

Décarie Boulevard Study

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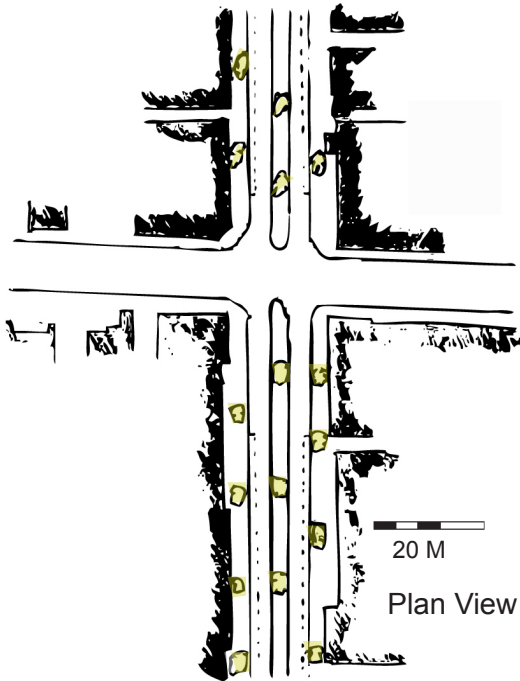


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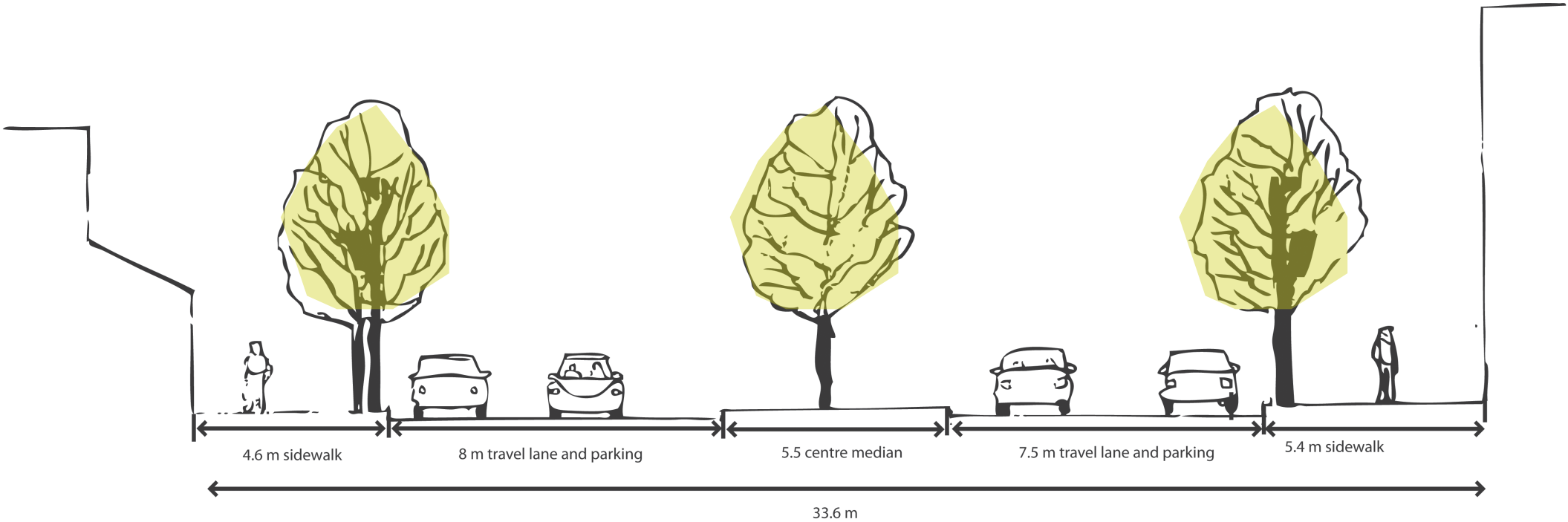
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Boulevard Décarie was subject to a revitalization plan in 2006. A red interlocking brick treatment characterized the old boulevard, as did a thin median flanked by on-street parking. Renovations were intended to facilitate pedestrian use, emphasize the boulevard's commerce, and invigorate street life. Major changes included sidewalk-widening, tree-planting, and aesthetic upgrades (<http://saintlaurent.ville.montreal.qc.ca/en/intro/projects/revitdecarie/revitdecarie.asp>). It appears that the boulevard was already in fairly good condition before the revitalization, though with little defining character.



20 M

Plan View



ABOVE: Pedestrian and landscaped areas represent over fifty percent of this boulevard. On-street parking separates pedestrians from traffic, while street lighting is directed towards sidewalks. Trees form canopies between buildings, creating a sense of enclosure on the ground. BELOW: The northern section of Boulevard Décarie emerges from a busy highway interchange as a main street in the borough of Saint-Laurent.



<http://spacingmontreal.ca/?p=14>



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The revitalized boulevard reuses some of its old red brick sidewalk treatment. This emphasizes the history of the boulevard, and was an economic- and eco-friendly choice. Walking space between trees and parked cars creates human-scale “tunnels” on the wide sidewalk.

With shaded outdoor seating, views of greenery in the distance, and a feeling of permanence given by obvious design efforts, the boulevard appears more unified and attractive. However, some have complained that parking is difficult in this new arrangement - a problem which affects merchants in particular.

Boulevard Décarie appears less inviting during the winter. Without tree canopies, the wideness of the boulevard seems harsh and uninviting. At the bus shelter, a prime location for pedestrians, lack of on-street parking leaves the sidewalk especially exposed to busy traffic.



Photo by Melanie Lambrick