

For virtually everyone living in Montreal today, the Deux-Montagnes commuter train has been operating for literally all their lives. There are currently **22** trains in each direction with approximately 30,000 riders per day, most of whom would disembark at Central Station. Obviously the closer one gets to downtown the more populous the train becomes - maybe even past capacity - especially at the two TMR stations. This was partially alleviated when the Mascouche line was added providing an additional **8** trains per weekday.

When the REM eventually comes in 2023 there will be **275** trains per day, in each direction, running through both TMR *and* Saint-Laurent. From 22 to 30 to 275 trains per day! - few could complain about that! Until one reads the small print: there will be no service at all through the Mont-Royal tunnel for two years, 2020-2022.

As **Jason Magder** pointed out in his column of December 8, **Alan DeSousa**, the mayor of Saint-Laurent, is as yet uninformed of the measures to accommodate those who get off the train in his borough in order to get them to a metro station. 30,000 passengers per day at 50 per bus - OMG!

An obvious partial solution would be to extend the Orange metro line from Cote-Vertu to Bois-Franc which would at least eliminate the need for buses for 30,000 per day. But this basic step is not even in the plans of the REM - an indication that it has not been adequately thought out and/or it is just a real estate promo.

All this just as we are emerging from 2 huge hospital projects, endless reconfiguration of the Turcot Interchange, a multi-billion dollar bridge rebuild, street closures, sewers, tar as well as a 20 story dig for a new train junction at the Edouard-Montpetit metro station . And a Pink Metro line!

Here is another idea that I do not claim as my own but may largely accomplish what the REM and the Pink line propose to do - **a train line to the airport and one from Lachine to Montreal-Nord: Use the Saint-Jerome commuter line from Park Avenue and Jean-Talon with stops at Canora, Namur, Cote-Saint-Luc, Lachine and Dorval with a shuttle to the airport. A combination of two train routes on infrastructure that is already in place - and operational!**

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