoods to the Ottawa River, passing over Place d'Orléans mall. The proposition imagines modifications in lifestyle, transportation and consumer habits. The tone of this speculative project is optimistic and in the direction of environmental recuperation, longevity, and social cohesion.

Fifty years from now, the Place d'Orléans mall as we know it, will be a relic of the past. Here as in other suburbs, the shopping experience will be totally transformed. The habit of visiting the mall with a personal car will be frowned upon. Once inside the mall, the feeling of wasting time spending money will be replaced by a feeling of relaxation and intellectual stimulation through discovery. The new mall will be a destination for intellectual interactions.

Fig. 45 New Vision for Place d'Orléans

To reach the mall, members of the immediate vicinity will be able to take a cable car. From the top of the Orléans escarpment visitors can be brought from their quiet suburban street down to the mall. (see figure 11) A cable car station on the shopping mall roof makes connections to the mall proper. One could decide to continue towards the next cable car station, to an intercity station located on the north side of the highway. This station organizes access to the mall for the northern neighbourhoods. Following the line, the next station allows access to the Ottawa River's shore. One can take a bike ride east to Petrie Isle to swim or play on a beach volley ball tournament, or decide to go west and visit the Parliament Hill. The cable car then crosses the river and has its last stop on the other shore, right at the edge of the latest constructed Gatineau neighbourhood. The debate for a new eastern bridge across the river still unresolved for over a century has made inter-provincial traffic flow intolerable. The Cumberland Bourbonnais ferry having reached its capacity twenty-five years ago is charging staggering fees. The real estate investment trust that owns the shopping mall saw the opportunity to profit from a new inter-provincial link. The eastern Gatineau residents that work in Ottawa's core are far better served by the East-West Light Rail Train line than the Gatineau bus transit system. Ottawa's core being too congested no longer allows for any buses to cross the bridges. Residents from the other shore would get to the mall's LRT station for an effortless travel to Ottawa's core. Residents from the entire region now have the opportunity to request a driverless car with their cell phones. In constant motion on the road system, these driverless capsules show up to one's doorstep within five minutes of calling for them. Once on the way to the mall, the automated car takes one of the ramps to the elevated concourse located right inside the mall's enclosure.

The Strategy: Operations on the Existing Mall

The reinvention of Place d'Orléans seeks to take advantage of the suburb's greatest assets while correcting its most problematic flaws and consequences, at the same time. The implementation of the vision for the site will result from five grand gestures.

First, the existing shopping mall will be carved out with the removal of large sections along the North-South axis, at two locations. This will allow for a reconnection across the site and the recovery of the demolished portion of Champlain Street that used to connect with St-Joseph Boulevard before the mall's construction. Within these two new gaps in the mall shell, a giant indoor garden and an enclosed public square will be located to provide new indoor amenities for the community. In winter, these will be warm, verdant and tread spaces.

Fig. 46 First Gesture - Carving the mall

Fig. 47 Place D'Orléans - Remaining Portion of the ground floor

Fig. 48 Place D'Orléans - Remaining Portion of the second floor

Second, lowrise commercial buildings will be erected along St-Joseph Boulevard and Place d'Orléans Drive to enhance the traditional main street fabric. These new buildings will complement the existing shops facing the site. This gesture will also allow the street to become more walkable and pedestrian friendly as it will replace a portion of the vast parking lot and instead provide a network of pedestrian streets, courtyards and public squares close to the existing shopping mall.

Fig. 49 Second Gesture - Completing the Traditional Main Street

Third, the remaining portion of parking asphalt will be removed to allow a marsh in between the Mall and the new traditional main street buildings to re-emerge. Being bordered by the new buildings along St-Joseph and Place d'Orléans Drive, one will be immersed in a totally different environment as one enters the marsh.

Fig. 50 Third Gesture - Reclaiming Natural Habitat

Fourth, the existing mall's roof will be extruded and “three-dimensionalized” to create terraced residential towers above the old mall. These four to five storeys hills of terraces will offer private gardens to every resident. These will sit on a grid of columns protruding from the old mall below. A space in between the mall roof and the underside each of the stepped housing masses is thus generated. These spaces will house co-work office spaces and meeting rooms, as well as event halls.

Fig. 51 Fourth Gesture - Extruding the Mall's roof to create Housing

The fifth gesture removes the parking lot and invites the reappearance of a soft ground surface and marshland. The latter is criss-crossed with boardwalks that link significant social and cultural places. Pavilions will be placed within the marsh to house various activities and events hosted by the MIFO. These pavilions sprawled on tilts above the marsh are to be linked along a boardwalk trail. The parking lot has given way to a live ground surface traversed with boardwalks that link significant social and cultural places.

Fig. 52 Fifth Gesture - Inserting Spaces for spontaneous Events

The Site Plan & Program

While redeveloping the site, the result of the six grand gestures will offer a mixture of programs that will help reclaim the historical town centre and transform it into an attractive destination. Place d'Orléans is to be turned inside out and the outside is to be brought into the mall while maintaining the interior public spaces. The project is to maximize the use of spaces for various profitable industries that are locally beneficial.

The proposed interventions can be defined by the introduction of three components that will ensure a successful future for the mall. Firstly, the “green streak,” which reintroduces and reinforces North-South circulation through the urban block, with the help of gardens, parks and green spaces. Secondly, the community centre component will bring diversified services and activities that will benefit and enliven the community culturally. Lastly, new medium-rise stepped housing blocks on top of the mall will provide a nearby retirement village for people of Orléans who wish to downsize but not leave their community.

In numbers, the proposed intervention on the existing mall reduces the existing 140 retail spaces and corresponding area of roughly 761,000 square feet to 70 retail spaces extending across 337,000 square feet. The interior public spaces within the mall are expanded by taking over the former retail square footage. In addition, ten pavilions are placed around the mall. Measuring 800 square feet each, these on-the-ground pavilions increase the community spaces by 8000 square feet.

The 113,000 square feet of unused roof is converted to co-work space, with 28,000 square feet reserved for an event space. The former “The Bay” department store is expanded and converted into a vertical farm measuring 295,000 square feet. Above the mall, 346 residential units over 328,800 square feet are introduced. Finally, the 3800 parking stalls for suburban drivers are fully removed to the benefit of a drop off zone for driverless cars and a public transportation hub. The OC Transpo bus station and the LRT are located to the north along the old transit pedestrian bridge on the second floor. The new cable car station is on the roof of the vertical farm with access elevators for this station situated next to the transit pedestrian bridge entrance. The mall will thus be strongly connected to the greater Ottawa region and the downtown.

The Green Streak

The project envisions a metaphorical green river, or “green streak,” reconnecting the site along the North-South axis. Forking away from Bilberry Creek, trails are diverted across St-Joseph Boulevard towards the south-west corner of the Place d’Orléans site. The green streak enters the building complex in the form of a giant indoor garden. Exiting the building on its north site, the green streak bridges above the 174 highway and connects to the trails that follow the highway. Beyond reconnecting the southern and northern portions of the community which the mall severed when it was built, the green streak aims to reclaim natural habitats that were lost to city sprawl and bring back fauna and flora, while also managing water on site.

The *Bilberry Creek* is a natural feature in the area that allows the ground water to drain across Orléans and eventually flow into the Ottawa River. Along this ravine, multiple trails connect different Orléans’s neighbourhoods such as Chateau Neuf, Queenswood Heights to the south. Orléans Village, in the Centre of which Place d’Orléans is located, and then Tudor Gate, Quarry Ridge and Orléans Wood to the North. Providing access to Place d’Orléans from the Bilberry Creek Ravine trail network would help connect this centrally located site to the population living around the area.

Fig. 53 The Green Streak

Fig. 54 The Bilberry Creek

A new *Corner Park* on the South-Western part of the site would act as a gateway to the mall. People walking along St-Joseph Boulevard (a traditional main street), and the residents walking down the ravine would be enticed to the mall through this opening in the city fabric.

Inside the mall, a grand and generous glass-covered space provides a year-round urban-scaled garden for mall visitors, co-work office workers, and dwellers of the rooftop housing. The *Veiled Park*'s structure would cover a large indoor park, or winter garden, providing temperate climate all year long and safe shelter from cold slippery winter days or hot smog summer days. This mega structure would house a unique flora that can't be seen elsewhere in the national capital's region. The park is located in the centre of the mall and framed by two residential masses on either side of its glass roof. Yielding a total of 346 units, these are medium height (four to five storeys) terraced buildings that read as "residential hills" protruding from the old mall. Residents from the units facing the indoor park have their private balconies covered by the park's structure.

Fig. 55 The Corner Park

Fig. 56 The Veiled Park

The *Buffer Marsh* surrounding the mall harvests all the rain water accumulated on the site. The marsh offers an opportunity to recreate wetland ecosystems that are rapidly disappearing in the region due to Orléans's urban sprawl. A boardwalk circuit would provide a walking trail to multiple pavilions surrounding the marsh. This small marsh is an important reference to a much bigger wetland, Mer Bleue Bog, located to the South of Orléans.

The *Green Bridge* offers a grade-separated crossing above the highway 174 that links to the trails on the north side. This connection promotes access from the communities on the north side of the highway to Place d'Orléans and the town centre.

Fig. 57 The Buffer Marsh

Fig. 58 The Green Bridge

The Community Centre

The greatest key to Place d'Orléans' success is its positioning. Place d'Orléans is located centrally in Orléans at the end of the traditional main street zone, next to the Shenkman Art Centre, the YMCA, and the city hall. Place d'Orléans is also the location of Orléans's transportation hub. The development of this unbroken large parcel of land must ensure that the mall takes advantage of the resources around it.

Orléans is blessed to have an organization that meets the needs of the francophone community. The MIFO (Mouvement d'Implication Francophone d'Orléans) has as mission to answer to the artistic, cultural, and social community, and caters to the education needs of the Orléans's francophone community. This multidisciplinary centre has access to grants and funds unavailable to profit-based companies. The MIFO already manages the French programming of the Shenkman Art Centre.

Fig. 59 The Shenkman Art Centre

Fig. 60 The MIFO

Through a survey conducted for the purposes of this thesis with the aging population, the desire for more community spaces at the mall was observed. (See Appendix B) Continuing with this line of thinking, we can say that the involvement of MIFO in this project would provide a critical component to the functioning of the site. Thus, the non-profit organization must have a core role in the site's operations. A Public/Private partnership would become beneficial for multiple parties involved, where each caters to one another and provides a diversified financial sustainability to the development. The idea is to have the MIFO animate the newly created public spaces through various events and activities, and in a manner that offers more opportunities for the different age groups to interact with one another. Spaces where several generations can interact allow for cultural knowledge to be transmitted to the younger generation and help maintain a healthy active lifestyle to the older generation. This is an in-person space intended to resist the virtual world.

Fig. 61 Place D'Orléans - Renovated ground floor with enlarged public realm

Fig. 62 Place D'Orléans - Renovated second floor with enlarged public realm

Fig. 63 Place D'Orléans - ground floor new programs

Fig. 64 Place D'Orléans - second floor new programs

The Migratory Village

As a marsh is to migratory birds, the new residential complex will be a fundamental stopping point for the local aging population. The housing on site will be an alternative to the “snowbirds” lifestyle many Canadians have. Instead of buying a condo and spending half the year in the Sunbelt, citizens will also have the option to move to Place d’Orléans. Local families (primarily seniors, in this story) looking to downsize from their family house would be able to move into one of the small towers on site. These terraced apartments would each have individual garden balconies or solariums. The housing on site will offer a densification of the area while offering proximity to services for its residents. While the residents living on site might not feed the mall’s retail operations, the creation of additional services on site would increase the number of people visiting, coming from the surrounding area to make this place more vibrant.

Fig. 65 Building Section

- 1 Entrance to Terracing Residential Structures
- 2 Entrance to Shopping Mall Area
- 3 Grand Alley, Reclaiming Former Champlain St.
- 4 Giant Glass Pivot Doors, for Summer Climate Control
- 5 Pond
- 6 Large Gathering Space, for Event such as Yoga Lessons
- 7 Small Gathering Pockets, for Small Group Reunion
- 8 Trail in the "Forest"
- 9 New Food Court
- 10 Exotic Forest
- 11 Benches, Providing Plenty of Resting Spaces

Fig. 66 The Veiled Park - Key Features

Fig. 67 The Public Square - Key Features

- 1 Entrance to Terracing Residential Structures
- 2 Entrance to Shopping Mall Area
- 3 Grand Alley, Reconnecting the Surrounding Communities
- 4 Giant Glass Pivot Doors, for Summer Climate Control
- 5 Farmers Market / Flea Market / Artist Exhibition Space
- 6 Large Event Space
- 7 Splash Pad
- 8 Play Structures
- 9 Atrium in the Shopping Mall
- 10 Urban Vegetation
- 11 Benches, Providing Plenty of Resting Spaces
- 12 Patio Area
- 13 Coffee Shop
- 14 Restaurants
- 15 Bakery

Fig. 68 The Veiled Park - Visitors Interactions

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Fig. 70 View of the marsh with its pavillions on stilts

Fig. 71 View of the garden glass structure with its giant pivot doors

Fig. 72 Community spaces withing the mall and the interior garden

Fig. 73 Indoor garden as seen from the mall's second floor bridge

Fig. 74 Vertical Farm within the former Hudson's Bay structure

Fig. 75 OC Transpo multimodal public transit with the cable car station and the bus station

Fig. 76 View of indoor garden as seen from a residential unit's balcony

Conclusion

After a study of the evolution of Orléans, the state of enclosed suburban shopping malls, Place d'Orléans, and the promise of the suburb, we must conclude that a radical gesture is called for to repair our current suburbs.

Orléans grew from a little farm village to the biggest suburb of Ottawa. Enclosed suburban malls and most specifically Place d'Orléans are encountering increasing difficulty in the market and have a hard time surviving. The suburbs' promised lifestyle proposes numerous advantages, but many undisclosed problems as well. The proposed intervention at Place d'Orléans is a statement and counterproposal to current approaches to our cities. Place d'Orléans Réinventé seeks to propose a place where people can live, work, and enjoy life. The community is aging, and new residents are moving in. This town centre needs to reclaim its title "Place d'Orléans," the true place for Orléans residents. Place d'Orléans should be proud of its identity and celebrate it with the people who compose its community. The site is ripe for a massive overhaul and has the potential to become the most successful suburban town centre in Ottawa.

The reconnection of the site to the surrounding neighbourhood, a reinforced traditional main street, reclaimed space for the environment, residential housing on site, an increase in functional indoor public spaces, the inclusion of community services that animate the space, are all gestures that will ensure the success of the enclosed mall. Such a radical intervention on a suburban mall will have repercussions at multiple scales: the city, the nearby neighbourhoods, and the site itself. At the macro scale, transportation, connections to the rest of Ottawa, connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods and ecosystems create a network of paths that inscribe Orléans more deeply into the fabric of the Canadian capital. At the micro scale, the diverse programs on site must cohabit and

interact meaningfully with each other. Each user, whether senior residents, consumers, commuters, workers, or community members, is an active character that will play a role within the community for the success of this project. Employing five decisive and bold design operations upon the existing mall and parking lot, the proposal organizes the cohabitation of diverse programs through various kinds of parks. The largest park is an indoor park, one that augments and elevates the mall's existing indoor public spaces. In turn, marsh-lands and a green streak reconnect the northern and southern sections of the community, connecting them via a green bridge to the northern side of the 174 highway, and, eventually, to the Ottawa River. Dwellers and visitors to the transformed mall will be much more aware of their environment, of cultural memory and of the landscape. And inside, on a cold slippery day, citizens of Orléans will be able to go for a long and pleasant walk without the worry or the risk of falling.

Ease of mobility, safety, rest, but also, physical activity, recreation, cultural expression and participation, and community interactions: Place d'Orléans *réinventé* aims to be the spark that triggers a conversation on a sustainable future for our suburban malls.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Ethics Clearance

Office of Research Ethics and Compliance
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CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS CLEARANCE

The Carleton University Research Ethics Board-B (CUREB-B) has granted ethics clearance for the research project described below and research may now proceed. CUREB-B is constituted and operates in compliance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2).

Ethics Protocol Clearance ID: Project # 108214

Research Team: Mr. Emile Parisien (Primary Investigator)
Janine Debanne (Research Supervisor)

Project Title: Reimagining Place d'Orleans Mall: A Design Proposal: Survey aimed toward aging population [Emile Parisien]

Funding Source (If applicable):

Effective: **January 23, 2018**

Expires: **January 31, 2019.**

Restrictions:

This certification is subject to the following conditions:

1. Clearance is granted only for the research and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modification to the approved research must be submitted to CUREB-B via a Change to Protocol Form. All changes must be cleared prior to the continuance of the research.
3. An Annual Status Report for the renewal of ethics clearance must be submitted and cleared by the renewal date listed above. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the closure of the file. If funding is associated, funds will be frozen.
4. A closure request must be sent to CUREB-B when the research is complete or terminated.
5. Should any participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to CUREB-B.

Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 2nd edition* and the *Carleton University Policies and*

Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.

Upon reasonable request, it is the policy of CUREB, for cleared protocols, to release the name of the PI, the title of the project, and the date of clearance and any renewal(s).

Please contact the Research Compliance Coordinators, at ethics@carleton.ca, if you have any questions or require a clearance certificate with a signature.

CLEARED BY:

Date: January 23, 2018

Andy Adler, PhD, Chair, CUREB-B

Bernadette Campbell, PhD, Vice-Chair, CUREB-B

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results

Description

This survey collected opinions of retired people and community members in their sixties and older. The goal was to increase understanding of the aging population's views and needs with regards to shopping malls.

Surveyed Population

A statistical survey was performed by the author on January 17th and 25th, 2018 amongst the aging population. On the first date, members of the local "Active Lifestyle club" were asked to complete the enclosed survey (Appendix C), and the following week, participants of the local "Golden age club" were also invited to contribute their opinions by completing the same questionnaire.

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

Summary of the results

The following are the essential elements that were brought forth when compiling the survey.

- 1-The most popular leisure activities amongst the aging population during the winter are walking, group exercising and playing cards.
- 2-Other most popular leisure activities considered during the winter include going up and down stairs, lawn bowling and paying bean bags.
- 3-Overall, most of the participants indicated that they visited the malls once a week or every two weeks.
- 4-The majority of participants find shopping malls' interior space important for they feel it provides opportunities to move around.
- 5-Interior space could be more useful if it included walking clubs, gardening clubs, beginner yoga classes or stretching groups, artisanal and local product sales as well as more resting spaces for seniors and natural light.
- 6-Spaces to meet friends and reserved area for walking are raised as a need in the responses to several questions.
- 7-When asked if they would volunteer their time or be involved in the maintenance of the interior public spaces in the shopping malls should these include community gardens, the majority of participants rejected the idea.
- 8-In summary, the aging population feels that meeting spaces to talk, paint and do artisanal activities, as well as additional areas to be active in low impact activities such as walking, yoga, stretching, dancing, lawn bowling and bean bag competitions would be welcomed additions to any shopping malls.

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

Survey questionnaire towards aging population

Results per survey Questions

1 - What leisure activities do you partake during winter?

Group 1

Walking	9
Active Lifestyle Exercise Group	8
Choir	1
Physical Exercising	1
Skating	2
Snowshoeing	3
Line dancing	1
Pilates	1
Aquafitness	1
Playing Cards	1
Going to the movies	1
Gardening	1

Group 2

Exercising	2
Singing	1
Playing Cards	12
Walking	5
Bean Bags	4
Dancing	2
Lawn bowling	2
Active lifestyle Group exercising	2
Playing darts	1
Skating	1
Volunteering	2
Skating rink maintenance	1
Going to the movies	1
Travelling	1

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

2 - What leisure activities do you do indoors during winter?	
Group 1	
Active Lifestyle Exercise Group	5
Going up and down stairs	5
Stretching	1
House chores	5
Cooking	1
Just moving around continuously	1
Exercise with or without DVD	2
Stationary bicycling	1
Puzzles	1
Dancing	2
Scrapbooking	1
Painting	1
Arts and Crafts	1
Going to the movies	1
Playing cards	1
Group 2	
Playing bean bags	6
Lawn bowling	5
Active Lifestyle Exercise Group	2
Playing cards	9
Dancing	2
Arts and Crafts	1
Going to the movies	1
Knitting	3
Playing darts	1
Cross-words	1
Puzzles	1
Singing	1

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

3 - Which activities do you wish you could partake in during the winter, but cannot because it is too cold and slippery outside?	
Group 1	
Cross country skyng	1
None	8
I don't know	1
Group 2	
Walking	4
Skating	3
Play bean bags	1
Festival events	1
Play bowling	1
Tobogganing	1
None	1
I don't know	1
4 - How often do you visit shopping malls?	
Group 1	
Sometimes	1
1/month	1
1/2week	1
1/week	3
1-2/week	1
2/week	2
2-3/week	2
Rarely	1
Group 2	
Rarely	2
1/3month	1
10/year	1
1-2/month	2
1/month	3
1-2/week	1
1/week	4
2/week	1
3/week	1

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

5 - Are public interior spaces within shopping mall important to you?

Group 1

Yes	8 (it makes us move)
No	3

Group 2

Yes	5
No	6
Sometimes	3
I don't know	1

6 - How could these spaces be improved so as to serve your needs better?

Group 1

I don't know	3
Artisanal sales	1
Local products	1
Have group meetings	1
Walking groups	1
Beginner Yoga and stretching group	1
I don't require anything more	2
More spaces for flower gardens and other plants.	1
Spaces for groups meeting to play games (cards, bean bag, Lawn Bowling, ...)	1

Group 2

Have well lit space (natural Light)	1
Well laid spaces	1
I don't know but they should	2
Activity space for seniors	1
No opinion	5
No changes, (I am satisfied)	2
Expend them	1
Have walking club	1
Have lockers	1
Have more rest spaces for seniors	1

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

7 - What purpose should interior spaces in shopping malls serve during winter?

Group 1

Have space for physical exercise	1
Medical Clinic	1
Reading Club	1
MovieClub	1
Space for simple exercise like "active Lifestyle Group"	1
Space for group meetings	3
Space for walking (& space for walking only)x2	5
Space for beginner Yoga	1
No opinion	1
Beautiful Spaces	1
Space to talk	1
Space to play games	1

Group 2

No Idea	1
Walking	5
I don't know but they should	1
For shopper	1
A space to go have a meal with friends	1
As a meeting space for friends	2
For restaurants	1
Seniors	1
Place to play games (cards)	1
place to go dancing	1

8 - Would you consider volunteering and giving some of your time during winter at the mall?

Group 1

No	8 (ex: I'm too busy)
Maybe	2

Group 2

No	10
Yes	2 (ex: red carpet events)
I already do so 2/per week	1

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

9 - Would you consider volunteering and giving some of your time during winter to help maintain the interior public spaces in shopping malls if they included community gardens and ornamental gardens?

Group 1

No	6
Maybe	3

Group 2

No	11 (I don't have a green thumb; to old)
----	---

10 - Would additional programs other than retail be appealing to you? If yes, which other programs would you like to see in a shopping mall?

Group 1

Physical Activity	1
Meeting Places	1 (ex: café style where we can talk)
Restaurant with group games	1
Exercise room	1
Meeting place	1
No	4

Group 2

Space to dance	1
Space to play games (card)	1
No opinion	1
More space to walk inside	1
No	7

11 - Is the nearest shopping mall located in close enough proximity to your house to allow you to get there in a safe and secure way during winter?

Group 1

Yes	4
Only by car (8+ km, 10 km)	2
No	2

Group 2

Yes	7
Yes, only by car (6 km)	3
By bus (ex: with one transfer)	2
No	5

Appendix B - Survey questionnaire towards aging population - Results (continued)

12 - If a shopping mall hosted some of the activities you can't normally partake in during the winter months such as gardening, how often would you visit it?

Group 1

2/month	1
1/week	1
1/2weeks	1
Me, it's more to talk with a group of people	1
No	1
I don't know	1

Group 2

sometimes	1
1/week	2
13/week	1
I go to walk, shop or for events	1
I already do some of these elsewhere (volunteering at the Dalton Farm)	1
I would come for gardening	1
More often	1
No	6

Additional Comments

Golden Age Club and Senior Clubs in the area have activities such as:

Playing cards

Painting

Language sessions

Sowing clubs

Dancing

Exercising

Active lifestyle

Appendix C - Survey questionnaire towards aging population

Survey questionnaire towards aging population

This survey group consists of retired people and community members in their sixties and older. The goal of this survey is to increase an understanding of aging populations' views and needs with regards to shopping malls.

Survey Questions

1. What leisure activities do you partake during winter?
2. What leisure activities do you do indoors during winter?
3. Which activities do you wish you could partake in during the winter, but cannot because it is too cold and slippery outside?
4. How often do you visit shopping malls?
5. Are public interior spaces within shopping mall important to you?
6. How could these spaces be improved so as to serve your needs better?
7. What purpose should interior spaces in shopping malls serve during winter?
8. Would you consider volunteering and giving some of your time during winter at the mall?
9. Would you consider volunteering and giving some of your time during winter to help maintain the interior public spaces in shopping malls if they included community gardens and ornamental gardens?
10. Would additional programs other than retail be appealing to you? If yes, which other programs would you like to see in a shopping mall?
11. Is the nearest shopping mall located in close enough proximity to your house to allow you to get there in a safe and secure way during winter?
12. If a shopping mall hosted some of the activities you can't normally partake in during the winter months such as gardening, how often would you visit it?

Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album

Photos taken by author

Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album (continued)

Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album (continued)

Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album (continued)

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Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album (continued)

Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album (continued)

Appendix D - Orléans, A Sprawling Suburb - Photo Album (continued)

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