

I want thank this current administration for their openness, in including the citizenry to be able to participate by addressing their concerns with respect to the 2020 Municipal Budget of Montreal. I do hope that this important consultation will provide a foundation for citizen inclusiveness, in the upcoming years.

I personally feel that this could be the last chance, to find a forum to portray my concerns of the influence of a less than financially transparent public transportation project. Personally I find this difficult to write this memoir as I have to make strong recommendations, while remaining vague at the same time.

A personal introduction

I am enthused at been given the opportunity to express my concerns, in my own name. I recently have seen real and concrete actions by our Municipal government, in providing the infrastructure to have a real dialogue on how to implicate the latent talent, of our citizenry on how to make Montreal the City that it ought to be.

David Bruce Merlo, has lived in the greater Montreal region since I have been two years old. Currently does not have a job, but works a lot. I am an activist in Urban, Environmental, Urban Agriculture, Collaborative Economy and Participatory Democracy Issues. As being a glorified volunteer, and actively participating in a dozen Established Foundations, Citizen Movements and even Crowdsourcing Peer2Peer networks. I am exposed to alot of competent professionals and their diligent views. The views expressed are my own but based on conclusions of dialogue that has been, previously shared, by a wide segment of professional talent.

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http://ville.montreal.qc.ca/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/COMMISSIONS_PERM_V2_FR/MEDIA/DOCUMENTS/DOC_PREBUDGET_20190312.PDF

2) Afin de régler le défi d'équilibre budgétaire montréalais et dans le contexte de la négociation d'un nouveau pacte fiscal avec le gouvernement du Québec, quels types de transferts supplémentaires devraient être envisagés ? Y aurait-il d'autres mécanismes d'appui que la Ville devrait envisager ?

Throughout history from the Roman Empire to the American Empire, transportation infrastructure was vitally important to the growth of these societies, and it is vitally important that we get it right, as it is costly to rectify as the only alternative is to force another costly solution on top of another.

As the role of the City is becoming more, important globally, our elected municipal have we lost the capability on deciding the best solution for the right place with respect to public transportation. Our local public transportation, has to be conceived and

implemented by our local politicians and municipal administrators. Our Public Transportation has to provide value to urban mobility needs, of the citizenry and not to alternatively structured investment vehicles for Bankers and Engineering firms.

Through the past few decades, under the various changes of Government, with the resulting restructuring of Governmental organizations, for example the tendency of centralization and decentralization, certain Ministries have been resilient to this change and we find ourselves in a situation, where we have embedded governments within a Government. As the MTQ is essentially an embedded Government, within the Quebec Government, where career Engineers dictate public policy, by opaquely planning infrastructure projects.

A solution of solving this issue, is as I will refer to as the “REMCO complex” a loosely federated Public, Private, Partnership to manage the implementation and operation of our public transportation infrastructure.

The Government of Quebec has advocated the administration and governance of these projects, to the REMCO complex, by the drafting and implication of Bill 137. After receiving a negative review of the REM project by the BAPE. One of the concerns that were raised was that the CDPQ did not submit crucial documentation, that was requested by the BAPE. Bill 137 was drafted and enacted to give an exemption, to the compulsory hearings of the BAPE.

The social contract between the Quebec Government and our City, has to be completely overhauled, as jurisdictional authority has been handed over to bankers, engineers and private industry. On the Ratification of the Provincial Bill 137, essentially has given the Quebec Government the ability to abdicate certain rights and obligations, on overseeing and financing vital Public Transportation Infrastructure.

There are strong indications that our Metropolitaine region will be committed financially for a period of 199 years, to a project that was essentially forced on the Greater Montreal Metropolitan Region, and the Quebec government has to intervene on behalf of the Montreal Metropolitan Community.

- 1) Conceived without consideration of any competing technologies, that could of been more cost effective, efficient and environmentally friendly.
- 2) Pushed through even though the BAPE, which is mandated to oversee the Environmental ramifications on our local socio economic infrastructure. REMCO was given an exemption via Bill 137 to this mandatory approval procedure, even though the BAPE recommended it was to be rejected. The CDPQ refused to relay important documents, that were required to make an informed decision.
- 3) Elected municipal officials were unable or unwilling to answer questions that were submitted in the form of an open letter at a press conference at City Hall, to

Valerie Plante, requesting that she requests from the REMCO complex answers to pertinent questions. Please refer to the attached PDF on the Open Letter to Valerie Plante.

- 4) Projected cost overruns directly and indirectly, which can total into the billions and can easily exceed the operational budget of the Ville de Montreal. It is unclear which part of REMCO will be invoicing the City and to what amount.
- 5) The Pink Metro line and the extension of the Blue line may never see the light of day as the City and perhaps the province may end up shouldering an onerous financial burden. Our City has completely lost control of the ability to properly plan our public transportation infrastructure, by implementing the right solution in the right place.
- 6) Was there an appropriate audit and assessment done, on incidental charges, on building the REM that could possibly tack on another 5.7 Billion, from the initial estimate of 6.3 Billion, which represents which is the same figure of this year's budget for a total of 5.7 Billion, assuming an overall cost of \$12 billion.

The present and future prosperity depends on proper management of the collective monetary resources of the citizenry. The proper functioning of a modern democracy depends, on the study and implementation, of these two requests. Our current municipal administration, is unable to support the population, that they represent, in having control with respect to Budgetary Finances. It is imperative that the two procedures have to be implemented.

- 1) The authors of the budget have to identify possible expenditures from either the Quebec government or a division of REMCO Consortium. These expenditures have to be extrapolated into how they will impact future budgets?
- 2) Apparently there are astronomical cancellation costs that are conveniently embedded into the contracts issued within the REMCO Complex, do they outweigh current and future direct and incidental costs?

I want to thank you again for providing the infrastructure, to express my views on how we can collectively provide our elected representatives, the legislative tools, to help the Greater Montreal Urban Community, to evolved into the 21st Century, without relying on "Robber Baron" schemes prevalent from the 19th Century!

Cordially Yours
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