Research Aims:

The Turcot Interchange, located in the southwest of Montreal and near the future MUHC site, is reaching the end of its useful life and will be replaced in the next few years. As the busiest interchange in Quebec with 280,000 vehicles per day, the Turcot serves a crucial role in Montreal’s current transportation infrastructure, yet many of the issues related to the presence of this mega highway infrastructure are not well known, such as negative health impacts, depressed land values in surrounding areas and the incompatibility with urban highways and good public transit provision. In order to encourage better understanding of these issues, the CURA has supported the development turcot.ca, a website that aims to present well-rounded information about the project in a timely, easy-to-read manner.

Key results to date:

Turcot.ca launched just prior to the release of the findings from the province’s environmental review board (BAPE), providing an important source of information to make sense of the many thousands of pages submitted for review. The project is also a way to explore how new media can be used in key public policy debates, via blogs and Twitter. Hits, keyword, and other internet traffic data can be analysed using Google Analytics and other social media tools.

While the BAPE was a major catalyst for this project, turcot.ca will continue to serve an important role in the academic and community sector by:

- Presenting condensed, referenced information on the project and its possible repercussions in a clear, visually-appealing manner;
- Provided a vehicle to engage students to contribute through research, public meetings;
- Reaching out to Anglophone communities, whose diverse interests are not represented in the mainstream media; and
- Showing Montrealers how other cities have dealt with the challenges of urban highway infrastructure.

This project is exploring new tools for community and university to affect public debate on key public policy questions, such as regional transport policy.