

Collaborative Planning and the Challenge of Urbanization: Issues, Actors and Strategies in Marseilles and Montreal Metropolitan Areas

Nicolas Douay
UMR CNRS Géographie-Cités, équipe C.R.I.A.
Université Paris-Diderot

Résumé

Dans un contexte urbain marqué par les phénomènes de métropolisation et de mondialisation, de nouveaux enjeux apparaissent et engendrent de nouvelles formes de gouvernance visant à élaborer une stratégie territoriale. La concordance des agendas politiques français et québécois quant à la mise en œuvre de réformes métropolitaines est à la base de cette recherche. Cette comparaison évalue dans quelle mesure ces nouvelles démarches métropolitaines marseillaise et montréalaise sont réellement innovantes et permettent d'envisager l'évolution des modes de planification urbaine. Le réseau métropolitain marseillais se caractérise par une démarche de « projet métropolitain » qui s'inscrit dans le courant de la planification stratégique alors que par l'intermédiaire de son institution métropolitaine, Montréal élabore un « schéma métropolitain » qui se révèle plus proche de l'approche traditionnelle. Le profil politico-institutionnel issu des réformes métropolitaines marseillaise et montréalaise est fort différent mais se caractérise par une difficulté commune à créer une arène de discussion à l'échelle métropolitaine. Ces deux métropoles illustrent donc la réapparition d'une pratique de la planification métropolitaine qui serait moins spatiale que celle développée durant les années 1960, néanmoins plus stratégique mais pas encore totalement collaborative.

Mots clés: urbanisme, planification métropolitaine, métropolisation, mondialisation, Marseille, Montréal, tournant collaboratif

Canadian Journal of Urban Research, Volume 19, Issue 1, Supplement pages 50-69.
Copyright © 2010 by the Institute of Urban Studies.
All rights of reproduction in any form reserved.
ISSN: 1188-3774

Abstract

In a context marked by globalization and rapid urbanization in metropolitan regions, new issues appear and generate new forms of governance, which in turn aim at elaborating new territorial strategies. The similarities of the French and Québécois political agendas for metropolitan reforms are the basis of this paper. The comparison evaluates up to what point these new Marseilles and Montréal metropolitan approaches are innovative forms of urban planning. The Marseilles metropolitan network is characterized by the *projet métropolitain* (metropolitan project) approach, which fits in the now familiar strategic planning trend, whereas via its metropolitan institutions Montreal is working out a *schéma métropolitain* (land use and development plan), which appears closer to a “traditional approach.” The political-institutional profiles resulting from the metropolitan reforms in Marseilles and Montréal differ but share the common difficulty of creating a workable forum for discussion on a metropolitan scale. These two metropolises thus illustrate the reappearance of a practice of metropolitan planning that is less spatially based than that developed during the 1960s, more strategic, but not yet completely collaborative.

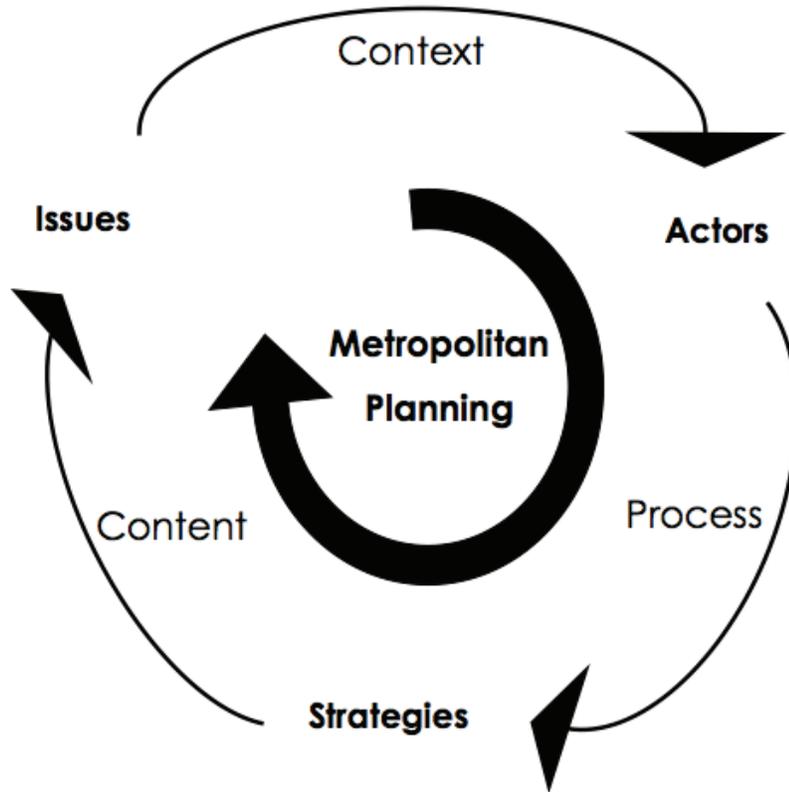
Key words: urban planning, metropolitan planning, urbanization, globalization, Marseilles, Montreal, collaborative turn

With the emergence of many metropolises, new issues are surfacing. This “metropolization,” defined as rapid urbanization in metropolitan regions, involves two processes (Bassand 2004; Scott 2002). The first process reflects the internal structuring of urbanization as a product of how homes and businesses are located. This internal structuring controls the spread of urbanization, which leads to new territorial specializations and centralities. The second process is more encompassing: it emphasizes the development of a system of metropolises within an economic context of generalized inter-urban competition. The globalization-metropolization duplet is the engine behind the great transformations of the modern world.

Cities are competing with each other in order to accommodate or quite simply to fix economic activities which have become increasingly volatile and mobile (Veltz 1996). As a result of this evolution, new forms of governance are emerging with the objective of elaborating territorial strategies. The contemporary practice of metropolitan planning aims to articulate economic competitiveness and social cohesion, in order to better position the metropolis within this rivalry.

This study¹ evaluates contemporary approaches to metropolitan planning in Marseilles and Montreal. The objective is to look at issues, actors and strategies (fig. 1) in order to understand how innovative the processes may be: of particular interest is the extent to which they reveal the potential for a collaborative turn in planning (Healey 1997).

Figure 1: Metropolitan Planning Process



To answer these questions, initially we need to understand what metropolitan planning means, and after learning about metropolitan planning, then we can better comprehend Marseille's network and its metropolitan project, as well as the Montreal Metropolitan Community (MMC) and its metropolitan land use and development plan. This comparison exposes the reality of the collaborative turn in metropolitan planning and reveals some of the challenges of implementation.

Planning Metropolitan Areas

Different versions of metropolitan regionalism

Traditional metropolitan regionalism emerged within the reform movement that appeared in the 1890s and again proved popular in the 1960s and 1970s. Reformers had the idea that a metropolitan government which united downtown and suburbs would provide the most appropriate approach for responding to questions of how

to govern metropolitan areas. Another theory, the school of public choice, maintains that municipal separation, indeed, competition between municipalities, is the most effective response to the question of governing metropolises:

Public choice theorists reject the metropolitanists' argument that large, regional governments necessarily achieve economies of scale. The polycentrists argue that metropolitan government is not necessarily more economical or efficient. In fact, the polycentrists argue, large, metropolitan government can become highly centralized, bureaucratized, and inefficient (Ross et al. 1991, 274).

Ultimately, these two theoretical approaches rest on different conceptions of the city and of local power, the first being progressive in inspiration whilst the second is more neo-liberal. Beyond the theoretical vision, the debate over governability has allowed for the restructuring and the planning of local government under a variety of forms. Canada seems one of the countries where this traditional model has been most engaged, notably in concluding institutional reforms in Toronto and Winnipeg during the 1960s, and in Halifax or Montreal more recently. The unitary governance model remains relatively rare in the western world. The most popular model remains the two-tier system that maintains the original urban districts alongside metropolitan government (Sharpe 1995).

The third theoretical school, the neo-regionalists, appeared in the United States in the early 1990s with the rise in power of cities in the wake of the dynamics of urbanization and economic globalization. This school goes beyond the classic opposition between opponents and supporters of traditional metropolitan government and proposes a third way that bypasses institutions (Wallis 1994; Champagne 2002) by proposing to take an interest in networks of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. This school of thought draws on the notion of metropolitan interdependence and maintaining economic competitiveness. New regionalism insists on the economic, social, political, and environmental viability of metropolitan cohesion and aims, ultimately, to implement concrete metropolitan reforms in order to adapt the structures of power to the new social, economic, spatial, and global order (Mitchell-Weaver, Miller, and Deal 2000; Frisken and Norris 2001).

Although neo-regionalism originated in the US, it is relevant for an analysis of Canadian (Sancton 2001; Sancton 2008) and French local political configurations. In relation to Canadian cities, Sancton stresses the need for going beyond a purely institutional approach to government and notes the necessity of understanding neo-regionalism as a dynamic of governance:

Most Canadian city-regions—including Montreal—already possess many of the governmental institutions that American “new regionalists” advocate. What is missing in Canada is an understanding throughout

our society that the economic and social health of our cities is a responsibility of all those with the resources to bring about change (Sancton 2000, 82).

The new metropolitan approach seeks to engender a collective process undertaken through dialogue and exchange among the actors. The continuous collective learning process it advocates resonates with the collaborative approach being promoted within contemporary planning theory.

Metropolitan specificity in planning

The metropolitan context offers a good illustration of the evolution of planning models. The metropolitan planning “golden age” took place during a period of rapid growth following the Second World War. This planning approach aimed to control urban growth outside the limits of downtowns. That raises the question of how to determine the objects of metropolitan concern (Gaudreau 1990). Defining these metropolitan objectives creates numerous debates because it questions the nature of the process of urbanization, as well as the importance and direction given to various planning approaches. Planners can use different criteria (Mogulof 1975) but the easiest way is to examine the issues concerning problems on a metropolitan scale. Indeed, this pragmatic vision of planning notes that metropolises in different countries confront similar problems (Kunzmann 2004), such as:

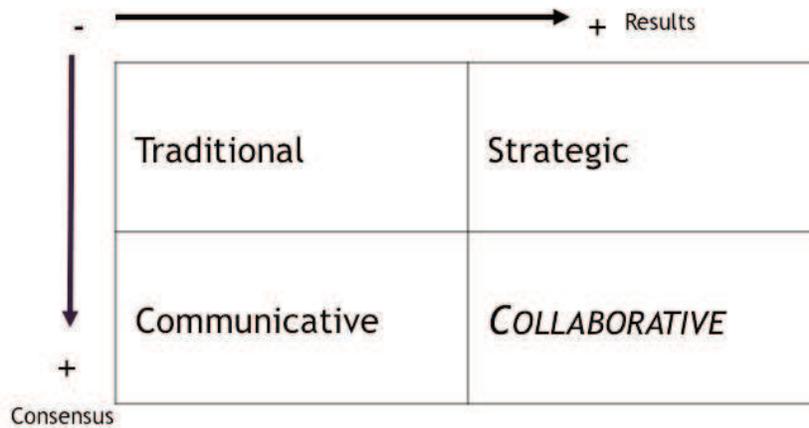
1. The process of urban sprawl, with its negative effects on natural resources, the consumption of energy, and social segregation;
2. Conflicts that emerge during the expansion of airports;
3. The effects of big peripheral shopping malls on city-centre shops;
4. Requests for the development of road networks in order to reduce traffic congestion;
5. Land use coordination to build transportation infrastructures;
6. The division of labour in urban areas;
7. The spatial concentration of leisure activities;
8. The destruction or pollution of traditional landscapes (both urban and rural);
9. Spatial fragmentation and social polarization of urban areas, as a consequence of erosion of regional solidarity.

In practical terms, the metropolitan planning approach supports the emergence of spatial strategies that bridge economic competitiveness, social solidarity, and territorial cohesion. To be efficient, these elements must be articulated via strategies that mobilize relevant actors.

The collaborative turn

The revival of metropolitan planning corresponds not only to a pragmatic emergence of professional practices, but also to the convergence and articulation of various theoretical currents of planning (Table 1), specifically between the strategic and the communicative models (figure 2). This theoretical meeting takes different forms according to various authors: Motte talks about “spatial strategic planning” (2006), Salet and Faludi (2000) refer to the “revival of strategic spatial planning,” and Healey (1997) speaks regularly about “collaborative planning,” “strategic plans” and “new strategic spatial planning.”

Figure 2 Planning models and collaborative turn



Source: Douay 2007

Whatever the semantic expression may be, there is considerable consensus that the collaborative approach is now the dominant paradigm in planning theory (Allmendinger and Tewder-Jones 2002; Innes 1995; Alexander 1997). Authors variously talk about “communicative planning” (Healey 1993; Innes 1995), “argumentative planning” (Fischer and Forester 1993), “collaborative planning” (Healey 1997; Innes and Booher, 2010), “deliberative planning” (Forester 1999) or “relational planning” (Healey 2007).

The pragmatic emergence of a new type of metropolitan planning questions the articulation of strategic and communicative dimensions in a collaborative approach. “How can a strategy emerge from such open processes?” (Healey 1997, 276). Collaboration requires a capacity to reach some agreement on the issues, to mobilize actors, and to define the purposes of strategies in terms of visions and actions in relation to resource allocation and regulatory power.

Table 1: Planning models

	<i>Planning models</i>		
	Traditional	Strategic	Communicative
<i>Origins</i>	1950s Rational Model	1980s Neoliberalism	1990s Social movements
<i>Objectives</i>	Land use regulation	Effectiveness	Consensus building
<i>Actors</i>	Political officials and planners	Political officials and economic actors	All actors take part in the process without anyone dominating
<i>Role of the planner</i>	Expert	Pragmatic mediator	Negotiator
<i>Methods</i>	Scientific, rational, statistical	Proactive, selective, strategic, contextualized	Communicative, interactive, consensual
<i>Decision-making process</i>	Centralized, vertical, authoritative	Closed on the key actors who hold the power	Open, ascending, collaborative, interactive
<i>Contents</i>	Global level centered on the land-use regulations	Partly spatialized, centered on specific issues and projects	Partly spatialized, centered on interaction of actors for the building common values and visions
<i>Implementation</i>	Static, hierarchical, top-down	Continuing, iterative	Continuing, interactive and dynamic, bottom-up

Preparation and implementation of plans requires many means of exchange to produce interactions between actors in order to create standards and a vision of united action:

In the ideal of collaborative planning, stakeholders representing the differing interests meet for face-to-face dialogue and collectively work out a strategy to address a shared problem. Participants work through joint fact finding and agree on a problem, mission, and actions. The players learn and co-evolve. Under the right conditions, this dialogue can produce results that are way superior to each individual part (Innes and Gruber 2005, 183).

At the end of the process, the actors will have finished formulating a metropolitan strategy and will have seen to the formalization and institutionalization (more or less as a whole, according to the degree of interaction and level of consensus) of a network of actors. In this sense, the project becomes a tool for consensus building, so construction of the strategies and construction of the networks of actors are closely dependent (Pinson 2005). Finally, this new form of metropolitan planning sees the evolution of the paradigm in favour of collaborative planning, while trying to integrate the contributions of strategic and communicative currents.

Metropolitan planning context in Marseilles and Montreal: spatial, institutional, and project complexities

The similarity of the French and Québécois political agenda for the development of metropolitan planning makes a comparison of the cases useful. Similar changes have been made to their legal contexts, which have resulted in implementation of institutional reforms and, more generally, a change in the conditions governing regional development. Marseilles and Montreal have been chosen for their spatial and political resemblances.

Both Marseilles and Montreal provide excellent illustrations of the urbanization process; both have a polycentric spatial organization. Also, they are located in sites with several natural barriers (the sea, fresh water, and topographic relief). In addition to these natural constraints, the type of urban growth exhibits a high degree of sprawl and a marked contrast between the centre and the suburbs. During the last three decades of the twentieth century, the central cities experienced demographic decline and marked pauperization during a period of regional demographic and economic growth. In such a fragmented urban context, urban transportation issues are central to metropolitan problems. Marseilles and Montreal are experiencing growing difficulties in their attempts to reduce congestion on their major roads and provide high quality public transport which can constitute a credible alternative to the car.

These two metropolises are institutionally complex. This has been the subject of long-standing debate in both Marseilles and Montreal. Historically, both areas have suffered from a lack of cooperation at metropolitan level. This is, of course, a common shortcoming, but it is particularly pronounced in these two metropolises as a result of the historical opposition between the centre and the suburbs. Transportation policies have been the first victims of this complexity and institutional fragmentation.

The spatial and institutional complexity produces all the conditions that generate planning complexity and also fragmentation. The lack of management mechanisms in these two metropolitan regions did not historically produce conditions for effective connection between different political visions. Fragmentation leads to thematic policies which are compartmentalized and lacking in global visions. The project complexities reflect a spatial aspect in which each institution conducts its own planning.

Marseilles and its Metropolitan Project

The Marseilles *Commune* has the largest population of the metropolitan region but it does not dominate it: the central city and peripheral cities are not only functioning independently but experience different development dynamics. Growth during the 1980s-1990s took place outside the city of Marseilles. Marseilles was declining demographically and economically. Rapid urbanization was happening outside the Marseilles territory. In a local context with a strong tradition of autonomy and a historical opposition to inter-municipal cooperation, metropolitan cooperation first appeared in the 1960s with the creation of the Marseilles metropolitan area scheme (1967).

French coordination of public policies in the metropolises has facilitated cooperation between communes. The first major attempt to develop cooperation was in 1966: Urban Communities were created in some large cities (like Lille or Lyon, but not Marseilles). Institutional and spatial coordination at the metropolitan level has been linked in France to national reforms of decentralized institutions. This process took its local configurations according to the characteristics of local institutional cultures; strategies for coordination differed from one metropolis to another. Decentralization during the 1980s was organized with no hierarchy between the main levels of local and regional governments. *Communes*, *Départements* and *Régions* could act separately because they were formally independent. The central state itself gave up many elements of its hierarchical powers to local authorities. Coordination of agendas depended on the willingness of local governments to work together. During the 1980s, in some urban areas, this new situation led to the development of cooperation, as in Lille, Lyon, and Rennes, for example. In other urban areas, limited cooperation or non-cooperation was dominant: this was the case in Bordeaux, Grenoble, Toulouse, and Nantes.

In the Marseilles metropolitan area competition first characterized institutional relations between communes, but the period from the 1990s was different. Following the 1990 census, the central state discovered new growth in the Parisian region. It launched national incentive policies to support regional metropolises to compete in the European context. In Marseilles, a new type of cooperation in metropolitan planning emerged, although it did not cover the totality of the metropolitan area. The *Chevènement* Act (1999) provided the opportunity for a major reshaping of the inter-communal landscape: new institutions (Urban Community, Agglomeration Community, Commune Community) were set up, with good success. The perimeters and jurisdiction of the first inter-communal institutions were reshaped and extended.

Two constraints governed municipal boundary changes in Marseilles: central government's desire to achieve a degree of coherence and, in particular, the poor image of Marseilles which acted as a deterrent for peripheral communes (as the central city was still frequently associated with social problems). The peripheral communes

did not wish to have to deal with these problems in an integrated cooperative structure dominated by a central city with such a large population. The Mayor of Marseilles, J.-C. Gaudin, therefore adopted a conciliatory approach in order to provide the communes with guarantees. Recently, however, many mayors have broken the informal community consensus, and in 2008 they supported the election of a new president who challenged the young candidate favoured by the mayor.

Metropolitan cooperation via the networking of the actors

The principal factor which triggered the dynamics of metropolitan cooperation was the show of strength between the Prefect and local elected officials with regard to defining the perimeters of the future Territorial Cohesion Plans (*schémas de cohérence territoriale*). In line with new practices of metropolitan regionalism (Savitch and Vogel, 2000), the presidents of the inter-municipal institutions of Aix-en-Provence, Aubagne, and Marseilles signed a charter of metropolitan cooperation and founded the “Metropolitan Conference” in order to coordinate their territorial policies. After two years and a preliminary phase of informal partnership, these three institutions drafted a joint introduction to their strategic visions. The call to metropolitan cooperation announced by the government in 2003 gave way to a new stage. Aix and Marseilles presented a unique and unified candidacy, which was accepted. Then, under the impetus of the government, the network of three inter-municipal institutions was extended to a total of eight inter-municipal institutions, thus including practically the entire department of the *Bouches-du-Rhône* (figure 3). However, this integration is still problematic and it meets with various conflicts: the most important is the opposition of Marseilles towards the construction of an incinerator for household garbage on the lands of the port of Fos-sur-Mer, west of the metropolis.

A strategic planning inspiration

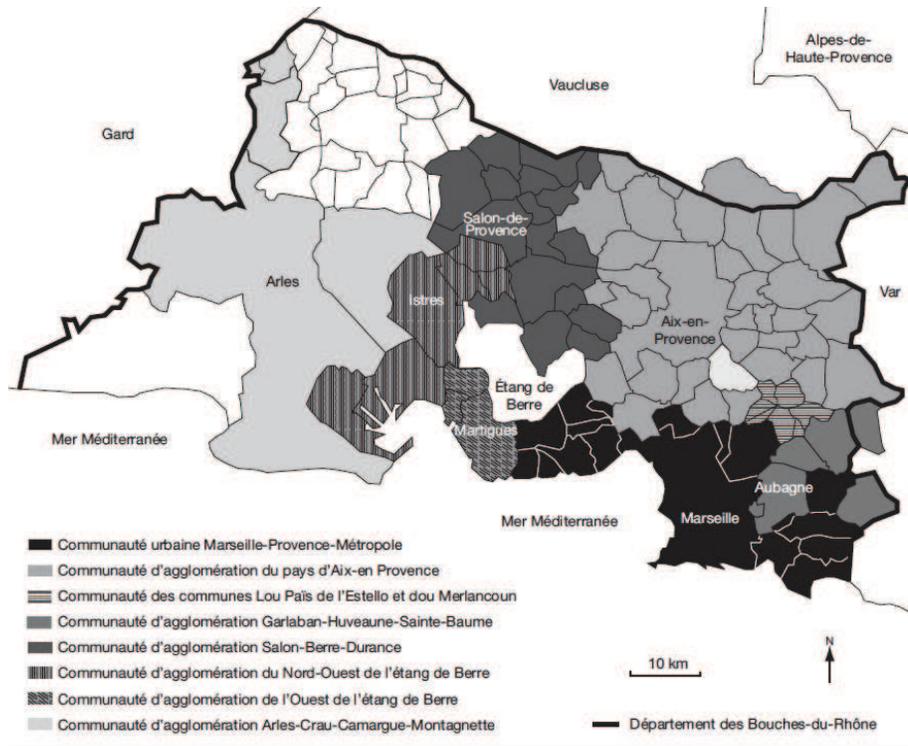
The importance of transportation issues contributed to the emergence of a metropolitan system of thinking and the first experiments of cooperation between institutions (Douay 2006): the metropolitan territorial project. Since 2003 development of informal cooperation in the Metropolitan Conference has allowed the drafting of a common introduction to the territorial projects of the agglomerated communities of Marseilles, Aix-en-Provence, and Aubagne.

In the tradition of the strategic planning (Padioleau and Demeestere 1989), the current preparation of the metropolitan project between the eight inter-municipal institutions begins with defining shared ambitions for the metropolis. The implementation of these objectives involves not just the Metropolitan Conference but the whole network of actors who will take part in it. The contribution of the metropolitan project is not in identifying micro-projects or new operations, but rather in motivating the interventions of actors in order to create a dynamic around common objectives. This project constitutes an important step because it acknowledges

the urbanization of the metropolitan territory; several elected officials recognize the interdependence which links them to metropolitan issues which exceed their own municipal territories.

In order to meet the stipulated objectives, the Metropolitan Conference chose to focus on particular themes (transport, economic development, universities, and culture), so as to support the emergence of specific actions. Using this process, inspired by the initial project, specific actions go through a dynamic sense of creation and hierarchy. The case of Marseilles illustrates the way this goes beyond the traditional approach, and circumvents potential conflicts and general discussions about the urban model. Land use regulation issues are relegated to local scales (Motte 2006).

Figure 3: Marseilles (2006)



This dynamic reveals the transition to a collaborative approach, which now concentrates on consensus building between the actors (Healey 1997). The metropolitan project does not have “to make” as in the rational approach, but rather “to create” consensus in order to articulate resources (financial, technical, political) to the actors (Mévellec and Douay 2007). In Marseilles, this consensus could identify priority-actions in negotiating the contract between the region and government. The other facet of the metropolitan strategy focuses on competitiveness and international

investments. This policy begins with Marseilles' operation Euroméditerranée and continues with the ITER project in Cadarache (North-East of Aix) which will push northward the limits of the metropolis. This project of 4.7 billion Euros joined together the European Union, the US, China, Russia, Japan, and South Korea with the ambition to control nuclear fusion and thus revolutionize energy production. The economic repercussions for the area are estimated at 2 billion Euros over 10 years. This project of international dimension will have repercussions on all the developments of the metropolis. The metropolitan cooperation policy was simultaneously elaborated with the competitiveness cluster policy launched also by the government. This cluster policy is based on mobilizing the companies, research units, and the universities around geographical areas or common economic projects. The goal is to reinforce the industrial potential of France and to generate high value added activities to stop the flight of companies and the processes of delocalization. The parallel between these policies makes it possible to underline the partnership character of the new policies of the government.

The reorganization of the modes of territorial governance seems an essential preamble to international development of French cities like Marseilles. Moreover, by developing synergies between public and private actors, it becomes the necessary condition for economic excellence. Lately Marseilles' metropolitan policies had known some success with the "plan campus" (involving governmental support for restructuring universities) and designation as European capital of culture in 2013 (Douay 2009).

Montreal and its Metropolitan Plan

The question of metropolitan cooperation has been on Montreal's political agenda for almost a century (Pineault 2000). A new step towards metropolitan thinking was carried out when preparations for Expo 67 were underway. At that time, the City of Montreal drafted a plan entitled Horizon 2000 (1967) which proposed structuring metropolitan territory along two axes (an east-west axis that was largely industrial and a north-south, primarily residential, axis). This plan has been at the heart of the various planning initiatives developed subsequently. However, this first plan had little effect; significant reform had to wait until 1969 when the Montreal Urban Community (MUC) was created to bring together the municipalities of the island of Montreal. This services cooperative was soon paralyzed by a recurring clash between downtown and suburbs (Collin 1998).

For several years, debates and discussions concentrated on creating a new metropolitan region covering the whole urbanized area or census metropolitan region area, with planning and coordinating powers (Trepanier 1998), as recommended by the Task Force on Greater Montreal (the Pichette Report, December 1993). The 1999 Report on Local Finance and Fiscality also raised the metropolitan governance issue: it suggested either a strategic metropolitan entity together with systematic mergers

of local municipalities in the region, or a strong and autonomous metropolitan government (without local mergers). Finally, the emphasis was put on strong amalgamations and the creation of the new cities of Montreal and Longueuil in 2001, which caught the attention of most stakeholders, notably regarding the processes of mobilizing to oppose the mergers. Thus the creation of the Montreal Metropolitan Community in 2000 was a secondary focus compared to the ordeal of municipal mergers. The mergers retained the attention of the different players with many complaints in West Island, the mainly English-speaking area of Montreal. Under the new system, the City of Montreal included 28 municipalities of the island with 1.8 million inhabitants in an area of 498 km². The merger generated protest and action. The provincial elections of April 2003 produced a Liberal government which authorized *demerger* referendums. On 20 June 2004, fifteen of the previously independent municipalities decided to demerge from the new city of Montreal. With the exception of East Montreal, this demerger movement involved the previously independent municipalities of the West Island. After the demergers, which took place on 1 January 2006, the city of Montreal still had 87% of the population and 72% of the surface area of the island of Montreal. A new city council took office, handling 60% of the budget of the municipalities and with large areas of responsibility, in particular with regard to planning and transportation. The new institutional framework limited the effect of the demergers. Similarly, the City of Longueuil lost important parts of its territory through demergers.

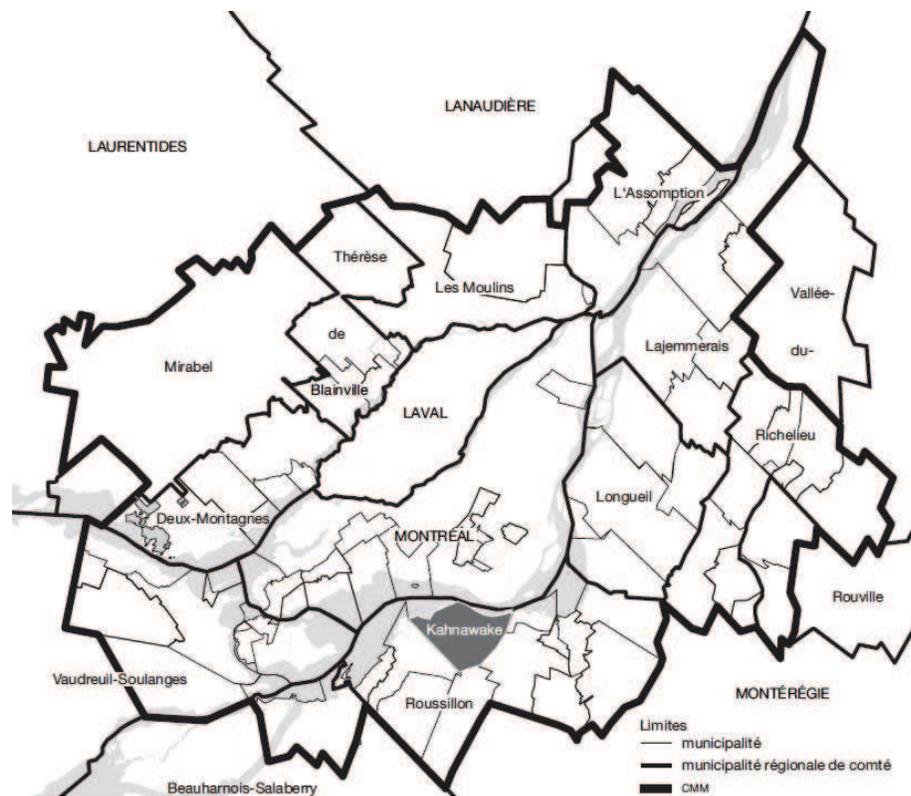
A metropolitan cooperation with a new institution

Following the traditional approach of the metropolitan government, the provincial government finally chose a light and flexible structure, but covering a much wider territory than the previous Montreal Urban Community. The new Montreal Metropolitan Community mainly covers the limits of the census metropolitan region with 3.4 million inhabitants and 4.360 km² (figure 4). Chaired by the Mayor of Montreal, the structure was constituted for the purposes of planning, coordinating, and financing at the metropolitan scale (environment, international promotion of the city-region, public transit, public housing, and the infrastructure of metropolitan institutions such as the Montreal Botanical Garden). Representatives are not directly elected, but rather chosen from elected officials in the 82 municipalities within the five administrative regions that constitute the metropolitan region. These representatives assume responsibility for MMC operations through two bodies: a council of 28 representatives (14 from Montreal, 3 from Laval, 3 from Longueuil, 4 from the North Shore, and 4 from the South Shore) and the executive committee.

The creation of the MMC triggered many protests from the suburbs, especially Laval and the North Shore, related to the distribution of powers. Since its creation tension between the centre and the periphery persist, as made evident in discussions concerning large-scale projects like the construction of a new bridge or hospital. The

MMC has not gained much legitimacy among the population, or even among the political class. The MMC's accomplishments, such as the metropolitan economic development plan, participation in the co-ordination and implementation of metropolitan public transportation, or the promotion of Montreal at an international level, have failed to attract public attention (Boudreau et al., 2007). The MMC manages an annual budget of \$103 million in 2010 (75 percent coming from the municipalities in its territory and 25 percent from the provincial government) and has so far convinced neither the municipalities nor the government that it can achieve new tasks related to improving the daily conditions of social and economic actors.

Figure 4: Montreal (2006)



A planning approach that is still traditional

Montreal is the main metropolis in Québec, with almost half of the province's population and more than half of Québec's GDP: according to the MMC's study, Montreal's GDP ranked last out of 26 compared with its North American neighbours. The government has chosen to supervise the MMC's approach to planning

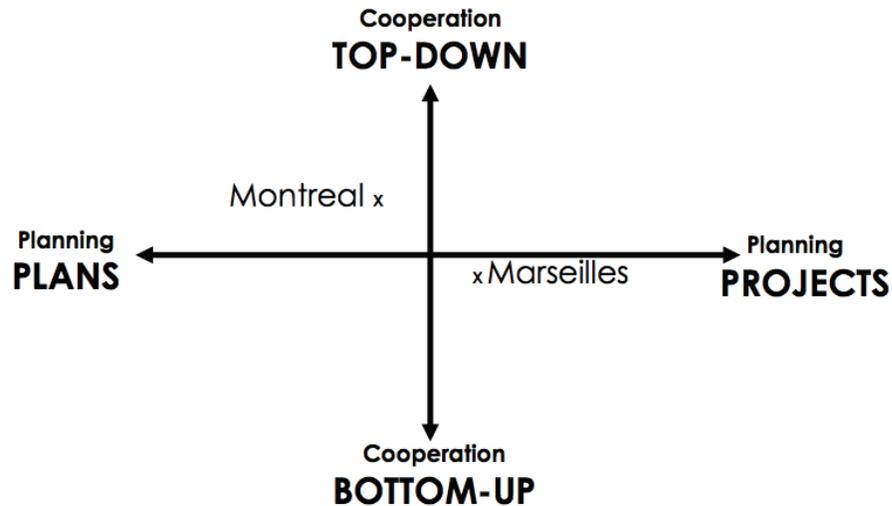
by adopting its *Planning Framework and Government Orientations for the Montréal Metropolitan Region* (Québec 2001) in order, on the one hand, to highlight the work of local stakeholders and, on the other hand, to coordinate the government's different ministries and services. The law obliges the MMC to commit to a planning approach that comprises several stages.

The metropolitan institution began to develop "Vision 2025," which in the end presents a rather nebulous content achieved through consensus. The second step imposed by the government consists of a metropolitan land use and development plan. With legal status, this document focuses on the territorial organization and should become a guide for the municipality's development.

Political officials and urban planners of the MMC conceived the metropolitan plan as a legal requirement and not as the principal cog representing emergence of a metropolitan institution. The MMC is paralyzed by conflicts between Montreal and the suburbs, but also by opposition from the other municipalities against the three major municipalities (Montreal, Laval, and Longueuil) which lead the MMC's decisions. This is exacerbated by government's decision, embedded in the MMC law, that the metropolitan land use and development plan is to replace all regional county municipalities' land use and development plans within its territory. Thus, the metropolitan plan had to deal with more technical and regulatory aspects than a strategic spatial vision would. During plan preparation, issues were discussed discretely, in a traditional approach which resembles the rational model. Important decisions of planning and development for the metropolis were not really discussed, and if they were, that is outside the plan's arena of negotiation. From this perspective the MMC appears to be marginalized. Important debates about facilities and infrastructure have by-passed the MMC. When the metropolitan organization reaches decisions the public forum has not invested any resources in response.

The decision-making process explains the inherent weakness in MMC planning measures (Douay 2008). In order to respect the legal delays (five years), an initial participatory dialogue was almost non-existent. Officials had to wait for the official public consultation which was carried out in spring 2005 to have a public debate. The few people who came forward chose to express dissatisfaction; the plan became the expiatory victim of the creation of the metropolitan institution. Finally, the MMC still appears as a young organization with elected officials who have garnered their legitimacy from their local municipality, rather than from their knowledge of planning and urbanization. They have difficulties understanding metropolitan issues in their universality and especially in assuming the consequences of a metropolitan strategy for their municipalities. In 2008 an agreement between MMC and Regional County Municipalities opened new perspectives for a new kind of metropolitan plan, more strategic. Bill 58 should ease tensions and restart the work on metropolitan planning.

Figure 5: Marseilles VS Montreal



The case of Montreal illustrates the integration of certain aspects of the strategic approach (Trépanier 1995; Boivin and Massicotte 2002) yet remains a work in progress, if we take into account the contributions of the communicative current needed in order to achieve collaborative tendencies.

The Collaborative Approach in Practice

The examples of Marseilles and Montreal appear (figure 5) extremely different (Douay 2007). The first corresponds to a project approach in a relatively bottom-up context; it is influenced by strategic planning theory and integrates certain principles of a collaborative approach. The second corresponds to a plan approach in a top-down context; this case highlights traditional practices, even if it takes into account certain parts of the strategic model.

These two metropolises face mainly similar obstacles. Indeed they struggle with and debate which development model to adopt, how to treat the redistributive aspects (e.g., economic, social, tax) of planning, and how to respond to the challenges of addressing land use conflicts. In fact, the obstacles faced correspond to those which sparked the questioning of the traditional approach to planning.

With these difficulties in play, the paradigmatic turn into the collaborative approach seems still largely innovative. Whereas the politico-institutional profile resulting from the metropolitan reforms in Marseilles and Montreal differs, it is characterized by a common difficulty to create a forum of discussion at the metropolitan scale. This is in order to be able to stabilize an “urban regime” (Stone 1989) for the metropolitan area, gathering the different levels of governments with private actors and civil society around a common strategy. These two metropolises illustrate the

gap which can exist between the evolution of the theoretical field and planning practice (Alexander 1997). They illustrate the reappearance of a practice of metropolitan planning, combining the revival with a spatial and strategic approach, and continuity with a certain difficulty in carrying out the collaborative turn. Even if it is not easy, this turn is important because it makes it possible to consider a better articulation between the actors, their strategies, and their resources in order to adequately answer the issues inherent in a context of rapid urbanization in metropolitan regions.

Questioning the collaborative turn at the metropolitan scale moderates the enthusiasm around the revival of regional planning. The collaborative approach was not often developed on a metropolitan scale. On the practical side, the examples of Marseilles and Montreal are rather representative of the scarcity of such practices. Indeed, the metropolis is a complex territory with many issues including urban growth, economic development, social cohesion, and fiscal challenges. Implementing a collaborative approach raises political questions. There is initially the question of political leadership which can be conceived through local scales with officials and also on a central scale through the role of government. Leaders have a key function in the processes to start cooperation or to secure collaborative innovations. However, the question of leadership reveals the complex relationships that can exist between the periphery and the centre. For instance, in the French case town councillors can simultaneously be elected as representatives at the national level: thus the mayor of Marseilles was also Minister of Urban and Planning Affairs in the 1990s and vice-president of the Senate since 2004. Political leadership must be understood as part of the dynamics facilitating new relations between the various actors. It is then a question of “institutional creativity” in order to design arenas (formal or informal) of negotiation: more than institutional tools, it is a question of generating a culture of governance that can exceed the status quo and release the creativity of political actors, business community and social forces. Reconfiguring governance raises questions about the implications for civil society (citizens as organized lobbies), not easily engaged at a metropolitan scale. Metropolitan collaboration challenges experimentation with new mechanisms of interaction and participation but meets two main obstacles. First, the question of scale: metropolitan issues are indeed vague and need to be clarified because they can appear remote from citizens’ daily lives. Clarification could facilitate participation from actors otherwise excluded from the arenas of discussion. The complexity of these issues reveals the diversity of the actors who are involved: divergent values and interests exist in various components within the metropolis.

The second challenge involves the question of learning. The participation and the collaboration of actors take time, particularly when regions may need to deviate from paths of institutional dependency. It is often a question of learning, with training concerning metropolitan issues in order to create a community of thought

between actors with different values and interests. Then, the difficulty is to go beyond the issues and keep heading toward action. This perspective suggests that metropolitan planning be understood as a process rather than as content or product. The sustainability of innovative practices rests on the appropriation of strategies by the actors' networks who then become recipients of implementation.

Metropolitan change will not come quickly. New metropolitan regionalism, by proposing to take an interest in networks of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, highlights the collaborative perspective to demonstrate what could be done through leadership and creativity. Planners have potentially significant roles (Innes and Booher 2010) in moving metropolises toward resilient governance systems by incorporating principles of collaborative rationality in their daily practices, engaging stakeholders and citizens in authentic participatory dialogues that they in turn use for making recommendations and getting public support for change.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the anonymous referees for their insightful, critical, yet constructive comments. The author would also like to express heartfelt thanks to the editorial support rendered by the Journal. All the errors that remain in the article are, of course, the author's sole responsibility. The funding support of the French Government is gratefully acknowledged.

Notes

¹ The qualitative method was based on review of documents and interviews with key actors in the process.

References

- Alexander, E. R. 1997. A mile or a millimeter? Measuring the "planning theory-practice gap." *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* (24): 3-6.
- Allmendinger, P. and M. Tewder-Jones, eds. 2002. *Planning futures: new directions for planning theory*. London: Routledge.
- Bassand, M. 2004. *La métropolisation de la Suisse*. Lausanne: Presses Polytechniques et universitaires romandes.
- Boivin, J. and L. Massicotte. 2002. Un vision pour l'avenir. La vision stratégique du développement économique, social et environnemental. *Revue Municipalité*, janvier-février 2002: 25-27.
- Boudreau, J. A., P. Hamel, B. Jouve and R. Keil 2007. Constructing metropolitan political spaces: Montreal and Toronto. In *Governing Metropolises: Profiles of Issues and Experiments on Four Continents*, eds. J.P. Collin and M. Robertson, 141-164. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Champagne, E. 2002. *L'émergence du nouveau régionalisme au Etats-Unis et sa portée*

sur la réorganisation des pratiques métropolitaines. Une étude de cas du nouveau régionalisme dans la région métropolitaine de Baltimore, Montréal, INRS, thèse de doctorat en études urbaines.

- Douay, N. 2006. Transportation and the setting up of metropolitan cooperation in Marseilles and Montreal. *RTS*, Paris: Lavoisier (92): 219-231.
- Douay, N. 2007. *La planification urbaine à l'épreuve de la métropolisation : enjeux, acteurs et stratégies à Marseille et à Montréal*, Montréal & Aix-en-Provence, Université de Montréal - Université Paul Cézanne (Aix-Marseille), PhD thesis in urban planning.
- Douay, N. 2008. La planification métropolitaine montréalaise à l'épreuve du tournant collaboratif. In *Renouveler l'aménagement et l'urbanisme : Planification territoriale, débat public et développement durable*, eds. M. Gauthier, M. Gariépy and M.O. Trépanier, 109-134. Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal.
- Douay, N. 2009. L'émergence des politiques métropolitaines marseillaises : entre conflits et apprentissages. *Cybergeo, Revue européenne de Géographie*, Aménagement, Urbanisme, article 459, mis en ligne le 25 mai 2009 (Accessed May 24, 2010) <http://www.cybergeo.eu/index22347.html>
- Fischer, F. and J. Forester, eds. 1993. *The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning*. London: UCL Press.
- Forester, J. 1999. *The deliberative practitioner: Encouraging participatory planning processes*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Friskin, F. and F. D. Norris. 2001. Regionalism reconsidered. *Journal of Urban Affairs* (23): 467-478.
- Gaudreau, M. 1990. Problématique et enjeux d'une planification intégrée de l'espace métropolitain montréalais. In *Gestion locale et problématiques urbaines au tournant des années 90*, eds. Morin R., R. Petrelli, P. Pilette and L.N. Tellier, 258-268. Montréal: UQAM.
- Healey, P. 1993. The communicative work of development plans. *Environment and Planning* 20: 83-104.
- Healey, P. 1997. *Collaborative planning: Shaping places in fragmented societies*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Healey, P. 2007. *Urban complexity and spatial strategies: Towards a relational planning for our times*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Innes, J. E. 1995. Planning theory's emerging paradigm: communicative action and interactive practice. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 14 (3): 183-190.
- Innes, J.E. and J. Gruber. 2005. Planning styles in conflict—the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71 (2): 177-188.
- Innes, J.E. and D.E. Booher. 2010. *Planning with complexity: An introduction to collaborative rationality for public policy*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Kunzmann, K. 2004. An agenda for creative governance in city regions. *DISP* 158 (3): 2-10.

- Mévellec, A. and N. Douay, 2007. From intercommunal to metropolitan cooperation: Changing the French territorial management paradigm. In *Governing Metropolises: Profiles of Issues and Experiments on Four Continents*, eds. J.P. Collin & M. Robertson, 187-207. Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Mitchell-Weaver, C., D. Miller and Deal Jr., R. 2000. Multilevel governance and metropolitan regionalism in the USA. *Urban Studies* 37 (5-6): 851-876.
- Mogulof, M. 1975. A model proposal for the governance of America's metropolitan areas. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 41: 250-257.
- Motte, A. 2006. *La notion de planification stratégique spatialisée en Europe (1995-2005)*. Paris: PUCA, Ministère de l'Équipement.
- Padioleau, J.-G. and R. Demeestere. 1989. Les démarches stratégiques de planification des villes. *Annales de la Recherche Urbaine* (51): 28-39.
- Pinson, G. 2005. Le projet urbain comme instrument d'action publique. In *Gouverner par les instruments*, eds. P. Lascoumes and P. Le Galès, 199-233. Paris: Presses de Sciences.
- Québec. 2001. *Planning framework and government orientations: Montréal metropolitan region, 2001-2021*. Quebec Minister of Municipal Affairs.
- Ross, B. H. and M. A. Levine. 1991. *Power in metropolitan America*, Itasca: FE Peacock Publishers inc.
- Salet, W. and A. Faludi, eds. 2000. *The revival of strategic spatial planning*. Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Science.
- Sancton, A. 2000. *Merger mania: The assault on local government*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Sancton, A. 2001. Canadian cities and the new regionalism. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23 (5): 543-555.
- Sancton, A. 2008. *The limits of boundaries: Why city-regions cannot be self-governing*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Savitch, H.V. and R. K. Vogel, eds. 2000. *New Regionalism and Its Policy Agenda. State and Local Government Review* 32 (3).
- Sharpe, L. J., ed. 1995. *The government of world cities*. Chichester: J. Wiley.
- Trépanier, M.-O. 1995. La nouvelle génération des plans stratégiques et des schémas d'aménagement au Québec et ailleurs. In *À la croisée des chemins : le développement régional et l'aménagement urbain*, ed. J. Léveillé, 59-99. Cahiers scientifiques de l'ACFAS.
- Trépanier, M.-O. 1998. Metropolitan governance in the Montreal area. In *Metropolitan governance revisited: American/Canadian intergovernmental perspectives*, eds. D. N. Rothblatt and A. Sancton, 111-152. Berkley: University of California, Institute of Governmental Studies Press.
- Veltz, P. 1996. *Mondialisation, villes et territoires. L'économie d'archipel*. Paris: PUF.
- Wallis, A. D. 1994. Inventing regionalism: The first two waves. *National Civic Review* 83 (2): 159-175.