The Montréal model: The institutionalization of public consultations
NOUS NE NOUS LAISSERONS PAS FORER !

RASSEMBLEMENT CIToyEN GAZ DE SCHISTE
L'ARGENTIE DOIT TRIOMPHER !

NON AU GAZ DE SCHISTE

Moratoire dès maintenant !

Nature Québec
The public consultation bureau
A paramunicipal institution dedicated to public consultation
A neutral and independent third party
created in 2002, entrenched in the Charter of the city.
Our mission

To consult Montrealers on any project assigned by the Montréal city council or executive committee;

To propose regulations aimed at structuring the public consultations of municipal authorities in order to ensure their credibility, transparency and effectiveness;

To reflect on best practices.
Triangulation of the public consultation process

Will of decision-makers

Technical knowledge of public service

User knowledge of citizens
Our areas of activity

- Right of initiative
- Real-estate projects
- Plans Policies Charters
- Community and institutional equipment
- Heritage sites and cultural assets
Four main values

Transparency of our practices
Access to information
Effectiveness of processes
Equity and equal treatment of participants
Engaging citizens in decision-making.
More than 180 consultations held to date

About 40% involved major private or public urban projects

Tens of thousands of citizens and groups consulted
Recently

2013
Consultations using digital means;

2014
Support for internal departments in consultation processes.

2016
Training of elected officials and public servants;

2018
Prototyping designs;
In 2012

First mandate under the citizens’ right of initiative - Urban agriculture in Montreal

Since then... 2 major consultations

- Reduction of fossil fuel consumption: what are citizens willing to do? (results send to the Conference of mayors – COP 21)
- Racial and Systemic discrimination: what solutions for a more inclusive Montreal? (ongoing)
Consultations divided into 3 phases

Information — Hearings of opinions — Report

A known methodology announced in advance

Commissioners who are not municipal employees

A strict code of ethics

Recommending powers only, the final decisions are made by elected officials
The consultation report

Outline of participants’ concerns
Analysis of public opinion
Recommendations of the commission

Submitted to the mayor
Made public
Tabled at city council
THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A better understanding of the needs and values of the population

Access to citizens’ expertise

A better understanding of the issues

Promotion of social acceptance

Alone we can go faster, but together we can go further.
Participation
What happened?

ONLINE PARTICIPATION

DIVERSIFICATION OF IN-PERSON ACTIVITIES

BETTER COMMUNICATIONS

REACHING OUT TO CITIZEN WHERE THEY ALREADY ARE

EMPOWERMENT
The art of combining Online + Face to Face participation

Anywhere and anytime
Reach new and more people
Different levels of participation
Generate new opinions
More flexibility for participants

Deeper discussions
Humanised interactions
Reach people who are directly impacted
Essential when there are social tensions
Thank you!