



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

The Canada Post site in Little Burgundy Southwest Montreal calls for the Federal Government to act

Montréal, 10th February, 2005 – The social and economic development group RESO, the Housing Resource Group Bâtir son quartier and the Little Burgundy Coalition call upon the federal government to become a partner in the development of an extraordinary project on the banks of the Lachine canal in the Little Burgundy neighbourhood, on the Canada Post site. This ambitious project, piloted by these three groups in the Southwest borough, proposes an economic and tourist dimension with a potential for the creation of **1000 to 1300 jobs**, and some **625 affordable housing units**, that would include a significant proportion of community and co-operative housing units.

It is critical that the site, owned by Canada Post, remains in the public sector and not be sold to private interests. **Therefore the three organizations call upon the federal government to assure that the Canada Post site be acquired by Canada Lands Corporation.**

The development of this site must be an exemplary a, sustainable, equitable and “green” project marrying economic, social and environmental objectives while responding to the needs of the population of the Southwest as concerns housing, employment and overall quality of life. The federal government, as owner of the site, can take a leadership role in this project in collaboration with the City of Montreal and the Québec government.

Situated in Little Burgundy, the Canada Post site is bounded by Ottawa street on the north, to the east by du Séminaire, to the south by the Lachine Canal and to the west by Richmond. The land covers an area of **1 million square feet** and is strategically located — close to downtown, Old Montreal, Cité du Multimédia, Peel Basin and Atwater Market. A large warehouse-style building on the site occupies more than a third of the land. The proposed project foresees the disassembly of this structure to allow for a more integrated development.

The development proposal put forward by the Little Burgundy Coalition, Bâtir son quartier and the RESO reflects the expressed needs of the Southwest community, particularly as concerns the need for a diversity of housing, income and function. The proposal also respects the regulatory criteria put forward by the borough and The City of Montreal planning authorities. For the Southwest milieu the notion of affordability must be integrated into all aspects of the project: housing, employment-creating initiatives as well as tourism and recreational projects. The proposal is sensitive to the heritage nature of the site and its place in the urban fabric. Of particular interest is the idea of a partial excavation of the former basins as well as unique landscaping efforts to evoke this industrial past. This development plan was

received with great enthusiasm during a public meeting on November 24th with 150 residents of Little Burgundy and the Southwest present.

Nicole Loiselle, MNA for Saint-Henri-Sainte-Anne, and coordinator of the Committee of the elected representatives of Southwest Montreal (municipal federal provincial and school board levels) supports this initiative of the community and underlines the consensus shared by the Committee as to the importance of an overall and integrated development plan that respects and incorporates the historic, economic and social concerns of people in the Southwest.

The plan foresees a portion of the site dedicated to job-creation projects, including office development, “new economy” businesses (such as digital imagery), local services as well as tourist-related services. Others parts of the site will be given over to affordable housing such as co-op and community housing and home ownership for households with average incomes.

The tourist and recreation space will include the l’Auberge International du Canal de Lachine, an Interpretation Centre for the Lachine Canal, food services, boutiques and living/production space for artists and craftpersons. A public park is foreseen on the banks of the Lachine Canal, as Guy Street will be extended to the water. Highlighting and reinforcing the heritage aspects of the site and improving the quality of life in the area are also key objectives; a prime example of this is the Pointe des Seigneurs, a historical and archaeological site of national importance.

The RESO, Bâtir son quartier and the Little Burgundy Coalition / Healthy Neighbourhood insist that they be full partners in all stages of the development of this strategic site.

The future of this project will depend upon the partnerships developed with private and non-profit promoters and also upon the involvement of the public sector especially as concerns issues such as decontamination of the site, the dismantling of the building, the excavation of the basins, public facilities, etc.