



CITY OF MONTREAL - URBAN PLANNING – JUNE 2003

GREEN COALITION RECOMMENDATIONS

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FOREWORD

The New City of Montreal will adopt its first Urban Plan at the end of 2004. Back in 1987, the Montreal Urban Community adopted its first Schéma d'Aménagement or Master Plan. That plan had a major flaw. It had no provisions to protect the territory's natural spaces – no green space plan. Then as now, the city's green space deficit was enormous. As a result, thousands of citizens banded together to correct that flaw. Interim Control By-laws that prevented the development of many ecologically valuable sites were slated to be removed at the end of 1989. That added special urgency to the citizens' struggles. The grass-roots efforts were successful in December 1989.

The Green Coalition respectfully urges the city administration move quickly to adopt its long-promised Natural Spaces Policy and establish an Integrated Mass Transit Plan now, so that these essential components may become integral to the 2004 Urban Plan as it evolves.

PART 1 NATURAL GREEN SPACES

Introduction

The Green Coalition and its member-groups are dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of the environment. While the groups work on a variety of issues, the Coalition is best known for its efforts to protect Montreal's natural green spaces. Vigorous lobbying through the late 1980's by the volunteer member-groups persuaded the Montreal Urban Community to adopt its \$200 million Green Space Acquisition and Aménagement Program in 1989. The first acquisition was Bois-Franc Forest, an addition to Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park, followed by the creation of new Nature-Parks, Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard, Bois-de-l'Anse à l'Orme, Bois-de-la-Roche, Bois-d'Anjou and the purchase of a series of islands.

The program ended when a Moratorium on greenspace spending was imposed in 1992. One half the budget, \$100 million, was left unspent and many important sites left unprotected. The MUC was poised to re-boot its Green Space Program in the spring of 2002. Instead, with the advent of the Megacity, the Green Coalition has repeatedly called upon the new administration to save Montreal's last green spaces. In May 2002, Mayor Gérald Tremblay lifted the 10-year-long Moratorium and he promised a new framework to protect the city's natural spaces and shorelines. The policy has not yet been implemented. However, a land exchange in April 2003, has saved a portion of the Rapides de Cheval Blanc waterfront – the first green space acquisition in 11 long years.

Participants at the Summit of Montreal last spring were invited to draft policies to guide the new administration, to craft a course for the City of Montreal to take its place as one of the great cities of the world - 'Une Ville Mondiale'. But, how can our brave New City aspire to be a world class city, with just a piteous amount of protected natural green space? When cities are stacked up one against each other, per capita green space is a principal 'quality of life' component that is considered. Sadly, Montreal just doesn't measure up. In a study by the National Post in 2002, in a field of fourteen Canadian cities, Montreal was dead last for green space quotas.

Context: Current desperate situation

Sixteen hundred (1600) hectares of Montreal's ecologically valuable green spaces are in peril - forests, old farmlands 'en friche', marshlands, creeks and shorelines. These natural spaces are owned by developers and are zoned and slated for development. Development pressures are so severe that these unprotected green spaces are at risk of disappearing completely in the near future. If these 1600 irreplaceable hectares (to put that in perspective, Mount Royal Park covers 200 hectares) are cut from the urban landscape, the beauty of our Island Metropolis as we know it today will be scarred forever.

More than 85% of Montreal has been developed. Just 3.3% of Montreal's territory is protected natural green space compared to the International and Quebec norm of 8%. According to new statistics from Quebec's Environment Ministry, green spaces are disappearing at an alarming rate. Between 1986 and 1994, 50% of Montreal's forested lands were built over; during the last 10 years, 750 hectares have been lost to relentless development and the losses continue. In 5 years most of the ecologically prized sites will be gone.

Statutes to protect Montreal's Nature-Parks are extremely weak. (Only one of the nine nature-parks, Bois-de-Saraguay Nature-Park has a special level of protection as an Arrondissement naturel.) Portions of nature-parks (if not whole parks) can be leased, sold or rezoned; such amputations of the parks have already happened or have been fought off by citizen action. Development pressures constantly threaten established and successful nature-parks. And the construction of new roads also threatens many nature-parks. Thus, at the whim of succeeding administrations, the nature-parks can be whittled away.

Recommendations - Short-term

- Natural Spaces Policy - last chance to redress Montreal's green space deficit
The new Natural Spaces Policy should be put in place now. The New City has one last chance to redress Montreal's appalling and growing green space deficit that it has inherited from generations of neglect. Recent Environment Ministry studies state that undeveloped portions of the Metropolis include ecologically valuable lands that, if acquired before they are gone forever, offer the last chance to boost Montreal closer to the 8% benchmark. We are the last generation that can balance Montreal's green space deficit.

- Natural Spaces Policy – 1600 hectares or 1, 048 hectares

Current planning for the new Natural Spaces Policy provides for the protection of 1,048 hectares of the 1600 hectares of natural green space that are at risk. The other 552 hectares were eliminated based on various criteria – woodlots too small, not close to residential areas, not contiguous to protected lands, etc. If all 1600 hectares are protected, only 6% of the territory can be conserved. Adding in strips of shorelines (bande riveraine) and borders of inland water courses for protection can boost the quota nearer the 8% target.

The city is urged to protect all 1600 hectares. The remaining green spaces are finite in number. Time has run out for the city to be choosy about which sites to protect: 552 hectares of natural parkland should not be discarded. Montrealers, present and future should not be short-changed.

- Natural Spaces Policy – Which sites

Reportedly, the city's new policy provides for the protection of a T-shaped green-belt from Saint-Anne-de-Bellevue in the west to eastern Île-Bizard and from Cap-Saint-Jacques in the north to include Angell Woods in the south. This green-belt is to be created by strategic acquisitions of linking lands between large green spaces in the zone that that are already protected. This admirable objective has long been shared by the Green Coalition.

The sites, slated for acquisition, that were left unprotected when the Moratorium was imposed in 1992 should be included in the new plan. These are Ruisseau de Montigny and Ruisseau Pinel in the east-end (so needy for green space), 18 hectares of Anse-à-l'Orme forest, Beaconsfield's Angell Woods, the southern portions of Bois-Franc, lands adjacent Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard, parcels of land on the northern slopes of Mount Royal, shorelines along the Rapides du Cheval Blanc, as well as lands on a number of islands where expropriation was incomplete and halted.

The Policy should ensure protection for the historical and natural heritage of the riverside region of the Lachine Rapids. Lastly, but very importantly, Meadowbrook must be saved as a green space.

- Natural Spaces Policy – A one-time investment in the city's future

Unlike most of the demands on the public purse, such as Public Security, Health Care, Education that will always require large annual expenditures, the acquisition of natural green space is a one-time investment in the city's future.

- Natural Spaces Policy – Who pays?

The Quebec Government was late, finally granting legal powers to the Montreal Urban Community to establish Nature-Parks in 1979. Other North-American cities had begun conservation action long before. The MUC made catch-up efforts, investing close to \$200 million between 1979 and 1992 in the creation 9 large Nature-Parks (1,386 hectares). But in all the years since 1979, the total sum contributed by the Quebec Government is \$12.5 million. The Quebec Government, along with the City of Montreal, owes a significant debt to present and future generations of Montrealers to invest in the last portions of the New City's green heritage.

- Natural Spaces Policy – Who pays? – Involve the private sector
The Green Coalition is still seeking the Quebec government’s assistance in setting up funding vehicles based on U.S. models, such as Land trusts, green Conservation Bonds and a Loto vert to facilitate private fund-raising. The city can help. Also being sought is Tax Relief on green spaces purchased by Land Trusts (ex. Fondation Espaces Verts), similar to that on agricultural lands.
- Arrondissement Naturel – Beef up statutes for Nature-Parks
Special status is being conferred upon Mount Royal as a Historical District and as an Arrondissement Naturel. The Green Coalition urges the City of Montreal to immediately secure Arrondissement Naturel status for all its Nature-Parks also. Without such protection, the Nature-Parks will always be particularly vulnerable to development pressures.
- Green servitudes
Servitudes for Boulevard de Salaberry and Autoroute 440 cut through Bois-Franc forest in Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park and Bois-de-l’Île Bizard Nature-Park, respectively. The Green Coalition asked the former Quebec Environment Minister to change the entire lengths of the two servitudes into green servitudes. The City is urged to back these efforts to save these important “corridors verts” for flora and fauna instead of roads. Plans for both de Salaberry and Autoroute 440 must be deleted from the new 2004 Urban Plan.

Recommendations - Mid and long-term

- Re-greening
Startling satellite images, produced by the Montreal Urban Community in July 1988, show that the depletion of the vegetation cover on Montreal’s territory had, even then, reached and passed the critical point. The MUC’s ‘Biomass-Map’ report, in 1989, urgently called for the vegetation cover of the Island to be augmented by 25% through re-greening.

The Société de verdissement du Montréal métropolitain made notable efforts in this regard that should be continued. Montreal has 4,800 hectares of contaminated land that offer ample scope for recuperation for development purposes and for reclamation as green spaces. (Compare to the current tally of protected green spaces – 1614 hectares!) Much of the contaminated land is in the east-end, so deficient in biomass, where green space rehabilitation projects should be promoted.

- Re-greening - indigenous species
For re-greening purposes a policy of planting only indigenous species should be undertaken. Such species are hardy and best adapted to this climate, thus ensuring the success of investments in planting projects. Non-native species are invasive. They choke out indigenous species. For example, Buckthorn from Europe ravages our Island’s hardwood forests as Purple Loosestrife does the marshlands.

And, as a matter of cultural pride we should choose native species, the magnificent Sugar Maple and Montreal’s own Black Maple over the Norway Maple, for example.

PART 2 TRANSPORT

Introduction

Transport was not the initial *raison d'être* of the Green Coalition. It was the conservation of natural green spaces. But over the years, the efforts 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 provides for the construction of six-lane de Salaberry through the Bois-Franc and the 440 Autoroute through Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard.

Now plans are being considered to build a "spaghetti network" of new roads through established and successful Nature-Parks and other 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.

Context: Transport planning - Essential elements to consider

Global warming concerns are increasingly reflected in international, national and local agendas. The City of Montreal has recognized the serious environmental, social and economic implications of climate change brought on by green-house gas emissions (GHG's), and has made commitments to the world-wide effort to effect corrective measures. Now the City must balance policy with action in biomass conservation and responsible transportation development. Whatever benefits are derived from trees, and they 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, and Quebec's, major contributor to GHG emissions. In Quebec, the transport sector is responsible for 37% of GHS's, in Montreal they account for more than 45%. The choice is clear: urban forest conservation must be a priority. New road development favouring the private passenger vehicle is anathema.

As the City evolves its transport planning, the following essential elements must be considered:

- 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 recognized norms;
- the commendable undertaking in a resolution, passed unanimously by Montreal City Council in May, 2002, to support the ratification by the federal parliament of the Kyoto Protocols and to require Montreal to do its part in achieving the Kyoto objectives;
- the commitment by the City of Montreal to the principles of sustainable development undertaken by resolution in April 2002
- the necessary implementation of a public transit plan that moves people from point of origin to destination in an efficient manner
- the alleviation of the road network congestion caused by an undue reliance on the single-passenger private vehicle
- the need to divert long distance, through traffic not destined for locations on island, and coming from points either east or west of Montreal onto off-island beltways

Recommendations for Integrated Public Transit

Incentive Options:

- Carpooling —The corporate sector 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 designated lanes and to take employees door to door.
- Shuttle Bus Service — Door to door corporate shuttle service, similar to the school bus model, could deliver large numbers of people on time during the 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 network. Convoys linking easily reached public locations in West Island boroughs to the Namur or Côte Vertu Metro stations are possible options.
- Designated Lanes for Buses and Filled Vehicles— In the West Island, these lanes would be particularly effective on the Trans Canada Highway, Sources Boulevard and other major arteries during rush hours. Vehicles authorized to use these lanes would include cars used in carpooling, shuttle buses and express bus convoys.

- Public Transit Grid System — A grid system for 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 the riders out of their way and complicate linkages. This would make the bus service more cost- and time-effective. It would attract more riders than the present system.
- Park and Ride Facilities — for the commuter train lines operated by the Agence métropolitain de transport should be increased and should be extended to serve other modes of public transit as well as carpooling. This would ease congestion and bottlenecks on main arteries. Parking facilities should also include secure spaces for bicycles.
- Off-island Beltways - The early completion off-island beltways is urged to eliminate through trucking. The construction of Highway 30 will divert east-west through traffic past Montreal and is long overdue. Construction of Rte 440, by contrast, will not divert traffic around Montreal Island, but will promote urban 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 Île -Bizard and its nature-park in two. At its projected south-western end it would divide the Angell Woods now being considered for inclusion in the Nature Park Network. Any northern beltway should be kept completely off island.
- The Doney Spur Light Rail Line is the keystone piece of the Green Coalition's integrated mass transit strategies (first proposed by the Coalition in 1989). The old Spur has the potential to become a new Surface Metro for central West Island. Operating on a schedule comparable to existing Metro lines, the 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 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 corridor 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.

Doney Spur is a virtually disused freight rail line that starts at Stillview Avenue in Pointe-Claire and goes east along the southern side of Trans-Canada Highway. Then the spur curves north past the Bois-de-Liesse Nature-Park to join the Two Mountains line at Highway 13.

- **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.**

Disincentive Options:

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

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

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 (NO_x), 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

*Jean-François Lefebvre, économiste, M. Sc
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www.grame.qc.ca

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!

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.