

community
plan
mansonville, québec
2011

imaginons
mansonville
a fifteen year vision

PLAN
HIGHLIGHTS

2025

five URBAN
PLANNING

This Plan Highlights is part of the final submission for the "Imaginons Mansonville" initiative.

This highlights document provides a summary of the key elements of the full plan, entitled "Imaginons Mansonville: A Fifteen Year Vision."

This project was a partnership between the residents of Mansonville, the Mansonville Revitalization Advisory Committee, and Five Urban Planning. A group of Master of Urban Planning Students from McGill University.

For more details, please see the full community plan.

December 16, 2011

Submitted to:

Mansonville Revitalisation Advisory
Committee

C/O Mr. Jacques Hébert, Chair of the
Revitalisation Committee

2, rue de Vale Perkins,
Mansonville, Québec

(450) 292-4190
Jacques.Hebert@live.ca

Submitted by:

Five Urban Planning

Suite 400,
Macdonald Harrington Building,
815 rue Sherbrooke Ouest
Montreal, Québec



Introduction

This community-based plan is a tool for residents, community groups and government to guide change in Mansonville to the year 2025.

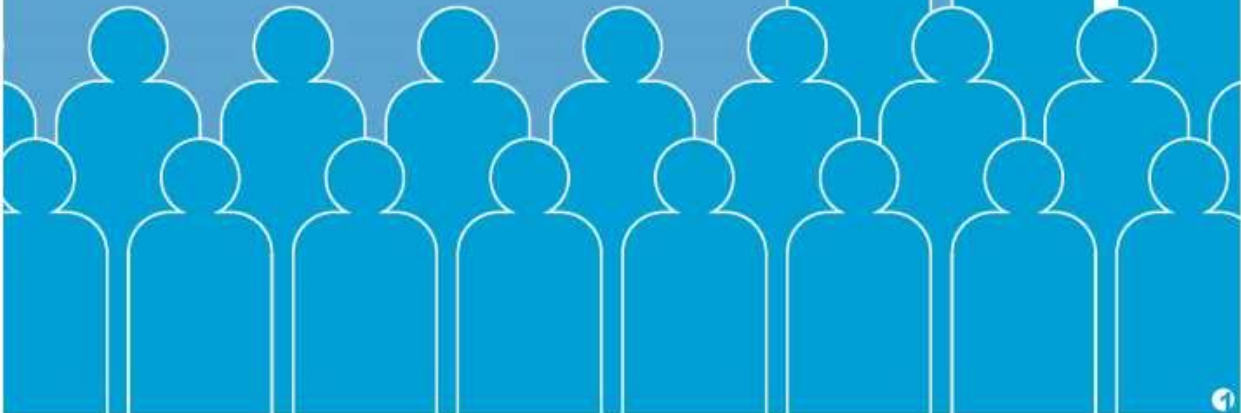
Small communities across Canada are changing. Many are struggling to sustain their populations, employment and vibrant nature as a result of global and economic forces. Despite these challenges, however, there are many success stories. Communities that choose to come together, innovate and actively guide the change are those that become stronger and ultimately continue to succeed. Mansonville recognises that this is an important time to define its path into the future and thus began the "Imaginons Mansonville" project in September of 2011.

Community engagement was at the heart of the planning process for "Imaginons Mansonville." By engaging in dialogue around the strengths and challenges in the community, the residents of Mansonville strengthened local ties and local knowledge – a key step in building a bright future. The outcomes from these activities provided a strong basis on which to create a community plan that reflects the community's input and is complementary to many important initiatives already underway in the village.

This Plan Highlights document gives a brief description of the planning process and the village context. It outlines the core values and key challenges, as identified by the community, and provides a vision for imagining Mansonville in 2025. Finally, it describes the four proposed physical interventions and seven proposed policy interventions, including their benefits, approximate costs and timelines.



imaginons
mansonville
a fifteen year vision



Context



Geography & Townscape

This plan addresses the village of Mansonville, shown to the left. Mansonville is located 120km southeast of Montreal in the centre of the Township of Potton. It is part of the Eastern Townships and the Municipalité régionale de comté (MRC) of Memphrémagog. It has a population of approximately 700 people and is the major centre of Potton. The provincial highway #243 runs through the village and is a key route for trucks and other traffic crossing the United States border, a ten-minute drive away.

Key Features of the village:

- Owl's Head ski resort
- scenic Missisquoi-Nord river
- unique town square
- many historical locations
- locations of worship
- social services, restaurants

Key Challenges

A discussion of problems and key challenges in the community is also crucial to imagining the future. Residents agreed that there are five key challenges that must be addressed in this plan:

Employment & economy

There is a real lack of employment in and around Mansonville. Residents support small-scale business and industry, with a moderate level of tourism, as a way forward for the Mansonville economy.

Attractiveness to young families

Mansonville residents want to attract and retain youth and families in the village. This will require more employment opportunities as well as specific amenities like parks, schools and appropriate housing.

Transportation & streetscapes

Heavy traffic along the main highway contributes to congestion and unsafe crossings in the town centre. Residents have concerns about sidewalk quality and accessibility for senior citizens and others with physical disabilities.

Perceptions of the municipality

Although the municipality is taking many steps to streamline development approvals and reflect the will of the community, residents have frustrations with some municipal functions. There may be a need for better communication and mutual understanding.

Community difference

Differences in the community can sometimes be more of a challenge than an asset. Residents recognize that future development and change must occur in an equitable manner, and that more dialogue must take place between groups of different backgrounds, languages and ages.

Community Engagement

The process used to create this plan included:

- 1 Key Informant Interviews
- 2 Background Research
- 3 Meet & Greet
- 4 Door - to - Door Outreach
- 5 Community Ideas Fair
- 6 Community Roundtable Meeting
- 7 Final Plan Presentation



Core Values

There are people of different backgrounds and life experiences, and therefore many different perspectives in Mansonville. Despite this, community outreach and dialogue revealed that there are many common understandings. These common understandings may be framed as "core values": the principles upon which members of the community agree. They are the elements of the community – physical, social and cultural – that residents can use to collectively imagine Mansonville in 2025.



Nos paysages naturelles
Our natural landscape



Notre caractère de village
Our small-town feel



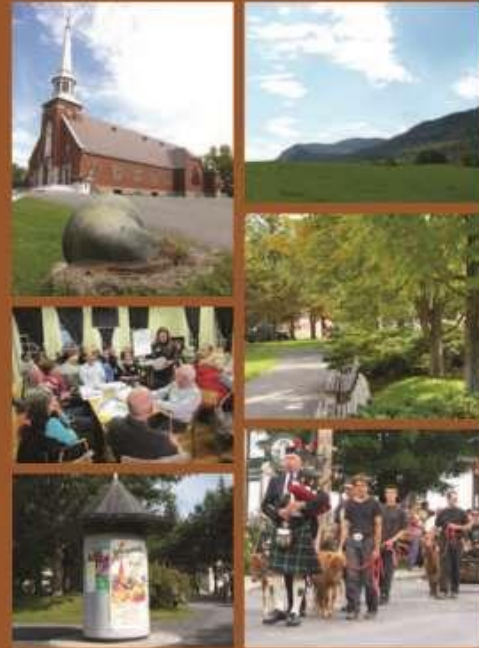
Notre diversité
Our diversity



Notre participation communautaire
Our community involvement



Notre héritage et histoires
Our heritage and stories



Vision

An understanding of these core values and key challenges identified by the community has provided a strong basis upon which to collectively imagine Mansonville in 2025.
The community imagines:



A Mansonville in 2025
where a thriving
community embraces
its natural and
historical assets within a safe
and attractive townscape.



Mansonville en 2025,
un village où une
communauté prospère
profite de ces biens
naturels et historiques dans un
espace sécuritaire et attrayant.

Movement in Mansonville

Overview

Benefits

Social

- Increase accessibility for those with limited mobility

Physical

- Increase attractiveness of town
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety
- Enhanced trails show the natural beauty surrounding the town

Economic

- Encourage drivers and cyclists to stop and spend time in town
- Spur development in the private sector

Costs

1 \$25,000 - \$250,000

2 \$1 - \$25,000

3 \$1 - \$25,000

TimeFrame

1 10 - 15 years

2 0 - 5 years

3 0 - 5 years



Pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers all experience Mansonville in different ways and at different scales. This section explores various ways the pedestrian, cycling and driving experience of Mansonville can be enhanced.

1 Driving in Mansonville

Rumble Strips

Rumble strips are grooves in the pavement which cause tactile and audible vibrations in vehicles. They send signals to drivers that the road is changing and that their driving will need to change as well.

Bulb-outs

Bulb-outs narrow the road by pushing a portion of the sidewalk out into the parking lane.

Screening

Screening can include decorative fences or hedges. They enhance the visual aesthetics of the community by shielding undesired aspects from view.



2 Cycling in Mansonville

New Cycle Path

To create a safer route for cyclists and reduce congestion, a cycle path should be created to divert cyclists west at the Round Barn and onto rue Joseph-Blanchet.

Sharrows

In recognising that the road is a shared space, sharrows should be added to the main roads in town.

Cycling facilities

Picnic tables, washrooms, and a place to fill water bottles could be placed at the round barn to entice cyclists on to this alternate route and encourage them to use this space.

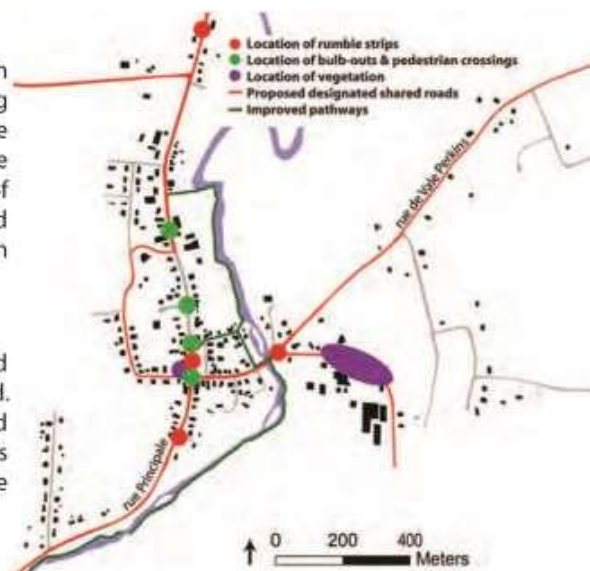
3 Walking in Mansonville

Trail-hub

In Place Manson, an information board containing maps, hiking times, and distances for all of the routes in Mansonville should be established. A themed series of trail pavement markings could guide users from Place Manson onto the trails.

Access

Access for those with limited mobility should be enhanced. Pathways and sidewalks should be improved and benches should be provided in for those who require rests.



Completing the Square

Mansonville has an attractive town centre with an impressive town square, Place Manson, flanked by important commercial and civic buildings. However, a parking lot occupies one of Mansonville's best plots of land. Finding an appropriate use for this site will benefit all residents of Mansonville. A multi-use building is the preferred option for this site. Since development will take many years, however, improvements like hedge screening and art can be implemented in the interim.

Potential Uses



- Hotel
- Pharmacy
- Grocery store
- Rental apartments
- Tourist information centre

Hotel

A hotel could restore the sense of pride that was lost when the original building burned down 28 years ago. It could increase tourism to Mansonville as the village needs some form of lodging if it aspires to be a hub for regional eco-tourism.

Pharmacy

A pharmacy located in town would enhance the lives of existing residents while removing a barrier to those considering moving to the town.

Housing

Including large, low-cost rental units on the second and third floor of this building would provide housing for families and allow young people an opportunity to live independently within the town.



Overview

Benefits

Social

- Restore the sense of pride lost when the hotel burned down

Physical

- Continuous streetscape
- More inviting and attractive town square

Economic

- Create new jobs
- Establish new services
- Retain current residents
- Attract new residents

Costs

1 \$250,000 +

TimeFrame

1 10 - 15 years

Animating the Centre

Overview

Benefits

Social

- Create a common shared space
- Facilitate community interaction

Physical

- Create larger public gathering space
- Strengthen connection to commercial area
- Improve safety

Economic

- Catalyze private investment
- Increased tax revenue
- Create high value retail area

Costs

- 1 Create Living Street
\$25,000 - \$250,000

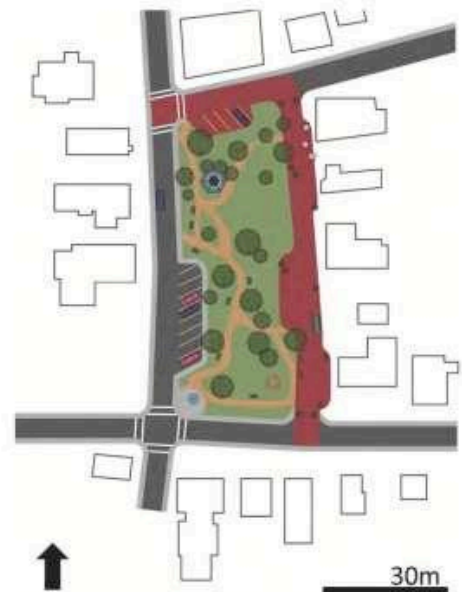
TimeFrame

- 1 10 - 15 years



As the heart of the community, Place Manson plays a special role in facilitating community interaction. Events held in the square help to draw the in the community and create the small town feel that residents appreciate.

Investment in public space should focus on the town square. With the recent redevelopment of the town square, Mansonville took an important step to creating a space for civic engagement. This space could be further strengthened through the following interventions.



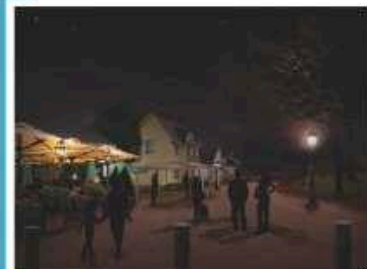
Woonerf Intervention

Strategies to improve the square include enlarging the square and enhancing the relationship with the surrounding buildings. In incorporating these issues, the town should create a 'living street', also known as a 'woonerf' on the northern and eastern frontages of the park.



Commercial Frontage

Ideally, the residential properties along rue des Pins would have commercial frontages. For example, a café in one of the houses could have a summer patio in the front which spills onto the street.



Pedestrianized Intersection

The unique textured paving material will have additional benefits if it is extended into the intersection at rue Mill and rue Principale. The change in texture and colour of the road will be a cue to motorists that they are in a pedestrianized area and they must slow down.



Around the Barn



The Round Barn would be greatly enhanced by improving the surrounding land. Simple landscaping, picnic tables and washrooms would enhance the appearance of the barn and provide an attractive **rest area** for cyclists and tourists.

Interventions

Signage
Heritage plaques
Historic scenes
Viewing platform
Rest area

The viewpoint from the Round Barn encompasses farmers' fields, forests and mountains. This quintessential image of the Eastern Townships should be capitalized on by building a **viewing platform** around the exterior of the barn. This walkway would be fully accessible to those with disabilities and senior citizens. Windows could be installed to

allow visitors to view the interior of the barn where different **historic scenes** would be created. This could be an inexpensive alternative to a full renovation, allowing visitors to interact with the barn without the expense of allowing them into the structure itself.

Heritage plaques and **signage** accessible from the outside would draw people to the site and tell the story of the Round Barn.



Overview

Benefits

Social

- New public gathering space
- Historic preservation
- Increase accessibility to those with mobility challenges

Physical

- Provide a rest area and public amenities
- Additional community space

Economic

- Capitalize on existing municipal investment
- Provide additional tourist opportunities

Costs

- 1 Improve physical space around barn
\$25,000 - \$250,000
- 2 Bike path and composting toilets
\$25,000 - \$250,000

TimeFrame

- 1 0 - 5 years
- 2 10 - 15 years

Planning for People

Unlike the previous interventions, Planning for People focuses on social programs and activities rather than physical interventions. These programs were chosen through collaboration of residents during the community consultation process.



Though all seven of these programs have equal importance, three of the options are highlighted below.

Mansonville could create a "Table de concertation" for its community organisations which is a forum where representatives from each community group come to share information about their work and activities and also to share resources where appropriate. By coming together, Tables de concertation would also enable the member organisations to better advocate for assistance from government or to organise collective events.

Table de Concertation for Community Organizations

A
Focus on
People

Youth Internship Program

Branding

A community brand, developed by residents, and coordinated signage throughout Mansonville will help to define and distinguish Mansonville. A competition for the logo and slogan will help to build community pride and engage residents in municipal matters.

To help students find employment and learn entrepreneurial skills, an internship program is recommended that would pair youth with business owners or professionals. This program will help youth develop necessary skills to start their own entrepreneurial activities.

Next Steps

This plan was developed in collaboration with the community of Mansonville. It is a tool for residents, community groups and government to guide change in the community to the year 2025. The text of this plan is important, however, the process taken to create this plan, and the steps taken in the future, are equally important in creating a Mansonville in 2025 where a thriving community embraces its natural and historical assets in a safe and attractive townscape. Moving from imagining to creating will depend on how the community is able to come together to collaboratively turn this vision into reality. If the compassion and energy of Mansonville citizens today are any indication, Mansonville has a bright future indeed.

“ great communities do not just happen; they are created from the hard work, dedication and passion of the residents ”

- Community Ideas Fair, Mansonville, October 2011

“ if you want to go fast, go alone. if you want to go far, go together. ”

- unknown

