

For immediate release

## Montréal exports its “Commerce Design” concept to Luxembourg

City's know-how once again garners international attention

**Montréal, February 11, 2009** – André Lavallée, Ville de Montréal Executive Committee Member responsible for the Transportation Plan, Urban Planning, Heritage and Design, is pleased to announce that a memorandum of understanding has been signed with the Union commerciale de la Ville de Luxembourg to replicate this city's Commerce Design concept. Luxembourg becomes the seventh city to adopt the concept, joining Trois-Rivières (Québec), Saint-Étienne, Marseille and Lyon (France), Brussels (Belgium) and New York City (United States).

Developed based on the original idea by the Ville de Montréal, the Commerce Design Luxembourg contest aims to reward merchants for the overall design quality of their premises and for showcasing the work of architects and designers.

Mr. Lavallée noted that the success of the program is due in part to the sustained actions taken by the Ville de Montréal over a 10-year period to raise awareness of quality design among retail business owners and the public. “The reputation and influence of the Commerce Design contest in Europe and the United States helps to position Montréal as a leader in strategies for developing and promoting design,” he said. “These transfers of know-how benefit our city considerably, in terms of both visibility and networking with other emerging design cities. Such recognition of homegrown design expertise bolsters Montréal's designation as a *UNESCO City of Design*. Having this new partner on board is not only a strong stimulus for Montréal, but it also benefits all of the cities in the Commerce Design network.”

For his part, Yves Piron, Director of the Union commerciale de la Ville de Luxembourg, said: “As a European hub and a business city, Luxembourg is not only a place where cultures meet, but also a premier shopping destination that attracts great numbers of visitors each year. Having a Commerce Design contest franchise in Luxembourg is proof of our desire to stimulate creativity and innovation in the design of retail establishments so as to enhance the quality of the urban living environment and raise the profile of the capital in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg as well as abroad.”

### **An internationally recognized concept**

Organized by the Ville de Montréal from 1995 to 2004, Commerce Design Montréal sought to persuade Montréal merchants of the benefits of investing in the design quality of their premises with the help of qualified professionals. A further goal was to create a ripple effect and convince owners of other businesses of the benefits of design on their bottom line, and to exert a strategic influence on the revitalization of commercial arteries in the city.

The success of this made-in-Montréal concept received abundant media coverage, and its potential was recognized by other cities, which in 2003 began seeking out Montréal's expertise to set up their own contests inspired by Commerce Design. So far, seven cities have followed Montréal's example.

The impact of Commerce Design Montréal was acknowledged in 2002 when the Ville de Montréal received the International Downtown Association's top honour, the Outstanding Achievement Award, for its dynamic, innovative and unifying character. The contest was also named one of 48 best practices worldwide as part of the UN-HABITAT 2006 Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment. The award recognizes the excellence of projects that have a positive, sustainable impact on improving the living environment.

Since 2006, the Commerce Design contest has continued in Montréal under a new banner, the *Prix Créativité Montréal en design de commerce*, run in partnership with the private sector.

For more information about the Commerce Design Luxembourg contest, visit the website [www.cityshopping.lu](http://www.cityshopping.lu).

Source: Darren Becker  
Office of the Mayor and of the Executive Committee  
514 872-6412

Information: Stéphanie Jecrois  
Design Montréal  
514 872-5388

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