

# LOOK! A CRANE ?!



The Montreal construction industry has been relatively dormant for the past several years. Although this stagnant condition still persists and the problem is widespread across the province, the recent revival of new office building construction in the downtown district is inspiring. Major investors have once again taken an interest in downtown real estate, and with the aid of federal and provincial funds are building new corporate structures.

Several major projects are in their preliminary design phases while others have received the green light and are currently under construction.

One project, which has yet to begin excavation but which is quickly acquiring the distinction of being an extremely relevant and prestigious undertaking, is the new international headquarters for Alcan Aluminum Ltd. It incorporates the old with the new, restoration and new construction. Situated between Stanley and Drummond, four historic 19th and 20th century structures along Sherbrooke Street are the key elements of the development. The Lord Atholstan House, the Berkeley Hotel and two stone-fronted townhouses shall be completely renovated and adjoined to the new complex planned for the rear of the site. The two new structures will be four and seven storeys high. Relating to the scale of the surrounding area and reversing the trend of destruction of Sherbrooke Street's character through the demolition of its historic structures, Alcan's new headquarters are destined to become a landmark in Montreal's architectural evolution. The 220,000 sq. ft. development, designed by Arcop Associates, has an estimated construction cost of \$20 million and is scheduled to be completed by 1983.

Another large corporation planning to relocate its Montreal head office is Hydro Quebec. Its tentative site is located north of Place des Arts, along Sherbrooke Street, between Jeanne Mance and St. Urbain. The existing Ecole

Technique de Montréal, once slated to be demolished, is to be incorporated harmoniously into the new design. A massive project, with an estimated construction cost of \$300 million and a floor area of nearly 3 million sq. ft., it will have both the Hydro Quebec Corporation and the James Bay Energy Society. An architectural competition shall be held to determine the designer of the super-complex.

Also on the drawing boards are the offices for the Banque Federal de Development, a 19-storey office building to be owned by the Trizec Corporation. The 350,000 sq. ft. structure, being designed by The Partnership of Webb Zerafa Menkès and Housden, has an estimated construction cost of \$15 million. It will have an exterior finish of reflective glass.

Turning to the post-excavation scene, deMaisonneuve blvd. is in the process of a drastic transformation. The four block stretch of parking lots between McGill College and Stanley is about to become a glass canyon, with no fewer than three new towers currently under construction.

2000 Peel, a joint venture of the First Quebec Corporation and Canderl Ltd., will be located between Stanley and Peel. The nine-storey office building, designed by Tolchinsky and Goodz, will have a floor area of approximately 160,000 sq. ft. and will cost \$10 million. It will have an exterior finish of reflective glass.

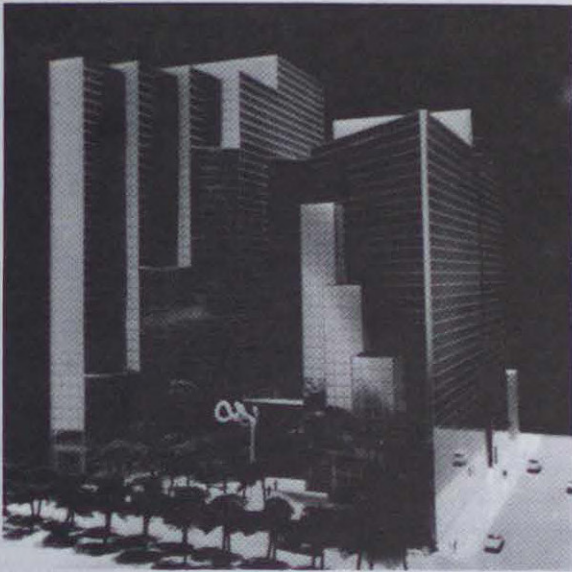
Two blocks east of 2000 Peel is the site of the 18-storey Manulife office tower, on the corner of Mansfield and deMaisonneuve. The Manulife Insurance Company will be both the owner and the major tenant of the building. To be completed by early 1982, the \$15 million structure with 180,000 sq. ft. in office space, has been designed by Webb Zerafa Menkès Housden. It will have an exterior finish of reflective glass.

The third building presently under

construction on deMaisonneuve blvd., on a 50,000 sq. ft. site bounded by McGill College Avenue and President Kennedy, was also designed by Webb Zerafa Menkès Housden. The project consists of twin towers, one of 16 and the other of 20 storeys, with a total floor area of 900,000 sq. ft. It will be built at a cost of \$60 million and is set to be completed by 1983. Louis Dreyfus Properties will own the buildings while leasing one of the towers to BNP of Canada. Interesting features of the project include a merging of the towers at adjoining floors and an entry way which is well set back from the street creating an inviting plaza which is landscaped so as to harmonize with the proposed McGill College Avenue Mall. It will have an exterior finish of reflective glass.

Further south, on La Gauchetière St., between University and Beaver Hall, another twin tower complex is under construction. Both towers are to have 28 floors. One will be occupied by Bell Canada (1 million sq. ft.) and the second by The National Bank of Canada (800,000 sq. ft.). The project has been designed by the firm of David, Boulva and Cleve, carries a construction cost of \$170 million, and is projected to be completed by 1983. The proposed exterior finish is glass and aluminum spandrels (similar to PVM).

The Quebec Government's Ministry of Tourism and Commerce is the client for a nearby project, the Palais des Congrès, which is being built on Viger Street directly over the Place d'Armes Metro station. The consortium of architects selected as a result of an architectural competition are Victor Prus, LeMoyné et Assoc., Labelle, Marchand et Geoffroy et Hébert et Lalonde, better known as 'Les architectes pour le Palais des Congrès de Montréal'. The \$55 million structure, scheduled to be completed by December 1982, will be used mainly for expositions, exhibitions and conventions. With a floor area of 750,000 sq. ft., the centre will have two underground garages,



Banque Nationale de Paris

roof and ground level terraces and various halls within the main building. The exterior of the building is expected to be of prefabricated concrete panels and glass within an aluminum framework.

The Palais des Congrès will be linked, through an underground tunnel, to the federal government's Guy Favreau Complex. This Public Works of Canada venture has been stalled for the past several years, however, there has been some activity on the site recently and the pouring of the concrete infrastructure may begin soon. It is being designed and coordinated by the associated firms of Webb Zerafa Menkès Housden and Larose Laliberté and Petrucci. The proposal consists of a landscaped plaza separating two multi-level office buildings, which will be situated on the north and south sides of the site. The complex will provide commercial space on two levels, but will not exceed a height of 13 floors. It will have a gross floor area of 1,400,000 sq. ft. and will cost over \$100 million.

There are several smaller projects which are currently under construction. The CN Building, at the corner of Dorchester and University, has been stripped down to its bare frame. It shall

be completely refurbished and will be clad in gold reflective glass. IBM of Canada is adding several storeys to the top of their Place Ville Marie headquarters. Finally, the former Holiday Inn building, at the corner of Dorchester and Drummond, is being completed by the Sheraton Group, under the direction of Sankey and Arcop - architects.



Guy Favreau Complex

The downtown skyline will change considerably within the next few years. The economics of this situation bear welcome news, and this is good for Montreal. In a city where the preservation scene has assumed a great importance recently, new construction and the resulting change in Montreal's texture shall greatly encourage a renewal of architectural debate.

