

I will make some brief suggestions and comments regarding Montreal's economic development, transport system, urban development and housing, and the Demain Montreal discussion document.

Regarding economic development, I find the part of the draft plan dealing with this concern to be somewhat insubstantial. Here are my suggestions to promote such development, which generally involve the City of Montreal prodding other actors into action.

First, develop Montreal as a commercial hub between Europe and Canada/North America. Assuming the Canada-Europe free trade and investment agreement is successfully concluded, it is important that Montreal benefit economically as much as possible from the increased trade and investment from Europe this agreement will bring to Canada. To do this, it is necessary, first, to increase the size of ships the Port of Montreal can accept, in accordance with the increasing size of ships brought about by the enlargement of the Panama Canal. The Port of Montreal has announced (as reported in *The Gazette* of May 18, 2013) that in response it is increasing the length and width of ships it can receive, but not their depth. This makes no sense since the enlarged Panama Canal increased the permissible depth of ships from 39.5 to 50 feet, whereas the Port of Montreal can admit ships of only 35 feet depth. This puts Montreal at a competitive disadvantage generally to deeper ports such as Halifax, Quebec City and New York. Second, the city should widen Notre Dame Street East, in particular between the eastern end of the Ville-Marie Autoroute and at least Dickson Street, to permit quicker access to the port for trucks going west (trucks going east can take Dickson, Souigny Avenue and Autoroute 25). Third, to encourage European companies to locate their Canadian or North American head offices in Montreal it is necessary to develop a rapid train link between Dorval Airport and Montreal downtown. The alternative of a reserved bus lane, while cheaper, diminishes the number of road lanes available to road traffic, and so increases road traffic congestion. The train link should go to Central Station on CN tracks, and CN and Dorval Airport should be expected to bear the major part of the cost of this train link. Finally, fourth, Montreal International, Montreal's economic promotion agency, should increase its efforts to promote Montreal as a Canadian and North American headquarters for European companies, emphasising Montreal's greater geographical proximity to Europe, multilingual and multicultural character, greater European ambience, and cheaper operating costs (e.g., than Toronto or New York). Toronto has benefited from the Americans, Vancouver from

the Asians; we must benefit from the Europeans--this is our natural destiny, if we grasp it.

Second, promote Montreal as a financial centre. To do this, first, Montreal must demand that a branch of the TSX Venture Exchange, the Canadian stock market for smaller companies, be opened in Montreal to serve not only Quebec but all of eastern Canada and to operate bilingually. The only present location of the exchange, in Vancouver, serves eastern Canada and in particular Quebec very poorly, with only a very small proportion of the companies listed on the exchange, I believe no more than 3%, coming from Quebec. One result of this is that Quebec does not get its proper share of private capital invested through this exchange. So locating a branch of this exchange in Montreal would promote Montreal's economy generally as well as developing its financial expertise in stock market investing in particular. My second suggestion to promote Montreal as a financial centre is that the existing Montreal Exchange should specialise, among other things, in being a market for issuers of securitised debt obligations, that is, packages of loans made by financial companies that are divided into units to be sold to the public. This would bring to Montreal a business comparable to the mutual fund industry centred in Toronto. The key to success here is for the Montreal Exchange to ensure that all the loans that are packaged into these units have a proper backing, unlike the sub-prime mortgages that led in the U.S. to the 2008 financial crisis.

Third, the city should promote the fashion and clothing industry. Montreal has many fashion designers, a majority of the clothing manufacturers in Canada and many clothing retail chain head offices, but these three components of the clothing industry work in general isolation from each other, to their mutual disadvantage. The city should encourage them to get and work together, the fashion designers providing original designs and the manufacturers and retailers providing finance, advice as to what is profitably sellable and wide retail exposure. There has been a little cooperation of this nature but not anywhere near what there could be. A city agency could create an inclusive internet site and meetings to bring together Montreal designers, manufacturers and retailers to promote their cooperation. Regarding the argument that our clothing industry can't compete against low wage countries, Montreal should demand the reinstatement of import tariffs on clothing, which were removed a few years ago, against countries that do not abide by the standards of the United Nations International Labour Organisation regarding the treatment of their workers. Also, we should learn

from the Italians, who have the largest clothing industry per capita in the world, based on their continual investment in new techniques, fabrics and designs--so good that the Chinese invest in them!

Fourth, not least, the city should promote the development of its high tech industries by bringing together researchers, entrepreneurs and financiers with common or related interests, again by creating inclusive internet sites and meetings on an industry basis (e.g., separate meetings for information technology, telecommunications, biotechnology, clean technology, etc). Although Montreal is blessed with many universities and research institutes (including in the soon-to-be superhospitals), the researchers there doing commercially applicable research often don't know of the interests of entrepreneurs in their field, and vice versa, not to mention the interests of financiers, so this is what the city should remedy by bringing these people together.

My second major concern is improving Montreal's transport system. I want to make suggestions increasing the speed of transport of people and goods and, related to this, increasing the use of less polluting public transport, and all this at a limited or reasonable cost.

The most important reason for overall traffic congestion in Montreal is that the chief traffic artery on Montreal Island, the Metropolitan/Decarie/Ville-Marie Autoroute system, is overloaded with cars, far more than it was designed for. Consequently, traffic is congested and slowed down on this system, particularly at rush hour, and also on all the major autoroutes feeding into this system, routes 15, 40, 520, 20 and 10. So what has to be done is remove traffic from this chief artery and from the autoroutes feeding into it. The environmentally best, though not only, way is to improve public transport. Here is what I would suggest, in rough order of priority. First, complete the Train de l'Est. I would have preferred an additional train going directly from Terrebonne into eastern Laval on an existing train line and linking up in Laval with the train from Blainville, rather than the circuitous route now from Terrebonne going east to serve Repentigny and then into Montreal; but maybe this additional train can come later. Second, increase significantly the frequency of trains from the West Island, particularly outside rush hours. The stop serving Lachine on the Vaudreuil-Hudson line would much better serve it if it were relocated to the intersection of Autoroutes 13 and 20 and served by a bus line going down 32nd Avenue in

Lachine. Third, establish the rapid bus service along Pie-IX Boulevard from Henri-Bourassa Boulevard to Notre-Dame Street, and extend the blue metro line to Pie-IX at Jean-Talon Street to connect with this rapid bus service. In my view, extending the blue line beyond this point to Anjou would not add enough new users of public transport to justify its cost. Fourth, extend the orange metro line in the west from the Cote-Vertu terminus to connect with the Bois-Franc railway stop on the Two Mountains railway commuter line at Marcel-Laurin (Laurentien) Boulevard. Note that by making this connection you enable commuters to use the Two Mountains line to access stops on the orange line, if this is their destination, and vice versa, thus increasing the number of possible users of both lines. Again, I don't think that extending the orange line beyond this point, for example to Laval, would add enough users of public transport to justify its considerable cost, provided there was a large and free car park at the Bois-Franc rail/metro stop for cars coming down Laurentien Boulevard from Laval. Fifth, similarly you can further increase the usefulness of the Two Mountains line and the blue and green metro lines by connecting the Two Mountains line with the blue line at the Edouard-Montpetit stop on the blue line, thus serving the University of Montreal, and with the green line at the McGill stop, thus better serving McGill University and the upper downtown. Note that the railway commuter and metro systems were developed independently of each other, so significant gains in both their usefulness can be made by linking them up in the manner I've just suggested, at minimal cost. Sixth, connect the commuter train from Blainville with the Two Mountains line, using existing railway track, so that the Blainville train goes straight downtown rather than along the wildly circuitous route it now takes through Cote-Saint-Luc and Montreal West before going downtown. By providing a quicker trip to downtown this encourages more people to use this line for this purpose. At the very least, or as an alternative, there should be a stop on the Blainville line at the Canora stop of the Two Mountains line, to permit a quick transfer between these two lines.

So far, I've focused on improving public transport, which is environmentally preferable. However, we must recognise that even if public transport is improved many people will still prefer to use their car, because of its greater door-to-door convenience, the lack of need to wait for public transport, including in unpleasant weather, and to pick up passengers at stops, the greater comfort and security of their car, the ability to determine who they travel with and what they listen to and to use their car at all hours, the ability to carry heavy goods in their car and, finally, for some people, the pleasure

of driving their car, at least when traffic is not congested. Therefore I would like to suggest two improvements to the road system which would reduce the existing traffic congestion, and thereby, by making traffic more fluid, also reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by cars. The first is to link up the north and south parts of Cavendish Boulevard so that it provides an alternative north-south route to the Decarie Autoroute, from Henri-Bourassa Boulevard in the north to St.-Jacques Street in the south. Right now there is no through north-south route west of the Decarie Autoroute serving the west end (not West Island) suburbs of Montreal, thus placing an excessive traffic burden on the Decarie Autoroute. By contrast, there are many major north-south roads east of St-Laurent Boulevard serving the east end of the city. What's more, this necessary link is quite short, maybe no more than one mile, so its cost would be limited, while its benefit in relieving traffic congestion would be significant. The second road priority I would have is widening Notre-Dame Street East between the eastern end of the Ville-Marie Autoroute to at least Dickson Street, which can then connect via Souigny Avenue with Autoroute 25. This is partly to facilitate the trucking of goods west from the port, as I've already explained, but also to provide residents living in the east with an alternative quick way to get downtown, with few traffic stops, since not many north-south streets intersect with this portion of Notre-Dame Street. Right now, some of these residents will take the longer but quicker route along the Metropolitan, Decarie and Ville-Marie Autoroutes, overloading these arteries, simply because there's no quick alternative. Therefore one purpose of this widening of Notre-Dame Street is to provide these people with a quicker as well as shorter alternative. As well, the Pie-IX rapid bus could take this widened Notre-Dame Street quickly all the way downtown.

Finally, on the topic of transport, I want to comment briefly on the possibility of building tramways in Montreal. Though this is not provided for by the Montreal development plan it is strongly supported by the Projet Montreal party who may win the next Montreal city election. In my view building the tramways that have been proposed would not increase enough the number of users of public transport to justify the tramways's cost. In particular tramways have been proposed for Park Avenue and Cote-des-Neiges Road, but both these streets are now well served by four different bus lines each, including express buses and buses that arrive every 10 minutes or less. It therefore seems doubtful that building tramways along these routes would add many more users of public transport. It's true that tramways are less polluting now than buses, but this can be remedied far more cheaply by

buying electric or hybrid buses to replace existing buses when they're due for replacement. It should also be noted that tramways will make the flow of road traffic worse, unlike buses, since no road vehicles can pass when tramway cars are picking up or disembarking passengers, unlike with buses who go to the side of the road for this purpose. So the overall effect of tramways on the transport of people and goods may be negative.

I want now to make a few comments about urban development and housing, particularly with regard to the western downtown, with which I am personally familiar, though my comments may apply to other areas in Montreal, most notably to the recent development in Griffintown. I believe that in these areas the city is failing to carry out its stated policies of attracting or keeping more families on Montreal Island, providing for a social mix of population, and providing the public facilities and green spaces that would attract these people to these areas. In particular, it is allowing builders of residential buildings to put up buildings that are unattractive to families on account of the small size of their units, limited number of their bedrooms--no more than one or two--lack of included green spaces and the great height of these buildings. This might serve well the single people or couples that are the target market of these buildings but it will not attract families. And this will continue unless the city takes a more active role and insists on residential projects more suitable and attractive to families. And the city must also do more to ensure the existence of schools, public libraries and community centres, and sporting and other recreational facilities and green spaces that will attract families to these areas and create a more desirable community life and environment there. As for social mixity, the city, with the more generous assistance of higher levels of government, must do more to provide for social and community housing in these areas--there are many vacant properties here that could be developed for this purpose--and must adapt its subsidy programs for purchasers of new residential units so that these programs apply to the higher price of residential units in these areas in or near downtown.

Finally, I wish to make a few brief comments about the Demain Montreal discussion document, apart from what I've already said above. What this document reveals is that the city is faced with an overwhelming financial burden to repair its water and road infrastructure, so that not enough money is left over for other valid needs. Specifically, according to this document,

the city will spend \$2,037.3 million for 2013-2015 on repairing its water and road systems (page 79), but only \$51.6 million in 2013 on housing (page 65), \$14.6 million in 2013 to help deprived areas (page 71), and nothing on increasing the green canopy of the city (page 69); also nothing to extend the blue metro line, though this is claimed to be a city priority (page 75). What this indicates to me is Montreal's need for more help from senior levels of government and more sources of revenue, and/or a raising of the property tax, which of course is politically unpopular. As for the development of Griffintown, the document does say that the city will spend \$134.3 million for 2013-2015 on the Bonaventure Autoroute project and Griffintown (page 54), but it isn't clear how much of this will go specifically to improving the "domaine public" in Griffintown. The city should be pressed to provide a figure specifically for this public development of Griffintown, and it seems to me that spending on this development should take precedence over the projected replacing of the Bonaventure Autoroute with an urban boulevard, desirable as this may be for the future. One last thing I wish to comment on is the covering of the Ville-Marie Autoroute. The Demain Montreal document speaks of eventually covering the open part of this Autoroute, from the Palais des Congres to the site of Radio-Canada, partly to encourage real estate development in the numerous underused sites now bordering this Autoroute, but no money is allocated for this now (page 54). It seems to me that it should be more of an immediate priority to cover specifically that open part of the Ville-Marie Autoroute between the Palais des Congres and the CHUM superhospital development which staddles the Autoroute between St-Denis and Sanguinet Streets. This is because not only is this area ripe for residential and other real estate development, with the creation of the superhospital and the nearby existence of City of Montreal offices, but also because covering up the Ville-Marie Autoroute here would desirably reunify Old Montreal with downtown. So money should be allocated for this as soon as it is available.

Robert

Hajaly