

Laval today

Baseline Study
for rethinking Laval



Reflection paper 2015



INTRODUCTION

WHO ARE WE?

WHAT DO WE WANT FOR LAVAL?

The *Repensons Laval* operation was launched in the spring of 2014 in order to give Ville de Laval a strategic vision that will inspire the development of Laval over the next 20 years. However, to plan the future, you first need to know where we are at and who we are today. The document you have in hand is the result of an ambitious labour to shed light on our common history, define the current issues and determine the challenges that await us.

A snapshot of Laval in 2015

In this document, you will find the most comprehensive portrait possible of what Laval is today: its heritage, population and environment, its island territory with its neighbourhoods and agricultural zones, its economy, governance and assets, but also the major issues that it must face. In short, by clearly describing the current situation in Laval, with its strengths and weaknesses, this inventory lays the foundations upon which a sustainable future can be built.

Laval in all of its forms

The production of this background paper was made possible thanks to the mobilization of all of the Ville's departments, its major partners and the community. Everyone participated in pooling together their know-how, ensuring the collection of the data and defining the trends and issues in their respective field of intervention. This teamwork generated an enthusiasm that testifies to a new culture of co-operation and collaboration at Ville de Laval.

Toward a common vision

Cities everywhere are reinventing themselves. Laval is brimming with opportunities for becoming a model 21st-century city, where life is good. In laying down the challenges that are before us, this inventory made it possible to set our directions, define our values, establish our priorities and develop a strategic vision for Laval 2035 that is perfectly aligned with the reality of Laval's territory and community.

Enjoy your reading!

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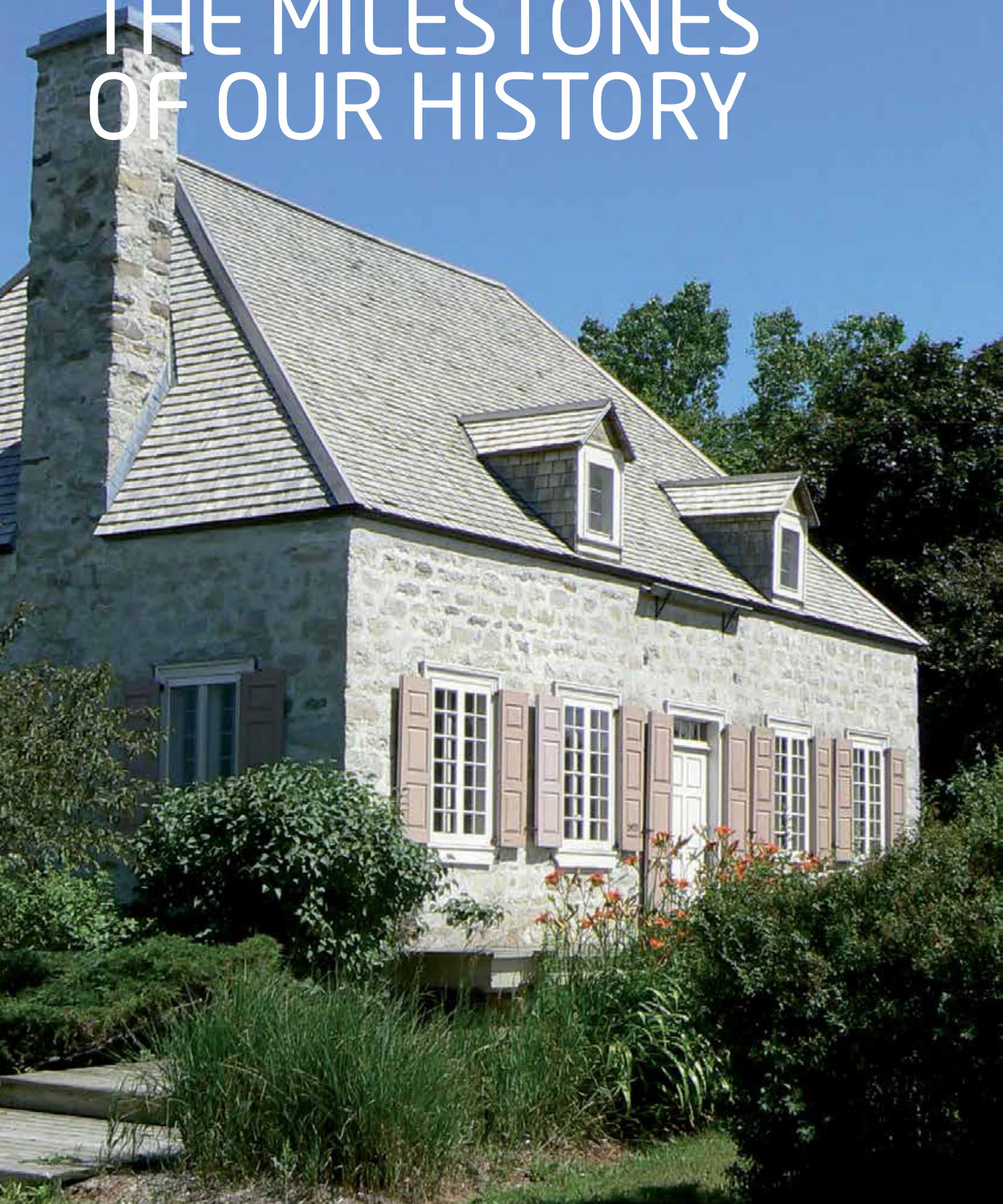
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THE MILESTONES OF OUR HISTORY



Before Laval, from 1636 to 1964

Seigneurie of Île Jésus (1636-1854)

- 1636** First granting of the seigneurie of Île Jésus to the Jesuits.
- 1672** The seigneurie is passed on to François Berthelot, omet uris secretary to Louis XIV.
- 1675** The seigneurie is granted to M^{gr} François Montmorency de Laval, after whom the city is named.
- 1680** The seigneurie is transferred to the Séminaire de Québec.
- Construction of roads and mills.
- Spread of agricultural settlements from the eastern tip of the island, along the rivers, and ultimately to the centre of the island.
- 1702** Creation of the parish of Saint-François de Sales.
- 1740** Creation of the parishes of Sainte-Rose de Lima and Saint-Vincent de Paul.
- 1774** Creation of the parish of Saint-Martin.
- 1854** End of the seigneurial system.

Start of the municipal system (1855-1915)

- 1855** Creation of the municipalities based on the parishes: Saint-François-de-Sales, Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, Sainte-Rose-de-Lima, Saint-Martin.
- 1869** Simultaneous creation of the parish and of the Parish Municipality of Sainte-Dorothée.
- More marked development of the village cores and gradual diversification of the use of the territory.
- 1858** Creation of the Village Municipality of Sainte-Rose.
- Start of the exploitation of quarries, especially in Saint-Vincent-de-Paul and Saint-Martin.
- 1912** Creation of Ville de Laval-des-Rapides, first municipality in the territory.
- 1915** Creation of the village municipality of L'Abord-à-Plouffe.
- Creation of Ville de Laval-sur-le-Lac.

Development and diversification (1915-1965)

Sectors of Île Jésus are developed as vacation destinations from the beginning of the 20th century. Resort municipalities appear around the beaches.

1930 Creation of the village of Plage Laval (later to become Laval-Ouest).

1941 Creation of Ville-des-Îles-Laval

Recreational activities also in the village of Sainte-Rose, in the parts of the parish of Sainte-Rose that later became the cities of Auteuil and Fabreville

1945 After the Second World War, there is a major rise in the population of Île Jésus following the construction of residential housing in various areas.

With residential construction comes the modernization and urbanization of most of the municipalities of Île Jésus, including increased services to the population (waterworks, sewers, parks, leisure facilities, road network).

1960 Creation of industrial areas, including those of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul.

1961 Creation of Ville de Chomedey (fusion of the municipalities of L'Abord-à-Plouffe, Renaud and Saint-Martin).

1964 The Commission d'étude sur les comités intermunicipaux de l'Île Jésus, headed by Judge Armand Sylvestre (referred to as the Commission Sylvestre), is put together.

1965 The Commission Sylvestre recommends the fusion of the island's 14 municipalities and the creation of what was to become Ville de Laval

The 14 initial municipalities of Laval

Ville d'Auteuil

Cité de Chomedey

Cité de Duvernay

Ville de Fabreville

Ville-des-Îles-Laval

Cité de Laval-des-Rapides

Cité de Laval-Ouest

Ville de Laval-sur-le-Lac

Cité de Pont-Viau

Ville de Sainte-Dorothée

Ville de Saint-François

Cité de Sainte-Rose

Ville de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul

Ville de Vimont

Laval: 50 years of history, from 1965 to the present

Development of the territory (1965-1974)

1965 Creation of Ville de Laval.

Organization of the new city: new municipal services, replacement of the bylaws, etc.

Construction of the main shopping centres in the 1960s and 1970s.

1968 During this period of effervescence, Laval underwent rapid urbanization according to the traditional suburban model based on single-family homes, spatial separation of the city's functions in strictly residential, commercial, service or industrial zones, and the use of automobiles for getting around. This is how the image of Laval that we currently have was formed.¹

1970 Adoption of zoning bylaw L-2000 and introduction of the development masterplan.

The neighbourhood of Laval-sur-le-Lac conserved its planning bylaws.

1970 The Centre de la nature opens to the public and follows through on a project proposed by the president of the Cercle des jeunes naturalistes in 1967.

1971 First Québec Winter Games.

Start of the construction of Autoroutes 13 and 440.

1973 First courses of Collège Montmorency in temporary premises.

1974 Inauguration of Carrefour Laval.

1974 Start of the study to establish Laval's city centre, between the junction of the 15 and 440 and the junction of the 15 and Saint-Martin Boulevard.

Development of the territory (1975-1987)

- 1975** First *Fête des voisins*.
- 1976** Inauguration of the building of Collège Montmorency.
- 1978** Adoption of the zoning bylaw decreeing nearly 30% of the territory as agricultural.
- 1978** Inauguration of the Cité-de-la-Santé.
- 1979** Inauguration of the Salle André-Mathieu.
- 1982** Consultation done with the population of Laval especially regarding leisure. The results of this survey led to a certain decentralization of the services related to leisure and culture with the establishment of the Bureaux municipaux des loisirs (BML).
- 1984** Start of the Revicentre projects to revitalize the city centres of Sainte-Rose, Saint-Vincent-de-Paul and Sainte-Dorothée as well as other strategic sectors of the city.
- 1984** Creation of the Laval Symphonic Orchestra (Orchestre symphonique de Laval).
- 1986** Inauguration of the Maison des arts de Laval, a major venue for visual and performing arts.
- 1987** Around the Institut Armand-Frappier, which was established several years earlier, begins the development of what would become the Parc scientifique et de haute technologie.

Consolidation of the territory (1990 to 2005)

- 1990** *Sommet de la personne*: public consultation on various social and community subjects that led to the modification of the service offerings by the Ville in these domains.
- 1991** Laval hosts the 27^e Finale des Jeux d'été du Québec
- 1992** Opening of Laval's courthouse.
- 1994** Inauguration of the Cosmodôme.
- 1998** Signing of an agreement between the Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Faune du Québec and Ville de Laval for the creation of a wildlife refuge on the Rivière-des-Mille-Îles within the scope of the PDZA (agricultural zone development plan).
- 2000** Development, during the 2000s, of areas oriented toward entertainment, shopping and dining, including the Centropolis and Quartier Laval.
- 2005** First International Choral Festival, which become the Mondial Loto-Québec de Laval.

Optimizing the occupation of the territory (2007 to present)

- 2007** The Cartier, de la Concorde and Montmorency Metro stations are put into operation. The arrival of the Metro gives rise to rethinking the land use of the areas around the stations to make these neighbourhoods more compact, more pleasant and more complete, oriented on active travel and public transport.
- 2011** Inauguration of the Laval campus of Université de Montréal.
- Adoption, by Ville de Laval, of a sustainable planning policy, *ÉvoluCité*, to improve the quality of life of its citizens and meet the challenges of urban development.
- 2012** Entry into effect of the PMAD (metropolitan land use development plan) of the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal (CMM). The municipalities of the CMM are called upon to establish high minimum residential density thresholds for the sectors located near the Metro stations and mass transit corridors.
- 2015** Laval celebrates the 50th anniversary of the fusion of its 14 Île Jésus municipalities

During this period, several actions to revitalize the older neighbourhoods were undertaken. Laval saw the emergence of denser, more specialized housing, meeting the population's increasingly diversified needs (seniors residences, condos, etc.). This period of consolidation is also consistent with the desire to develop the territory more sustainably in order to protect and enhance Laval's natural environments and agricultural zones ².

Today, Laval is the second largest city of the CMM. It has matured from a residential first-ring suburb into a peripheral city where the number of jobs is as great as the number of households* - more than 154,000 in 2011 according to Statistics Canada - and with its own economic and social vitality while participating closely in metropolitan life.

*A household can be made up of a family, of unrelated individuals or of only one person.

OUR TERRITORY



Its metropolitan context

Laval's territory is made up of the large Île Jésus and several islands or islets, some of which are still wild, on the Rivière-des-Prairies and Rivière-des-Mille-Îles. Located between the administrative regions of Montréal, Laurentides and Lanaudière, it has a land area of 246 km², of which 242 km² is on Île Jésus. It is connected by seven road bridges and one ferry to its southern neighbour, Montréal. It is delimited to the north by the municipalities of the second ring of Montréal suburbs, that is, Saint-Eustache, Boisbriand, Rosemère, Bois-des-Filion and Terrebonne, and is connected to each of them by a bridge.

Laval is part of the polycentric community of the Montréal agglomeration³ and is the main economic and residential pole north of the Island of Montréal.

Laval must harmonize its strategic vision with that of the CMM and ensure its land use development plan is compliant with the PMAD (metropolitan land use development plan).

A land use development plan adopted in 1990 and urban planning regulations direct and govern the entire territory.⁴ Ville de Laval expects to adopt a new land use development plan in December 2016 and revise its planning bylaws.

One city with 14 flavours

The 14 municipalities that were grouped to form the city of Laval have become the city's neighbourhoods and have kept their names and some of the physical characteristics that tend to distinguish them from each other. People in Laval still often use the names of these neighbourhoods to explain where they live and establish a sense of belonging to a location. However, for the purposes of administration and the provision of municipal services, the territory has been divided into six sectors.



Nature is ever present

Despite the transformation of the territory by people, nature is still very much present in Laval and it stands alongside agricultural and urban environments alike. Laval's natural landscape is namely made up of:

- Rich and diversified wildlife that includes nearly 60 species of fish and 230 species of birds.
- More than 250 kilometres of inland watercourses.
- 1,141 hectares of wetlands (ponds, swamps, marshes and bogs), regulated by the provincial government's Environment Quality Act.⁵
- 100 kilometres of public and private waterfronts along the two major rivers and the Lake of Two Mountains, including 37 public shorelines developed for citizens.
- Forest cover corresponding to 12% of Île Jésus (or 3,000 hectares), of which half is in 20 woods.
- 18 woods of ecological importance determined by Ville de Laval and protected by a municipal bylaw, particularly including five woods of ecological importance from a regional perspective and determined by the CMM, and 14 exceptional forest ecosystems (rare forest, old-growth forest or forest refuge for a threatened or vulnerable species).

There are 15 legally protected areas constituted by the Québec government⁶, specifically:

- Six muskrat habitats, two aquatic bird concentration areas, one wildlife sanctuary, mapped and protected under the Act Respecting the Conservation and Development of Wildlife.
- Two plant habitats, mapped and protected under the Act Respecting Threatened or Vulnerable Species.
- Two nature reserves and two voluntary conservation natural environments, mapped and protected under the Natural Heritage Conservation Act.

The Rivière-des-Mille-Îles Wildlife Refuge was established in 1998 under the Act Respecting the Conservation and Development of Wildlife. This is an exceptional site in terms of wildlife and plant life alike and serves as a habitat for animals likely to be classified as threatened or vulnerable.

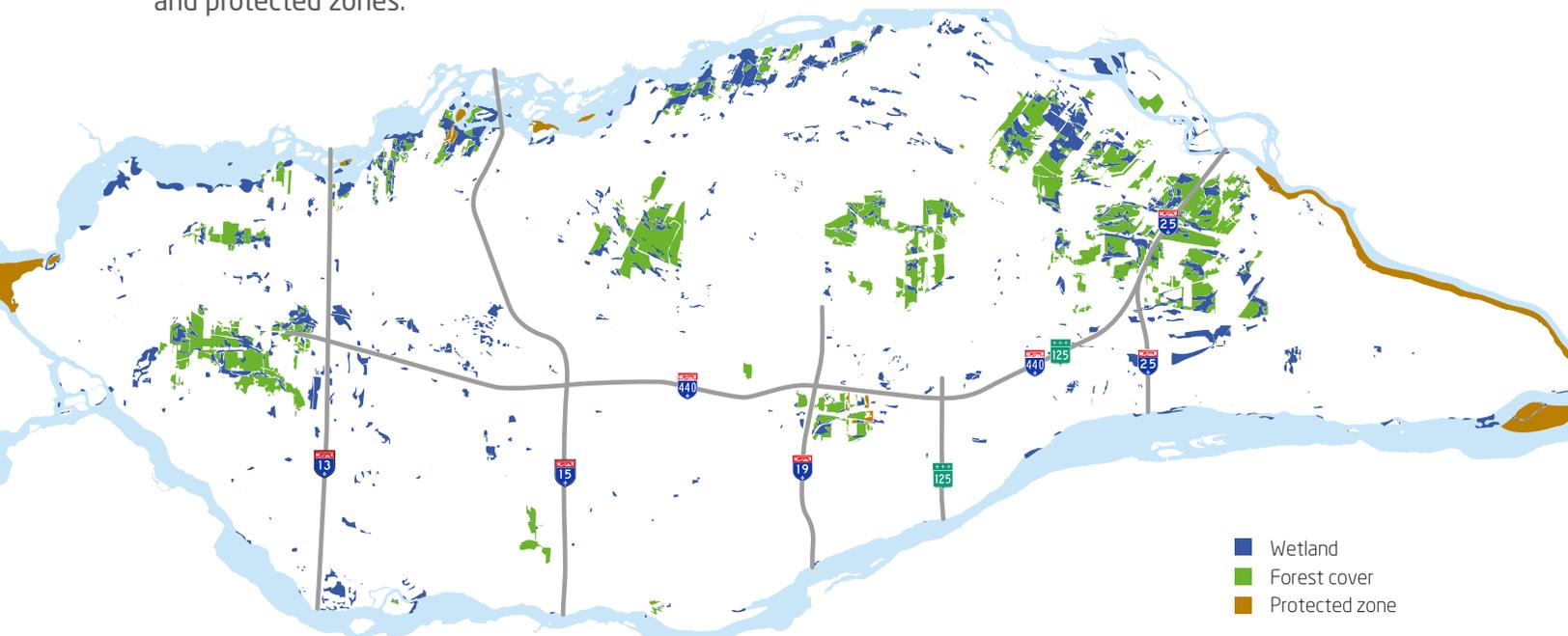
It is made up of ten islands covering 26.2 hectares of private land belonging to the cities of Laval and Rosemère and to the Éco-Nature organization.⁷ The latter assumes the management of this site and is currently working with partners, on the expansion of this refuge and of the Parc de la Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

The territory of Laval is characterized by the presence of various sizes of wooded areas and by its vast network of aquatic ecosystems, wetlands and shorelines. Woods of more than 0.3 hectares represent a land area of more than 3,000 hectares and are located in both the urban perimeter and the agricultural zone. Complementary to the wetlands and 250 kilometres of inland watercourses, woodland habitats are essential for the healthy growth of fauna and flora.

Various groups of citizens work toward the protection and enhancement of various woods in Laval, including the Corporation pour la mise en valeur du Bois de l'Équerre, the Association pour la protection du boisé Sainte-Dorothée and the Association pour la conservation du Bois Papineau.

To direct its actions toward the conservation of natural environments, in 2009, Ville de Laval developed a policy regarding the conservation and enhancement of natural environments with ecological importance. In this document, the Ville set forth the objective of increasing protected lands to 9% of the territory. Today, the CMM's PMAD set the objective for protected land to 17% in the metropolitan zone and proposes to work toward 30% of forest cover over the entire territory of the CMM, which will require considerable effort from all of the members of the metropolitan community.

Map of the network of forest ecosystems, wetlands, main watercourses and protected zones.



Regarding the development of Laval's image, 92% of residents feel that Ville de Laval should develop its image by enhancing and prioritizing its green side with its natural environments, parks and woods.

Source: Zins Beauchesne et associés
Survey conducted with Laval residents on their satisfaction and pride of living in Laval as well as on their perceptions and image of Laval, Fall 2014, n=500 respondents.

The agricultural environment

Nearly one third of Laval's land area, 71.3 km², has been protected since 1978 under the provisions of Québec's Act respecting the Preservation of Agricultural Land and Agricultural Activities. Only 51% of the zone is actually cultivated thanks to about 120 producers. The non-cultivated agricultural spaces are primarily fallow land, wooded areas, watercourses and wetlands, making up 41%.

The agricultural territory is divided into four zones, with the three largest located in the Eastern sectors (Duvernay, Auteuil, and Saint-François), Sainte-Rose and Sainte-Dorothée.

Map of the agricultural zone



The underutilization of about 11% (or more than 8 km²) of the agricultural territory is attributed to the fragmentation of properties into small plots prior to the delimitation of the permanent agricultural zone in the 1970s.

To this effect, Ville de Laval, in collaboration with the farmers and other players of the agricultural world, is working on the elaboration of a plan for the development of the agricultural zone. Ultimately, this plan should enable Laval to contribute to the metropolitan objective, set forth in the PMAD, which is to increase the land area of cultivated lands by 6%.

Outside of the permanent agricultural zone, "urban" farming is taking on increasing importance in the sector. At the industrial level, greenhouse production is starting to be practised on the rooftops of large factories and warehouses. At the domestic level, about 33.5% of residents of Laval grow food in

their garden or in pots on the balcony. Community-wise, some 12 organizations operate collective or community gardens.

Furthermore, agrotourism is alive and well within Laval's territory and generates substantial investments. Laval has earned its reputation as Québec's horticultural capital: it offers the province's greatest concentration of horticultural greenhouse growers⁸ and showcases the charm of the rural sectors with its three agrotourism circuits:

- *La Route des Fleurs*, in Sainte-Dorothée.
- *La Venue des Récoltes*, in the neighbourhoods of Auteuil and Saint-François (in the north and north-west part of the island).
- *Les Chemins de la Nature*, on boulevard des Mille-Îles and boulevard Sainte-Rose Ouest.

The urban environment

Laval's urban territory is now 90% constructed or occupied.

With the exception of the old villages, this urban territory is characterized by a rather marked functional separation which is typical of suburbs. Industries are concentrated in the clearly delimited industrial zones, the shopping areas are along the major thoroughfares or highways, and residential areas are grouped in neighbourhoods with their own parks and schools.

The whole is organized around automobile travel so that going from your home to the grocery store without using a car is usually not an option.

Although single-family dwellings dominate Laval's residential landscape, there are major variations in the density of housing over the territory and even, sometimes, from one plot to the next.

The most densely populated areas are generally between Autoroutes 13 and 19 and south of Autoroute 440. The gross average residential densities vary mainly from 30 to 50 units per hectare with sectors reaching 50 to 100, and even 100 to 200 units per hectare.

Elsewhere, the density is more like 15 to 30 and 30 to 50 units per hectare. Certain old vacation territories, such as Laval-sur-le-Lac, are characterized by a density of less than 10 units per hectare.

Likewise, although the large majority of constructions were built in the past 50 years, building quality and its alignment with the urban potential of the various sectors vary greatly throughout the city, and it is mostly in the south-central area that urban rehabilitation challenges arise.

The aging and socio-economic devitalization of certain neighbourhoods has led the CRÉ (regional conference of elected officials) to support RUI (integrated urban revitalization) initiatives in a few of them.⁹

In other cases, the trigger was the arrival of a Metro station: Ville de Laval had to revise the planning of the sectors neighbouring the three stations that appeared on its territory and adopt special urban planning programs for their redevelopment.¹⁰

The opportunities for urban redevelopment do not end there. Even before the creation of Ville de Laval, several businesses established themselves along the major thoroughfares, often in one-storey buildings. The result, on boulevards like Saint-Martin, Curé-Labelle and Laurentides, is a nondescript and diffuse commercial landscape.

Nowadays, these major arteries and their surrounding areas are parts of the territory that would need to be redesigned¹¹ to better meet the needs of the community, all the more so as commercial activity is undergoing profound a change that is compounded by factors such as e-commerce.

Furthermore, in the past few decades, a city centre has formed within a very large quadrangle delimited by Autoroute 440 and Chomedey, Notre-Dame and Industriel boulevards.

In addition to major shopping centres, there are now specialized commercial arteries with a regional scope (car dealerships, furniture and home product stores) as well as a concentration of buildings housing offices and financial services.

This is also home to Collège Montmorency, a Université de Montréal campus, next to Montmorency station, Laval's city hall and courthouse, the Maison des arts as well as condominiums or apartment buildings.

The Place Bell amphitheatre, which is currently under construction, will serve as a multipurpose sport and cultural complex. However, this city centre still lacks the density, compactness, human scale and lively public spaces that usually characterize an attractive downtown core.

This is surely related to the space accorded to cars. Autoroute 15 runs through the sector. The stores, restaurants and entertainment establishments are concentrated in commercial centres with their own parking lots. Finally, the width of the streets and the setting of the sidewalks do not provide a welcoming environment for pedestrians.

Since 2012, and at least for the next decade, the PMAD of the CMM¹² has greatly influenced the transformation of the territory of Laval. Indeed, the PMAD sets significant density objectives along the strategic public transit corridors and near the Metro stations and existing and projected train stations so that these locations may evolve according to the TOD (transit-oriented development) principle.

Mobility

A well-organized road network

As Laval was developed in the age of the automobile, the convenience of getting around by car and finding parking, is one of the main characteristics of the territory mentioned by its citizens and visitors.¹³

The autoroutes, which are the largest of the major roads, are the primary road network and fall under the Ministère des transports du Québec's jurisdiction. This department is responsible for managing a total of 54 kilometres of autoroute in Laval alone. No less than five autoroutes run through or cover the territory. In the north-south axis, there are four: A-13 (Chomedey Autoroute), A-15 (Laurentian Autoroute), A-19 (Papineau Autoroute) A-25 (Louis-H.-La Fontaine Autoroute). The A-15 and A-25 are the only two autoroutes that directly connect the South Shore to the North Shore. The A-19 ends at Boulevard Dagenais, and becomes Avenue Papineau (Route 335), which in turn leads to Athanase-David Bridge, over the Rivière-des-Mille-Îles.

A project to extend this autoroute up to Autoroute 640, in Bois-des-Filion, is currently under study. Laval's territory is intersected, from the A-15 to the A-25, by only one east-west road, Autoroute 440.

The territory; therefore, is relatively well served by the road network that promoted its industrial, commercial and residential development, but also by the more recent road network of the municipalities further north, toward which the autoroutes extend. On the other hand, the congestion during rush hours is notorious along all of these Laval autoroutes, which have also become recognized sources of air, light and noise pollution.

The secondary road network comprises national roads under provincial jurisdiction (Routes 125, 33, 117 and 148) and the major municipal arteries. This network was developed around a road that goes around the island and various range roads and country roads, so that it forms a grid that is more or less orthogonal.

The tertiary network, the collector and local roads from the various neighbourhoods, follows different patterns according to the period of construction, but in general, and particularly over the past 40 years, the local networks were designed to discourage through traffic and speeding and to ensure the tranquillity of the neighbourhood units. However, these looped streets and cul-de-sacs reduce the connectivity of the network, lengthen and discourage active pedestrian and bicycle traffic toward the local points of service which are actually near by, as the crow flies.

Rail transport for people and goods

Two railways serve for the transport of merchandise and traverse Île Jésus: one running north-south, the other east-west.

Two AMT (Agence métropolitaine de transport) commuter lines serve and cross the island: the Deux-Montagnes line, located at the western tip of the island; the Saint-Jérôme line, which runs through the very middle of the island. These two lines enable Laval residents to get to Montréal's downtown area in less than one hour. In total, five train stations are located on the territory of Laval:

- Île-Bigras and Sainte-Dorothée, on the Montréal-Deux-Montagnes line.
- De la Concorde, Vimont and Sainte-Rose, on the Montréal-Saint-Jérôme line.

Public transport that keeps improving

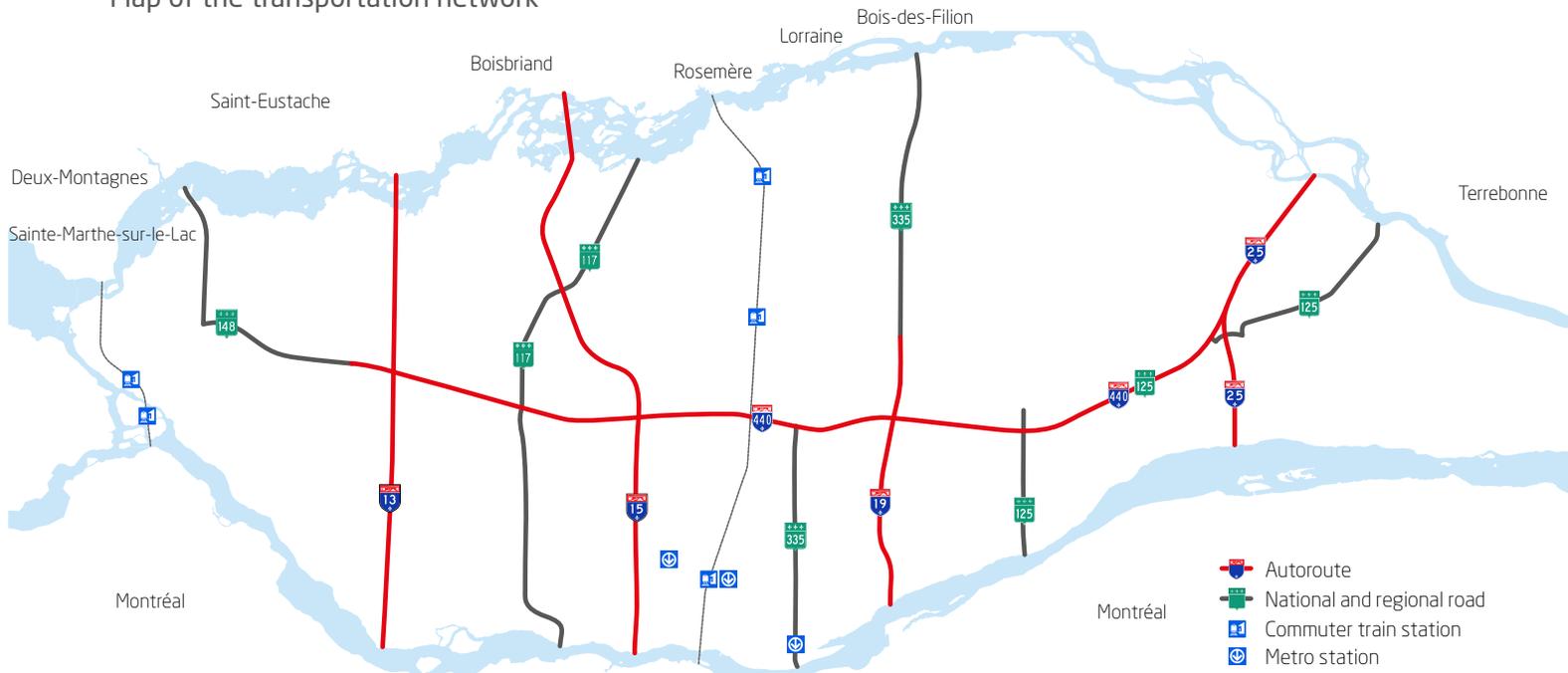
The Société de transport de Laval (STL) provides mass transit by bus and paratransit services on Île Jésus and up to certain destinations on the Island of Montréal. In Laval itself, numerous bus routes ensure connections with the commuter trains and the Montréal Metro at the Cartier, De la Concorde and Montmorency stations. The latter station also provides access to bus lines of the Conseil intermunicipal de transport Laurentides (CITL) and the Municipalité régionale de comté (MRC) des Moulins. The Origine-Destination enquiry conducted in the fall of 2013, which included 78,831 households, provides a portrait of the movements of residents of the Montréal metropolitan region, for all modes of transport.

Among other things, this study shows a rise in the market share of mass transit toward downtown Montréal and Laval. This increase is probably largely attributable to the arrival of the Metro in Laval in 2007.

Furthermore, the rate of growth of travel by public transport between 2008 and 2013 is higher for the residents of Laval and of the North and South suburbs (27.8%, 33.3% and 22.2% respectively) than for residents of the Island of Montréal (5.7%) and Longueuil (4.2%).¹⁴

The STL busses are primarily used by youths, 54% of the STL's clientele is 25 and under. The majority of passengers use mass transit to get to work and to educational institutions.

Map of the transportation network



Toward sustainable mobility

Throughout the world, a model of urban development based solely on automobile travel is no longer considered viable. In this context, Ville de Laval presented the consultation document *Sustainable Mobility Plan* in 2011 and adopted its Active Mobility Plan in 2013.

This document contains the Ville and the STL's planned objectives and numerous actions to achieve these objectives, namely:

- To reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions (GGE) by 50% per resident by 2031. Traffic is responsible for 57% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Laval.¹⁵
- Electrify the STL's bus fleet, electrify the commuter trains and deploy stations for recharging electric cars on the territory (100 public stations).
- Develop Laval's employment poles to limit the growth of the pendulum movements toward Montréal.
- Double the modal share of active transport so that it will reach 14% in 2031.
- Put pedestrian and bicycle travel at the forefront in the planning of new neighbourhoods and the redesign of existing streets.
- Find a solution to integrate motorized mobility aids on public roads, given that these are used more and more by the aging population, and encourage universal access.

Included among the achievements are:

- The eight Communauto car-sharing stations on the territory.
- A considerable reduction of CO₂ emissions, 875 tons per year since 2008, by operating all of the STL's vehicles on B5 biodiesel.
- The arrival of the first 100% electric bus in 2012.

The next ten years will be crucial for the STL and Laval alike. The commitments made by the STL and the Ville, described in the Sustainable Mobility Plan, regarding the service offering and the tightening of the synergy between mass transit and urban development, will require coordinated actions and a firm resolve to make Laval less dependent on automobiles. Because even now, automobiles are the main means of travel at peak times; their modal share is about 75%, while that of mass transit is only about 7%.

As the population and the densification of Laval is rising and employment is steadily developing, there is no lack of challenges. The service model, highly oriented on links with Montréal, will need to shift to an organization that takes greater account of the dynamic of travel within Laval itself, as internal movements are on the rise.

In this regard, the STL will undertake an in-depth revision of its network to define a new service structure for the 2016, 2021 and 2031 time horizons.

A mainly recreational cycling network

Laval's 175-kilometre cycling network is made up of bike lanes (44%), exclusive cycle tracks (40%), designated roadways (14%) and multipurpose paths for pedestrians and bicycles (2%) that are not all interconnected. This network is used essentially for recreational purposes, as very few people use bicycles a utilitarian means of transport. For that matter, the main generators of traffic (schools, places of employment, commercial poles) are poorly served by this cycling network.

Sparsely used pedestrian paths

In total, the city has more than 1,050 kilometres of pedestrian paths (all types included), but Laval residents only travel on foot over very short distances: less than two kilometres for 95% of them.

Several residential neighbourhoods have no sidewalks, and pedestrians walk in the street, which can make some people feel unsafe and discourage them from walking, thus depriving them of a basic physical activity.¹⁶

Between 35% and 40% of Laval residents work in Laval, which puts increasing pressure on improving their mobility. The development of mass transit and active mobility, including bike paths and sidewalks, represents a sizeable challenge.

The elements that would increase Laval residents' appreciation of mobility are:

21% of Laval residents spontaneously mentioned the improvement of mass transit (frequency and cost).

17% of Laval residents referred more specifically to the lack of access to mass transport outside of peak times, more particularly in the 18 to 34 age bracket (25%).

*Source: Zins Beauchesne et associés.
Survey conducted with Laval residents on their satisfaction and pride of living in Laval as well as on their perceptions and image of Laval, Fall 2014, n=500 respondents.*

Active mobility in the summertime

A high proportion of respondents said they never walked or used a bicycle or other wheeled athletic equipment as a means of utilitarian travel because of the lack of sidewalks or bike paths (29%) or because the distances they have to travel is too great (25%). To encourage people to walk or cycle more, the installation of continuous sidewalks or multipurpose paths is desired.

71% of Laval residents choose walking, among other means of transport, to travel to a retail location.

50% also choose to use a bicycle or rollerblades to travel to a retail location.

*Source: Zins Beauchesne et associés.
Survey conducted with Laval residents on mobility, Spring 2014, n=1,533 respondents*

The heritage setting

The natural and built heritage of a territory gives it its own character. The conservation and knowledge of this heritage forge the community's identity.

The Maison André-Benjamin-Papineau, located in Chomedey, is protected under Québec's Cultural Heritage Act. Today, it is a cultural asset of the Québec heritage and an art gallery. Completed in 1830, it is a prime example of the rural homes in the first half of the 19th century.

In addition to the Maison André-Benjamin-Papineau, five other buildings are classed as heritage buildings: Sainte-Rose-de-Lima church, Maison Charbonneau, Maison Joseph-Labelle, Maison Pierre-Paré, and Maison Therrien.¹⁷

There are still several old buildings that stand in testimony to Île Jésus' former villages and countryside. Urban planning bylaws set forth provisions aimed at conserving the most remarkable character of these locations. Five urban heritage sites are thus protected, including Sainte-Rose, Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, Village Saint-Martin, Sainte-Dorothée and the one located near the intersection of Saint-Elzéar and des Laurentides boulevards. Three rural heritage territories are also covered: Boulevard des Mille-Îles/Terrasse Coutu, Boulevard des Mille-Îles, and Avenue des Perron.

Working toward an eco-responsible occupation of the territory

Today's understanding of the need to respect the environment and fight climate change leads to the modification of development practices. It must also be noted that the commitment and readiness of the citizens regarding the environment are on the rise everywhere. Laval residents are increasingly concerned by the issues of climate change, pollution, protection of natural environments,¹⁸ and governments are following suit.

In 2011, Ville de Laval developed a sustainable urban planning policy called *ÉvoluCité*.¹⁹ With this policy, the Ville made four commitments:

- Coordinate sustainable urban planning in Laval.
- Prioritize the development of the city's key sectors when planning.
- Invest in the public domain.
- Include the citizens and partners in the process.

In 2015, Ville de Laval started the revision of its land use development plan.

Ecological water management

One of the sectors in which the Ville is called upon to invest robustly in the next few years is that of its waste water management infrastructure. Laval provides high-quality drinking water to homes thanks to its three water treatment plants and its water supply system. Its three wastewater treatment plants are efficient with regards to the quality of the water released into the rivers. However, sometimes the sewer network (which includes sewers that combine sanitary and storm discharges), the pumping stations and the treatment stations are stretched to their limit. During the rainy or snowmelt seasons, overcapacity may be reached, causing contaminated water to be discharged into the watercourses. This phenomenon is called “overflow.”

The Ministère du Développement durable, Environnement et de la Lutte Contre les Changements Climatiques (MDDELCC), recently tightened the rules in order to contain overflows and protect the water quality of the rivers. Since April 2014, no new land development or redevelopment project is allowed to result in an increase of overflows. Such an increase might stem from the addition of housing units and increased sanitary discharges or the reduction of the soil's capacity to absorb rain and the additional inflow of rainwater following the construction of streets, buildings, parking areas, etc.

In parallel, Ville de Laval, in accordance with provincial policies and regulations, adopted several measures that will enable it to better manage water. It no longer allows the filling, redirecting or canalling of watercourses for residential purposes.

The Ville is working on updating the masterplans that will enable better management of overflows. To this effect, the masterplans for the sewers are a priority as they have not been revised since the early 2000s. The Ville expects to have to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to bring its infrastructure up to the standards.

The increase in the territory's occupation density in certain sectors of the city, sought by the PMAD to optimize the occupation of the territory, is closely related to this.

Waste Management

Ville de Laval has implemented several green initiatives over the past few years aimed at offering its residents a pleasant living environment and protecting the natural environments on its territory. Since a family living in Laval produces about one ton of garbage per year, it is paramount for the Ville to ensure the proper management of this waste. To do this, the city plans to revise and implement its 2012-2017 Waste Management Program (PGMR).

Thanks to this plan, Ville de Laval expects to increase its rate of processed waste from 35% in 2012 to more than 60% by 2017. To do this, the proposed plan sets forth 41 measures, including the establishment of a composting centre capable of processing 50,000 tons of waste per year, in addition to a biomethanization centre with an annual processing capacity of 65,000 tons of waste.

The PGMR will be included within the scope of the implementation of the CMM's *Plan métropolitain de gestion des matières résiduelles* [metropolitan waste management plan], which is currently being revised. This metropolitan plan draws its objectives, which include the recuperation of 70% of recyclable materials and 60% of organic materials, from the *Politique québécoise de gestion des matières résiduelles* (PQGMR) [Québec waste management policy].

Thanks to the massive distribution, in 2008, of wheeled bins to all Laval households, the rate of diversion of recyclable materials reached 53% in 2014.

The collection of organic materials is offered in Sainte-Rose (Champfleury), Laval-des-Rapides and Chomedey, where it covers more than 6,500 households. In 2014, the rate of recuperation of organic materials in the sectors served was 60%, which perfectly meets the recuperation objective set by the PQGMR. With the PGMR, the Ville intends to implement the collection of organic materials in all buildings with eight units or less on its territory.²⁰

OUR TERRITORY

The main observations

Nature is a strong presence, but needs protecting

Nature occupies an important share of Laval's territory. Be it in the form of inland watercourses, rivers, woods or wetlands, nature in Laval rubs shoulders with agricultural and urban landscapes. However, despite laws that protect certain spaces, nature in Laval is losing ground and the tree cover is diminishing. This decline is so concerning that the new PMAD has set high objectives for the protection of natural areas. These requirements will necessitate considerable actions from the Ville.

Agricultural activities to develop

Although one third of Laval's land area is protected under the Act Respecting the Preservation of Agricultural Land and Agricultural Activities, the area of cultivated land could increase while preserving the ecological function of the environment. This underutilization is attributable to the fragmentation of the landscape and the presence of fallow land. To optimize the use of this territory, as well as to protect and enhance it, Ville de Laval is developing a plan for the development of the agricultural zone that will enable certain agricultural lands to go back into production.

A changing functional city

Laval's urban territory is characterized by traditional functionalism, defined by a marked functional segregation typical of suburbs. It is also poorly organized: the layouts do not always correspond with the utilizations. However, the introduction of the PMAD will have a major influence on the transformation of Laval's territory. Furthermore, the development of a new land use and development plan for Laval will remedy the lack of urban planning and design that the city experienced over the past few decades. In this regard, the design of several major arteries, such as the Laurentides and Curé-Labelle boulevards, will need to be revised to integrate them more harmoniously into the urban landscape.

Mobility undergoing transformation

Designed during the era of the automobile, Laval is distinctively easy to travel in by car and find parking. Its road network is substantial and well tiered, although rush-hour traffic is a steadily growing problem. While the design of the local streets ensures a certain tranquillity in the neighbourhoods, it lengthens and discourages travel by foot or bicycle. The pedestrian paths remain sparsely used and the cycling network is primarily recreational. However, the public transportation services offered are improving, and the arrival of the Metro in 2007 has had a positive impact on the use of mass transit. Thus, the demographic growth within Laval's territory, the aging population and growing concerns about the environment and social inclusion are slowly transforming the territory and the needs of the clientele that uses the public transportation.

Village heritage

The recognized built framework of Laval is one of countryside and villages. The city has six historically classed buildings and five protected urban heritage sites. It also has three protected rural territories. However, its patrimony is aging and must be better protected, enhanced and requalified.

Management of the territory oriented toward eco-responsibility

Thanks to its sustainable urban planning policy, *ÉvoluCité*, Ville de Laval put into action several plans to ensure the eco-responsible management of its territory. Thus, the Sustainable Mobility Plan, the Active Mobility Plan, the policy regarding the conservation and enhancement of natural environments with ecological importance, and the waste management plan contain objectives that will help Laval become a greener city. Wastewater management remains one of the areas in which the Ville will need to invest the most over the coming years, particularly because of the problems with overflow, given that as long as this work related to wastewater is not completed, the occupation of the territory could be set back. Likewise, the increase of active transport and mass transit and the management of organic waste materials remain sizeable challenges for Laval.

OUR COMMUNITY



Changing demographics

Population growth continues

Since its foundation in 1965, Laval has grown consistently. Between 2006 and 2011, Laval's population increased by 8.9%, as compared to 5.9% for Québec.²¹ In 2014, the population of Laval reached 420,870 residents.²²

The Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ) forecasts that between 2011 and 2036, the Laval's population will increase by 31%, which is the highest rate in the province, along with that of the region of Lanaudière. In comparison, the population of Québec as a whole is only expected to increase by 17.3% during the same period. Inward migration (from other regions of Québec or from outside of Québec) is expected to be the principal source of demographic growth in Laval.

TABLE 1
Projected population according to the reference,
high and low scenarios, Laval, 2011-2036

Year	PROJECTION SCENARIO		
	Reference	Low	High
2011	406 100	406 100	406 100
2016	435 200	434 300	436 500
2021	463 000	456 800	471 500
2026	488 900	474 200	508 600
2031	511 800	487 100	542 900
2036	530 800	495 300	573 400

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Perspectives démographiques du Québec et des régions, 2011-2061, 2014 edition.*

A higher proportion of young people than the average for Québec, relatively fewer people of working age and a higher proportion of seniors.

In 2011, the percentage of the population aged 65 and over was 15.6% in Laval, as compared to 14.8% in Québec.

The 15 to 64 age group (working age population) was 67.2% of the population of Laval, as compared to 68.5% for Québec.

Finally, individuals between 0 and 14 years old represented 17.3% of the population of Laval, as compared to 16.7% for Québec.

In 2011, the median age of Laval residents was 40.9 years, as compared to 41.9 years for Québec as a whole.²³

According to the ISQ, between 2011 and 2036, the number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 79.8%, to 126,000 people. During the same period, the number of Laval residents aged 80 and over will soar by 167.6%, to 44,700. In 2036, the number of people aged 65 and over will overtake the number of youths aged 20 and under.

It is important to note that this trend toward the aging of the population is generalized throughout the province. Comparatively, the decrease of the demographic weight of the 20-64 age group, where the majority of people who are active in the job market are situated, will be less marked in 2036 in Laval (down by 7.6 percentage points) than in Québec as a whole (down by 9.1 percentage points).

TABLE 2
Expected evolution of the population of Laval,
by age groups, from 2011 to 2036

	Population		Demographic weight (% of the total population)	
	2011	2036	2011	2036
0-19	95 500	120 900	24 %	23 %
20-64	248 200	283 800	61 %	53 %
65 and over	62 400	126 000	15 %	24 %
80 and over	16 700	44 700	4 %	8 %

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, Perspectives démographiques du Québec et des régions 2011-2061, 2014 édition.

While the region of Montréal is facing the issue of family retention, the region of Laval is benefitting from this migration and reporting slower projected population aging than for Québec as a whole. This forecast is a concern nonetheless, because an aging population will result in this population's increased rate of dependence on the various assistance and volunteer organizations, in the increased contribution required of taxpayers for maintaining the essential public programs and ensuring a decent quality of life for the population as a whole and, perhaps, in reduced appeal of the territory for private employers.

More large families than in Québec as a whole

According to the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS), Laval had 112,880 families.²⁴ Specifically, these are citizens living as couples with or without children. This represents an increase of 6.7% from 2006.

Families without children represent 35.4% of Laval families as compared to 42.2% for Québec. Families with one child represent 27.6% of families in Laval (27% for Québec). Families with two children represent 26.6% of families in Laval (22.2% for Québec). Finally, families with three or more children represent 10.4% of Laval families (8.6% for Québec).²⁵

The median income of families in Laval, couples or single parent, with or without children at home, is greater than the median income of the population in the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Montréal.

TABLE 3
Family income, Laval and the CMA of Montréal in 2011

Family incomes		
	Laval	CMR of Montréal
Median income of all families with or without children at home	\$ 75 020	\$ 70 794
Median income of families made up of a couple and at least one child at home	\$ 92 224	\$ 90 630
Median income of single-parent families with at least one child at home	\$ 50 599	\$ 45 028

Source: National Household Survey (NHS), 2011.

A population that is largely French speaking and a relatively high proportion of allophones.

In 2011, 7% of the population of Laval declared English as their sole native language, 60.8% French, and 28.5% another native language. In comparison, province wide, these percentages were 7.7% for English, 78.1% for French, and 12.3% for another language.²⁶

TABLE 4
Number of allophones in Laval in 2011

Non-official languages spoken in Laval (2011)	Number of people
Arabic	34 170
Italian	25 180
Greek	17 325
Spanish	22 605
Arménian	8 765

Source: National Household Survey (NHS), 2011.

Early childhood

During the 2011-2012 school year, a portrait of the development of Laval children enrolled in kindergarten was drawn up. According to the 2012 Québec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten (QSCFK), the proportion of children who were born outside of Canada was greater in Laval than in Québec as a whole (7% versus 6%). Consequently, the proportion of children who have at least French as their native language is lower (52% versus 78%). This raises several major challenges, among them providing assistance and/or services to the child as well as to the members of the child's family.

Substantial immigration

The demographic weight of immigrants in Laval increased from 20% in 2006 to 25% in 2011. Today, more than 102,000 immigrants live in Laval. In comparison, Montréal had 846,600 immigrants in 2011, which represents 22.6% of the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA).²⁷ Slightly more than 8% of the immigrants admitted in Québec between 2002 and 2011 and present in the province lived in Laval in January 2013.²⁸ In comparison, 16.3% of immigrants lived in Montréal in 2011.²⁹

The data in Table 5 confirms that the immigrant population is concentrated in the central neighbourhoods located near the bridges that connect Laval and Montréal and that Chomedey stands out from the city as a whole with a proportion of immigrants that is higher than the average.

TABLE 5
Laval neighbourhoods with the most immigrants by percentage of the total population (2011)

Sectors	Distribution
Chomedey	36 %
Laval-des-Rapides	26 %
Sainte-Dorothée	25 %
Pont-Viau	23 %
Duvernay	23 %
Laval-Ouest	16 %
Sainte-Rose	16 %

Source : CRÉ de Laval

The distribution of affluence and poverty

The income of Laval households is slightly higher than those of households in Montréal or in the province as a whole. However, the city is facing an increase in the number of people with low income.

TABLE 6
Distribution of households in Laval and Québec,
by income bracket, in 2013

Household income	Laval households (%)	Québec households (%)
Less than \$ 20 000	9%	14%
\$ 20 000 - \$ 39 999	18%	21%
\$ 40 000 - \$ 59 999	20%	20%
\$ 60 000 - \$ 79 999	17%	16%
\$ 80 000 - \$ 99 999	13%	11%
\$ 100 000 - \$ 119 999	6%	5%
\$ 120 000 - \$ 139 999	5%	4%
\$ 140 000 - \$ 159 999	4%	3%
\$ 160 000 - \$ 179 999	3%	2%
\$ 180 000 - \$ 199 999	2%	2%
\$ 200 000 and over	3%	2%

Source : Institut de la statistique du Québec

In the central areas in the south of Laval, there is a considerable proportion of low-income families, single-parent families and children under six years of age living in poverty. This reality is particularly concerning as it affects nearly one out of four children. People living alone, especially seniors, are also part of the vulnerable groups that are strongly represented in these neighbourhoods. Finally, a substantial proportion of immigrants, especially new arrivals who are likely to experience major economic, social and personal difficulties in their immigration process, are also found in these same neighbourhoods.

Thus, many households face difficult living conditions. Furthermore, residential mobility (moving at least once between two five-year censuses) is higher in underprivileged neighbourhoods than in the rest of Laval, which influences the dynamic of social and community life.

The fight against poverty and exclusion

For the territory, several modes of community co-operation and development have been established and put in place to increase the capacity for action of individuals and communities. The objectives include focussing on local social and health services and adapting them to the needs of vulnerable populations, to consolidate the actions regarding food security and, finally, to promote healthy living habits.³⁰

Laval can count on some 140 community organizations that are active in multiple domains and that are devoted to providing services to citizens: emergency help and social support, social development, food security, etc.

These organizations are present in every neighbourhood, but more particularly in those that are the most densely populated and the most underprivileged. In these neighbourhoods, the organizations face growing needs and the increasing complexity of social issues.

To improve the living conditions for residents in severely underprivileged sectors, integrated urban revitalization initiatives (RUI) are currently in progress in Chomedey, Place-Saint-Martin and Pont-Viau.³¹ These initiatives are funded by Ville de Laval and several governmental and institutional partners.

In the future, more diversity and more inequality will make social needs less homogeneous and expectations more differentiated. The municipality will have to adapt to the complexity of the social changes, in addition to facing problematic situations the scale of which rises as the city grows: homelessness, pockets of devitalization, social exclusion, illiteracy, etc.

Support for the most vulnerable populations

Laval contributes directly to developing solidarity and social inclusion by ensuring all citizens have access to sports, leisure and cultural activities. In so doing, the Ville specifically encourages the integration of new immigrants and contributes to social revitalization.

With its social, community and public partners, Ville de Laval has adopted objectives, shares in their responsibility and optimizes the community's resources. These players are important interlocutors in various areas, including building relationships with governmental and private institutions for supporting seniors, welcoming the immigrant population, addressing poverty and housing.

Support for seniors

In Laval, there are more than 85 organizations at the heart of the intervention with seniors and working on the local and regional level. The services offered by community and institutional resources as a whole are many and varied, and address both material and social needs.

The growth of the senior population, which will continue over the next decade, will represent 27% of the population, and will pose challenges in terms of transport, housing, leisure, etc. Most importantly, the impact of this population increase on the organization of health services and their accessibility will necessarily be significant. This means that the community organizations in Laval will inevitably be called upon to put more and more services in place.

In February 2014, Ville de Laval adopted its *Municipalité amie des aînés* (MADA) [age-friendly city] action plan. With the contribution of its various community and institutional partners, the MADA action plan encourages the global and integrated intervention of the various partners to offer seniors a suitable environment that meets their needs and their characteristics, while encouraging their participation and inclusion in the community.

As in many other urban regions of Québec, Laval seniors live in a certain precarious financial situation and have more trouble finding suitable housing. They need housing that is easy to access, as well as affordable services and leisure facilities near their domicile. Likewise, access to health care must be facilitated.

In view of making transit easier for seniors, the Société de transport de Laval offers free transportation at all times to people aged 65 and over.

Prevention of abuse and promotion of the feeling of safety are major challenges for people in this age group. Thus, Ville de Laval and its partners must put into place measures to eliminate isolation, enhance the role of seniors, and ensure that they can pursue their activities.

Welcoming the immigrant population

As Laval has become a residential choice for new immigrants to Québec, one of its major challenges is closely related to its capacity to attract, integrate and retain the immigrant population. Furthermore, this population is heterogeneous, and the level of precariousness of its living conditions varies greatly. The engagement, mobilization and harmonization of the actions of the community, using an integrated and complementary approach, seems necessary to ensure the coherence of the efforts and interventions relative to immigration in Laval.³²

On this subject, as early as 1993, Ville de Laval adopted a municipal orientation in matters of intercultural relations called *Ensemble à Laval* [together in Laval]. This orientation focused on promoting access to services, as well as the adhesion and participation of people of all cultures to community life in Laval. Currently, the *Ensemble à Laval* orientation is in the process of being updated, and the main guiding principles will set the municipal approach with regard to the settlement of immigrants in the territory.

The Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Diversité et de l'Inclusion (MIDI) of the government of Québec acknowledges and financially supports three organizations: two of them have as their mission to help new immigrants establish themselves in Laval, and one provides assistance in their qualification and search for employment.

Over the past several years, Ville de Laval has worked together with MIDI as well as with institutional partners to support projects that address the issues defined in Laval related to receiving new immigrants.

Housing

Nearly three out of five households in Laval, 58%, are homeowners, and a little more than two out of five, 42%, are renters. Approximately half (48%) of Laval residents live in a single-family house.

Furthermore, close to one third of renter households (or close to 15% of all households) devote more than 30% of their income to housing.³³

The shortage of rental units in Laval is one of the most severe in the metropolitan region, which puts additional pressure on the most vulnerable groups (single-parent families, new immigrants, seniors, youths, the homeless, etc.). The proportion of social housing or affordable units is low, particularly near services and mass transit. It is also impossible to know the number of dwellings that are adapted for the impaired, however, the needs for such housing are critical.³⁴

Health

A population that perceives its health condition as poorer than the average in Québec

In general, the residents of Laval perceive their physical and mental health condition, including their level of stress, as slightly poorer than that of other Quebecers.³⁵

More than half the residents of Laval (52%) declare being overweight or obese, as compared to 51% of Quebecers as a whole.

Less than half (43%) of Laval residents engage in physical activity during their leisure time or are moderately active, as compared to 50% of Quebecers as a whole. In addition, only 44% of Laval residents eat five or more portions of fruits or vegetables per day, as compared to 47% of Quebecers.

On the other hand, 21% of Laval residents currently smoke every day or occasionally, as compared to 22% of Quebecers, while 11% abuse alcohol, as compared to 19% of Quebecers as a whole.

A health care network that brings together the public, private and community players³⁶

Table 7 presents an overview of the health care network in Laval.

Two figures indicate that the region is not autonomous as regards health care for its population:

- The region of Laval has 1,600 places in CHSLDs (long-term health care facilities), an accommodation rate of 2.4%. This rate is below the accommodation rate (2.8%) targeted by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux.
- Half of Laval residents access their medical care and services outside of Laval, including in the region of Montréal,³⁷ where there are health establishments near the bridges to Laval.

According to the CRÉ, the scarcity of land in Laval will complicate the extension of better local service offerings, especially in the health sector.³⁸

TABLE 7
Global view of Laval's health and social services network in 2014³⁹

<p>Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de Laval (CISSS de Laval)</p>	<p>New organization grouping all public health and social services establishments of the territory. The CISSS de Laval assumes the following responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan, coordinate, organize and offer the population all health services and social services. ○ Ensure coverage for the entire population in its territory, especially the most vulnerable clientele. ○ Ensure management of simplified access to health services and social services.
<p>Centre de santé et de services sociaux de Laval</p>	<p>Offers services and care to the population of Laval and to the neighbouring regions through the following installations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hôpital de la Cité-de-la-Santé ○ Centre intégré de cancérologie ○ Outpatient centre ○ Four CLSCs [local community services centres] ○ Five residential centres ○ Two family medicine facilities affiliated with Université de Montréal ○ Centre intégré de services de première ligne (CISPLOI)
<p>Jewish Rehabilitation Hospital</p>	<p>Offers clientele with disabilities resulting from physical health problems or from a physical impairment, specialized adaptation, intensive functional rehabilitation, social-professional integration, socio-residential and community services, as well as residential services in non-institutional residential resources.</p>
<p>Centre de réadaptation en déficience intellectuelle et en troubles envahissants du développement de Laval</p>	<p>Offers specialized adaptation and rehabilitation services to a clientele of all ages living with an intellectual disability or an autism spectrum disorder. It also offers support networks, specialized assistance and support services.</p>
<p>Centre jeunesse de Laval</p>	<p>Provides youths aged 0 to 18 years old, and their families, with psychosocial adaptation and rehabilitation services. The Centre receives and processes reports of abandonment, neglect and abuse of children from 0 to 17 years old under the Youth Protection Act. To this centre is integrated an addiction rehabilitation centre for persons suffering from problems of alcohol, drug and pathological gambling abuse, as well for their families.</p>

Other health and social services resources

Private subsidized residential long-term care centres (RLTCC)

Offers the following, on a temporary or permanent basis:

- Residential, assistance, support and monitoring services
- Rehabilitation services
- Psychosocial services (psychologists)
- Nursing, pharmaceutical and medical services

The region has six private subsidized residential long-term care centres.

Medical clinics

Eighteen walk-in medical clinics, including 10 family medicine groups.

Five specialized medical clinics with permits to carry out certain surgical interventions.

Pharmacies

More than 100 community pharmacies.

Community organizations

Prevention of, assistance with and awareness raising about social problems.

Laval's main health-related priorities established by the government of Québec are:⁴⁰

- › Prevention and management of chronic diseases (cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases).
- › Improvement of access to frontline health services.
- › Adjustment of the service offering to the diversity of the population.
- › Improvement and diversification of the services to support the independence of seniors.
- › Promotion of healthy living habits (fight against the use of tobacco, nutrition and physical activity).
- › Intervention with vulnerable clientele (prevention of infections, psychosocial assistance, community-based care).
- › Development of young children and of the targeted actions in the school environment.

Create environments that encourage healthy living habits

The municipality's role is not to directly offer health services. However, its know-how in the development of the territory and in leisure now make it a key player. In the past few years, scientific studies have clearly established a link between people's health and the characteristics of the urban landscape and of the environment in which they live. Thus, living environments can be designed to encourage healthy living habits in the population.⁴¹ Municipal actions and developments that contribute to the health of Laval residents include:

- The reduction of heat islands by transforming the materials used on heat-absorbing surfaces (roof and ground coverings), increasing green spaces, and planting trees in urban areas. Laval's current urban landscape promotes heat islands.⁴²
- The fight against any form of environmental pollution and the realization of developments that make it possible to reduce exposure to contaminants. The territory of Laval specifically experiences smog episodes in the winter that are related to wood heating, an element on which Ville de Laval can act.⁴³
- The deployment of active, pedestrian and bicycle transit networks that encourage daily physical activity. As mentioned in the previous chapter, these networks present deficiencies in Laval.
- Urban regulation that promotes the establishment of businesses offering healthy foods in all the neighbourhoods and that discourages the implantation of junk food establishments, particularly near schools.
- The creation of group or community gardens in the aim of contributing to food security.⁴⁴ Ville de Laval already supports a dozen organizations that operate such gardens.
- Leisure facilities for all ages.

Community life in Laval

As demonstrated earlier, Ville de Laval works in close collaboration with some 600 community players in the region to offer services that aim to meet the current and future needs of all the citizens.

TABLE 8
Distribution of community actors by field of intervention

Field of intervention	Number of organizations (n=593)	% of organizations
Sport organizations	95	12 %
Recreational organizations	123	14 %
Cultural organizations	87	14 %
Community organizations	87	19 %
Health and social services organizations	201	41 %
Total	593	100 %

Source : La ville de Laval, 2014

The municipality mobilizes its own cultural and leisure services to support the initiatives of the citizens and of the local and regional recreational, cultural, sport and community associations.

The mission of the Service de la vie communautaire et de la culture [department of community and cultural life] is to promote culture, sports, the outdoors, leisure and activities related to community life, as well as to ensure a development in these areas that meets the current and future needs of the citizens of Laval.

To accomplish this mission, the Ville has chosen to offer the majority of the activities of the Service in partnership with the local associations. These associations assume the responsibility for and management of the activities in their respective domains.

Leisure

Leisure in general affects people's quality of life and health, contributes to the creation of social relationships and the development of social capital, and is a place for expressing and learning about democratic life.

Organized leisure is increasingly considered a reliable indicator of the quality of life that a community can offer its members.

To ensure all segments of the population have access to a varied offering of affordable programs and services near their living environment, Ville de Laval puts equipment, installations and facilities at the disposal of the organizations and citizens. Organizations in Laval can also count on municipal support toward accomplishing their missions. Finally, citizens are considered the key players in their leisure, the community being the prime contractor in that field.

Underinvestment in community infrastructure

Despite the large amount of community infrastructure, in 2015, the equipment is proved to be insufficient in quantity and suffering from obsolescence and/or disrepair. Adequately distributed throughout the territory, this equipment was for the most part constructed in the 70s and 80s and now needs to be renovated and improved. On this subject, the Ville is undertaking a plan for the renovation, expansion and construction of the network of libraries and a plan for the renovation and construction of arenas.

The territory also has a major deficit of indoor pools and community centres. Yet, the demand for these types of facilities is very present. In 2014, nearly 485,000 people used the community centres. To resolve this deficit, Ville de Laval plans to build three community centres in the next few years and is actively working on an aquatic centre project.

Upgrading the cultural and sport installations, specifically the arenas, pools and libraries, is part of the Ville's 2015-2017 three-year capital expenditure plan. This plan, valued at \$246 million in 2015, will reach nearly \$1 billion by the end of 2017. This plan also includes the development of woods, the creation of parks, access to the riverbanks and the revitalization of the Centre de la nature.

Among the many changes in the social landscape in leisure, an increase in unstructured activities is observed. The reduction of free time for workers and the obligations relative to juggling family, work and play modify the way people participate in leisure activities. As they cannot make a regular commitment and generally only have isolated pockets of free time, people prefer unstructured rather than organized leisure activities. The offer of services is then made mostly through the development of sites and environments and by the scheduling of events rather than regular programs.

Culture

On its territory, Laval welcomes more than 30 professional organizations covering several disciplines of the performing arts (theatre, dance, music), literature, visual arts, museology, history and heritage. The municipality has cultural institutions, such as the Maison des arts de Laval and a network of nine neighbourhood libraries. In addition, the municipality offers summer cultural programming in all the neighbourhoods and holds activities in the major parks and public spaces of the region.

The Maison des arts stands out thanks to its distribution, mediation and professional support programs and provides citizens with a multidisciplinary cultural offering. Laval's libraries strive to promote reading, offer cultural activities, create a living environment that fosters sharing and interacting, and support literacy, meaning the capacity to use written information to function.

However, lack of investment toward cultural development is a hindrance to the development of quality infrastructure and to funding for structuring institutions. In fact, for the 2008-2009 period, the investments granted by the government of Québec was \$16.43 per resident, as compared to \$18.75 for the regions termed as "peripheral" and \$124.89 for Québec as a whole.⁴⁵ This financial unbalance experienced by Laval is attributed, in part, to its proximity to Montréal. Because of the pool of creators, artistic organizations and cultural enterprises found on the Island of Montréal, total cultural expenditures are clearly higher there than in the nearby regions.⁴⁶

According to a survey conducted in 2013 by Zins Beauschêne et associés, in part, regarding the renown of the venues in Laval, only 11% of Laval residents said they spontaneously recognized the Maison des arts, as opposed to 53% for the Salle André-Mathieu and 12% for the Théâtre Marcellin-Champagnat.

Statistics Canada reports that Laval households spend substantially the same amounts, on average, as the residents of the CMA of Montréal for shows and cultural events, sport events and movies. However, they spend more than Quebecers as a whole. Since it is impossible to quantify the consumption of shows by the residents of Laval outside of the territory, it is reasonable to believe that part of their spending on cultural activities is done in Montréal, among other places.

Furthermore, there is no professional artistic creation centre, and the show venues are used to their maximum, in addition to being confronted with reaching the ceiling of supply (the rate of seats available is three times less than for cities like Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivières and Québec). In terms of financing, the four scientific culture museums on the territory are recognized by the government of Québec, but they are not financially supported; the same applies to the Centre d'archives and the Salle Alfred-Pellan.

The protection and enhancement of the heritage are also experiencing change. The classic approach to protecting heritage, which particularly concerns the ancient built environment, is still applied. However, a trend is emerging toward a broader definition of heritage to include the natural, landscape and intangible heritage.

Laval has nine public libraries, yet the overall space of these is 44% lower than the baseline standard. This represents a below average total number of books as compared to Québec as a whole (644,232 as opposed to 1,186,153 books); the same applies to the number of audiovisual documents (21,854 as opposed to 48,076).

Furthermore, Laval receives less media coverage than Montréal, and therefore, has more difficulty promoting the cultural, sport and leisure products and services that it offers. After the construction of the Place Bell, an amphitheatre with 10,000 seats, Laval will host national and international events of all types and sizes. This will surely mitigate the difference in media coverage with Montréal.

The residents of Laval often frequent the businesses and restaurants in their city, but they do not consume many cultural products. In fact:

82% of them frequented Laval businesses in the past year.

55% of them went to restaurants in Laval in the past year.

17% of them attended shows, in the past year, or participated in cultural or sport activities in Laval.

Source: Zins Beauduchesne et associés. Survey conducted with Laval residents on their satisfaction and pride of living in Laval as well as on their perceptions and image of Laval, Fall 2014, n=500 respondents.

Volunteer work

The arrival of a new generation of volunteers, more educated and with less time to devote, requires major adjustments in the management of the sport, leisure and cultural programs and activities. Furthermore, the aging of the population may affect volunteerism since the number of people who are capable of providing assistance and services will diminish. The challenge to renew and recruit volunteers will arise.

A population that is connected

Ville de Laval made a major move toward digitization these past three years. Its website is the principal means of communication with the population, with more than two million visits per year. A mobile version has been available since summer 2014 and new Web features are currently being developed. These features include an interactive map to easily locate municipal sites and buildings. The first mobile application, *La route du patrimoine à Laval*, has been available since the summer of 2015.

The Ville also manages 11 other thematic websites that are linked to specific major events, entities and locations. In addition, it manages 18 social media accounts.

A weekly newsletter is sent to 9,000 subscribed citizens. Furthermore, the municipal council meetings have been on the Web since the spring of 2015. Finally, it will soon be possible for Laval citizens to track the progress of their queries or information requests online.

At the end of 2015, Ville de Laval opened 14 datasets. The main objective of this initiative was to facilitate the sharing and utilization of all this data by third parties for the purpose of facilitating city management, promoting citizen participation, encouraging the networking of citizens, enterprises and organizations, and ultimately improving the well-being of citizens. In the meantime, the deployment of a data network covering the entire territory of the city allows all the employees to connect to the network and to the Internet. Together with some 700 GPSs on city equipment and infrastructure, the network also allows better control of the operations on the territory.

A municipal Wi-Fi network offers citizens the possibility of connecting to the Internet in several public places (the city's libraries, the Maison des arts de Laval, the Centre de la nature, the council chambers at city hall and the Saint-François arena). By the end of 2015, the objective is to offer Wi-Fi in all of the city's parks and in the arenas.

Ville de Laval encourages the utilization of digital books and, on this subject, it offers free training to people wishing to learn how to use this new reading method. Furthermore, computers are available to users free of charge in the territory's libraries.

As digital technology is a major vector for innovation, Laval wants to develop a technological appeal strong enough to build an environment that attracts high-knowledge enterprises and citizens through the development of its digital infrastructure.

The use of the Internet and social networks by Laval residents

77% of Laval residents agree with the Ville's desire to increase wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) on its territory by installing new wireless terminals in certain public places.

88% of Laval households have on average two portable or desktop computers, and **61%** have a smart phone.

90% of Laval households have Internet access at home.

57% of Laval residents use social networks.

49% of respondents have at least one tablet (ex.: iPad).

Source: Zins Beauchesne et associés. Survey conducted with Laval residents on their Internet and Wi-Fi use, Fall 2014, n=500 respondents

In 2013, **82%** of Laval residents used the Internet at least once a week. This proportion of regular Web users is significantly higher than that observed in Québec (78%). In the ranking of administrative regions regarding the proportion of Web users, Laval was still in first place in 2013.

As regards e-commerce, the rate of people who buy online on a monthly basis rose to **26%** in Laval, in 2013. This rate is comparable to that observed province-wide (28%).

Source: CEFRIO. NETendances. Area sheet 2013.

VILLE DE LAVAL ON SOCIAL THE NETWORKS

More than 21,000 likes on the Facebook page

Ville de Laval uses its Facebook page to share information and interact with residents on a daily basis. This page contains posts about activities, programs, services, events, and information about the Ville and its major partners and recognized organizations. In addition to the Ville's official page, you can follow:

- › Laval's libraries
- › Maison des arts de Laval
- › Centre de la nature de Laval
- › Service de police de Laval

More than 4,000 Twitter subscribers

The Ville's tweets regularly to share information with residents and interact with them: news and bulletins, services and bylaws, important notices and more.

More than 5,500 LinkedIn subscribers

On LinkedIn, Ville de Laval is positioned as a choice employer. It posts divers job offers on its page as well as some of our employee's successes.

More than 200 subscribers on YouTube

From culture to eco-responsible practices, the Ville's YouTube channel, created in November of 2010, addresses divers subjects. It also suggests various reading lists.

Education

Education is a lifelong endeavour. Laval has numerous educational resources that can be used by clientele of all ages and horizons: early childhood centres (CPE), primary and secondary schools, cégep, vocational training, university campuses, etc.

Diversified resources

In Laval, the network of early childhood education centres has 39 corporations that manage more than 3,000 places in 48 installations and 6 coordination offices that facilitate the work of nearly 800 family day care managers providing services on a daily basis to more than 4,500 children.

The public networks of primary and secondary education and vocational training are under two school boards: the Commission scolaire de Laval and the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board.

In 2014, the Commission scolaire de Laval offered education services to 24,368 preschool and primary school students, 13,647 secondary school students, 6,233 vocational training students and 5,268 adult education students. These were distributed in 54 primary schools, 14 secondary schools, four adult education centres, and eight vocational training centres. Ten of the primary or secondary schools of the Commission scolaire de Laval have a status of underprivileged school under the *Stratégie d'intervention Agir autrement* (SIAA). Laval also has 12 private French-speaking teaching institutions, nine of them at the primary level.⁴⁷

The Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board is the third-largest English-speaking school board in Québec, and it combines the territories of Laval, Lanaudière and Laurentides. It has some 14,000 students distributed in 26 primary schools and 11 secondary schools.⁴⁸

Demographic data from the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche indicates that, between 2011 and 2016, an increase of more than 3,000 students in primary schools is expected.⁴⁹ The question of space and access are therefore currently major issues that will require specific enhancement actions.⁵⁰

A young population that needs special attention

In 2014, the Commission scolaire de Laval identified 10,825 active intervention plans and transition plans for at-risk students or those with adaptation or learning difficulties or disabled students in specialized classes or integrated in regular classes. Disabled students represented 6% of the clientele of primary and secondary schools, 2,211 students, an increase of 806 since the 2008 school year.

Issues of perseverance, motivation and security

The rate of students enrolled in secondary 5 and who obtained their diploma at the end of the year, rose by 6% over the 2013-2014 period, reaching 72%.

Two organizations offer help with homework on the Laval territory: Aide aux devoirs Laval, Centres Pédagogiques Accompagnement Scolaire.

Furthermore, the territory of Laval has four organizations that offer francization courses to new immigrants, enabling them to integrate more harmoniously.

Finally, three campuses connected to Québec universities have established themselves in Laval: Université de Montréal, Université du Québec à Montréal, and Université de Sherbrooke.

Space issues for post-secondary education

Contrary to the great majority of the cégeps in Québec, the student population of Collège Montmorency will continue to grow, since Laval is one of the seven regions for which the Institut de la statistique du Québec does not forecast a decline in the population before 2026. In fact, according to the long-term projections of the Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Recherche, Laval will experience the strongest student population growth between now and 2025, 5.2%.

In fall 2013, according to the education blueprint set at 5,800 students, the Collège refused more than 1,880 people, 1,268 of whom were eligible, 538 of them residents of Laval. A small majority of the Collège's student population is from Laval (56%) and from the northern suburb (27%), while about 8% of students are from Montréal.

A population that has more diplomas than in Québec as a whole

In Laval, as compared to Québec as a whole, proportionally fewer people aged 25 and over have no diploma or have only an SSVD (Secondary School Vocational Diploma). On the other hand, a higher percentage of people aged 25 and over have a university degree. Despite these encouraging statistics, the Ville is still very concerned about the number of people who are likely to experience problems related to functional illiteracy.

TABLE 9
Type of diploma, population aged 25 and over, Ville de Laval, Province of Québec, in 2013

Type of diploma, population aged 25 and over	Ville de Laval	Province of Québec
No diploma	19%	22%
Diploma of secondary studies (DES)	23%	21%
Diploma of vocational studies (DEP)	15%	17%
Diploma of college studies (AEC, DEC, etc.)	17%	16%
University degree (certificate, bachelor, master and doctorate)	26%	24%

Sources: Zins Beuchesne et associés; Detailed profile of the residents of Laval, Spring 2014. Pitney Bowes, 2013 to 2023 Estimates and projections - Canada CCF

A successful college population

Since 2002, the global rate of success in college-level courses, all courses, all terms and all programs included, is slightly rising, it was 83% in fall 2002 and reached 88% in fall 2013. Also, between 2003 and 2011, the rates of re-enrolment in the third trimester all increased at Collège Montmorency and, during the same period, the rates of re-enrolment dropped in the public network, with the exception of pre-university programs. The rates of re-enrolment to the Collège (85%) are higher than those recorded in the public network (80%) for all the education sectors.⁵¹

Law enforcement services

The SPL (Service de police de Laval) has 555 police officers and 267 civilian employees distributed in six neighbourhood stations, one RCMP station, the headquarters and other satellite buildings. The rate of coverage reaches 1.33 police officers per 1,000 residents, which is low in comparison with comparable departments in Québec which have rates between 1.32 and 2.33 per 1,000 residents.

In 2013, the overall total of criminal offences reported on the territory of Laval continued on the downward trend observed in the past several years. In fact, the 17,503 offences reported in 2013 represent the lowest total recorded in more than 20 years.⁵²

In the short term, a drop of 993 offences has been observed as compared to 2012 (-5%). This decrease is all the more significant because it occurred in a context of substantial demographic growth.

Property-related offences continued on their downward trend in 2013, reaching their lowest level. The police department recorded 9,345 property-related offences that year, which corresponds to a drop of 1,007 crimes as compared to 2012 (-10%). All the types of property-related crimes decreased in 2013, which is exceptional.⁵³

Factoring in the demographic growth, the rate of offences under the Criminal Code per 100,000 residents has been in decline in Laval over the past ten years, going from 5,177 offences per 100,000 residents in 2002 to 3,704 in 2013. In comparison with the other cities in Québec with a Level 3 or higher law enforcement department, for 2012, Laval was in a good position. The territory stood out particularly for its rate of property-related crimes, which was the lowest.

TABLE 10
Comparison of the rates of offences under the Criminal Code per 100,000 residents in 2012

Rate per 100,000 residents	Montréal	Québec	Longueuil	Gatineau	Laval 2012	Laval 2013
Total offences under the Criminal Code	5 768	3 901	4 263	4 831	4 006	3 704
Offences against the person	1 230	946	817	1 396	929	964
Property-related offences	3 904	2 733	3 074	2 801	2 534	2 260
Other offences under the Criminal Code	635	222	372	634	545	480

Source : Service de police de Laval. Bilan 2013 et pronostics 2014

Despite these rather positive numbers, citizens surveyed during an enquiry commissioned by the SPL perceive that crime has remained stable in their neighbourhood (67%) as well as in the territory of Laval as a whole (45%). They are particularly concerned with traffic violations and speeding (71% of respondents). More than 30% of them are also worried about theft, littering, graffiti, and vandalism, drug-related crimes, street gangs or youth-related problems, the safety of children near schools, and violence.

The SPL has been involved in more than 50 prevention projects. Each neighbourhood station works on prevention programs related to the reality of the territory. The SPL conducts more than 15 targeted campaigns on matters of road safety every year.

Civil security

To meet the requirements of Québec's Civil Protection Act and ensure public security, Ville de Laval has established a Civil Protection Plan. The implementation of this plan is ensured by the services and partner agencies which form the Organisation de sécurité civile de Laval, including the SPL and the Service de sécurité incendie (SSI). Various risks exist on the territory: floods, earthquakes, industrial accidents, etc. A vulnerability analysis⁵⁴ has determined that priority must be granted to accidents related to hazardous materials in fixed sites (industries) and during transport (road, pipeline, train).

Fire safety

The revised fire safety cover plan must make it possible to respond to the major developments and modifications that are inherent to the growth and densification of the population. The needs in capital assets, among other things, are considered in the plan. A study on the establishment of a first-responder service is also in progress, the objective being to reduce the response time for the benefit of the entire community.

The SSI has 297 firefighters, officers, inspectors and civilian employees distributed in nine fire stations, the headquarters and the quartermaster. In 2013, the SSI performed interventions in:

- 241 fires in buildings
- 682 other types of fires
- 3,064 interventions other than for a fire
- 2,204 false alarms

The SSI has increased the efficiency of its service because, between 2006 and 2012, the average time to bring a fire under control went from 32.17 minutes to 24.29 minutes.

Aside from firefighting, the SSI responds to accidents related to hazardous materials or floods, road accidents (extrication) or boating accidents, etc. These total more than 5,400 calls per year. The SSI plays a significant role in training and prevention for workers and the population. It is an important partner in the certification of seniors residences and it trains their employees to detect risks and carry out the safe evacuation of residents. In addition, several prevention programs have been adapted for new immigrants, day cares and early childhood centres, children in grade 5, etc.

OUR COMMUNITY

The main observations

A growing population, especially among seniors

Since its beginnings in 1965, the population of Laval has grown steadily and this will continue over the next 25 years. According to socio-demographic projections, Laval will have the highest growth rate in Québec. The Ville currently has a higher proportion of seniors than in the rest of the province, and this trend will escalate in the next 25 years. The aging of the population will give rise to several challenges such as the rise of the rate of dependence and the increase of the load on taxpayers to maintain adequate social services.

A host community

Laval is ranked third among the regions of Québec that attract the most immigrants, behind Montréal and the Montérégie, which creates pressure for the development of receiving structures. It also contains a large proportion of allophones, which raises several issues regarding education, health and integration. However, newcomers and the immigrant population must be harmoniously integrated in Laval society in order to prevent social isolation and impoverishment. To this effect, Ville de Laval must update the integration orientations of *Ensemble à Laval*, which addresses the settlement of immigrants on its territory.

Growing social disparity

Ville de Laval is facing a rise in the number of people with low incomes. These individuals are primarily concentrated in the central neighbourhoods, but certain vulnerable sectors exist within affluent neighbourhoods. Nearly one out of four children under six years old lives in poverty. Furthermore, vulnerable households have a greater residential mobility than more well-to-do households, which influences the dynamic of the social and community life.

Shortage of rental units

Single-family houses are predominant in Laval's housing pool. The city is experiencing one of the most severe shortages of rental units in the metropolitan region. What's more, a substantial proportion of renter households are in units whose monthly rent takes up a significant part of their income.

Support for the vulnerable populations must increase

The territory of Laval has 85 organizations that provide services to vulnerable populations such as seniors, immigrants and people in disadvantaged situations. Ville de Laval as well the government financially support these organizations. The Ville has also developed several municipal plans and objectives to support these populations. This support must be increased to combat the escalation of problematic situations typical of large cities: homelessness, social exclusion, devitalization, etc. In addition, social behaviours are changing and volunteerism is thus affected. This is a major challenge for the sociocultural sectors, which will need to find a way to compensate for the decrease in the number of people who are available for volunteer work.

Fragile health

The region of Laval is not autonomous in terms of health care, which raises major issues for the future, especially with an aging population. The health sector in Laval has adopted the following priorities: prevention, access to care, diversification of the offering, and services suited to individual needs, as well as interventions targeting the vulnerable populations.

Impoverished cultural and leisure offering

Ville de Laval suffers from a lack of cultural and leisure infrastructure. There is no central library and the space allocated to the library network is 44% of the base standard. In addition, there is no professional artistic creation centre and the show venues are used to their maximum, in addition having reached their supply ceiling. The proximity of Montréal is a major challenge for the city since Montréal enjoys greater cultural investments and broader media coverage, to the detriment of Laval.

An educated population with a shortage of space

Laval has many educational organizations and institutions that offer courses and training to people of all ages. Its population has relatively more diplomas than in Québec as a whole. However, the primary and secondary schools are facing issues in terms of the academic perseverance and motivation of its students. It is; nevertheless, important to mention that between 2008 and 2012, the school drop-out rate decreased from 23% to 18%. Furthermore, there are issues of space and access regarding primary, secondary and college education alike.

Less crime

Criminal offences in Laval have dropped over the past several years, even with substantial demographic growth. The crime rate in Laval is low as compared to similar cities.

OUR ECONOMY



Laval's economic performance

Slight improvement of labour-market indicators

Despite the province-wide economic downturn over the past few years, particularly in 2013, the main labour-market indicators in the region of Laval have improved. In fact, in 2013, the region saw an increase of 8,400 jobs, while its rate of activity rose by 0.3 points to 68.8%, and its employment rate gained 1.5 points, to reach 64.4%.⁵⁵ For its part, the regional unemployment rate, like that of the province, went down.⁵⁶

Slow growth of the GDP

In 2013, Laval's gross domestic product (GDP) reached \$13.8 billion, an increase of 1.5% since 2012. Proportionately, between 2012 and 2013, Montréal also recorded a 1.5% increase of its GDP with a value of \$117.5 billion.⁵⁷ In Québec for the same period, the GDP was \$339.5 billion, representing a gain of 1.7%.

On average, since 2009, Laval's GDP has represented about 4.1% of the GDP of Québec as a whole.

TABLE 11
Gross domestic product (GDP) at baseline rates,
Laval and Québec as a whole, 2009-2013

	Laval	Province of Québec	Laval/Québec ratio
	\$M		%
2009	12 285	296 317	4,1 %
2010	12 742	309 059	4,1 %
2011	13 062	322 983	4,0 %
2012	13 600	333 782	4,1 %
2013	13 809	339 513	4,1 %

Source: Institut de la
statistique du Québec.
Bulletin statistique
régional
Édition 2014.

Increased investments in 2014

Between 2004 and 2012, Laval's economy experienced relative stability in terms of investments (industrial, commercial, institutional and residential sectors). After cutbacks in 2013, Laval significantly increased its investments in 2014. The results obtained are promising given the slow global and North American economic growth.

TABLE 12
Investments by sector of economic activity, Laval 2004-2014

Year	Industrial	Commercial	Institutional	Residential	Total
2004	\$ 496 603 347	\$82 864 990	\$ 225 785 000	\$594 908 812	\$1 400 162 149
2005	\$611 907 271	\$147 308 654	\$185 532 747	\$622 877 899	\$1 567 626 571
2006	\$556 286 271	\$149 614 269	\$256 084 200	\$518 206 363	\$1 480 191 103
2007	\$623 184 958	\$160 691 193	\$95 751 306	\$631 441 896	\$1 511 069 353
2008	\$676 270 880	\$164 412 533	\$114 866 428	\$746 549 370	\$1 702 099 211
2009	\$422 647 732	\$59 381 300	\$438 030 058	\$589 131 765	\$1 509 190 855
2010	\$417 372 566	\$115 368 100	\$168 293 691	\$649 369 064	\$1 350 403 421
2011	\$558 056 397	\$129 822 164	\$207 054 053	\$622 449 775	\$1 517 382 389
2012	\$506 007 507	\$183 557 964	\$148 666 365	\$659 941 379	\$1 498 173 215
2013	\$340 679 772	\$86 206 236	\$105 447 279	\$443 708 158	\$976 041 445
2014	\$551 647 001	\$77 189 306	\$177 293 169	\$418 664 235	\$1 224 793 711

Source : Laval Technopole – statistical survey 2014.

Slight increase in the exporter base⁵⁸

The number of exporting businesses in Laval has gone up slightly these past ten years. While there were 428 exporting businesses in 2007, their number was estimated at 498 in 2014. Still in 2014, these companies provided jobs for nearly 23,000 people, 15% of the total number of jobs in the region. The large majority (73%) of Québec exports are by manufacturers, while non-manufacturing establishments contribute up to 27%. Laval is the only administrative region to diverge from this trend, with much more balanced proportions, 52% of exports are attributable to manufacturers and 48% to non-manufacturers. The scale of Laval's wholesale business sector partially explains this observation.

In 2007, Laval generated 1.5% of Québec's goods exports. Based on this proportion, the value of these exports in 2014 can be estimated at \$1.105 billion, with \$573.35 million attributable to manufacturers and \$531.8 million to non-manufacturing establishments.

Employment in Laval

Remarkable growth of jobs in the territory of Laval between 2001 and 2011⁵⁹

According to estimates, in 2013, Laval had 153,500 jobs. The job growth between 2001 and 2011 was remarkable; an increase of 24% was observed for this period. In comparison, Montréal recorded 3% growth for the same period, as did the CMA.

TABLE 13
Number of jobs in Laval, Montréal and the CMA, in 2001, 2011 and 2013

Jobs	Laval	Montréal	RMR
2001	118 400	1 112 800	1 743 700
2011	146 800	1 146 500	1 800 100
2013	153 500	1 188 100	1 873 100
Variation 2001-2011	24%	3%	3%

Source : Consortium de la CMM sur l'emploi local. L'emploi local dans la région métropolitaine de Montréal, édition 2013, vol. 8, 2013.

Laval, a growing work place for its residents

More and more Laval residents work in Laval. The number of Laval citizens who work in Laval increased by 5% between 2006 and 2011. However, because of the growth of the population, during this same period, the proportion of residents of Laval who work on the territory has basically remained the same, 39.5%. The same applies to the proportion of Laval residents who work in Montréal, 46.4%.

TABLE 14
Main places of work of Laval residents

Place of work	2011		2006		Change
	Number	Distribution (%)	Number	Distribution (%)	
Montréal	79 480	46,4	74 885	46	0,38
Laval	67 610	39,5	64 150	39,4	0,05
Dorval, Mont-Royal, Pointe-Claire	8 275	4,8	8 270	5	0,22
Saint-Eustache, Terrebonne, Boisbriand	4 470	2,6	3 975	2,5	-0,15
Longueuil	1 120	0,6	1 030	0,6	0,02
Other	10 435	6,1	10 495	6,5	-0,36
TOTAL	171 390	100	162 805	100	

Source : Statistics Canada, National Household Survey 2011.

The majority of the people who work in the territory of Laval are residents of Laval (50%), followed by those who live in the northern suburb (18%) and in Montréal (14%).

Immigration and employment⁶⁰

Between 2001 and 2011, the percentage of immigrants in Laval's population increased from 15.5% to 24.6%, a rate twice as high as in Québec as a whole (12.6%). In 2014, this could represent about 102,600 immigrants, of which 14,100 were recent immigrants, that is to say immigrants who arrived in Canada less than five years ago.

The proportion of people aged between 25 and 64 who have a university certificate or degree is higher among recent immigrants (49.2%), followed by non-recent immigrants (35.0%) and non-immigrants (29.7%). However, there are more non-recent immigrants who have no diploma (17.5%). Among immigrants between 25 and 64 years old as a whole, 16.7% have no diploma or certificate and 36.8% have a university degree.

Access to employment is more difficult for recent immigrants. In fact, despite a larger proportion of university degree holders among recent immigrants, this group has the lowest observed employment rate, 54.4%. In addition, the very high unemployment rate among recent immigrants testifies to the fact that a great many of them are actively looking for employment. There is also a large gap between the incomes of each of the groups, non-immigrants having an average income higher by 15.0% than that of non-recent immigrants, and higher by 73.4% than that of recent immigrants.

Portrait of entrepreneurship among Laval residents⁶¹

From 2001 to 2006, the rate of entrepreneurs in Québec increased from 2.5% to 2.7% and then dropped to 2.3% in 2011. In Laval, it increased from 2.8% to 2.9% and then dropped to 2.5% for the same periods. In absolute numbers, this represents a total of 7,525 entrepreneurs in Laval in 2001 and 7,800 entrepreneurs in 2011.

The most striking observation of Laval's entrepreneurial portrait in the past few years lies, unequivocally, in the positive perception of the youth in relation to entrepreneurship: an entrepreneurial career is valued, respected and desired by a large majority of young people between the ages of 18 and 34. In fact, the region of Laval has a population with strong intentions of launching a business project, especially among the 18 to 34 age group. Although the rate of young entrepreneurs is higher in Laval than in the province as a whole (3.6% in 2001 and in 2006), it dropped markedly in 2011 and settled at 2.7%. In short, this portrait shows exceptional entrepreneurial potential where the only obscure zone remains a higher closure rate than anywhere else. This problematic situation has unfortunately started to undermine how youths perceive entrepreneurship.

In Laval, the immigrant population that has settled in Laval has created a greater number of business than the national average.

Laval entrepreneurs record a lower average income than that of entrepreneurs in Québec as a whole. Nevertheless, this income rose 28.7% between 2000 and 2010, going from \$49,094 to \$62,968 during this period.

Finally, the entrepreneurial portrait of Laval is most likely to develop toward a concentration of businesses owned and managed by teams. In fact, 52.8% of pre-startup companies choose the contemporary approach of co-management and co-ownership, a model to which the lending institutions and the socio-economic stakeholders will need to adjust.

Ville de Laval mandated Zins Beauchesne et associés to conduct a survey with Laval businesses on their perception of the business environment in Laval. According to the businesses surveyed, the elements that differentiate Laval from other neighbouring cities in a business context are its advantageous geographic location in the greater Montréal region, the quality of its road network, the vitality and growth of its economy, the fact that there is still space for industrial, commercial and residential development, and the availability of labour.

Zins Beauchesne et associés. Survey with Laval businesses on their perception of the business environment in Laval, fall 2014, n=60 respondents

The region's main sectors of activity

In 2013, Laval had 10,756 businesses (retail, restaurant, manufacturing, construction, etc.).⁶²

TABLE 15
Businesses and jobs in Laval by sectors of activity, 2013

Sectors of activity	Establishments		Jobs	
	Number	%	Number	%
Production of goods	2 304	22 %	25 926	16,8 %
Agriculture	86	0,8 %	330	0,2 %
Mining, oil and gas extraction	8	0,7 %	520	0,3 %
Public services	3	0 %	1 077	0,7 %
Construction	1 589	14,8 %	9 488	6,2 %
Manufacturing	618	5,7 %	14 511	9,4 %
Services	8 452	78,8 %	127 617	83,1 %
Wholesale	729	6,8 %	11 455	7,5 %
Retail	1 178	10,9 %	25 355	16,5 %
Transport and storage	580	5,4 %	4 875	3,2 %
Information and cultural industry	81	0,7 %	2 791	1,8 %
Finance and insurance	268	2,5 %	6 473	4,2 %
Real-estate, rental and leasing service	517	4,8 %	3 171	2 %
Professional, scientific and technical services	1 367	12,8 %	11 015	7,2 %
Corporate and business management	91	0,9 %	146	0,1 %
Administrative, support, waste management and sanitation services	690	6,4 %	5 276	3,4 %
Educational services	87	0,9 %	10 093	6,6 %
Health and social assistance services	931	8,7 %	19 771	12,9 %
Arts, shows and leisure	126	1,2 %	2 236	1,5 %
Accommodation and food service	807	7,5 %	10 363	6,7 %
Other services, except public administration	998	9,3 %	6 862	4,5 %
Public administration	2	0 %	7 735	5 %
TOTAL	10 756	100 %	153 543	100 %

Sources: Number of establishments - Business Register, Statistics Canada, June 2013
Number of jobs - 2011 census of Statistics Canada and Consortium de la CMM.

The agri-food sector

Laval devotes nearly 30% of its territory to agricultural development, by protecting some of the best land in Québec. This choice comes with a modern vision of development: this sector is not only fuelled by agricultural production and food transformation, but also by the interrelation with the scientific community, especially by the presence of the Laboratoire de Recherche en Sciences Appliquées à l'Alimentation de Laval, of the INRS-Institut Armand-Frappier, which is recognized worldwide in the agri-food sector.

Laval's agri-food sector is partially characterized by the presence of a peri-urban agricultural community made up of about 120 businesses, the majority of which are horticultural, fruit and vegetable production operations. This sector is also characterized by the establishment of nearly 100 product transformation companies, a large number of which are specialized in meat and bakery products.

Laval's agriculture distinguishes itself by the predominance of short marketing channels, with the presence of about 50 farmer's stands and three neighbourhood markets. To meet the growing consumer demand, new productions and farm activities are being launched: lamb production, visit to a hop farm and sugar shack.

Food transformation is in full growth and provides jobs for nearly 2,600 people. Laval now has nearly 100 food transformation businesses, including industry leaders such as Montpak International, Les Produits Alimentaires Viau, and Multi-Markes. The companies primarily operate in the following sectors: meat transformation and cured meats, production of baked goods, prepared meals, transformed fruits and vegetables.

Distribution also occupies an important place in Laval, with more than 130 companies and 1,800 jobs.

In total, more than 300 companies operate in the agri-food sector, which generates in excess of 6,000 jobs.

Laval has more than 150 agricultural producers.

Life sciences

The life sciences sector in Laval comprises more than 85 businesses and institutions that create nearly 5,000 jobs in the territory. Several are flagship companies of the Canadian scientific economy –Sanofi, GlaxoSmithKline, Servier, Valeant, Roche Diagnostics, Vertex, etc.– and they are all located within a four-kilometre radius of the centre of the territory.

INRS-Institut Armand-Frappier is a scientific graduate and postgraduate university devoted to research and training in human, animal and environmental health. The centre is part of major national and international research networks, namely the Institut Pasteur International Network (RIIP) on infectious diseases, the Réseau de recherche en santé environnementale, the Centre interinstitutionnel de recherche en écotoxicologie du Québec, and the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.

The Institut also has exceptional expertise in doping tests and the characterization of bioactive peptides. Its doping control laboratory is famous worldwide and is accredited by the International Olympic Committee.

The Centre québécois d'innovation en biotechnologie (CQIB) is a world-famous incubator. It offers premises and the necessary expertise for the development of young biotechnology and life science enterprises. For example, it offers access to shared, fully equipped, pharmaceutical-calibre laboratories that can be adapted to international standards. It also guides entrepreneurs in the development of their business. The only incubator of this kind in Québec, it operates at full capacity. Among the businesses that went through the CQIB are Bio-K+, Cirion, and Replicor.

Information and communication technologies (ICTs)

In Laval, more than 535 businesses operate in the information and communications technologies sector, and over 7,100 jobs are associated with them. The largest subsector is computer system design and related services. This sub-sector alone represents more than 2,000 jobs in close to 400 companies.

The manufacturing sector

Consistent with the economy of Laval, one of the strengths of Laval's manufacturing sector is its diversity. In fact, this sector represents upward of 10,000 jobs and is made up of more than 500 businesses operating in over 18 sub-sectors, including printing, the manufacture of metal products, furniture and machines, the production of chemicals, as well as of plastic and rubber products.

Wholesale business

The wholesale sector is very present in Laval. With more than 740 businesses and 9,500 jobs, this is the sector in which Laval specializes the most. In fact, the relative weight of this sector, as regards the number of jobs it generates in relation to the total number of jobs, is twice as high in Laval as the North American average.

Recreational tourism

The characteristics and positioning of Laval's current offerings in the tourism sector primarily distinguish the city in the following categories: business tourism, shopping and entertainment. These categories encompass the following sectors: restaurants, entertainment, recreation, drinking establishments, travel accommodation, art, shows and leisure. These sectors of activity represent more than 910 businesses and provide jobs for over 12,500 people.

The services sector

Québec's economy is dominated by the service industry and Laval is one of the regions where this sectorization is the most developed. In Laval, the services sector provides employment to more than 127,000 people.

Economic development tools

The general direction of economic development

Following the Institut sur la gouvernance d'organisations privées et publiques (IGOPP)'s submission of its report on the governance of Laval's paramunicipal companies, and to meet its own desire to encourage economic development within its territory, in 2015, Ville de Laval announced that it would coordinate its activities with Laval Technopole, the Centre local de développement (CLD) de Laval and the CRÉ de Laval. This integration of the Ville's economic activities will enable it to increase their synergy and efficiency.

The development of the territory

Industrial parks

On its territory, Laval has three major industrial development cores (centre, west and east) distributed geographically along Autoroute 440 and totalling 12 industrial parks. The centre industrial park is the main core.

Supply of industrial land⁶³

Although the overall industrial zoning of Laval's territory in the most land use development plan indicated a potential of 195 million square feet of industrial land available, a more comprehensive analysis of this land, which takes into consideration recent sales and changes in the zoning and other appropriations by the municipality, gives us another picture: only 25.7 million square feet are actually available for industrial development.

In addition, of these 25.7 million square feet, 2.3 million can be developed without restrictions, whereas the rest, 23.4 million square feet, are subject to restrictions, 50% of which are major. The municipality, if it takes into account the land that can be developed without restrictions (2.3 M ft²) and the sites that are subject to minor restrictions (5.5 M ft²), therefore estimates the short- and medium-term capacity for industrial development to be 7.8 million square feet.

Based on the industrial development over the past ten years, the Ville has already drawn up a plan for the optimization of each square foot for new businesses offering jobs with high added value.

OUR ECONOMY

The main observations

New economic reality

In the past few years, economic growth has slowed down in certain key sectors present in Laval. This downswing has resulted in increased actions and measures to attract and support businesses and their strategic resources, at the same time that the rise of emerging economies exerts a strong attraction on these businesses and talent.

The life science sector, still essential to the regional economy, is undergoing a period of transition with the closure and/or reorientation of certain companies and the reduction of research.

Evolution of the levers for economic development

The main levers of development in Laval for the 2010-2030 period are:

- › Capacity of existing businesses or start-up businesses to grow on the territory.
- › Availability of a range of talent in the immediate vicinity.
- › High-quality public services and a good quality of life.
- › Integrated support systems facilitating innovation and productivity.
- › Environmental protection and regulation.

Three major challenges for future economic development in Laval

- 1. Reinforce the economic base of the territory.**
 - › On the industrial and entrepreneurial level, Laval continues to bank on several factors that are favourable to its development.
 - › This economic base needs to be preserved and it will be essential to identify the business “leaders” in our prioritized sectors, work with them and attract them.
- 2. Use the perspectives and demographic assets of the territory.**
 - › As regards talent and skills, Laval can continue to count on demographic trends that are very favourable for its economic development.
 - › Laval must take advantage of its labour potential in order to better meet the needs of the companies located on its territory or that choose to establish themselves there.
- 3. Encourage a quality urban and civil framework on the territory**
 - › By putting the emphasis on quality of life and the appeal of the territory, Laval created an environment that promotes economic development.
 - › However, the city is beginning to experience the inconveniences of a more “mature” territory. In addition, Laval must ensure better protection of the environment and improve its technological infrastructure.

OUR GOVERNANCE



The concept of governance can be defined basically as the set of rules and collective processes, be they formalized or not, by which the stakeholders concerned participate in the decision and implementation of public actions. Governance involves more open, decentralized, collaborative management ethics, leading to the intervention of multiple players.⁶⁴

Municipal governance has an impact on the city's capacity to be appealing, competitive, responsible and solidary as proposes the strategic vision statement of the Communauté métropolitaine de Montréal, of which Laval is the second-largest city in terms of population, land area and property value.

Reorganization in progress

Laval stands out from the other major cities in Québec by being an island, a city with the same powers as a local municipality and as an MRC and an administrative region, all in one. This fosters consistency in decisions, efficiency in actions and more direct communication with the supra-regional and governmental bodies.

A charter to be revised

Among other things, before 2013, the Charte de la Ville de Laval⁶⁵ led to an excessive centralization of the information and decision powers at the executive committee and senior management level. This contributed to the creation of an imbalance in the distribution of the responsibilities and powers between the executive committee, the Council and the civil service, a bias in the decisions and a lack of transparency, if not to abuses. The Council has set out to transform, by means of regulation, the rules relative to decision-making to align them with the best practices of Québec cities. In parallel, over the course of 2015, the Ville is preparing to present the Ministre des Affaires municipales et de l'Occupation du territoire, an innovative project for reforming the charter that will focus on true accountability to the citizens, transparency and responsible management.⁶⁶

Protecting public funds and recovering taxpayer dollars

Unfortunately, in recent years, Ville de Laval has received some negative attention in the news, particularly for the Commission of Inquiry on the Awarding and Management of Public Contracts in the Construction Industry (Charbonneau commission) and the work conducted by the Unité permanente anticorruption (UPAC) and the following arrests.

Ville de Laval has taken these allegations very seriously. Acting as the responsible administration, Laval performed a retrospective analysis of the community's rights and remedies against those who participated in the alleged activities.

Moreover, Ville de Laval has actively worked with the Charbonneau commission to formulate innovative proposals that protect public funds from fraudulent behaviour, including that alleged against the previous administration.

Ville de Laval also participated in the parliamentary commission's work to study Bill No. 26. Following this work, the new Act to ensure mainly the recovery of amounts improperly paid as a result of fraud or fraudulent tactics in connection with public contracts was sanctioned by the Québec National Assembly on April 1, 2015. The enactment of this regulation allows Ville de Laval, with the agreement of the Minister of Justice, to take action against those suspected of fraud, including against individuals and companies associated with the previous Laval administration, to recover the allegedly misappropriated funds.

Toward organization-oriented governance

Since the end of 2013, the municipal administration has been rethinking and modifying the governance of its organization to make Laval an exemplary organization and rebuild the trust of the citizens and the municipal employees. This is an organization with 3,641 employees, 2,535 of them full-time. The actions accomplished by the new public administration include:

- Upgrading the general auditor's autonomy and contractual power.
- Tightening the code of ethics for elected officials.
- Deploying professional resources for labour relations, communication and litigation to perform certain central city tasks that were previously subcontracted.
- Empowering the ombudsman to follow through with certain requests from citizens according to his/her judgment, without having to wait for all the administrative and legal recourses to have been exhausted.
- The creation of the Bureau de protection de l'intégrité et de l'éthique municipale.
- Lifting the professional privilege for the Ville's lawyers within the scope of CEIC and UPAC investigations.
- The announcement of the commitment to take legal action against enterprises, companies and individuals who have stolen from the Ville.
- The Ville's resumption of several outsourced functions (communication, engineering, and project management).
- The creation of a hiring policy.
- The hiring of experts in strategic fields (engineering, real-estate management, communication, human resources).
- The start of the general reorganization/modernization of the structures, procedures, management tools, delegation methods and accountability processes.

With its employees, the administration has undertaken an extensive project that will span several years in order to modernize its practices and management tools and thus promote ethics, governance and accountability as well as fight against all corruption without creating administrative complexity. This exercise also extends to the 15 paramunicipal companies in Laval.

As an example, the administration has undertaken a thorough revision of the mechanisms for delegating power. Special attention will be paid to the zoning regulation.

Furthermore, a strategic planning process was launched in February 2014, and the revision of the land use development plan was started in March 2014 and should be completed by the end of 2016.

A reform of the decision process is in progress, as well as the implementation of governance for program and project management. The revision of the organizational design of the support functions has recently begun. In this respect, all the management processes will be reviewed and a risk analysis is in progress to establish what sensitive information must be protected by the appropriate mechanisms.

Following all these changes, Laval will become the first city in Québec to adopt a governance policy. The result will be the creation of the Governance Secretariat, charged with implementing and monitoring the governance policy, and the Commission permanente du Conseil municipal, charged with assessing the performance of the paramunicipal companies. Initially, this policy will apply to the paramunicipal companies and will then gradually be extended to cover the entire Ville and the organizations that are under its jurisdiction.⁶⁷

The financial health of Laval

In 2013, Ville de Laval had a debt of \$1,695 per resident, as compared to an average of \$3,066 for the nine other Québec cities of 100,000 or more residents. This represents a difference of \$1,371 per person.

Furthermore, the city has a low dependence on financial sources over which it has no control, such as government transfers, which gives it good control over its finances. In addition, it has moderate flexibility, as compared to the low flexibility of comparable Québec municipalities, for increasing its debt load or the fiscal burden of its taxpayers.

The credit-rating agency Standard & Poor's gives Ville de Laval a rating of AA- with a positive outlook. This surpasses that of the city of Montréal and the government of Québec, which both are rated as A+ with a stable outlook.

Citizen participation in Laval

Previously, Ville de Laval conducted consultations when developing its policies. These; however, have often been directed toward already-defined partners such as organizations whose field of interest was connected to the object of the policy, rather than toward the population in general. With respect to land use and urban planning, public consultation was generally limited to the minimum prescribed by provincial law.

The population of Laval is almost as interested in municipal election issues as that of Montréal. In 2013, 41% of Laval voters exercised their right to vote in the municipal elections, in Montréal this number was 43%.

The Ville is looking to further stimulate the participation of the population. Aside from the new Marketing Department, which will conduct many marketing surveys of the citizens, organizations and enterprises, a citizen consultation division has been created to involve the population in planning the city's future. In parallel, elected officials have held public meetings in their respective neighbourhoods. The population's response is encouraging.

As regards the *Repensons Laval* operation, using a unique promotion campaign throughout the territory and in the media, the municipal employees, the population, enterprises and partner organizations were invited to share their ideas regarding a strategic vision of the territory and of the Laval community. They were invited to do this via a dedicated website and at 11 discussion workshops held at various times of the day and in various locations over the first two weeks of November 2014. In total, nearly 700 people participated in the discussion workshops. The Ville is about to continue the operation for the revision of its land use development plan.

A tradition of community collaboration

Ville de Laval is very mindful of its taxpayer's ability to pay, as demonstrated in its Déclaration de services aux citoyens.⁶⁸ This value was primarily reflected in a major partnership with 600 organizations for the provision of leisure, culture and community life services. For that matter, Laval is the first city in Québec to have adopted a declaration of services to partners in which it undertakes to provide its partners with professional, physical and financial support as well as the production of activities.⁶⁹

Appreciation of the population

In the spring of 2014, Ville de Laval conducted a survey of 500 citizens regarding their level of satisfaction with the municipal services they received over the past year. The results show that improvements are necessary in terms of communication with citizens and enhancing the Ville's image as only a certain portion of the population reported being VERY or SOMEWHAT satisfied with the services offered.

Satisfaction of citizens with the municipal services offered.

85% of respondents said they were very or somewhat satisfied with the municipal offices (BML).

77% of respondents said they were very or somewhat satisfied with the Ville's communication with its citizens.

76% of respondents said they were very or somewhat satisfied with the municipal administration.

73% of respondents said they were very or somewhat satisfied with the municipal council.

Only **62%** of respondents said they were very or somewhat satisfied with their ability to be heard by elected officials.

Only **60%** of respondents think that the services they receive from Ville de Laval are worth the taxes they pay.

Source: Zins Beuchesne et associés. Satisfaction survey with the residents of Laval regarding municipal services - n=500 respondents.

OUR GOVERNANCE

The main observations

A territorial organization that promotes consistency

Since Ville de Laval exercises the powers of a city, an MRC and an administrative region, this facilitates consistency in decisions, efficiency in actions, and more direct communications with the supra-regional and governmental bodies. Furthermore, by the end of 2015, the integration of the CLD, Laval Technopole, and the CRÉ will be completed and these organizations will form part of the municipal apparatus.

A municipal reorganization in progress

Before 2013, the Charte de la Ville de Laval made it so that information and powers were excessively centralized at the executive committee and senior management level. Through several regulations, the new municipal council undertook to transform the rules regarding decision-making. In addition, the Ville modified its governance to offer citizens responsible and transparent management.

Good financial health

Laval enjoys good financial health that enables it to have a low level of debt per resident, as compared to similar cities. The new tax agreement between the government of Québec and the cities cut Laval's 2015 budget by \$15 M. Laval is behind as regards its investments in infrastructure and it wants to make up for lost time. The Ville will; therefore, need to maintain a financial balance between settling its current financial obligations and ensuring the quality of life of its citizens.

Rising citizen participation

In the past, public consultation in Laval was limited to the minimum prescribed by provincial law, especially in matters of urban planning and land use. Since 2013, Ville de Laval has managed to boost citizen participation by organizing various reflection, discussion and sharing activities. Citizens are stepping up and want even more to be involved in the development of the city, while making their voices heard by elected officials and the municipal administration. In this respect, the marketing function will be used to increase citizen participation and get feedback.

THE DIAGNOSIS



Avenues for action in 2015-2035

Eight issues stand out from the inventory of the situation drawn up in the preceding chapters and the reflections of the various Ville de Laval departments. These issues were chosen as they represent either things we risk losing if no action is taken or no attention is given to them, or things we can gain or improve if we act accordingly. The way that these issues are addressed must be determined in a strategic plan. To thoroughly understand what these eight issues mean in the context of Laval, a few examples of the major tasks which the community of Laval may consider undertaking appear on the following pages.

To rise to these challenges, Laval will need to rely on the support and collaboration of its partners in the territory and the other levels of government.

Challenges 2015-2035

ISSUE 1 A dynamic and inclusive community

Challenges

- Ensure a safe living environment.
- Provide an attractive environment that promotes the well-being of families.
- Harmoniously manage the integration of immigrants and cultural diversity.
- Mitigate the risks of impoverishment and their consequences.
- Retain citizens aged between 50-69 and the young (20-29 years old).
- Reduce the risk, associated with the aging of the population, of growing economic dependence on the active population.

ISSUE 2 A healthy and fulfilled community

Challenges

- Focus on the development of infrastructure and sport, cultural and leisure programs that promote healthy living habits.
- Foster synergy in matters of social development with partners, volunteers and non-profit organizations (NPO).
- Encourage the distribution of the cultural and community activities over the entire territory.
- Facilitate the creation and distribution of cultural works on the territory and foster access for all citizens to arts and culture.
- Meet the needs for social or community dwellings and affordable housing.

ISSUE 3 A green and blue city

Challenges

- Include nature in the urban fabric.
- Protect, promote and make accessible, on the island of Laval and throughout the archipelago, the shorelines, watercourses, woods, natural environments and biodiversity as essential components of the collective natural heritage.
- Protect and promote the agricultural zone, slow down the abandonment of agricultural lands, and support the new generation of farmers.
- Ensure the eco-responsible management of the territory, including waste and water management.
- Offer a living environment that contributes to the well-being of the citizens by significantly reducing disturbances associated with noise, heat islands, air pollution.
- Reduce the ecological footprint of human activities and prepare the population, companies and institutions for climate changes.

ISSUE 4 A city and its neighbourhoods

Challenges

- Optimize the occupation of the territory by increasing the population density in a way that respects the existing environment and the human scale by developing coherent and user-friendly multifunctional sectors.
- Promote interconnection between the neighbourhoods, poles of activity and residential sectors.
- Orient real-estate development around sustainability, accessibility and active mobility.
- Favour the emergence of central locations and the strengthening of existing neighbourhoods, all with community services and connected with each other and the residential sectors.
- Coherently, diligently and efficiently renew the infrastructure network.
- Support the initiatives to fight the obsolescence and/or disrepair of equipment and the socio-economic devitalization of certain neighbourhoods.

ISSUE 5 A city that promotes active and sustainable mobility

Challenges

Develop appropriate networks to ensure the transit of people for multiple purposes.

Promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (GGE) associated with transport.

Meet the growing demand for mass transit.

Extend the means of utility and recreational transit using appealing and user-friendly active transit networks, such as bike paths, green corridors, safe sidewalks, etc.

Optimize the transport of merchandise in relation to economic activities.

ISSUE 6 A competitive and prosperous city

Challenges

Maintain and promote a diversified, competitive, leading-edge economy.

Stimulate and support entrepreneurship as well as succession in existing businesses.

Meet the human capital needs by attracting the most qualified people to Laval and creating favourable conditions for the community-based training of skilled labour.

Meet the physical needs of enterprises with well-situated, well-served, affordable locations.

Provide Laval with advanced information and communications technologies.

Stimulate the development of the tourism and cultural offering with poles of attraction offering an original, high-quality experience.

Stimulate access to employment for Laval citizens in the territory.

ISSUE 7 Efficient and quality services

Challenges

Maintain and develop efficient, accessible, high-quality community services.

Adequately serve citizens and families by making appealing, sound and safe installations and programs available to them while respecting their ability to pay.

Quickly respond to the needs and requests of residents and corporate citizens.

ISSUE 8 An agile, open and transparent administration

Challenges

Develop agile and transparent organizational practices that are oriented toward being receptive and responsive to citizens and that are ethically irreproachable.

Involve the citizens in the development of projects, policies and programs through participation and consultation.

Make Laval an open city, where public data is easily accessed.

Strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats

To address the issues, it makes sense to take advantage of our strengths, mitigate our weaknesses, seize the opportunities and counter the threats that arise. It is; therefore, necessary to take the time to identify these factors by performing a “scoping analysis”, also called a SWOT analysis. In 2014, Ville de Laval did this when it brought together partners of the Ville, its department heads and internal and external professionals on several occasions.

Strengths and advantages

- Location and accessibility
- Safe, family-friendly environment
- Presence of bodies of water, natural environments and green spaces
- Financial health of the city
- Diversified residential offering
- Integrated transport network
- Ethnocultural diversity
- Permanently protected agricultural zone with diverse crops
- Diversified offering of retail businesses
- Diversified and dynamic associative life
- Structured road network and parking
- A city, an administrative region
- Spread of «living and working» in Laval
- Simple territorial organization
- Access to property

Weaknesses and obstacles

- Lack of global planning:
 - City centre poorly defined, lacking density, vitality and dynamism
 - Absence of public spaces and gathering areas
 - Missing, aging or inadequate infrastructure and equipment
 - Transit services not adapted to the needs of the citizens (congestion, mass transit, active mobility, sidewalks, bike paths)
 - 90% of the territory designed on the basis of a traditional suburban model
- Feelings of belonging and pride are low among the Laval residents,
- Insufficient health institutions
- Environmental commitment to be better defined
- Denial of social disparity
- Shortage of affordable housing
- Insufficient supply of knowledge

Political, economic, sociological, technological, environmental and legal factors that represent opportunities or threats for Laval have also been identified.

Potential and opportunities

- First host community for immigrants to Québec
- Demographic growth
- Extension of the Metro
- Capacity for urban redevelopment with the extension of the Metro
- Spread of the metropolitan region
- Commercial attraction for Laval of the population of the cities north of Laval
- Capitalization on the «quality of life» trend
- Sport and recreational tourism
- Partnership with the other cities on the North Shore

Threats and risks

- Exodus of people in the 20-29 and 50-59 age groups
- Aging population and active population
- Impact of sedentary living on Laval residents
- Reduction of financial health
- Climate change and the impact of non-sustainable development
- Social issues related to urbanization
- Fragile world economy
- Impact of Laval's tarnished image
- Limited capacity to support economic succession and emerging enterprises
- Increase of automobile traffic
- Competition from cities north of Laval for attracting families
- Tax regime concentrated on real-estate
- Abolition of the CRÉ and the CLD
- Overflows

CONCLUSION





Today's Laval is a community that will undergo considerable changes that are likely to shake up its society, its economy and self-image. It is also a city that will need to redesign itself rather than continue expanding its urban territory in the suburban model. Finally, Laval is a municipality that is seeking to establish an exemplary pact between its citizens and its administration.

The portrait in the preceding pages allows the city to better understand itself and consider the future from a better perspective. The present is not perfect: Laval has its share of poor and vulnerable people, housing shortages, zones with economic vocations that fall short of their full potential, environments that do not promote the health of the citizens, problems with public mobility and institutions that do not meet the demand. The present; however, also shows that nature in Laval is still abundant, the heritage is still very present and cherished, the population is still engaged in all spheres of community life and the economy is still enviable.

Laval has what it takes to face challenges and take advantage of trends, to rethink itself and build a vision for its future.

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