

## Presentation to the OCPM on Mount Royal access roads

Mount Royal park is part of Mount Royal mountain, which I will refer to as the Mountain in my presentation and the Mount Royal park as the park

Camillien Houde / Remembrance Rd, the city's most scenic, traverses the mountain, connecting the east and west the runs along the northern perimeter of Mount Royal Park and not through the park.

Pedestrians and cyclists have several car free paths in the park, notably Chemin Olmsted. These car free paths have several access points from the perimeters of the park and are well used by pedestrians and recreational cyclists. Over the years on Camillien Houde, I have seen elite cyclists training but very rarely pedestrian traffic. This is not surprising. Why would they chose to walk on a shoulder of very steep road when pleasant wooded paths with more gradual inclines are close by?

The pilot project stopped cars from using Camillien Houde / Remembrance Rd as a transit route, presumably to improve access for those who use the park and to reduce pollution on the mountain.

The results of the pilot project as presented by the city on November 8 showed that despite the fact that there was a huge reduction in cars using the road there was no increase in cyclists or pedestrians or a reduction in pollution. In fact, there was an increase in pollution and more traffic on the roads around the mountain where there are several universities, schools and hospitals thus making it more dangerous for those pedestrians and cyclists, who are far more numerous than those on Camillien Houde / Remembrance Rd. They also noted that there was a reduction in number of cars using the car parks compared to 2017. They linked that to the fact that 2017 was Montreal's 375 anniversary. Given that the weather this summer, 2018 was much better than in 2017. I think it is reasonable to attribute the decrease to the pilot project. The city could have looked at the 2016 data.

Another point noted in their report was that on 6 Sundays during the pilot project, Camillien Houde was shut to all cars and buses including public transport for Cyclovia from 7:30am- 12:00pm. Usually the road was closed until 1:00 A total of 1,500 people participate in 6 events, an average of 250 participants per event. Sundays are the one of busiest days at the park, is it right to deny Montrealers access for benefit of a few elite cyclists?

Now for my personal observations on the pilot project, I have lived very close to the mountain, since I arrived in Montreal in 1977 and have regularly walked /skied in Mount Royal Park/mountain, as well as enjoying the beautiful drive over mountain. I live on the west side.

1. Major problem of accessibility for visitors arriving by car from the west on Remembrance road on weekends as the parking lots at Beaver lake were often full, with long lineups of idling cars queuing. Total parking capacity at Beaver lake is 176 places whereas the capacity at Smith house is 549. The first weekend, the police just directed them back down the hill despite the fact that the parking lots at Smith house, were not full. Later on, once the parking lot was full, the security interviewed each motorist one by one before allowing them to proceed to Smith

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house parking This created long, lineups on the left hand lane of Cote des Neiges at the turnoff for Remembrance road. By September, some people had given up as there were fewer lineups.

2. There were fewer families and people in the park even on good weather days on weekend, picnic tables were available. My own observation, corroborated by several in my circle.
3. Created an East West divide. I used to shop and dine out frequently in the Plateau and on Park avenue, but stopped during the pilot project . It just took too long to go around the mountain, even in off peak hours. In effect, the pilot project created probably the world's largest roundabout around the mountain. Lots of people I spoke to stopped going from West to east and vice versa unless they had to.
4. Privileges the super fit cyclists who traverse the mountain as part of their training routine, often riding above the speed limit and racing through stop signs and traffic lights on Cote des Neiges. I had observed the same behaviour on the Camillien Houde section before the start of the pilot project. I am surprised that there have not been accidents as I have seen near misses with pedestrians. The report on accidents on Camillien Houde / Remembrance Rd submitted by the city, only documents accidents involving at least 1 car.
5. Discriminates against the elderly, those with reduced mobility and people with compromised immune systems, e.g. patients receiving chemotherapy as they cannot enjoy the beautiful drive over the mountain, or the park as cycling, walking or taking public transit is not an option for them I really missed not being able to drive over the mountain and take in beautiful ever changing panoramic views, stopping at the Camillien Houde lookout when I had visitors or it was very clear day. It was so good for the soul.
6. Belvédère Soleil What an ill conceived idea. The report by CIMA+ noted multiple problems. I cannot understand why it was installed in the first place as there is already a pedestrian path in the park, not on the shoulder of the narrowest section of the road that allows people to walk from the Camillien Houde lookout to the escarpment that overlooks the Belvédère Soleil , where the view is even better.
7. Belvédère Camillien Houde I did not visit during the pilot project. However, I did note that the structure put in place for the cafe before the start of the project effectively blocked a lot of the view.

In my opinion closing Camillien Houde / Remembrance Rd, the city's most iconic transit traffic, because of one tragic fatal accident last year the only one since the road was built in 1961 was an overreaction.

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I agree that steps need to be taken to improve the safety of all who use the road.

The installing of barriers to prevent U turns and the improved signage in French are a good first step. However, signs should also be in English as this is an area frequented by tourists and clear instructions on how to access the Camillien Houde coming from the east would be helpful.

Regarding the STM buses, the majority of users are descending or boarding at Beaver lake and Smith House. I would recommend that the city reconfigures the chemin sud , the 2 lane road runs which between the Beaver lake parking lot 115 and Smith House parking lot P 117 so that the STM buses can stop at Beaver lake and Smith House in both directions instead of having transit users having to cross Remembrance road. This road is currently only used by park's maintenance vehicles.

This would certainly improve access to the park for people with reduced mobility and those with young families. The pedestrian walkways would be in place for those wishing to access the cemeteries.

I would also allow cars to enter the P116 parking lot at Beaver lake from the road on south side which is currently blocked.

I would remove the additional stop signs and bus stops that were installed during the pilot project and instead use photo radar to ensure that the speed limits are respected. I would suggest that the city license bicycles so that cyclists can be more easily held accountable for their actions.

I sincerely hope that Camillien Houde / Remembrance Rd will remain open for all transit traffic and not turned into a training track for elite cyclists.

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