

January 28, 2025

**Subject: Motion to Pedestrianize Wellington Street**

Hello Council and Neighbours of Verdun,

My name is Pauline, and I live in 2E avenue Verdun. I have been living in my apartment for 3 years, and each year, I get to **fall in love** with the Verdun community and the Wellington Street all over again – especially every summer.

In 2019, I moved from Calgary to Montreal for a new job opportunity and for a change of scenery. Montreal (at least, the island) is mainly **walkable** and I am happy to rely on the public transport to get around. No more headaches of traffic, parking, snow removal, maintenance, repair, and insurance costs.

In those initial years, I enjoyed many green spaces such as Parc Jarry and Jeanne Mance Park, as well as the pedestrianized streets of Saint Catherine. When I walk down these streets, I slow down, people watch, engage with local businesses, and **remain in the present**. It has significantly **improved the quality of my life and well-being** (and I brag about where I live to my Calgarian friends!)

On 2021, I was met with skepticism from friends and peers when I told them I was moving from downtown Montreal to Verdun. After all, Verdun was known to be dry, lackluster, and crime-affected in its early years. I am so happy to say I have proven my friends otherwise, and constantly **invite** them over to Wellington Street, especially with the growth and expansion of businesses, new eateries (Joyo Burger, Moa Moa), bakeries (Premiere Moisson, Le Toledo), boutiques (Medz Salon), cafes (Lili & Oli, Sweet Lee's), yoga studios and of course, the community staples (RONA, Bossa SAQ).

These same streets allow seasonal vendors to sell their hand-made goods and allow the hosting of events like salsa classes and dancing where you get together...and dance with a stranger! **Old and young alike, friends and family**. It was on one summer evening on July 2024 where I spontaneously decided to join in the fray and danced with 7 new friends I made! We remain good friends to this day. This was an accomplishment – do you know how hard it is to **make new friends** in a new neighbourhood, in a new city, as an adult? I am equally heart warmed looking at families taking evening strolls together, and elderly on scooters moving around with no obstacles and with **safety and confidence**.

I love Verdun, and I love Wellington Street. It is not surprising that Time Out Magazine named it the **coolest street** in the world (August 2022). It is because of the vibrant community and welcoming businesses that gather at the same space. It is important for people to **take up space**.

The pedestrianization is a staple of **European city walkability**. It strengthens **community bonds**, promotes **social interactions**, and allows for **accessibility** and safety from vehicles and traffic. With the reduction in traffic, I foresee a decrease in air and noise pollution, contributing to a **cleaner, greener and healthier environment**. This is especially important in the face of climate change today. A reduction in traffic would also mean **less maintenance** of the roads. Finally, it provides **space for artists** to create unique communal seating, stunning art installations and vibrant chalk road art. This **visual appeal** makes it even more pleasant to spend more time in the neighbourhood. I would like to **advocate strongly for** the pedestrianization of Wellington. I am confident that we can collaborate to develop action plans that will address and **mitigate other members' concerns**. I want to **invest** in my community and take active steps to make it my permanent **home**.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Immacula". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'I'.