

RE: Dorval-downtown train project resurrected, Article online since November 15th 2007, 12:30, The Chronicle, Letter To The Editor, Albert Kramberger, by Avrom David Shtern, Green Coalition, Montreal.

Dear Editor,

Dorval Mayor Edgar Rouleau says that "...the priority should be linking Montreal to the airport, with the remaining links to the West Island coming in afterward." This is absurd. There is not enough of a market to justify a stand alone air-rail shuttle especially along the longer more expensive and circuitous CN line. London England's Gatwick Express was almost cancelled because improved local commuter rail service was deemed more important and the airport shuttle was getting in the way. It was also considered a drain on resources. The primary focus should be to cater to local needs. The demand is there to make the shuttle a success.

By all means integrate the airport with a fast, frequent, energy efficient and electrified Dorion-Rigaud commuter line. In fact, Montreal–Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport should become an intermodal hub with local and intercity buses, VIA Rail trains, and future light rail lines. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be made easier as well.

According to a report in your sister publication the Westmount Examiner, Senator Michael Fortier, the Montreal point man for Prime Minister Harper, has a "... clear preference for the CP route and improvements to the suburban service, which West Island mayors have been campaigning since the spring." ("Shuttle planers return to CP route through Westmount", Westmount Examiner, Don Wedge, Nov. 1, 2007.)

No doubt improvements would have to be made to the line. These include: Relaying the third track from Vendome to Montreal West; Grade separation at the Westminster-Elmhurst crossing; the installation of a few new power switches and computerized centralized traffic control west of Dorval.

There are of course issues with the dreadful metro station at Lucienne L'Allier: Four stories down! Windsor Station must be somehow revived. If the trains were still arriving at Windsor, it would be easier for passengers to get to the more accessible Bonaventure metro station.

Fast, frequent and reliable commuter rail service to the Lakeshore is the ticket to ride. But mix it with a little common sense because Montreal has had enough white elephants.

Yours Sincerely,

Avrom David Shtern,
Green Coalition Verte,
Transportation Issues.