



Green Coalition Brief

**Transportation
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Foreward:

Transport was not the initial raison d'etre of the Green Coalition. It was the conservation of natural green spaces. But over the years, the efforts to save Montreal's green spaces have been complicated by the constant threat of new road construction. Back in the 1970's, a founding member-group successfully resisted proposals for a major road, (de Salaberry), and housing development in the Bois-de-Saraguay. In 1989, the Coalition persuaded the Montreal Urban Community to adopt its \$200 million Green Space Acquisition and Aménagement Program. The first two acquisitions were the Bois-Franc Forest and the Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard. But sadly, the MUC Schéma d'Aménagement, adopted in 1987, still provided for the construction of six-lane de Salaberry through the Bois-Franc Forest and the 440 Autoroute through Île-Bizard Forest. Thankfully, the City of Montreal has officially removed the former from its plan. Alas, Highway 440 as well as other environmentally destructive roads still beckon!

Introduction:

The conservation, protection and restoration of the environment must be a top priority. Global warming, pollution of various kinds, destruction of natural habitat and essential fertile farm land, urban sprawl and the current energy crisis have made it all the more pressing to rethink what we do to our environment. We must remember that we cannot remove ourselves from Planet Earth -- even with space travel! We are at best custodians of the land, air and water. At worst, we can be very destructive. Indeed, the laissez-faire policies of the past and present have not only harmed the flora and fauna, but have imperilled the health and future of the human race.

Transportation cannot be taken on its own. It is a vast area of study and is also an integral part of civilization and social and economic organization. It affects such areas as land use, pollution, health

and the economy. Every time a new road or highway is built, new subdivisions are developed. Although the Green Coalition recognizes the need for housing, it is imperative that full cost/benefit analyses be done before any new road or highway is built. These costs should not only include such areas as security, infrastructure, snow clearing, etc., but should also deal with elements that have not been costed up until now. Such as: Destruction of arable land, encroachment on sensitive areas and natural spaces, social costs, health effects, global warming and energy efficiency.

Montreal must balance policy with action in biomass conservation and responsible transportation development. Whatever benefits are derived from trees, and there are many, in the Kyoto Protocol context they represent the sequestration, (storage), of carbon and must be conserved as a permanent repository of that element. The automobile represents the desequestration of carbon from fossil sources and is Montreal's major contributor to green-house gas emissions (GHG's). In Montreal, the transport sector is responsible for 45% of GHG's. The choice is clear: urban forest biomass conservation must be a priority. New road development favouring the private passenger vehicle is anathema.

As such, we urge the city administration move quickly to establish an Integrated Mass Transit and Transportation Plan which does not encroach on Montreal's natural spaces, is environmentally friendly, efficient, time sensitive, and encourages motorists to abandon their cars as much as possible. This plan should become an integral part of the evolving Urban Plan and future CIMA II Report on West Island Transport.

As the City of Montreal and surrounding area evolves its Transport Plan,
the following essential elements must be
considered:

- Emphasize public transit as the premier transportation mode of the future.
- The need to protect the established Nature-Parks from dissection by roads or other transport infrastructures. Such development would have a serious impact on the ecological integrity of these important public assets.
- The urgent need to preserve intact the remaining natural and ecologically important green spaces that are being considered for acquisition to address the deficit that Montreal has relative to provincially and internationally recognized norms.
- The commitment by the City of Montreal to do its part in achieving the Kyoto objectives, and the principles of sustainable development.
- The completion of the island-wide bicycle network and recognition of bicycling and walking as utilitarian and essential transportation modes. Clearly, bicycles require full access on all trains, metros, and future LRT's.
- The necessary implementation of a public transit plan that moves people from point of origin to destination in an efficient and most direct manner.
- The alleviation of the road network congestion caused by an undue reliance on the single-passenger private vehicle or single occupancy vehicle, (SOV).
- Recognize the value of the railway mode as more environmentally friendly and energy efficient than highway transport. And, approach it not just as a business or industry or necessary "nuisance", but as an essential utility such as waterworks, hydro power, or roads.
- The need to conserve dormant railway corridors, such as the Doney Spur, for future rail transit use.
- The need to divert long distance through traffic, not destined for locations on-island and coming from points either east, west or south of Montreal, onto intermodal containers, off-island intermodal container terminals, and intermodal unit trains.

Recommendations for Integrated Public Transit and Transportation;

Incentive Options:

- Carpooling -- The corporate and public sectors should be involved to devise and operate an effective system that would include incentives for carpooling. A centralized, electronic data base, focusing on the postal codes of potential users and their workplace destinations, would be the basis of a system to put filled vehicles in HOV, (High Occupancy Vehicle), designated lanes, and to take employees door to door.
- Shuttle Bus Service -- Door to door corporate and public sector shuttle service, similar to the school bus model, could deliver large numbers of people on-time during rush hour.
- Point A to Point B Express Bus Convoys -- These convoys to deliver commuters, during rush hour, to a point within easy walking distance of their workplace or to provide easy links into the public transit network. Convoys linking easily reached public locations on the island to Namur, Cote Vertu, Vendome, etc..., Metro stations, commuter rail stations and future LRT terminals.
- Designated Lanes for Buses and Filled Vehicles/HOV Lanes -- These would be particularly effective on the Trans Canada Highway, Sources Boulevard, Notre Dame Street, and other major arteries during rush hours. Vehicles authorized to use these lanes would include cars used in carpooling, shuttle buses, express bus convoys and taxis.
- Lobby upper level of governments for transit pass/fare rebates -- This policy has become so attractive that even the Leader of the Opposition in Ottawa has proposed it as a way to increase ridership. Reducing, freezing or even eliminating fares are great incentives but, stable sources must be sought elsewhere.
- Public Transit Grid System/Make Transit More Convenient -- A grid system for MTC/STM buses, operating on a simplified back and forth, north-south, east-west basis with easy links or transfers, would reduce the aggravation of frequent diversions and loops that take riders out of their way and complicate linkages. Connecting buses often do not wait for passengers. There are too many "HORS DE SERVICE" buses on the road! Bus service should be cost- and time-effective.
- Increase the Frequency of Buses Reverse Commuting During Rush Hour and More Buses After Rush Hour -- In some areas, such as Walkley and Cote St. Luc Road, waiting for a bus can take between 25 and 40 minutes. This is too long. In some cases, if walking to the bus stop and waiting for the bus is included, it can take up to an hour and a half to get downtown. Taking a bus and two metros is a disincentive!

- Special Traffic Lights For Buses: An Excellent Idea! -- However, will the buses have to stick to their schedule? If so, will this not work at cross purposes if the bus is ahead of schedule? It only works when the bus is fully loaded and behind schedule.

- Metro Extensions -- One hopes that the ATM has learned a hard lesson. For the price of the Laval Metro extension, Montreal could have had approximately 2½ electrified commuter rail lines, or several light rail lines -- including the Doney Spur! Solid accounting methods and planning must be done before any new Metro extension proceeds. Line 2's extension to Bois Franc is logical. But, why was Line 5's extension to NDG, Cote St. Luc and Lachine never resurrected? There is a pent up demand for better service in the West End of the city.

- The Doney Spur Light Rail Line -- The Doney Spur right-of-way must be preserved intact for public transit use -- if not in the short term, then certainly for such use in the future:

GREEN COALITION'S DONEY SPUR PROPOSAL (since 1989)

Doney Spur Light Rail Line should be developed as the backbone of public transit in the West Island: Schedules and fares should be integrated with the Bus, Metro, Future LRT Network and Commuter Rail System.

- Doney Spur Light Rail Line (first proposed by the Coalition in 1989) is the keystone piece of the Green Coalition's integrated mass transit strategies. The old Spur has the potential to be the new Surface Metro for central West Island, operating with schedules and fares comparable to existing Metro lines, conveying passengers to and from Montreal's downtown core.

- Doney Spur runs west to east through the heart of the West Island. The Spur is a virtually disused freight rail line that starts at Stillview Avenue* in Pointe-Claire and goes eastward along the south side of one of Montreal's most congested and problematic arteries, the Trans Canada Highway. Then the Spur curves north past Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park to join the Two Mountains line near Highway 13. Doney Spur service can be linked at Bois-Franc Station to the entire Metro system, once the planned extension of the Orange Line from Côte Vertu to Bois-Franc is complete.
*The Doney Spur right-of-way can possibly be reclaimed as far west as St. Charles Boulevard.

- Doney Spur Light Rail Line can be an important axis for public transit, offering an attractive alternative to daily commuters, alleviating traffic on the Trans Canada Highway and precluding road network building in the same region. The Doney Spur service can have a dramatic effect on the future development of a West Island "downtown", its commercial core, centred on St Jean Blvd and the Trans Canada Highway. Serving the growing West Island suburbs, stations along the Spur can provide access to Lakeshore General Hospital, the Fairview Hub, Saint-Laurent's Techno and Industrial Parks, Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park, etc.

Surprise Proposal to roll buses on Doney Spur! No cost/benefit studies, no environmental impact studies are quoted in the Draft Transport Plan to warrant this sudden change in vocation for Doney Spur.

The proposal in the Master Plan for bus and taxi service on the Doney Spur Line, with a possible upgrade to rail service in the indefinite future, is a recipe for failure. For the reasons stated below, buses will not draw the sort of passenger volume that will justify an upgrade.

- Bus service will not capture the commuting public's imagination; buses will not attract riders in significant volume; a train service will. The full trains on the Rigaud and Two Mountains demonstrate this. The riders that could equivalently fill the Doney Spur Light Rail Service now wait in the Trans Canada Highway congestion in their cars. Also, for the most part, buses only appeal to students, the elderly and those who don't own cars.
- Commuters are far more likely to gravitate to a high capacity light rail train than to a bus because: 1. they are more likely to find a place in the train than on a bus 2. they are far less likely to have to wait for the next train than for the next bus. This reliability factor is an important draw for ridership.
- As a light rail line, Doney Spur could deliver large volumes of people on a tight schedule into the downtown public transit system in less time and with less stress and pollution than the present private vehicle alternative.
- Doney Spur is the only transit solution in the West Island that can satisfy Montreal's declared sustainable development objectives.
- **Two new overpasses** on the Trans Canada Highway, one at Delmar/Tecumseh between Sources and St Jean Boulevards, the other at Stillview between St Jean and St Charles Boulevards, could relieve bottlenecking on the three existing overpasses while providing ready access to the Doney Spur line from north of the Trans Canada Highway. The two new overpasses could favor bus shuttles during rush hour. The shuttle buses could bring passengers to the Doney Spur line from park and ride facilities in peripheral localities.

- A selfpropelled biodiesel "O-Train", (OC-Transpo, Ottawa), could be used initially to avoid the extra costs associated with electrification.
- Regional rail services, (as in Toronto) -- Resurrect VIA Rail service to Sherbrooke.
- Create Full-service Commuter Rail Lines -- In the longer term, all lines should operate at frequencies or headways of at least $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to 20 minutes all day long. The Rigaud line for example, requires full centralized traffic control signalling, more power switches, and full continuous welded rail to make this a reality. Inconveniences such as the flight of stairs at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue station should be corrected.

A third track between Vendome and Montreal West stations would relieve congestion and increase flow. The creation of new stations along the Blainville line, such as Cote St. Luc, Decarie, ^(Narrow Metro) etc., will allow the West End to use a quicker alternative -- at least during rush hour in the short term.

Also, Laval's plan to terminate the proposed Mascouche commuter rail line at the future Concorde Metro station will be very inconvenient. Motorists will choose public transit only if it is a "one-stop-shop", and they do not have to switch from one vehicle or mode to another! Its final destination should be Lucien L'Allier, (Windsor). This plan seems to be merely an excuse for the ill-planned Laval Metro extension.

Commuter rail is an ideal form of transport since it is relatively cheap to operate, is energy efficient and attracts new users to the public system. The lines to Rigaud, Delson, Saint-Hilaire, Two Mountains and Blainville should just be the starting point. Extensions and new lines to Saint-Jerome, Mascouche, Repentigny, Chateauguay-Valleyfield, Varennes, etc., should be a priority.

Until 1960, the West Island's Lakeshore was served by two commuter rail lines: 1) Canadian Pacific Railway's suburban Town Train service -- the longest running passenger rail service in Canada -- and 2) Canadian National's line -- formerly, the Grand Trunk Railway's line -- out of the old Bonaventure train station, south of Windsor Station. In the 1940's, there were over 80 trains departing Windsor Station serving a plethora of destinations. In particular, Lakeshore service was fast, frequent and comfortable. One did not have to consult a schedule!

The efficient rail service to Dixie, (Lachine/Dorval), "...was of compelling importance in the 1890's for no member, [of the Royal Montreal Golf Club, sic.], then had an automobile..." The Royal Montreal Golf Club's "...minute book for Dec. 21, 1916 said: 'Letters of appreciation of the excellent train services were ordered to be sent to Canadian Pacific Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway, [later CN, sic.], companies...' With the coming of the automobile, the club's dependence on the railways to Dixie became less complete. But for many years the automobile was regarded as a noisy and dusty intrusion into the peace of the links..." In

1911 for example, "...speeding on the club's road had brought a new terror into..." the member's lives. The automobile and later the superhighway created urban sprawl, not the excellent rail service of the past. (See: "The club and the railways; The club moves to Dixie", ch. III, by Edgar Andrew Collard, The Royal Montreal Golf Club 1873-1973; the Centennial of Golf in North America, 1973, pp. 60-62.)

- A Circumferencial Railway on the South Shore -- This line would use the CSX/CPR/CNR railways from Côteau through Valleyfield/Beauharnois/Chateauguy/Delton/La Prairie. Diversion of intermodal freight and truck traffic not destined for the Montreal area should be a Federal/Provincial priority!
- High-Speed Rail -- Canada and the US are in the Third World compared to Europe, Japan and China! Its popularity has been proven time and time again.
Encouraging the Federal Government to make incremental improvements via a PPP, (private/public partnership with the railways and other interested parties), to medium-distance inter-city rail corridors with the long term view of high-speed to very-high-speed passenger rail service. City pairs such as Montreal-Toronto, Montreal-Ottawa, etc., are likely candidates.
- Track Sharing -- The Montreal-Toronto corridor has 2 sets of tracks. It has been proposed that the CN right-of-way be mainly used for passenger services and the CP route be mainly for freight. Improved infrastructure such as, switches, signaling and welded rail, would benefit freight railways with faster and more convenient shipping schedules. Ex: CPR's roll-on-roll-off nonreinforced, (conventional), trailer Expressway service should be expanded throughout the Northeast and Midwest to New York, Boston, Windsor/Detroit, Chicago, Quebec City, and Atlantic Canada. Current users include: The Bay, Zellers, Lays, Sunbury, Naya, Canadian Tire, etc...
- Alternative Fuels -- Encouraging alternative fuels, energy sources, and hybrid engines that are environmentally sound for all modes of transport. Ex: Ethanol, Biodiesel, Hydrogen-powered fuel cells, solar power produced hydrogen, etc... Energy efficiency: "Drive for our real needs, not our egos!"
- Convert public fleets -- And encourage the conversion of fleets of publically regulated companies to use such fuels. Ex: Buses, trains, public works vehicles.
- Oppose Seaway Project -- Lobbying in conjunction with other interested parties. Such as: The Iroquois Nation, New York State, Ontario, etc., against the US Corps of Army Engineers' Seaway Project which would devastate the delicate eco-system of the St. Lawrence- Great Lakes System, imperil drinking water, introduce more foreign species and pests, create pollution and spills, and endanger the economic viability of the Port of Montreal.

- Airport Rail Shuttle -- The Green Coalition applauds the fact that the Downtown to P. E. Trudeau Airport shuttle will not use the more expensive and longer northern route, thus maintaining the Doney Spur for future local light rail use.

However, there are some glaring omissions in the plan:

- 1) The Dorval commuter rail and bus terminal are not being integrated with the airport facility. Encourage the authorities to reconsider in order to create a true intermodal terminal.
 - 2) The Rigaud commuter line will not stop at the airport. This will inconvenience Western Montreal as well as West Islanders who may want to take this service to the airport. Although a new switch will connect the CP line to the projected service, it is not expected to be used regularly in the near term.
 - 3) The southern CN line is longer than the CP route. The CN line crosses the Lachine Canal twice. To be successful, the route must be competitive with the automobile. The shortest route is the most logical. Indeed, if the airport shuttle were to use CPR's Westmount Subdivision, it would be able to stop at Vendome station -- an intermediate catchment station. The most successful train-to-plane services have suburban stops! People in the greater West End, (NDG, CDN, Cote St. Luc, etc.), and western downtown and Westmount will not head east to go west! One fully understands that VIA Rail's trains will stop at Central Station as it is its terminal. But, the local service should compliment the Rigaud line -- not undermine it!
- Future LRT lines -- LRT's should use off-the-shelf technology as much as possible to forestall the teething problems encountered by the Two-Mountains commuter line and the ever present jerky low-floor buses. Several Seattle city council members have called for a "monorail exit strategy" given its huge expense and low returns as opposed to other more reliable and conventional modes. (See, www.nationalcorridors.org, 7/12/2005, pp. 11-12). It goes without saying, that Loto Québec's casino monorail is a nonstarter!

Reserved lanes for LRT's are preferred as they are safer, allow for quicker transit times and do not interfere with road traffic.

Disincentive Options:

- Remove Downtown Parking -- Removal of outside, ground level parking lots discourage vehicle use within the city core. An efficient public transit system already operates in the central core

and there is an extensive underground pedestrian network where walking is often a possible and time-efficient alternative. Removing downtown parking would diminish traffic from outlying residential communities and suburbs. [These sites would be better used for residential and green space development and made attractive for people to live close to where they work.]

- Increase Downtown Parking Fees (surtax) - in those zones that are major target destinations for commuters. The costs of private vehicle use should be raised high enough to tip the balance decidedly in favour of using public transit during peak periods. Proceeds from a surtax could go towards financing park and ride facilities in outlying communities.
- Leave Road Network As It Is - Finally, the most effective disincentive to increasing private passenger vehicle use is to leave the road network as it is. New roads built to alleviate traffic congestion exacerbate the problem they were intended to resolve. New roads temporarily loosen congestion and create the perception of more fluid conditions. In turn, more traffic is generated. In short order the system reaches the same equilibrium state of traffic fluidity/congestion that existed before the new roads were built. This dynamic will always apply no matter how many roads are put in place. It is better to hold the line on road development and induce commuters to take public transit earlier rather than later. New roads are an invitation for more people to bring more cars onto a road network that is already overburdened while offering no long term solution to transit needs. "Thus, the more congestion the better the PT (public transit) situation."

Richard Bergeron, AMT

Motives and Context of a Revision of a Strategic Plan by Richard Bergeron

Canadian Transit Forum, April and July, 2002 pp 24-26 and 18 - 21

ROADS:

In 2002, the CIMA I Report proposed a "spaghetti network" of new roads through established and successful Nature-Parks and other unprotected green spaces in the West Island. The endangered Nature-Parks are Bois-de-Liesse and its Bois-Franc Forest, l'Anse à l'Orme and Ste-Anne's Forest, Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard and Pointe Théorêt at Cap-Saint-Jacques. Roads could also cut through Angell Woods and other unprotected green spaces.

The Green Coalition has called upon the Minister of Transport and the City of Montreal to scrap the road network in favour of public transit strategies to reduce traffic. Given the extraordinary shortfall in protected natural green space on Montreal Island relative to other major North American cities, the preservation of Montreal's rapidly disappearing natural heritage must be given priority over road development.

No single magic solution can protect natural parkland, reduce traffic congestion and support sustainable development principles. Rather a complex of solutions must be envisaged, the components of which will, in a mutually complementary way, make traffic manageable. These solutions must comprise both incentives and disincentives to get more people into fewer vehicles particularly during the rush hours. While the Green Coalition's 'Recommendations for Integrated Public Transport' focus on the West Island, the principles involved apply to the Island of Montreal

as a whole. Our transit survey found 87% of rush hour vehicles on the Trans-Canada carry one person -- the driver. (See Annex)

Virage Vert: City officials say natural spaces are now safe from new road building

Through the past year, in public question periods, in meetings with City officials, Green Coalition representatives have been reassured that natural spaces come before roads. De Salaberry Boulevard extension through Bois-Franc in Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park would be excluded from the new Master Plan; plans to construct the 440 Autoroute to Laval through Île Bizard, its Nature-Park and through Point Théorêt (part of Cap Saint-Jacques located on Île Bizard) were not favoured at all. Plans for road building through Angell Woods were to be cancelled. Most particularly, assurances were repeated and definitive that there would be no new roads constructed through the Anse-à-l'Orme Nature-Park or any part of its Forest (Woods #3). That is, specifically, plans to extend Pierrefonds Boulevard to Morgan Boulevard through the newly-named Corridor écoforestier de la Rivière-à-l'Orme would be abandoned. Bravo!

Glitches in the Virage Vert! New plans shock Green Coalition

Officials are contradicted:

The repeated and definitive assurances made to Green Coalition reps by City officials that no new road would go through the Anse-à-l'Orme Écoterritoire were contradicted by Mr. Sainte-Marie, (May '04.) Mr. Sainte-Marie affirmed that Pierrefonds Boulevard will be extended west through the écoterritoire, then south to join Morgan Boulevard; and that the only question remaining is to determine the exact trajectory of the road. Sadly, the Master Plan appears to support Mr. Sainte-Marie's statements in Chapter 2, action 3.3.

Boroughs' planning schemes show new road through écoterritoire:

The planning maps for the boroughs of both Pierrefonds/Senneville and Beaconsfield/Baie d'Urfé have partial indications on their maps labelled "*Projected extension of Pierrefonds Boulevard to Morgan Boulevard*".

Doney Spur confusion:

During all the discussions about the Doney Spur with City and other officials (and they have been numerous because the Green Coalition first made the Doney Spur Proposal in 1989) **no use other than rail service has ever been mentioned for the Doney Spur!** At the hearings May '04, Green Coalition members were astounded to hear Mr. Sainte-Marie's remarks describing plans to roll buses on the old Doney Spur! In section 2.2 on transport in the Master Plan, a short reference is made of proposed initiatives including reserved lanes for buses and taxis on the Doney Spur.

The Green Coalition has serious concerns about these new developments as described below.

GREEN COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS

Extension of Pierrefonds Boulevard through L'Anse-à-l'Orme Écoterritoire to join Morgan Boulevard in Baie d'Urfé is unacceptable

Ecological Impact of Road

- Extending this artery while preserving the ecological integrity of L'Anse-à-l'Orme Écoterritoire is wishful thinking: it is an attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable. And once the sensitive zone is breached, more development alongside the road will surely follow.
- The hydrology of sensitive forested areas adjacent to the floodplain will be disrupted, in particular the Anse-à-l'Orme Forest (also known as the MUC's Woods #3), east of Chemin L'Anse à l'Orme. This forest is ranked as among the most ecologically valuable on the Island. Its relatively small size is a constraint as far as its long-term viability is concerned and it can little afford further insult if adjoining areas are fragmented. Biodiversity stands to be lost - and visitors impoverished.
- The viability of a beaver marsh that provides habitat for migratory water fowl will be rendered impossible. The marsh lies to the west of the point where Chemin L'Anse-à-l'Orme crosses the Rivière-à-l'Orme and in the path of the only possible route for the road extension. Strains on the water quality of the Rivière-à-l'Orme itself would increase; sufficient water supplies to the river could decrease.
- Traffic will disrupt the tranquil conditions for wildlife in the corridor as well as for people looking for a rare and peaceful retreat from the noise, smell and bustle of urban life. One road, Chemin L'Anse-à-l'Orme, is enough of an intrusion - it destroys the serenity of this prize locale and causes enormous stress to both wildlife and people.
- This écoterritoire is a unique zone that needs all the help it can get in the planning process. Community participation must focus on achieving the protection of this rich ecosystem; energies must not be siphoned off to fighting the new road building plan.

Futility of Extension

The road is to extend west then south from western Pierrefonds where new housing development is planned to provide enhanced access to a station on the Rigaud commuter rail line in Baie d'Urfé. During morning rush hour, most of these commuters want to go east towards the city centre. This extension will move commuters westwards in their cars to access the rail service that will then take them eastward; the entire wasteful process

being reversed in the evening rush hour. Note that the Rigaud rail service is efficient only during rush hours on weekdays. Presently, off-hours and weekends are ill-served. To be effective, this line must become full service day and night!

Ecologically valuable lands and their public use and enjoyment could be sacrificed to a less than optimal public transit service. Priority is given to getting people to work, inefficiently, through a disrupted natural space rather than enhancing opportunities for their leisure in the same space. What a cheerless vision!

- Construction of Route 440 will not divert traffic around Montreal Island --It will promote sprawl. It will bring more traffic, mostly trucks into the West Island, and into the overburdened Trans Canada corridor before turning north to Laval. En route, it would impact Cap-Saint-Jacques Nature-Park at Pointe Théorêt and cut Ile-Bizard and its nature-park in two. At its projected south-western end it would divide the Angell Woods natural space. Reconsideration is warranted. Use of the servitude for local access would eliminate the need of more destructive roads.

- Laudably, the City is resolved that Notre-Dame Street East be a hybrid urban boulevard and not an expressway. It is also encouraging that the Louis-H.-La Fontaine Boulevard corridor will have a modest bridge to Laval,

instead of the more invasive version - Autoroute 25 to Laval. The latter would potentially compromise the sensitive Islands Rochon, Boutin, Lapierre and Gagné and the Ruisseau de Montigny Basin. Autoroute 25, like its mirror image in West Island, the 440 Autoroute to Laval, would serve to exacerbate on-Island traffic congestion and promote off-Island urban sprawl. Neither Autoroute is a true beltway. The Green Coalition urges the City to hold to its rejection of the 440: its construction would be an ecological disaster in idyllic Île-Bizard.

It is noteworthy that the last operating farm within the Washington, DC Beltway ceased operations this year!

• Alternatives to destructive extension of Pierrefonds and Antoine-Faucon Boulevards:

The same commuter traffic that would use the Pierrefonds Boulevard extension could, as easily, be channeled towards the Trans Canada Highway (A40) along the planned boulevard in the servitude reserved for the A 440. The future residents of western Pierrefonds would then be able to reach the train station in Baie D'Urfé by travelling west on the Trans Canada (or Chemin Ste Marie) and accessing the interchange constructed to provide a link between Rte 20 and Trans Canada Highway (A40). Residents of any new development in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue would have easy access to the new Morgan Boulevard/Trans Canada interchange without the Pierrefonds Boulevard extension.

New Policy fails to save Forest rated #1 Members of the Green Coalition have been attending Pierrefonds/Senneville borough council meetings regularly. They have been hearing, at one council meeting after another, that the "Antoine-Faucon" housing project will carve into the "forêt centenaire" and its wetlands in the Rivière-à-l'Orme Ecoterritory. The magnificent old-growth forest is part of the Anse-à-l'Orme Forest considered by the former MUC to be *the* #1 forest in ecological quality on the Island of Montreal. The citizens (voters) feel doubly dismayed and betrayed that the City of Montreal will contribute to the extension of Antoine-Faucon Boulevard enabling the construction in the forest *using taxpayers' dollars!* Estimates in Pierrefonds' Plan Triennal d'Immobilisation peg the costs of this part of the extension at \$2,450,000. According to the city's own polls, Montrealers are overwhelmingly in favour of preserving natural spaces, even if it means paying more taxes. Their tax dollars must not be spent to destroy a unique natural site.

Roads to cut up Ecoterritory Later, Antoine-Faucon Boulevard is slated to cut across the ecoterritory from south to north, ending at Gouin Boulevard. And a major artery, Pierrefonds Boulevard, is to extend westward through the Corridor, through rare forest, beaver marsh, deer yards and the river course. Because of the configuration of the L-shaped ecocorridor and the curving road, the highway would traverse the greenbelt not once but twice. To complete these two boulevards will cost Montrealers many more millions: other roads and more housing developments will inexorably follow. Costs to this exceptional natural area are immeasurable: these projects signal the end for the ecoterritory's survival.

Note: To build the 2 arterial roads through the ecoterritory in western Pierrefonds will cost taxpayers more than \$16 million (Pierrefonds' plan triennal). But to extend and complete Pierrefonds Boulevard west and south through to Morgan Road past the limits of Pierrefonds will cost even more millions.

An Alternative to cutting roads through the ecoterritory is to build a new north/south access road between Gouin Boul. and Highway 40 on the 440 servitude.

- The boulevard in the A440 servitude would also provide a direct route east by car or by bus on the Trans Canada Highway proper or by way of Chemin Ste Marie. At present, Chemin Ste Marie crosses the Trans Canada Highway at the approximate point where the interchange for the boulevard in the 440 servitude would be placed (near the Coliseum Theatre Complex). Shuttle buses could deliver riders from the new development in western Pierrefonds along Chemin Ste Marie to the south side of Trans Canada Highway to the terminal end of the Doney Spur at Stillview Avenue.

More Transport Related Issues:

* Railbanking/Rail-Trails

The City of Montreal, in conjunction with the AMT and other levels of government should be acquiring or otherwise securing dormant, underused or abandoned railway lines on its territory for light rail transit, (or even modern streetcars where appropriate), in the longer term and for linear/nature corridors, for walking/cycling in the shorter term. Both vocations can and should coexist. Examples of such rights-of-way are: The Montreal/Lachine Subdivision, (Victoria/Bouchard), the Lasalle Loop, the North/South Lachine Canal Bank Branches, the Park Avenue Subdivision, the Val Royal Subdivision, the Doney Spur CSX's Adirondack line, (South Shore), the Varennes line, (Victoria Bridge), etc... Serious attention must be given to enacting a moratorium to prevent any further building in such rail transit corridors.

* Aesthetics

Troughs or shoe systems as once employed by the former Washington, DC streetcar can avoid overhead wires in historic areas. Grass may be planted along the LRT right-of-way, as is done in Barcelona, Spain.

* TOD -- Transit Oriented Development and 'Intensification'

The Green Coalition is completely in accord with TOD or Transit Oriented Development - the principle of intensifying residential and commercial development, as well as community services, close to metro and rail public transit nodes. This can promote sustainable development practice, reducing the eating up of natural and other land in uncontrolled urban sprawl. Creating new, denser communities close to transit hubs can reduce the dependency on the automobile

TODs inappropriate in écoterritoires: Creating intensification poles within the last rare, remaining natural ecosystems in the City - within the écoterritoires is inappropriate. Two areas deemed for Intensification, shown on map 2.2.2 of the Master Plan are located in particularly sensitive natural environments within the Écoforestier corridor of Rivière-à-l'Orme near Beaurepaire Station and within the Rapides du Cheval-Blanc Écoterritoire near the proposed new train station at Cheval Blanc. These areas must be spared the impacts of high density development.

Particularly distressing is the immense development with its Miami Beach profile slated for Cheval-Blanc West. Five 10-storey towers and fifteen other substantial structures are to loom over the shoreline green space. The mega-project appears to compromise guidelines in the Master Plan for boosting Montréal Bleu! Chapter 2, objective 11 - enhance the island character of the City's identity; action 11.2 - Control the site coverage and height of buildings along the waterside... Maintaining visual access to the water

* Rethink new train station at Cheval Blanc: Use Doney Sour!

The new station on the Two Mountains Line will be problematic. The line is over-capacity and must be upgraded. It goes off-island just past Cheval Blanc and provides little service to central and western Pierrefonds as well as the West Island interior. Even if the line is double-tracked, the new station will pull desperate train commuters looking for a seat on this most popular train from the environs. With the population explosion of the mega-high-rise projects in this zone "enclavé", major traffic headaches are on the way. Instead, passengers in this area should

be diverted to the Doney Spur Light Rail Line to serve a broad spectrum of West Islanders, while offering opportunities for "intensification" and for economic exploitation along the Line – a gold mine!

Vacant land ideal for enhanced transit hub at St Jean Boulevard on Doney Spur

The large tract of vacant land on the south/east corner of Trans Canada Highway and St Jean Boulevard, diagonally across from Fairview Centre, should be secured now by the City. This site will be invaluable as a major transit hub on the Doney Spur Light Rail Line.

Another viable area for a TOD is Namur Metro station/future train station/Blue bonnets area.

* Setbacks:

Cities have encroached up to the limits of transportation facilities such as railway yards, airports, seaports, etc..., which have had pre-existing rights, without regard for the need of safe distance setbacks and noise and pollution mitigation. A balance must be struck between the conflicting needs of viable and essential economic activities and healthy residential and natural spaces. (See, Ontario Municipal Guidelines on Compatibility Between Industrial Facilities and Sensitive Land Uses, <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/gp/index.htm#landuse>, as Quebec and Montreal do not have setback standards equivalent to those in Ontario.)

* Claremont rail crossing:

The OCPM has proposed construction of an at-grade railway crossing at Claremont on the border between Westmount and NDG. The MUHC mega-hospital is in need of access, but a grade crossing is not the answer. The Roxboro crossing on the Two Mountains line is dangerous and has had fatalities. Why build a new one along CPR's Westmount Subdivision when the Westminster crossing poses serious traffic and safety problems?

If access has to be improved, a grade separated bridge or tunnel should be the first choice!

* Meadowbrook Golf Course and road access:

The Green Coalition is opposed to Meadowbrook's development and granting increased access to the site. If this vital green buffer zone is developed, permanent traffic congestion, gridlock and pollution would ensue as there is currently only one exit and entrance to the site. It is "enclavé": Cote St. Luc road is the only access. Security and fire protection would be problematic. Already, dangerous and perilous intersections like Westminster and Cote St. Luc Rd., Cavendish and Cote St. Luc Rd. and the Westminster railway crossing would become increasingly so. It would cost multiple millions of dollars to improve access. For that amount of money, the City of Montreal could conserve Meadowbrook!

* Westminster crossing:

"Rail traffic has increased 30% when the Glen Yard closed, creating potential danger for drivers and pedestrians, including students who cross the tracks when they go to Royal West Academy..." and other schools. (See, Joel Goldenberg, The Suburban, West End edition, Wed., June 29 2005, p.11.)

Montreal's appeal to the AMT and Quebec "...to pay for a West Broadway overpass from de Maisonneuve to St. Jacques..." (Op. cit), must be aggressively pursued!

* Cavendish extension and drainage; CSL/St. Laurent:

Improved drainage and flood control is suggested. In the future, streams in other parts of the island should not be used as drainage ditches, capped and buried and used as storm sewer collectors and intermixed with sanitary sewers that have less capacity. Natural streams can overflow their banks; sewers flood basements! Several streams, including the Little St. Pierre at Meadowbrook, overflowed its banks on July 5, 2005.

* Rebuild existing roads before Montreal builds any new ones:

Existing roads should be rebuilt to eliminate the serious pothole/ problem encountered in many areas such as NDG/Snowdon. The poor road conditions create dangerous situations and fluidity problems for pedestrians, animals, cyclists and motorists alike. Broken wheels, not to mention life and limbs, are at stake. Resurfacing is not the answer!

* Bike Networks:

Extension of utilitarian bike networks -- especially the de Maisonneuve path/trail from Montreal West to Downtown Montreal.

- Eliminate "missing links" between Decarie Expressway and Claremont and between Greene and Downtown.
- Eventual Western extension to Meadowbrook and the Lachine Canal via the CPR tracks.
- If the AMT buries the line-side signal cables, as is planned for 2006, it would be possible to transfer the de Maisonneuve path onto CPR property. At present, the NDG portion of the bike path is in very poor condition and presents a danger to cyclists, pedestrians, joggers, skaters, etc. The same winter conditions exist in Westmount as NDG, yet the Westmount portion is in good shape. Many wheels have been broken because of the potholes and cracks in the road.
- Encourage businesses and building managers to accommodate cyclists and their needs. Such as, showers, racks, changing rooms, etc. Certain downtown buildings ban bicycles!

* Vegetation control/herbicides on railway rights-of-way:

Encourage the Federal Government, CN and CP and other railways to use more biologically friendly methods to maintain the integrity of the rail bed.

- Possibilities: Steam, beet juice?!

* Safety and security:

Post 9/11 has dawned a new age in the sphere of transportation security. We urge Montreal to err on the side of caution. Civil liberties should not be impinged upon. Ex: The banning of railway hobbyists from taking photos is an overreaction and must be avoided. However, for transportation of goods and people to be attractive, it must be and feel secure:

- Environmentally friendly graffiti resistant coatings may deter vandalism.
- Positive Train Control, (PTC), Automated Train Stop Systems "... involving digital communications and automatic positioning systems to manage and control railroad ..." and shipping operations must be explored! (See, www.nationalcorridors.org, 05/02/2005.)
- Explosive-resistant and leak-resistant coatings used by the US military could "... prevent and lessen the severity of rail, truck and ship tank punctures and subsequent danger and pollution. Re, the tank cars in the Alberta CN derailment in midAugust 2005 should have been so equipped. (Op. cit.)

ANNEX: WHY THE GREEN COALITION IS OPPOSED TO ROADS:

1. Environmental impacts on natural spaces

Road and highway drainage systems are designed to pull large volumes of water from the surface and direct it into surrounding rivers and lakes or as in the case of the core city of Montreal into the domestic treatment system. From the standpoint of the impact on our existing and projected nature parks, this is a particular problem at the time of the spring thaw. Water that would otherwise be held at the surface of these areas to drain slowly off the surface or percolate down with a lowering water table, is intercepted by the drainage system and removed weeks sooner than should be. Quite apart from what this contributes to raising normal riverine water levels, this premature drying out of park substrates disrupts the life cycles of sensitive lifeforms adapted to primordial drainage patterns resulting in shrinking biodiversity and ecological impoverishment. The value of these natural assets is, in all respects, irreparably diminished.

As well, park dissection disrupts the contiguous and tranquil conditions under which wildlife, particularly animal, meets its needs. The chaos of traffic, which brings both noise and danger, adds a level of stress to creatures already working under tight constraints to survive. Sensitive indigenous plantlife will have to cope with the added burden of winter road-salting and will give way to the encroachments of more tolerant, and far less attractive, weedy species. Reduced air quality for animals and plants and other life forms adds one more stressor that in some cases might tip the balance against them.

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) standards of 8% recognize the global need to conserve the World's common biodiversity heritage. Unique sites wherever they are should be conserved. The province has officially endorsed this benchmark and has called on its municipalities to meet this norm. The Montreal region and the Island of Montreal have unique natural sites to preserve. Montreal has at present just short of 3.3% of conserved natural lands and can barely achieve 6% if all other eligible sites are brought into the fold. Montreal cannot afford to jeopardize its network, already deficient in size, with transecting roads.

2. Social impacts

Citizens by the thousands make use of the nature-park system in all seasons and are looking for a broadened not reduced base in which to meet their needs. The leisure, exercise and recreational activities provided in these natural settings contribute significant benefits to the health and well-being of Montrealers. Park users — and tax payers — must not see a reduction and devaluation of these important recreational and environmental assets as a result of roads being pushed through them.

Roads, and the heavy traffic they serve, reduce quality of life by raising noise levels, generating stress and creating chaotic and often dangerous traffic conditions. Ironically, suburban bedroom communities arose specifically to escape this sort of urban traffic frenzy. Paradoxically, suburban road development endangers the very tranquility it reaches out to access. Nature-Parks are a necessary haven from the hectic pace and the harshness of living in an otherwise artificial milieu.

Natural spaces are an important educational resource and offer invaluable opportunities to enrich the intellectual lives of our young people. Educators can provide unique first hand experiences in the biological and ecological sciences and sensitize youth to the issues of environmental stewardship. Road development through these places sends the wrong message to the next generation.

3. Health impacts

Exhaust emissions from a growing number of automobiles continue to contribute to air pollution. Unburned hydrocarbons (HC), nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO) are among gases released through combustion inefficiencies and further contribute to ground level ozone. Carbon monoxide is particularly dangerous to persons with heart disease; hydrocarbons are toxic with the potential to cause cancer; ozone is the most serious urban air pollution problem and irritates eyes, damages lungs, and aggravates respiratory problems. These contribute to high costs in the health care system.

Sources:

US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

EPA 400-F-92-00, August 1994

Fact Sheet OMS-5, Automobile Emissions: An Overview

Environmental Health Center

A Division of the National Safety Council

1025 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 1200, Washington, DC 20036

4. No Logic to new road building

Between 1973 and 1985 in OECD countries, improved technologies produced, on average, a 25% reduction of carbon dioxide emissions per automobile/Km. However, during the same period, increased travel distances and decreased use of collective transit, due largely to urban sprawl, have led to a rise of 35% in vehicle/Kms travelled. At the same time, the automobile is the least efficient way of moving people place to place from an energy standpoint. While a mid-sized automobile carrying one passenger consumes 4000 joules of energy per person per Km, a diesel bus loaded to 100% of seating capacity with no one standing uses only 450 joules per person per Km, a reduction of 89% of energy consumed for each passenger. Even more dramatically, a Metro car filled to seating capacity consumes only 280 joules per passenger per Km while a fully loaded Metro car uses only 130 joules, the energy consumption equivalent of a bicycle, a saving of 97% per passenger! These figures represent an enormous potential for GHG reduction.

Source:

*AQTR (ASSOCIATION QUEBECOISE DU TRANSPORT ET DES ROUTES inc.) 36e
CONGRES ANNUEL - DU 1er AU 3 AVRIL 2001*

Le transport et l'environnement

1. Aménagement et gestion des transports dans une stratégie de réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre :

2. le rôle des instruments économiques

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Trees and other woody plants represent sequestration, or storage, of carbon. Cars represent desequestration of carbon through combustion of gasoline, a fossil fuel. Since trees cut in the city by contractors are sold as cordwood for use as heating fuel, trees cut down also represent the release of carbon into the atmosphere. Roads pushed through urban forests produce a 'double whammy' of GHGs: exhaust emissions from burning of fossil fuels in car engines and chimney stack emissions from burning wood in wood-burning stoves. [Also, the noxious emissions from wood burning stoves occur mostly in winter and often hang close to the ground

where they pollute the air we breathe and contribute to respiratory illness and have an economic impact on our already overburdened health care system.]

5. Other factors

Ville Saint-Laurent Council has unanimously adopted resolutions, twice, in opposition to the construction of de Salaberry through the Bois-Franc in Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park, June 28, 1990 and December 11, 2001

- The road grid jeopardizes the hard-won Nature-Parks – many thousands of citizens have been involved in their creation. Many millions of taxpayers dollars have been invested in these parklands: they would be squandered. Once the Nature-Parks are cut up by roads, the dismembered pieces would soon be considered useless as green spaces and they would be developed. And Montreal's pitiful quotient of green space would be diminished.

CONCLUSION : Dynamic, decisive leadership needed!

Jerky buses, low frequency schedules, huge staircases, broken escalators, and the lack of elevators in the Metro and some suburban rail stations discourage higher ridership. Higher fuel prices alone does not a policy make! The exorbitant Boston Big Dig/Central Artery Tunnel is not only structurally unstable, but has diminished the attractiveness of the Boston subway in the short term -- notwithstanding escalating fossil fuel costs!

Car drivers will not make the effort to alleviate the burden on the road network solely on their own initiative. While most acknowledge the problem of the use of single passenger private vehicles and recognize that carpooling could be one of the solutions, they see no guarantee that any individual sacrifice they make will contribute in any significant way to an improved situation. There must be a clear perception that they are acting in concert with other commuters and in support of authorities working to reduce traffic congestion and to provide efficient transit options. While commuters will not be inclined to act responsibly prior to a program being in place it is a safe assumption that they will respond supportively once a program is in place. What they will respond to is leadership and a coherent integrated program for mass transit. Again, road building for cars runs counter to this dynamic and sends the completely wrong message.

Building roads rewards inefficiencies of dependence on the internal combustion engine. It neither alleviates the burden of traffic congestion nor lessens the load of GHG's and toxic gaseous emissions being sent into the atmosphere.

In planning workable transit strategies, serious, concerted effort must be made to get people out of their cars during the daily commute. According to the Green Coalition's own Transit Survey, 87% of vehicles travelling the main bed of Route 40, the Trans Canada Highway, between 7 and 8 am carry only a single passenger, the driver. Collective and public transit use must be seen as a major component in moving the City of Montreal towards future sustainable practice.

The Green Coalition appeals to our decision-makers to bring on creative public transit measures, to protect our established Nature-Parks from new road building. The Green Coalition appeals to our decision-makers to move quickly to implement the Natural Spaces Policy. Our last green spaces can't wait. Since the 1970's, Montrealers have demonstrated their desire to protect the city's natural heritage. The grass-roots have played their part – at press conferences, at city hall question periods, through letters, petitions and special events. It is time for our political leaders to respond – with action.

The City of Montreal's Transport Plan is the blueprint for the future of our beautiful Island Metropolis. The Green Coalition is proud to make some contribution in shaping the city's sustainable development. We extend our thanks to all who have made our participation possible.

August 2005.