

# **A Target Model for Montréal as a Global City**

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A recent Bank of Montreal/Boston Consulting Group analysis of Montréal contained 10 propositions to turnaround Montréal's sagging fortunes:

- Set ourselves an economic ambition: to rejoin the front ranks and then become one of the best.
- Mobilize the business, academic and social community in partnership with Montreal's mayor and the Montreal Metropolitan Community.
- "Repair" the city.
- Project ourselves into the future.
- Retain, attract and welcome talent from everywhere.
- Favour the emergence of new international leaders.
- Give Montreal the powers of a metropolis.
- Endow the metropolis with the necessary fiscal resources.
- Promote a unique identity.
- Rigorously measure the progress made.

If these propositions were to become actual action items they could be implemented in either of two contexts: under the current view of Montréal as a provincial metropolis or as a global city. This goal is still unclear.

If all the existing Québec rules remain the same, this guarantees the Provincial Metropolis outcome.

Montréal could be a global city if it became a model to which others aspire. It would attract and retain the best talents, it would produce and buy the best the world offers.

Montréal would be a global city if it was one of the top 10 North American cities: this is the position Montréal has enjoyed for most of its history. This is a clear goal. It could be measured by prosperity (per capita GDP, employment), quality of life, reputation, liberty and entrepreneurship, for example.

The benefits from achieving such a position would be significant. Prosperity would improve to at least the North American average, a gain of 30% or more from our current last place standing. The impact on citizens, on Québec at large and the continued improvement of quality of life in Montréal would be direct and immediate.

To do this, Montréal must control its destiny.

The city must be open to diversity, it must offer a high level of liberty and become a magnet of opportunity.

This involves being responsible for the functions that are required to build its prosperity and culture: taxation, commerce, education and health for example. There may be others. Areas of common needs would be organized as shared services with the rest of Québec.

In order to reconnect into the North American network, Québec's language laws need to be reviewed and adapted as they apply on Montréal's territory. The Immigration and enterprise aspects of the law are two areas in particular need of realignment. This is fundamental and critical if Montréal is to become a global city and not remain a Provincial Metropolis.

This rethinking could follow the following guidelines:

- Montréal is a French city.
- It is also a North American city.
- It should become a global city.
- Global cities are defined by their diversity and creativity.

- For example, all students regardless of ancestry or origin need to be bilingual at the end of primary school.
- And trilingual at the end of secondary.
- Anglophones and allophones (including immigrants) can go to any school they choose as long as the schools offer bilingual and trilingual education.
- Businesses and institutions could use the language of their choice.
- The public would have access to all services in either language anywhere, anytime.

This is the foundation required to achieve the significant improvement required to close Montréal's performance gap and make it one of North America's top 10 cities, a global city.