

**Brief to the  
Bureau d'Audiences Publiques sur L'Environnement  
On the REM Proposal**

**Executive summary:**

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**-Introduction**

My name is Ron Goes as a private person with experience in the Air Transport industry and interests in transportation issues. I was going to give a general introduction but as I reviewed the data it became apparent that this proposal would not work. So I am making my conclusion apparent from the beginning that this project should be refused on the basis that it will not meet the environmental goal of pulling people out of cars. The problem is that the project is both underbuilt and overbuilt. This is a pattern started by the new Champlain bridge, which does not have enough extra lanes to accommodate future users. I might remind you that Hong Kong built a 12 lane double decker, typhoon proof, suspension bridge with 6 traffic lanes, two transit lanes, 4 HOV, taxi, bus and service lanes for just over \$1Billion of our dollars; adjusted for inflation. I might remind the commission also that \$2.5B of our tax dollars are going to this project and

we do not know what is included. As you listen to this please think about the amount of transit we could buy if for \$2.5B. I have very little comment about the south shore component as I am not familiar with that. And as the word says: I will be brief.

### **-Structure of the Proposal**

The network is to be built and managed through the CPDQ Infra organization with \$3B (Billion) of QPP investment money coming from the pension fund and \$2.5B coming from in indeterminate proportions from the provincial and federal taxpayers. CPDQ Infra already has possession of the D-M (Deux-Montagnes) line, tunnel and the St-Eustache layover yard and shops via legislative fiat (transfer). The AMT service shops in Point-St-Charles will be transferred later. They also have possession of Central station leases for the tracks and two platforms the AMT uses in that Terminal. The CPDQ has stated that they are only absorbing the commercial risks of operation. This is very important to note.

### **-Routes Chosen**

This proposal is to take over the existing Deux-Montagnes line; rework it into an automated people mover type partially elevated rail line. conventional trains will be barred from it. Add two more lines to it. One, along the current CN Doney spur (though branching off before (Autoroute 40) A-13) to Hymus and St-Jean in Pointe-Claire then crossing A-40 then proceeding along the same autoroute along the north side to an indeterminate location near Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue and then the other branching off shortly after first crossing A-40, north to south, on the Doney spur. Then through the Technoparc and underneath the Trudeau airport to the terminal building. One station will be added to the existing line at the first crossing of the A-40 at the Metropolitan freeway in Ville Mont-Royal. There will be four stations for the Doney spur line. There will be two stations for the Airport line: one, in the Technoparc and one underneath the airport terminal. The south shore line will proceed from Central Station, along the current train lines to Bridge Street then along the Bonaventure freeway and over the Champlain bridge to the intersection of 10-30 and

then towards the 10-30 complex. None of this is definite and there might be add-on stations.

### **-Technology Chosen**

Automated light rail 2-car trainsets coupled to 4 cars in rush hour with a European loading gauge (loading gauge is the standard exterior car dimensions that includes door and platform heights) along the lines of Skytrain-Canada line in Vancouver.

### **-Environmental impacts: Positive and Negative.**

The only discernable positive environmental impact is that service will be provided where none existed before. The question is: will it pull people out of cars. Since the new line (the Doney spur extension) will not run close to where substantial populations exist. The target markets will either have to bus or car up to these stations on very congested boulevards. Large parking lots will need to be provided. Existing commuters will be very disrupted during the construction phase. Mascouche commuters will lose their single seat rides to the downtown. South Shore commuters will lose the same and lose the transitway for commuters outside the RTL (Réseau de Transport de Longueuil). There is not enough capacity projected in their own minimum headway scenarios for the existing line and there is no room for expansion because they have fixed and short platforms. There is already platform crowding on the Canada line. Would this plan take away money from improvements to the Vaudreuil line?

There is also the question of disturbances to already protected areas. We were sold by the MTQ (Ministere de Transports Quebec) by a parkway and linear park in the Turcot yards. We not only got neither but they cut down trees and bit into the falaise escarpment.

## **-Missing elements.**

Connections with the Metro: Projected stations in the tunnel at McGill (Green Line) and Édouard-Montpetit (Blue Line) are not included as indicated by the open circles on the map provided by the promoter. connection and extension of the Orange line at Bois-Francis.

Fare plan and integration of AMT TRAM fares: completely missing from this plan.

## **-Impacts on VIA's Very Frequent proposal and the Mascouche AMT line.**

VIA Rail has made a very good analysis of their needs and the European conventional rail systems. They have determined that they can have good speeds on dedicated tracks that they can get from the Quebec-Gatineau Railway (QGR). They can run hourly and an alternating basis on CN on the south shore and the CN to the QGR at Repentigny on the north shore. They need the tunnel to get there. If they think that VIA would have a transfer station at the A-40; they are dreaming. This plan would kill that.

Mascouche ridership would go down when faced with full trains at the A-40 transfer station.

## **-Financial risks**

This plan places taxpayers, pensioners and users at odds with each other. Who is paying for the extras and externalities? Remember there is already a substantial subsidy in the form of ceded properties from the AMT.

If anyone sent a proposal, without a proper business plan, to the CDPQ; to the CDPQ; they'd be laughed out of the room.

We have seen with the Union-Pearson Express (UPX) trains; that the high fares are suppressive of use. I would suggest to the people in charge of the pensioners money should keep it in their, the pensioners, pockets. Remember, there is \$2.5B of taxpayers required for this project. Maybe it should be spent more wisely.

## **-Alternatives**

When the freight railways were weaker, towards the end of the nineties, both made an unsolicited offer to develop and operate the

commuter system we have now. We should talk to them about how they can support with expertise, the building of the whole network. Their costs for basic first class rail with CTC control that heavy freights can run on with speed is \$2Million per km, \$4M double track. The electrics are more by an unspecified amount.

There is nothing wrong the D-M line that more trains and more track cannot solve. We need transfer stations at Bois-Francs, Canora, Édouard-Montpetit and McGill. High level platform bi-level EMU's (Electrical Multiple Unit) already exist in Europe but would need to be re-dimensioned for the North American loading gauge

I don't disagree with the sense of the Doney spur extension. It just needs to run into what we call the North Shore from a point of divergence where the Hydro-Quebec transmission corridor crosses west of A-13 and along that corridor to Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue with overpasses over the three main boulevards using the same trains from the D-M as newer EMU double-deckers come in.

The transitway on A-10 and the new Champlain bridge should have rails embedded to permit street operation of light rail along the lines of Calgary's C-train. It could then parallel the Bonaventure and the rail lines extending from Central station on elevated sections.

### **-Conclusions.**

The project should be scrapped. The successor to the AMT needs to sit down with the two railways, VIA Transport Canada and the MTQ and come up with a unified vision for all the commuter and inter-city transport.