



Chambre de commerce
du Montréal métropolitain
Board of Trade
of Metropolitan Montreal

June 19, 20003

Mr. Claude Dauphin
President of the Société de transport de Montréal and
Executive Committee member responsible for public transit
Société de transport de Montréal
800 rue de la Gauchetière Ouest
P.O. Box 2000
Montreal, Quebec
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Dear Mr. Dauphin:

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal is very concerned by the possibility raised today in the media that the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) could decide to close the metro on weekends in an effort to save money. On behalf of its 7,000 members, the Board of Trade would like to point out that any savings resulting from such a decision would be negligible compared to the damage it would cause to commercial activity, to the economic development of Greater Montreal, and to mobility within the city.

First of all, after numerous campaigns promoting the use of public transit, we have seen a 4% increase in its use in 2003. Implementing major constraints to accessibility would only reverse these hard-earned gains. While the vast majority of metro users are Montrealers, the system is also used by many foreign tourists. Closing the metro on weekends would be a crushing blow to the image of vitality and quality of life already enjoyed by Montreal on the international scene.

The metro is widely used on weekends by people attending the many events and festivals contributing to Montreal's status as a vibrant and dynamic city and those wishing to visit the downtown business district without worrying about parking or traffic jams, and any reduction or interruption to the use of this means of transport would have a devastating impact on the vitality of the downtown core and its businesses.

In addition, from an environmental standpoint, at a time when enormous efforts are being made to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases – produced largely by vehicles – it would be exceedingly contradictory for those in charge of managing public transit in a city like Montreal to choose a solution promoting reduced use of the metro system. If such a plan were to be officially proposed, the Board of Trade would of course have no choice but to vigorously oppose it.

Sincerely,

Benoit Labonté
President

c.c. Mr. Gérald Tremblay, mayor of Montreal