



Planning for active aging in medium-size cities: An overview

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Layout

1. Age-friendly environments
2. Aging in different environments
3. Methodological aspects
4. 3 cases:
 - St-Eustache
 - Shawinigan
 - Gatineau
5. Concluding remarks

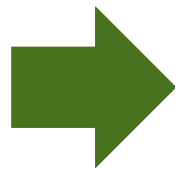
Age-friendly environments?

Key elements:

- ▶ **Spatial accessibility to retail and services** (Horner et al 2015) and health services (Paez et al. 2010).
- ▶ **Proximity to food stores and parks** (Cao et al. 2010)
- ▶ Public transportation (Engels and Liu, 2011)
- ▶ Sense of security (Stahl et al. 2008)

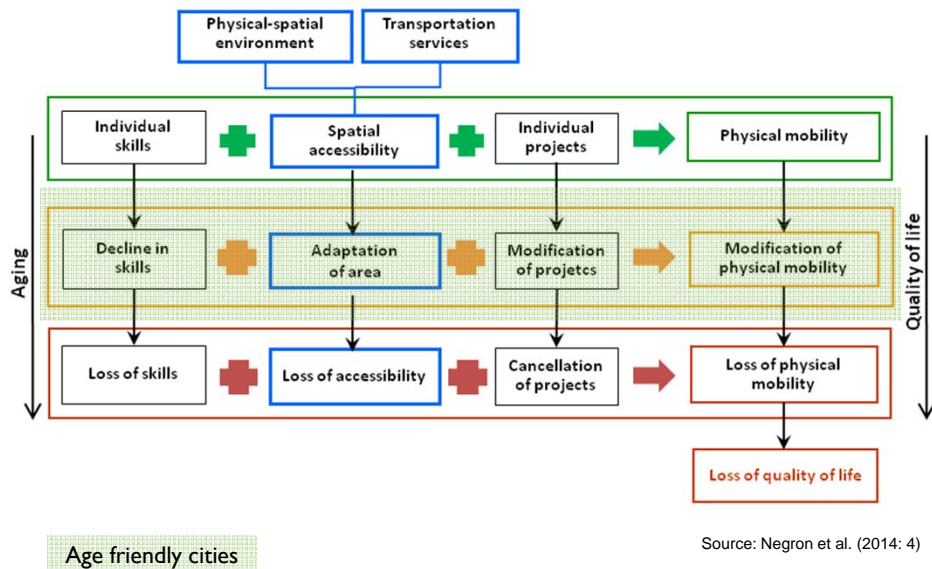


<http://www.nationalseniorsstrategy.ca/>



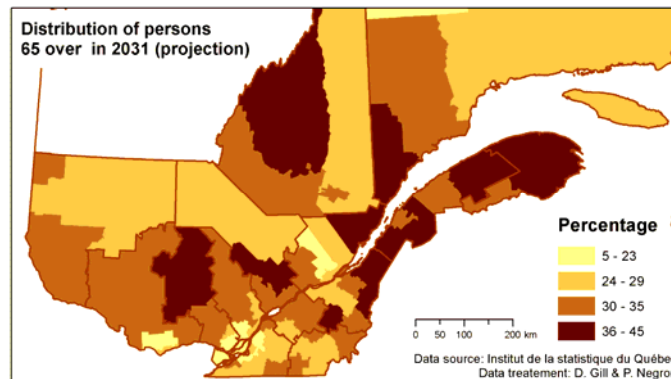
**Positive experience
of aging**

Skills + Accessibility + Projects = Mobility



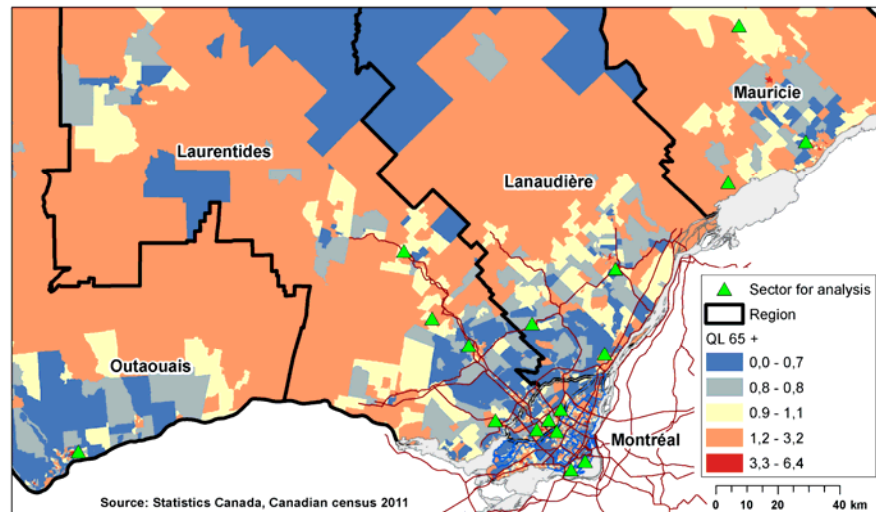
Variations in aging contexts

- Strong differences between regions
 - Rural environments, Medium-size cities, Metropolis
- Variations in metropolitan environments
 - Central neighborhoods
 - Suburban neighborhoods



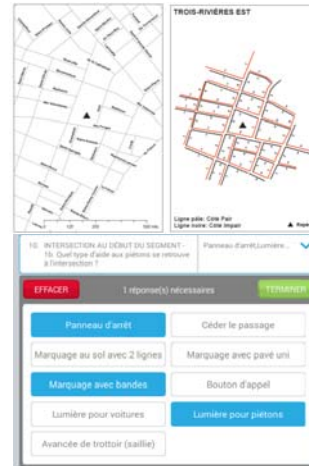
Main objective

- How different urban environments can facilitate a positive experience of aging according to different lifestyles?

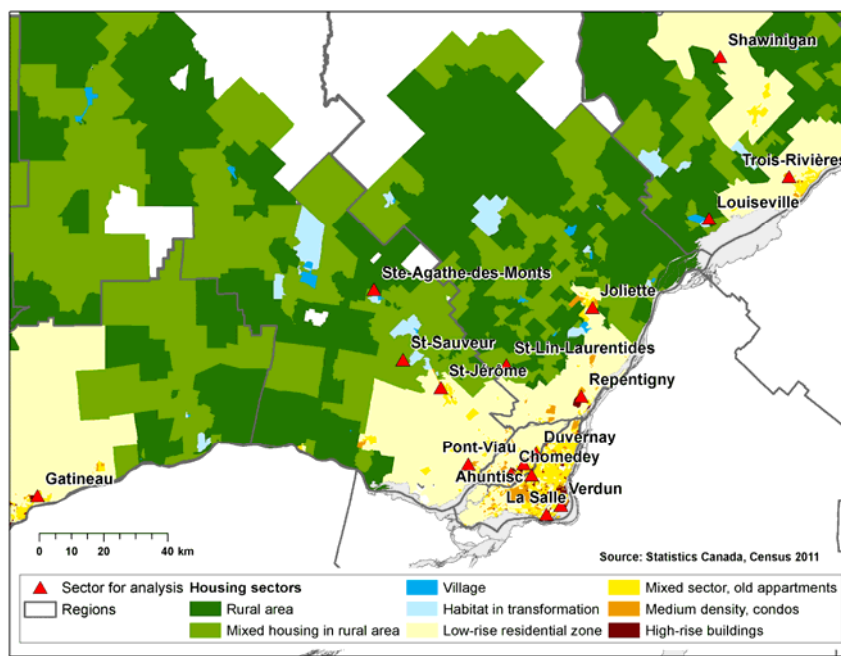


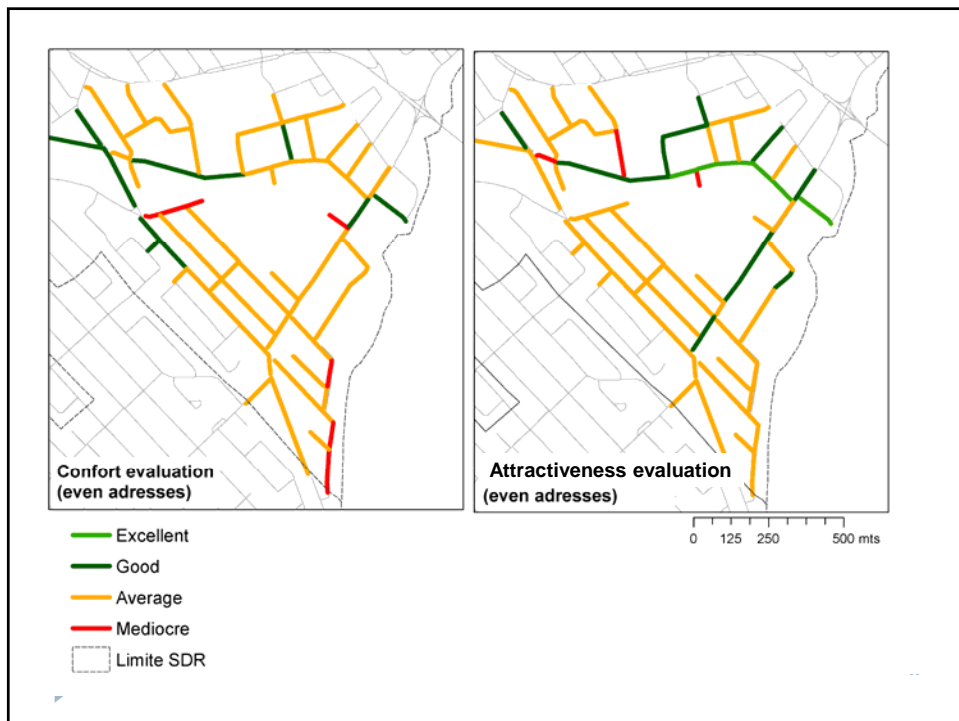
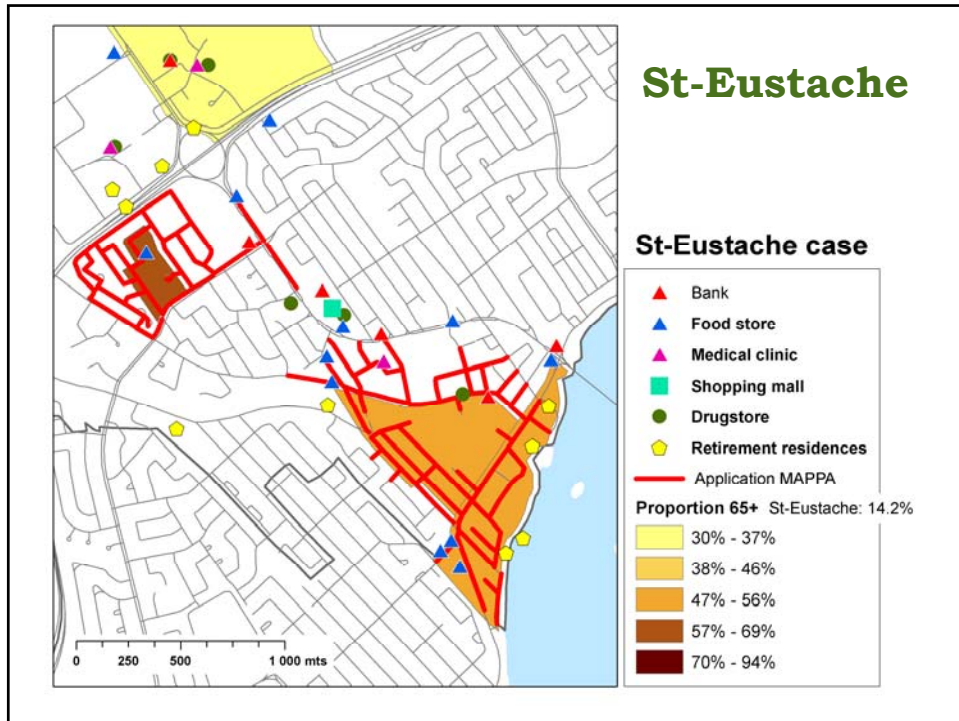
The process

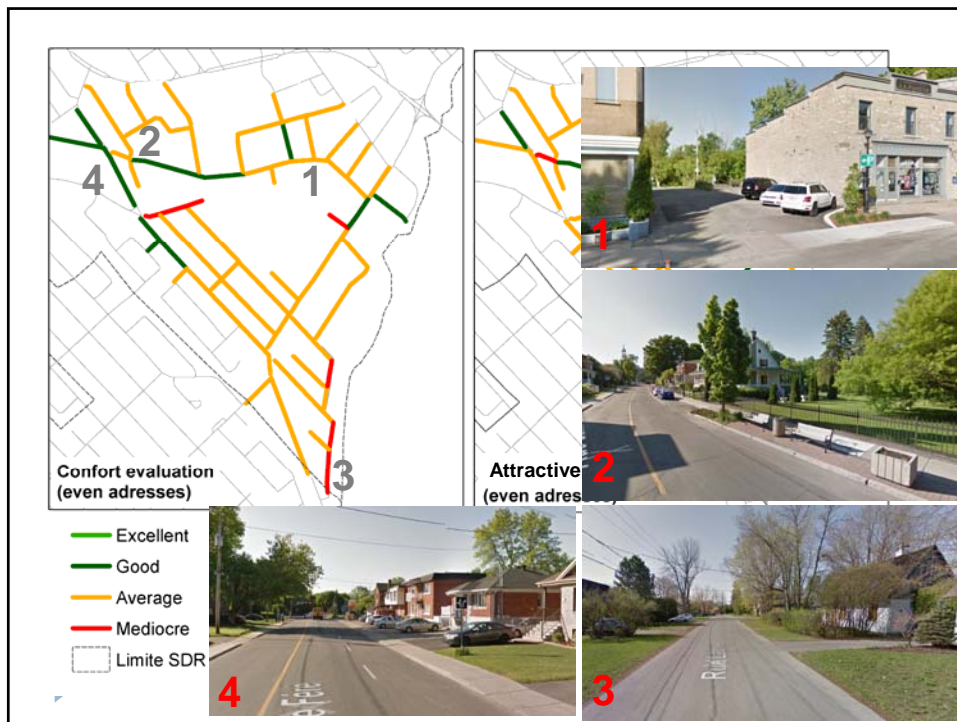
- ▶ Construction of a housing classification in the analyzed regions
- ▶ Identification of sectors (DA) with important concentrations of seniors (>30%)
- ▶ Location of potential destinations (banks, shopping mall, medical clinic, food store, drugstore)
- ▶ Application of a walkability audit (MAPPA-WATS)
- ▶ Focus groups with seniors living in these environments: aging in place, everyday mobility, inclusion, sense of home



Housing classification

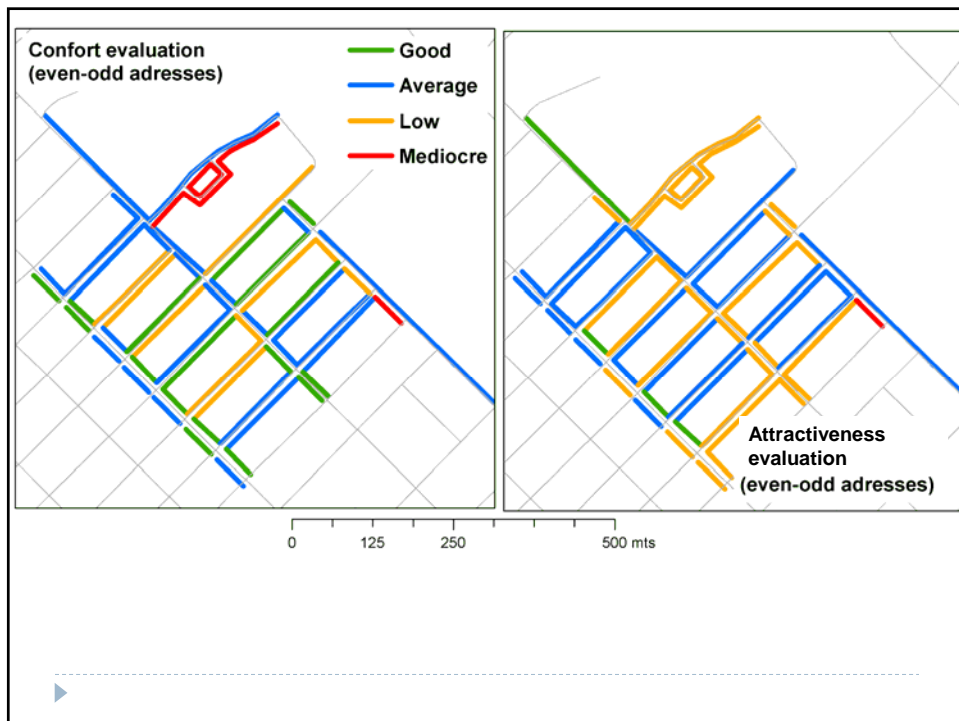
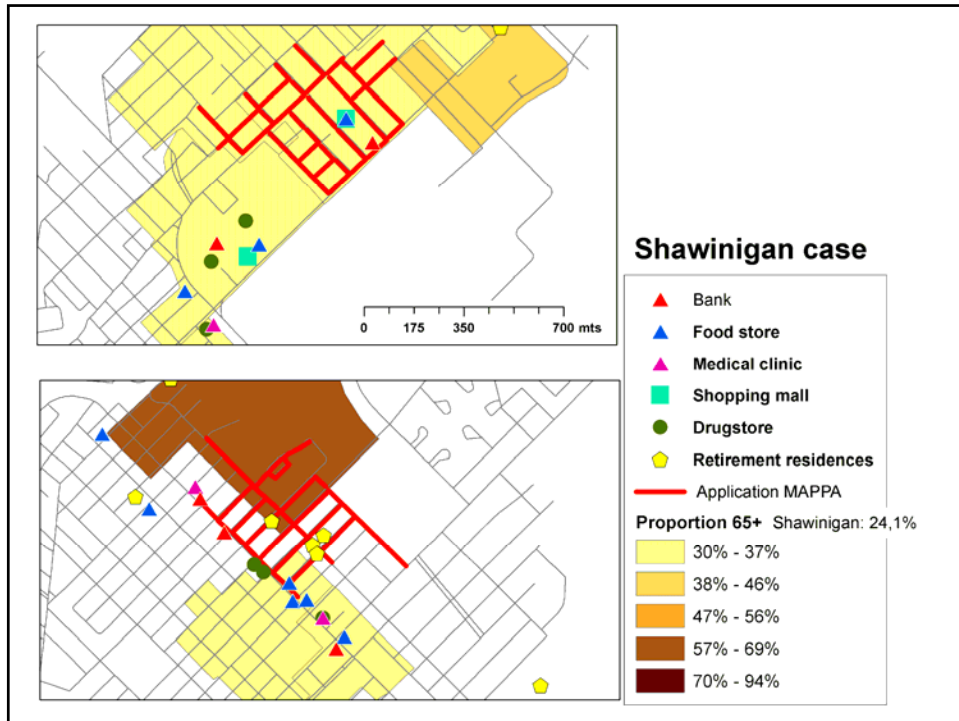


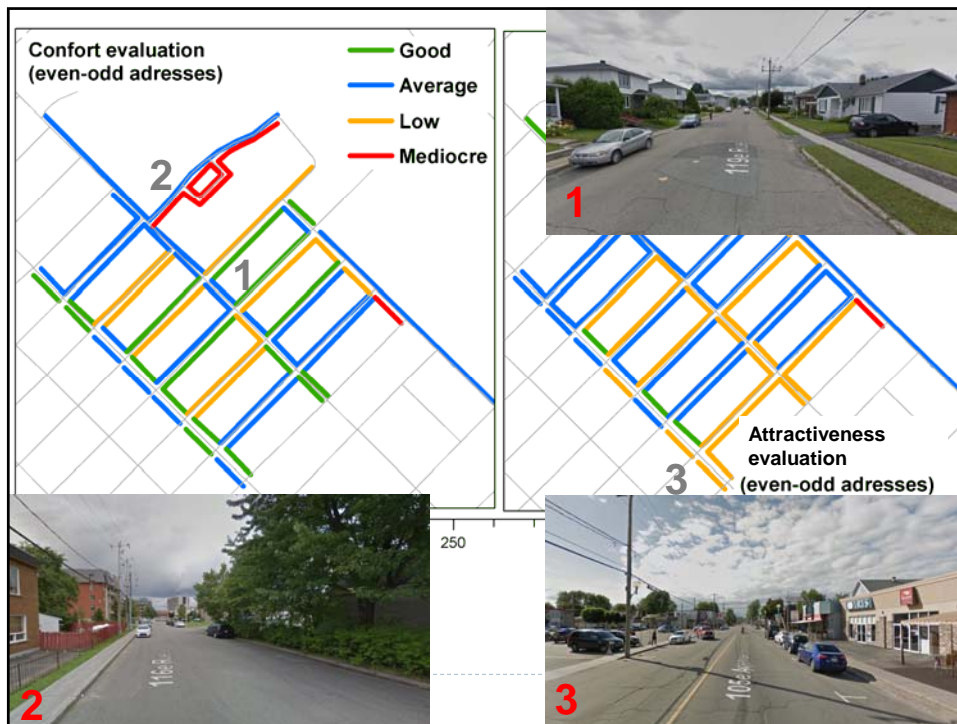




St-Eustache, Focus Group

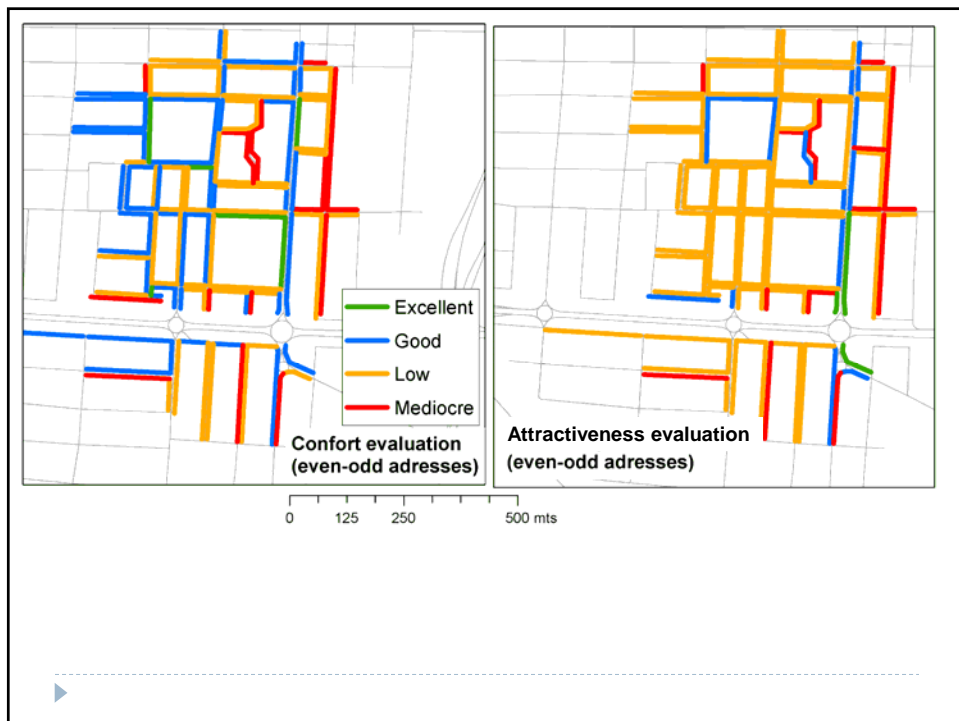
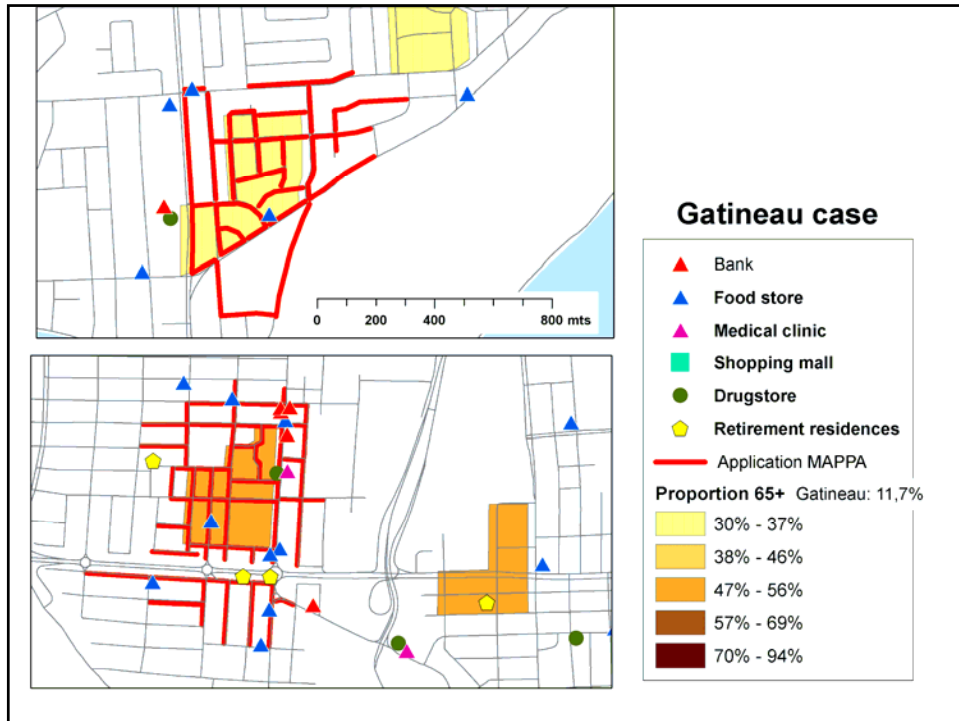
- **Accessibility** to stores is possible only with a car (family, friends)
- **Public transportation** doesn't meet seniors needs (location, frequency, difficult to bring mobility aids)
- The city of St-Eustache makes visible efforts to improve **quality of life**
- Seniors feel they are part of the **community**, they feel respected
 - *It's like a village... like the country*
 - *The (seniors) residence it's almost like home, I'm good here*
- People move to the residence mainly because of health problems. Those still living in their own house **apprehend** that moment
 - *I am informed. Its impossible for me to move here [to the residence] it's too expensive*
 - *I like to walk; I used to take long walks, but I lost my sense of equilibrium,... Instead I just sit outside [in the garden]*





Shawinigan, Focus Group

- ▶ Seniors **enjoy living** in Shawinigan
 - ▶ *The big advantage is the cost of living is lower than outside*
- ▶ Strong feeling of **belonging**
 - ▶ *At the residence everything is alright... you have friends automatically*
 - ▶ *As long as I am able to have autonomy, I'll continue to live in my own home*
- ▶ For seniors **walking** is very important.: walking club, inside the residence, inside the mall (winter)
- ▶ People **drive to places** where they can walk (park, mall, etc.)
- ▶ **Accessibility** issues
 - ▶ The **mall** offers a transit service once a week
 - ▶ Need of a **regional** accessibility
 - ▶ More **flexible** service
 - ▶ Stores go to the residence
- ▶ Impact of the **economic situation**
 - ▶ Housing stock
 - ▶ New population
 - ▶ *We also pay taxes!*





Gatineau, Focus Group

- ▶ Seniors **want to live at Gatineau**
 - ▶ They are close to family and friends, services
- ▶ Seniors like to **walk**, but is not easy
 - ▶ *It is very interesting to walk, but when there is a distance like the one to the grocery store, it's pretty far And there are no benches to sit on.*
- ▶ Walking inside the residence, their apartment, the mall
- ▶ **Accessibility** issues
 - ▶ Transportation service in the residence to do the groceries,
 - ▶ Difficult to get medical services (payment in the residence)
 - ▶ Several attractive destinations, but no easily accessible: *We need fresh air!*
- ▶ They appreciate living in the **residence**
 - ▶ *It is good but I think it is expensive for what you got*
 - ▶ *I think I will not have enough if I live 100 years!*

Concluding remarks

- ▶ Pedestrian accessibility is important in these environments, but not sufficient
- ▶ Living in a residence has several benefits, but they are not accessible for all seniors
- ▶ Seniors want to be part of the community: more recognition



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