



How can our built environment make us happy?



PLATO The world of universal ideas that hold the essential nature of things. Justice, truth, beauty and the theory of forms.

We started by asking this question.

Developing a sense of **belonging** to a community, feeling **comfortable** and not vulnerable, **engaging** with a greater good, **playing** and hanging out with friends, having **interactions** that we learn from, feeling a sense of **ownership** about something we've done, having a place to **escape** to, and enjoying a shared **identity** that comes from global and local experiences. These are **universal themes** everyone desires and needs.

Chances are if we give people ideas on how to achieve these notions—and provided they are **easy to understand**—they may spark a desire to stretch their domus beyond the boundaries of their house. In a **sharing economy** we don't need to design anything. It doesn't have to be aesthetic or have a particular style, because it's built by the people using the space. As a **grassroots** project, it will always be adapting to the residents.

This proposal aims to **make places meaningful**. Through local activities, **spaces become places**, with meanings. It's all about creating a place where notions of **good living** can thrive. Whether it's a lane, an unused school yard in the summer, an empty lot, or a green space, whatever it is, our modules can be applied anywhere in the city. This blueprint is meant to **inspire people to take agency** and **engage** in their community.

Our modules offer suggestions on how to convert and redefine spaces. People can start with one or two or mix them up—it doesn't matter—they will **grow organically**. The idea is to keep it simple, flexible and make it as easy and as unintimidating as possible. The focus will depend on **their decisions**.

So let's put the voyeurism back into neighbourhood watch, let's turn the writing on the wall into a historical narrative, let's know thy neighbour and create a place of memory, let's mark our turf and indulge our sense of belonging.

Thank you.



ARISTOTLE Engaging with universal ideas through the senses. Looks at life through realism, natural sciences, ethics, politics, matter and form.

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OWNERSHIP

- Personalize a space
- Creatively mark the names of current and past residents
- Collages and murals
- Collective maintenance
- Donate stuff or time to your space

PLAY

- Sports
- Painted pavement / chalk for hopscotch and ball games
- Walls used for ball games
- Boxes for board games and toys
- Homemade skating rink
- Surface for exercises, tai chi, stretching

BELONGING

- Help a neighbour
- Collaborate on a project
- Hang clotheslines for artwork and notices
- Block parties
- Celebrate seasonal events and birthdays
- Discover the heritage

ENGAGEMENT

- Seek out social clubs for seniors and youth and build each other up
- Engage with your environment
- Familiarize yourself with your neighbourhood's composting and recycling resources
- Start an ecological initiative
- Learn about being green

Examples of where to get resources

- Your local library
- Eco Quartier
- Montreal Urban Ecology Center
- La Remise: Bibliothèque d'outils
- Atwater Seed Library
- Santropol Roulant
- Jane's Walk Montreal
- Head & Hands

COMFORT

- Accessibility and easy access
- Comfortable spaces for all ages
- Shaded areas, trees, umbrellas
- Unobstructed, safe walking area
- Accessible tables and chairs
- Space where young children and parents feel safe
- Garden boxes for spices, flowers or food
- Set up a network to engage with seniors

INTERACTIONS

- Meet and Greet with newcomers to Canada and new people in the neighbourhood
- Skillsharing
- Workshops
- Garage sales
- Food and seed sharing
- Tables and chairs
- Share your shed
- BWYC (Bring what you can)

ESCAPISM

- Private public-spaces
- Multiple entry points
- Music
- Introverted and extroverted spaces
- Reading area

IDENTITY

- Time capsules
- Storytelling
- Dropbox for community stories
- Local wifi hotspot to listen to recorded stories
- Signs, banners, murals
- Make a sound installation